Lady Braves defeat USC Aiken in five sets

By Nick Phillips
Sports Editor

After dropping their first set, the UNCP volleyball team bounced back for a 3-2 victory against USC Aiken in Peach Belt Conference play on Sept. 25.

In the second set of back-to-back PBC road contests, the Lady Braves fell behind by a set but pulled out a 2-0 set victory, a 25-22 win after a 0-29 set attack percentage in the opening set.

UNCP rebounded to win a close, 25-23 second set while siding out at a 63 percent rate in the set followed by a third set win with a 25-19 score.

The fourth set was a complete opposite of the third set, with USC Aiken finishing the set with a .273 team attack percentage compared to UNCP’s .029 team percentage in USC Aiken’s 25-12 set victory.

In the deciding fifth set, the Lady Braves pulled out the match win with a 16-14 set victory.

The fifth set alone featured seven tie scores and five ties coming in the final set alone.

Senior Rachel Young tallied the most kills for the Lady Braves with seven and also having the highest attack percentage on the team for the set.

Junior Tiara Anderson finished with six kills of her own and seven digs defensively.

Freshman libero Marissa Baker finished with a team high 17 digs, while junior Heather Bolwerk ditched out 20 assists in the losing effort.

UNCP’s Allie Schneider goes for a kill against Flagler last season. Schneider finished with six kills against Flagler on Oct. 1.

Lady Braves lose to defending PBC champs

By Nick Phillips
Sports Editor

The UNCP volleyball team hit a roadblock on Oct. 1, as they dropped three straight sets to home standing Flagler in Peach Belt Conference action.

Flagler won the PBC regular season title and the PBC tournament title last season, while also winning the Southeast Regional and advancing to the Division II National Semifinals. They were also the preseason pick to win this season’s PBC title.

In the opening set, Flagger took a 25-13 win with the help of the Lady Braves’ -.167 team hitting percentage for the set.

Flagler finished off set two by a 25-18 score, while set three was the closest of the night at 25-20.

In sets two and three, UNCP barely reached positive numbers in team hitting percentage, with set percentages of .029 and .022, respectively, while Flagger finished the night with an attack percentage average of .233.

Over the three sets, the match featured only four lead changes and 10 tied scores, with five ties coming in the final set alone.

Offensively, UNCP was led by junior Allie Schneider and Tricia Varno who had 13 and 11 kills respectively.

 Fellow junior Tiara Anderson had a perfect game in the win with nine kills, while senior Rachel Young totaled eight of her own.

Junior Heather Bolwerk spread 42 assists around the court to run the UNCP offense, while adding eight digs, three assisted blocks and two service aces on the night.

Freshman Marissa Baker tallied a team high 15 digs defensively, while Schneider added 13 digs and senior Ronel Varno finished with 11.

The Lady Braves improved their record to 9-4 overall and 2-2 in the PBC with the win.

UNCP and USC Aiken have now alternated wins in their last five PBC matchups.

NUMCP’s front row Lilian Henson (left) and Delina Beavers (right) try to plate a kill against Gannon on Oct. 7.

Lady Braves’ volleyball makes quick work of Winston Salem

By Nick Phillips
Sports Editor

After three games on the road, the UNCP volleyball team returned home to the English E. Jones Center on Sept. 28 and quickly knocked off visiting Winston-Salem State University in three sets.

UNCP recorded 16 service aces as they took the straight set win in just over an hour.

The Lady Braves took the first set 25-15 before taking set two 25-18 behind a .222 team hitting percentage.

In the final set, the Lady Braves hit at an astounding .318 percentage, as they wrapped up the match with a 25-16 set win.

High praise
“Tricia and I thought we served them out of system, and that’s what our idea was going into this match,” UNCP head coach Jeff Billington said.

“They had two kids that were pretty legitimate hitters, but if you can take them out of system, you can limit their swings. We did a good job with that,” Billington added.

Junior Rebecca Morgan finished with a team and match-high 11 kills on 17 attempts.

Ridge passed out nine assists and three aces, while sophomore Morgan Ridge and junior Heather Bolwerk ran the Lady Braves offense.

Ridge passed out nine assists and three aces, while Bolwerk led the Lady Braves with 15 assists.

Bolwerk also tallied two kills, six digs and two aces on the night.

UNCP improved their record to 10-4 overall with the win, and moved their perfect record up to 8-0 against Winston-Salem State All time.

Volleyball drops first Peach Belt road contest

By Justin Pollard
Sports Editor

The UNCP women’s volleyball team dropped a 3-1 decision to Peach Belt Conference foe Lander on Sept. 24 in Greenwood, S.C., at Horne Arena.

The visiting Lady Braves fell to 8-4 overall and 1-2 in PBC play, suffocated by a strong defensive match by the Lady Beacon’s.

The loss came in UNCP’s conference road opener.

No set was decided by more than four points, with the fourth set coming down to a 27-25 Lander win to decide the match.

The Lady Beacons took the first set 25-22, and UNCP responded with a 25-22 victory in the second set. Lander then won the third set 25-22.

The back and forth was led by junior Tiara Anderson, who recorded 11 kills out of 31 attacks. Teammate Rachel Young, a senior, collected 10 kills with a .333 attack percentage.

Rebecca Morgan recorded nine kills for UNCP, while teammate Trinity Varno added eight kills.

Shay Peterson led the team with six blocks, two of which were solo blocks.

Heather Bolwork compiled 39 assists, 11 digs and three kills for the Lady Braves. Freshman Mariissa Baker set a new Lady Braves season-high and personal career-high with 33 digs.

Lander posted 61 kills to UNCP’s 42, but UNCP held a 7-4 advantage in service aces and a 16-2.5 edge in blocks.

The Lady Braves were half a block shy of tying their best total of the season, but posted a dismal .302 hitting percentage in the match.

With the victory, the Lady Beacons improved to 6-6 overall and 1-4 in conference play.

NUMCP’s front row Lilian Henson (left) and Delina Beavers (right) try to plate a kill against Gannon on Oct. 7.

NUMCP’s front row Lilian Henson (left) and Delina Beavers (right) try to plate a kill against Gannon on Oct. 7.