Volleyball edged out of Patriot League tournament

BY DAVID WANCZYK
Crusader Sports Staff

Volleyball went down in defeat to Army last Friday at West Point, ending postseason hopes but bringing to a close a season far surpassing previous campaigns. With an even conference record of 6-6, the team tried to win their total in the Patriot League and for the first time bested a team other than Lafayette in the league. With victories over Army, Navy, Lafayette, and Lehigh, the Crusaders finished fifth in the league, missing out on the tournament by the slightest margin. That finish better the preseason estimate of members of the media, who predicted the Peter Vitteriti-led squad would end up sixth.

"There were a lot of upsets this season; otherwise, we would definitely be in," commented Vitteriti, lamenting spoiling victories by Army and Lehigh over Colgate which threw off the balance of power in the league.

In the culminating contest in West Point, New York, the Cadets came out firing on all cylinders, winning the first two games by a combined score of 30-17. Holy Cross circled the wagons in the third game, 15-10, then fell short losing 15-8 in the fourth. Both teams played well in the last game, combining for only six errors, but Army (18-10, 7-5 PL) was too much. With the game tight, Army senior Kate Konkel ran the score to 14-8 on her serve and swung the momentum for good.

In the first match this year, HC took Army 3-1, but the Cadets rebounded this season. The Black Knights ended on a strong note, including a 12-1 record in their home gym. Coach Vitteriti had hoped for a victory, but with an edge that at home, and the Patriot League Player of the Week (Liz Andreichuk), Army's victory wasn't totally unexpected. Army captured the third seed in the tournament and moves on to tomorrow to the tournament with Colgate, Bucknell, and Lehigh.

The 12-16 record, though, marks the best in the Vitteriti era, and the core returns next season. Senior Captain Katie Lynch and senior Meghan Dowd move on, but sophomore starters Jessica Ostlund, Katie Snell, Cassia Bennet, and Chemi Jakielo should lead the Cross to further success and the postseason with their leadership and teamwork. The rising seniors are Vitteriti's first recruiting class and continue to mesh. "We play as a team and we're an up-and-coming team, and we'll just get better," Vitteriti said.

Men’s basketball off to an impressive start

BY JAIME DE LEON
Associate Sports Editor

The Crusader Men’s basketball team kicked off its season with two impressive exhibition wins last week. With all five of last year’s starters returning, and a healthy Pat Whearty, the team looks to improve even more than last year.

This year’s Crusaders have added freshman John Bucaro, Jave Meade, and Greg Rector, and have lost only Chris Spitter from last season’s squad. Of the three, expect Meade to see the most time off the bench, providing a possible impact player. Here is a look at the team by position.

Centers

Last year’s team MVP, Josh Sankes, returns for his senior season. Sankes averaged 24.5 points and 14 rebounds in almost 30 minutes in each of the two victories. Last year’s starting center and leading rebounder in the NCAA, expect Sankes to keep controlling the class.

Sankes will be helped by the return of a healthy Pat Whearty. Whearty, who was out most of last season with a hip muscle injury, will most likely play power forward, but he will also spell Sankes at the center position. Whearty averaged 7.3 ppg in the two pre-season games. Sophomore Kris Clemmons and Rector will also see some minutes at center.

Forwards

Along with Whearty, senior Juan Pegues will start at forward. Pegues scored 14 points in the two games so far. Pegues averaged 7.5 ppg last year and 9.5 for his career. Pegues also missed significant time last season due to an eye injury. Hopefully he can stay healthy this year and provide some much needed experience to the relatively young team.

Sophomore Tim Szatko, last year’s P.L. Rookie of the Year, will likely be the team’s sixth man. Szatko led the team last year with a 4.9% three point percentage and averaged 11.4 points a game. Rector and Clemmons will also play at the forward spot at times.

Guards

This is the Crusader’s deepest position. With three legitimate point guards, expect the play of starter Ryan Serravalle to improve considerably. With Meade, who is still recovering from a shoulder injury, getting back, Serravalle should have to play well in order to keep getting minutes. Serravalle averaged 12.3 in the preseason games and added 15 assists. Along with Meade, sophomore Jared Curry and senior Guillermo Sanchez will also see some minutes at the guard position.

Hockey drops heartbreaker in Van Buskirk’s debut

The Holy Cross Women’s Ice Hockey team lost a heartbreaking game this past Sunday at the Hart Center. The Crusaders, under new Head Coach Peter Van Buskirk and returning nine from last season, held BU scoreless for over two solid periods of play before losing 1-0.

The Crusader defensive effort was able to hold off every BU advance into their zone and quick break the puck out for offensive strikes. “I think our defense was good,” coach Van Buskirk commented.

The first penalty in a game that would eventually tally nine came with 6:39 to go, a two-minute minor against Holy Cross. Playing a tight box, the Crusaders were able to convert the situation into a goal. Though unable to convert the power play, the Crusaders were able to backhand in an ice-hugging goal with 11.9 seconds left, winning the game for Boston University. BU’s goal was scored on a 2-on-0 rush, with the BU bench, erupted into cheers, and did so again as the final buzzer blared.

“The game was a good base for us,” says senior co-captain Liz Pegues. “It was our first test .. encouraging, but we need to work on some things,” said Pegues.

BU iced the puck. After that, the Holy Cross Women’s Ice Hockey team could not be cleaned between periods. The Crusader defense was able to get a goal off of BU early in the first period, a goal that would not suffice for the victory.

BU’s Maggie Harr ripped the puck back out for offensive strikes. “The Crusaders had a few whiskers break outs into the offensive zone, but it seemed as if the game would end with the score tied at zero. With less than thirty seconds left, BU’s Amy Mastrootian picked up the puck in the neutral zone and skated it into the Holy Cross zone. She broke away and backhanded in an ice-hugging goal with 17.5 seconds left, winning the game for Boston University. BU’s goal was scored on a 2-on-0 rush, with the BU bench, erupted into cheers, and did so again as the final buzzer blared.

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