THE CRUSADER SPORTS

Friday, April 6, 2001

Men and Women’s Crew have started the Spring season strong, riding the wave of success on which they ended last year. Despite the fact that Lake Quinsigmond is still frozen, the teams have continued with their season, moving last week’s scheduled home races to Worcester, Mass. The races were held here in Worcester on lake Quinsigmond, and the efforts exhibited by both teams so far are evidence of a strong, exciting season to come.

Women’s Crew had a very strong season last Spring, continuing on a build up of successes over the last few years. Some of their best finishes came when they crushed University of New Hampshire and Simmons College. They also had strong showings against Bates, University of Rhode Island, and University of Massachusetts - Lowell.

The Lady ‘Saders had a great weekend at the Patriot League Championships last year and hope to defend their titles this Spring. Victories there included the First Varsity 8 placing first, and the Second Varsity 8 and Novice 8 placing first in their respective races. The team consists of many sophomores from last year’s extremely successful novice boats.

The men’s team hopes to continue their success as they move into the varsity boats as well as ten juniors, five seniors and two freshmen on the varsity squad. They are coached by HC alumni Patrick Diggins ’86 and Tom Sullivan ’70 and led by tri-captains: Seniors Jess Resch and Sarah Tyler and Junior Rebecca Smith.

The Men’s Crew team had a solid season last Spring. Last season they competed very well against Boston College and University of New Hampshire as well as Connecticut and Tufts. The team was consistent throughout the season and their teamwork and spirit will hopefully carry over to this year.

At last year’s Patriot League Championship, the best finishes included: the Varsity 8 boat taking first place and the Lightweight 8 and Varsity 4 coming in second. The team continues to be coached by Holy Cross Crew director Tom Sullivan who not only graduated from Holy Cross, but has coached the varsity teams (in some capacity) since 1975. The team is fairly young with 15 freshmen, 15 sophomores, 11 juniors and just 2 seniors (JP Breaux and Justin Lednar).

On March 26, both teams traveled to the Cooper River in New Jersey to compete in the Jesuit Invitational, all which featured Jesuit schools from all along the Eastern seaboard including Boston College, Georgetown and Fairfield.

The teams came in 4th overall in competition, with Georgetown taking the title for the weekend as well as the men’s Cannonball Point Trophy. The Women’s Lightweight 8 boat finished 2nd behind St. Joseph’s with a time of 8:10:10 and the Men’s Varsity 8 and Lightweight 8 both came in 3rd in their respective races.

Last weekend on March 31, the teams traveled to New London, Connecticut to face Wesleyan and the US Coast Guard Academy for races that were unable to be held here because of the ice on the lake. There they raced the standard 2000 meter course.

Both the first and second Women’s Varsity 8 boats came in second to Wesleyan with times of 6:27.90 and 6:49.01, respectively in close races in which they both defeated the Coast Guard.

The Men’s Varsity lost to both Coast Guard (5:32.1) and Wesleyan (5:32.8) in a very close race where their time was 5:34.7. However, the Second Varsity 8 team managed to defeat both teams with a time of 5:58.20 with Coast Guard trailing by seven seconds.

The next races for each team will be this Saturday, April 7 against University of New Hampshire and Simmons College (Women only). They will hopefully be rowing here at hope on Lake Quinsigmond. Best of luck to both teams as they start off their season.

By Dara Ely
CRUSADER SPORTS STAFF

The water may be frozen, but crew teams are on fire.

The 10th INNING

Matthew Chmura

Amidst the excitement, tragedies plague the world of sports

This is one of the best weeks in sports as Opening Day, the Final Four, and the Masters all occur one 9 day stretch. It is heaven for the true sports fan, as Sportscenter is packed with great highlights, and ESPN.com is exploding with information about all the events. It just seems like a never-ending week of incredible sports.

For a writer, this plethora of material provides tons of great stories to document. For example, I could write about Coach K winning his third national championship and joining the coaching elite, and Shane Battier staying in school for four years and leaving college basketball with a national championship and national player of the year hardware.

Also along the college hoops loop, I could cover Lute Olson leading Arizona to the Finals of the NCAA tournament just three months after the passing of his beautiful wife Bobbi. I could cover golf as well, and Tiger's great play over the past few weeks and his attempt to win the Masters again, or how about the great personal story of Lee Westwood (arguably the best European player) showing that there are more important things in life than sports- he withdrew from the first major of the year so that he can be home with his wife in case his first child is born over the weekend.

Despite all of these great things that are happening in the world of sports, there are also a few negative things that have occurred in the sports world. Though I do not like to dwell on negative things, and I rarely write about the downside of things, the rest of this column is going to talk about two instances that bother me extensively as a sports fan and writer.

The first story involves the Philadelphia 76ers and the Croce family. Pat Croce is the owner of the 76ers. His story is an amazing one. He was a “problem child” growing up. His father used to beat him, and sometimes when his father came home drunk he would sacrifice himself to his father, simply so his mother wouldn't get beat.

He got into a lot of trouble as a child, and as a result he earned the reputation of being a tough guy. Despite his troubles, childhood, Pat turned his life around when he went to school to be a physical therapist and sports trainer. Eventually he became the trainer of the Philadelphia Flyers and through smart business he became the president of the 76ers. Croce still has signs of his rambunctious days, as he sports a very large tattoo on his forearm (about the only thing he has in common with his franchise guard, Allen Iverson).

When he became the president of the Sixers, the first thing that Pat Croce did was bring in a lot of his own people to work for him. One of these people was his brother, John Croce. John was hired as the conditioning coach of the Philadelphia Eagles. One of these people was his brother, John Croce. John was hired as the conditioning coach of the Philadelphia Eagles. Eventually he became the trainer of the Philadelphia Flyers and through smart business he became the president of the 76ers.

This week it was released that the John Croce’s resignation was forced, because he was caught on video tape stealing cash from Allen Iverson’s pants while they were in the locker room. This is not only embarrassing to the NBA, the 76ers, and the Croce's but also to sports fans. People everywhere dream of being part of a professional sports franchise someday, and being able to work along side the players that they love. The 76ers were people for the common person to idolize.

They came from nothing to become the people in charge of one of the best teams in the National Basketball Association’s Eastern Conference. But with the action of John, their name is now marred. The one thing that I do say, is thank you Allen Iverson. Thank you for not making this a big deal, and for acting professional. Iverson simply went on working like he has been all season, and being the PROFESSIONAL that he has turned into this year.

The next disgrace is one of the greatest basketball players of our time (or should I say who could have been one of the greatest basketball players of our time). Darryl Strawberry, the ever turbulent Met (he’ll always be a Met) continued on his wayward path this week as he left the hospital that he was being monitored in as part of his drug rehabilitation. By leaving the hospital he violated his probation and as a result was in the news again. Rumors that Strawberry had been kidnaped and a ransom of $50,000 was wanted for his return were all over the national press. When he was finally found, Straw said that a woman picked him up and she was supposed to bring him to an AA meeting.

Instead the woman began smoking crack in the car, and he couldn't resist the temptation of the drug that basically has ruined his life and career. She then took him to a local hotel where five men met Straw and the woman. The men had guns, and they took all of his jewelry. Then they all stayed in the room where they went on a five-day coke bender. Finally the men decided it was time to leave and they drove around for a while, bought more drugs and went to another hotel.

Finally Straw surfaced a couple days later in a hospital. Wow. Whether Darryl's story is true or not doesn't really matter. What does matter is that he needs help. One of the best baseball players in the 80's, Strawberry should be remembered for things like the ‘86 World Series, not for his drug addiction. Straw, please clean yourself up.

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Though this isn't the most positive column I have ever written, I think that it is sometimes important to look at the negatives and try to protect against them in the future. As sports fans we just have to hope that everyone learns from Darryl and Pat, and sports aren't tarnished like this is the future. Sports should be entertaining and fun, and these types of stories take away from that and hurt sports...