

DEACON NOTES

Mock Kirkpatrick named Academic All-American

Senior forward Brenda Mock Kirkpatrick was named to the Verizon Academic All-America District III Basketball Team, announced Feb. 22.

Mock Kirkpatrick was the only player from the ACC named to the first team in the district that includes the states of Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia, and was the first Deacon to earn the honor since 1995.

To qualify for the team a player has to be a starter or key reserve, have a sophomore athletic/academic standing, and a cumulative GPA of at least 3.2. Mock Kirkpatrick and her fellow first teamers will now move on to the national ballot. She is a graduate student in the Masters Teacher Fellow Program, having graduated last year with a 3.87 GPA and a degree in both history and sociology.

The 6-foot forward is among the top 20 scorers in school history, fifth all-time in field goal percentage and top 10 all-time in rebounds, as well as leading this year's Deacons in rebounding, field goal percentage and steals as well as ranking third in scoring.

Women's tourney set for Greensboro Coliseum

The 2001 ACC Women's Basketball Tournament will be held March 2-5 at the Greensboro Coliseum. The Demon Deacon women's basketball team faces a monumental task in its first contest, having to tangle with the No. 1 seed and fourth-ranked Duke Blue Devils March 2 at 8 p.m.

In other action seventh-seeded North Carolina will face Georgia Tech, the No. 8 seed, at 6 p.m. on March 6; fourth-seeded Florida State will play No. 5 Virginia at 2 p.m., the winner of the seven-eight game against No. 2 Clemson at 4:30 p.m., and N.C. State, the third seed, will face sixth-seeded Maryland at 7 p.m. on March 3. The semifinals will be played Sunday, March 4 at 1 and 3:30 p.m., with the championship game at 7:30 p.m. the next day.

The four-five game, as well as both semifinals and the championship game, will be aired on regional sports networks, with the championship game being aired nationally on Fox Sports Net.

Track teams make good on Last Chances

Members of both the men's and women's track and field teams achieved NCAA qualifying times at the Last Chance Meet at Virginia Tech Feb. 23-24.

Both distance medley relay teams achieved national qualifying times, as well as new school records, possibly earning them a spot in the NCAA Indoor Championships to be held March 9-10 in Fayetteville, Ark.

The Men's DMR team ran in 9:37.51, which was underneath the automatic qualifying time, ensuring them a spot in the championships, and the women's team ran in 11:20.59, below the provisional qualifying mark.

Senior Jill Snyder set a new school record in the 800 meters, running in 2:08.33. Snyder, freshman Nikeya Green, senior Summer Shaw all achieved provisional qualifying times in the event, finishing second, third and fourth overall, respectively.

Snyder also qualified in the mile run Feb. 28 at the University of Florida Fast Times Invitational. Her time of 4:42.78 earned her an automatic qualification to Fayetteville.

SCHEDULE

Friday, March 2
Baseball vs. New Orleans, Hooks Stadium, 2:30 p.m.
Men's tennis vs. Florida, Indoor Tennis Center, 2 p.m.
Women's tennis at Tennessee, Knoxville, Tenn.
Women's track and field at USA Indoor Nationals, Atlanta

Saturday, March 3
Baseball vs. New Orleans, Hooks Stadium, 1:30 p.m.
Women's track and field at USA Indoor Nationals, Atlanta

Sunday, March 4
Baseball vs. New Orleans, Hooks Stadium, 1:30 p.m.

Tuesday, March 6
Baseball vs. East Carolina, Hooks Stadium, 2:30 p.m.

Men's tennis shut out by No. 14 VCU

The Deacons play well, but fail to break through on the scoresheet in loss to Virginia Commonwealth.

By Jared Klose
Senior Reporter

Sometimes a final score is not indicative of the competitiveness of a match. That was certainly the case in the Demon Deacons' 4-0 loss to Virginia Commonwealth this weekend.

Despite coming away without a single victory on the score sheet, the Deacons (4-2) managed a win in doubles and stretched the No. 14 Rams (9-3) to the brink in singles play, where three matches out of four went the maximum three sets in the Feb. 25 showdown at the Thalhimer Tennis Center.

The Deacons were coming off a trying road trip, which saw No. 20 Miami hand the Deacs their first loss of the season in a very tight match, and the results from this past weekend were similar. As has become the pattern so far this season, the Deacons found themselves locked in an uphill battle from the beginning after they lost the doubles point to start the match.

Senior Raul Munoz joined with freshman David Loewenthal at the third flight to garner the only Deacon win of the day (8-3) in singles or doubles. At first position sophomore Mike Murray and junior Justin Kaufmann were beaten 8-4, and the No. 2 Deacon tandem of sophomores David Bere and Trent Brendon were overcome by their VCU opponents by the same score.

The Deacons have only won two out of three doubles matches twice all year, but remain optimistic never the less about their chances for success even when getting off to a slow start.

"I think we can still win with singles play and there's a lot of teams out there that win the match in singles without the doubles," Head Coach Jeff Zinn said.

Despite the results on paper, Zinn was optimistic about the team's performance and pleased with how the team responded following its first loss of the season.

"I thought we came out and we played well again," Zinn said.

"You look at the scores and it's one of those couldn't-get-any-closer type things. But we got to start winning those against those top 20, top 10 teams though, because they'll both be in the top ten soon.

In singles play, Munoz, Bere, Murray and Loewenthal comprised the top four Deacon representatives, and as it turned out, they were the only Deacons whose matches would be contested that afternoon.

At the No. 1 position, Munoz started off lethargically, dropping the first set 3-6, before rallying to take the second set 6-4 to stave off elimination.

But the Rams, enjoying their home court advantage, seemed to have the answer to every Deacon run, and Munoz's opponent pulled out a 7-5 third set to claim the point for VCU. It was that kind of a day for the Deacs, and Murray's and Bere's matches strikingly resembled Munoz's.

Playing third for the Deacons, Murray turned in another close result, but eventually came out on the losing end of scores of 6-3, 5-7, 6-4.

Meanwhile, at No. 2 singles, Bere was in the midst of a three-set affair of his own. After jumping out to a 6-3 first set, Bere lost the second 2-6 and was embroiled in a tooth-and-nail battle in the third set before retiring from the match down 3-4 in the third.

The termination of Bere's match came about because Loewenthal had already been beaten 6-3, 6-2, and the earlier

results were enough to clinch a Rams victory.

"Not much separated us from them," Zinn said. "That's for sure. We're right there and maybe at the end of the season, and maybe at tournament time, we'll get to play those guys again. Disheartened is not the right word, and not frustrated either, to describe us.

"These guys want to break the mold of Wake Forest tradition. They want to be the team that sets things right, and they'll do it."

The coach is not worried about confronting so many difficult opponents in a row, and the Demon Deacons will get another chance to tackle a tennis powerhouse when 11th-ranked Florida rolls into town March 2 for what Zinn hopes will be the Deacs' first outdoor home match of the season.

"We should be all right," Zinn said. "The good thing compared to other years, is that the guys are still very confident and they're not hanging their heads or anything.

"They're hungry, that's what I like. There's no downside and they're still rearing to go.

"We're still tinkering with our singles, but it will get better. I'm confident in that," Zinn said.

Pitching powers Deacs to three victories

By Mike Scott
Old Gold and Black Reporter

Yogi Berra once said, "All pitchers are liars and crybabies." While that conclusion is still up for debate, the Demon Deacon baseball team probably doesn't care what its pitchers act like, so long as they keep throwing the way they have been. The Deacs rolled their win streak to four games thanks in large part to strong performances from their hurlers.

Sophomore Ben Clayton was the first of the Deacon pitchers to dominate. Against Virginia Tech Feb. 24 at Hooks Stadium, Clayton kept the team in the game, pitching seven innings and giving up only five hits and one run while striking out six. Clayton's performance was a timely one, as the Deacon bats were not their usual potent selves.

After Clayton gave up a run in the first and junior Jamie Athas was driven in by senior Jason Aquilante in the second, Clayton and Virginia Tech starter Jason Bush took over the game. While Bush gave up only six hits in 7.2 innings of work, Clayton was even better, retiring 15 straight batters at one point.

It wasn't until the bottom of the seventh that the Deacs finally drew more blood. Senior Matt Price drilled a ball to deep left center to start off the inning. The Virginia Tech centerfielder dropped the ball after meeting face to face with the outfield wall, leaving Price with a leadoff triple. Aquilante followed with a sacrifice fly to score Price and put the Deacs ahead.

From there it was simply a matter of time, as freshman Jamie D'Antona's second home run of the season in the eighth provided an insurance run and junior closer Dave Bush pitched a perfect eighth and ninth to pick up a save in the 3-2 Deacon victory.

After rain forced the postponement of the Feb. 25 date against Virginia Tech, freshman Kyle Sleeth took the mound as the Deacs took on the Liberty Flames Feb. 26.

The offense wasted no time getting started in this game as senior Cory Sullivan led off the game with a double and was driven in by freshman Steve LeFavre's RBI single to tally a run for the Deacs in the first. Sullivan then led off the third inning with a bunt single and scored on D'Antona's ground out. The Flames, however, had answers both times, coming back with a run in both the bottom of the first and third.

Sophomore Ryan Johnson then led off the fourth with a triple to spark a two-run inning, and D'Antona and senior Corey Slavik scored in the fifth after leading off with back-to-back singles, and the Deacs were back on top 6-2.

True to form, Liberty bounced back in the sixth with a two-run homer to make the score 6-4, but that was plenty for Bush, who pitched the final three innings without incident, picking up his third save for the season and giving the Deacs the 6-4 win. Head Coach George Greer sees the strength of the bullpen as a big advantage.

"I think it gives everybody confidence," Greer said. "I think when you go out there thinking that you have to start and finish a game, I think it puts a burden on your mind as a pitcher, whereas you can go out and



Kirsten Nantz/Old Gold and Black

Freshman Josh Hansen launched a two-run home run against High Point Feb. 27 as the Deacons were victorious 11-3. The Diamond Deacs were also victorious in games against Virginia Tech and Liberty this past week.

feel that I can go out and give six strong innings, get a quality start, and have somebody come in for an inning or two, and then we can get to David Bush.

"We feel very good about the depth of our pitching staff."

Next up for the Diamond Deacons was a home date Feb. 27 with High Point. Again, pitching was a big part of the win.

Sophomore Ryan Braun pitched five innings, giving up one earned run and four hits and striking out five. The difference in this game, though, was that the Deacon bats performed equally as well.

The team started right away, as freshman Josh Hansen belted a two-run homer and D'Antona scored on a wild pitch to give the Deacs three runs in the bottom of the first.

After a run in the fourth, the Deacs again scored three runs, this time off two hits and a Panther error and balk. While the bats kept going as the Deacs scored runs in

the sixth, seventh and eighth innings, the bullpen took over for Braun after the fifth and allowed only one run the rest of the way, giving the Deacs a 11-3 win.

Next up for the Diamond Deacs is a weekend set March 2-4 at home against New Orleans, who Greer expects will be a good team to prepare the Deacs for upcoming ACC play.

"New Orleans looks to be a typically strong team," Greer said. "Their players down in that part of the country are very good breaking ball hitters, they can hit fast balls really well, you're just going to have to keep the ball down and move it around. They'll play good defense and they'll have good team speed.

"We wanted someone who was going to be a typical ACC type school to play," Greer said. "(We're) getting ready for the ACC which starts next week against Duke, so we felt that New Orleans would be a great opportunity for us, going into a series with the same kind of focus that we have for an ACC weekend."

Clau finishes 18th at Lady Gator Invitational

By Jordan Webster
Sports Editor

The No. 15 Demon Deacon women's golf team joined a strong field at the Sun-Trust Lady Gator Invitational in Gainesville, Fla. on Feb. 23-25, and earned a 16th-place finish for their efforts.

Sophomore Nuria Clau paced the Deacons, carding a seven-over 223 for the event, which tied her for 18th individually.

Auburn captured the team title, shooting a combined 868 in the three-day, 54-hole tournament, and finishing ten strokes ahead of second-place Georgia. Auburn topped the leaderboard after each of the three rounds. Three golfers

completed the tournament with a three-under par 213, but Georgia's Summer Sirmons outlasted Young-A Yang of Tennessee and Celeste Troche of Auburn in a playoff to take individual honors.

For the Deacons, Clau saved her best performance for the last round of the tournament on Feb. 25, as she shot a one-over 73. Clau carded a three-over 75 in each of the first two rounds. Clau cracked the top 20 with her 73 in the final round. The sophomore from Barcelona, Spain was in a six-way tie for 24th after 36 holes.

"Nuria played very well," Head Coach Dianne Dailey said. "I was very pleased with that.

"I really think that she is going to be

one of our mainstays this spring."

Sophomore Caroline Stetler followed Clau on the leaderboard for the Deacons, finishing in a tie for 48th after carding a 17-over par 233 for the tournament. Stetler struggled with a first-round 84, but recovered nicely to card a two-over 74 in the second round and a three-over 75 in the third.

Freshman Deb Means tied for 58th with a 20-over 236, and juniors Camille Lee and Veronica Prado-Lacoste placed 83rd and 89th, respectively. Means played her best 18 holes in the third round, matching Stetler's three-over 75. Lee's best round came on the second day (80), as did Prado-Lacoste (82).

Dailey tinkered with her lineup for

the tournament, giving several players a chance to participate that normally do not.

"We were able to play a few players that haven't been able to play," Dailey said. "If you looked at the scores, you would think we would be disappointed. But because we played some players, and got some good individual efforts, I was pleased."

The Deacons will have several weeks to prepare for their next tournament, the Lady Gamecock Classic, which takes place on March 15-18 in Columbia, S.C. Dailey plans on continuing to play with her lineup for that tournament.

"We want to give everyone a chance to play," Dailey said.