Men’s, women’s soccer open in middle of pack

By Matt Smith

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Dec. 7, 2008

The UNCP men’s soccer season is 2008 PBC Conference champion. The Lady Braves will start off the season 8-9-1 last season. Black and Gold men’s head coach Mike Schaeffer believes that the ranking will help provide his players some added motivation as the season opens.

“Motivation as the season opens, I don’t put much stock in our level to have much validity, particularly when we have just added two new teams to the conference in Montevallo and Flagler and both could be very good.”

Two sophomores headline the Braves’ team this season, as all-conference goal keeper Horatio Bynes and forward Carlos Cipriano return in 2009. Bynes started 12 games for the Black and Gold last year and finished with a .750 save percentage while navigating the Braves to four wins. The sophomore also registered two shutouts in his 13 total games. The Braves will lose their top scorer from 2009 in NCAA Division II National Championship Tournament. The Lady Braves announced that the Lady Braves will start off ranked No. 21 in the NCAA Division II National Championship Tournament. The Lady Braves were ranked as high as sixth last year in the Coaches Poll, and along with the men, return six starters in 2009.

This year it has been announced that the Lady Braves will start off ranked No. 21 in the National Soccer Coaches Association of America’s preseason poll, the first time the UNCP women’s soccer team has earned a preseason nomination.

Among the returners for the Lady Braves this season is 2008 PBC Freshman of the Year Britney Joiner who had 11 goals and four assists last season. Joiner was the only Lady Braves named to the Preseason All-Conference Team, as the sophomore joined 10 others across the conference on the preseason honor list.

The Lady Braves had 73 votes in the preseason poll and Columbus State led all teams with 100 total votes and 10 first place votes.

**Soccer News Update from UNCP Men’s Soccer Team**

The UNCP men’s soccer team started their season off on Aug. 27 as they traveled to Coker College, but came away disappointed, falling by a score of 2-1.

Senior forward Rondell Honora had one shot on goal for the game; a shot that found the back of the net for the Braves lone goal. Senior Diego Castillo recorded the only two other shots that the Braves would tally in the game. 

“We just didn’t do a whole lot right tonight,” said head coach Mike Schaeffer. “We had a lot of possession and could not do anything with it.

“We probably put more balls out of bounds than we did in the field of play. If you look at the shot total, they had almost no shots and we had less. It was a very disappoint- ing way to start the sea- son.”

Coker’s Eric Stiefel tallied both of Coker’s goals, in the 22nd and 54th minutes of action. The game was marred by penalties, as the two teams combined for 29 total fouls, including 5 yellow cards and a red card.

Coker played the game’s final 56 minutes a man down, due in part from the combination of Marc Menjou’s yellow card at the 33:51 mark, followed by Jason McCann’s red card with the clock still stopped.

The victory marked the first time in the 17-game series that Coker recorded consecutive vic- tories over the Braves in men’s soccer.

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