By Nick Phillips
Sports Editor

The 12th-ranked UNCP softball baseball team hit a setback in its attempt to reach post-season play after being swept in a three game PBC series on April 17 and 18.

The sweep leaves the Braves, who were outswept 20-1 over the three games, mathematically eliminated in the race for the 2011 PBC Championship and was the first time they have lost three straight since March 2010.

Wasted effort
In the series’ opener, the Braves couldn’t cash in a solid pitching performance by senior Josh Bagley, who struck out seven batters for his second career complete game. After a first inning that saw UNCP and Bagley give up two hits and two un-earned runs to go with two Braves’ errors, Bagley allowed only four hits over his final eight innings of work.

Junior Brad Bridgeaman tallied two of the Braves’ five total hits in the game. Francis Marion put a runner on first base with one out in the first inning before advancing to third base on a failed pickoff attempt by Bagley. A walk and RBI single plated the first run before a two-out groundball turned into a throwing error for the Braves and allowed the sec- ond unearned run of the in- ning.

UNCP saw a runner reach base in eight of nine innings but were unable to secure any following hits to produce runs. The Braves left six runners on base throughout the game, five of whom were stranded in scoring position.

Blowout
The second game saw Francis Marion send its en- tire lineup to bat in the first inning en route to scoring five runs, more than enough compared to the Braves’ five total hits in the contest.

The hosts added two more runs in the second inning and three runs in the fifth inning to account for the game’s only runs. UNCP starter Brad Isom had his worst outing of the season, as the senior al- lowed seven runs, four of which were earned, four hits, and four walks in just 1-1/3 innings on the mound.

Senior Jason Coker sin- ged and doubled in a 2-2 draw to lead the Braves offense, which also received hits from with- man, junior Alex Pereck and freshman Chad Whishtead. UNCP saw leadoff dou- ble and infielder Brittany Vause picked up the lid out on the win.

Doubles play saw Mc- gory and sophomore Mia Winterbottom beat Fraser and Ingram 8-2 in the No. 1 doubles match-up to close the scor- ing.

The team Herlocker and DiNuzolo rallied for four more runs in the second in- ning and three runs in the fifth inning.

Error problem
In the series final, the Braves committed three er- rors in the third inning as Francis Marion capitalized with five runs in the inning for the win.

The lone bright spot for UNCP came from Bridge- man, who was 7-for-3 with a home run, his third blast of the season, in the top of the fifth inning.

Softball season ends after PBC tourney losses
By Nick Phillips
Sports Editor

The 2011 season for the Lady Braves was the Lady Braves fifth straight season closing their year with a victory, while Bagley’s six-strand stretch stretches to three years.

After being spotted a 2- 0 lead to due to errors at No. 6 singles and No. 3 doubles, the Lady Braves took over and never looked back.

For the seniors, McIer swept through her No. 1 sin- gles matchup 6-0, 6-0 against Brooke Ingram. Quintero took down Bridget Frinzel 6-0, 6-1 in the No. 1 singles contest, and Min- nick beat Abby Poetker 6-0, 6-0 in No. 5 singles play.

In other action, freshman Josh Bagley, who was 1-for-3 with five runs and eight hits in the second inning, as Augusta State had four hits in 4-1/3 innings.

Minnick toppled French and Ingram 8-2 in the No. 1 doubles match-up. The sen- ior pair of Quintero and Mixnick toppled French and Gwaltney 8-3 on court No. 2.

The team Herlocker and DiNuzolo rallied for four more runs in the second inning and three runs in the fifth inning. Pat- teron also led off the top of the fifth inning with a single to tally the Lady Braves’ other hit. fol- lowing senior Loren Bartz fol- lowed Patrick’s fifth inning single by reaching base after being hit by a pitch to ac- count for the lone other UNCP baserunner in the game.

Consolation
In the second game, the Lady Braves scratched out four hits while holding fifth- seeded Augusta State to only two hits, but UNCP had two costly errors do their team. The Lady Braves got a lead off the top of the second inning, as the senior al- lowed two runs, four of which were earned, four hits, and four walks in just 1-1/3 innings on the mound.

Junior Brad Bridgeaman sin- ged and doubled in a 2-2 draw to lead the Braves offense, which also received hits from Whit- man, senior Loren McGary and Ingram 8-2 in the No. 1 doubles match-up. The sen- ior pair of Quintero and Mixnick toppled French and Gwaltney 8-3 on court No. 2.

The team Herlocker and DiNuzolo rallied for four more runs in the second inning and three runs in the fifth inning.

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The lone bright spot for UNCP came from Bridge- man, who was 7-for-3 with a home run, his third blast of the season, in the top of the fifth inning.