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THE PARTHENON

Marshall University's Student Newspaper
Monday, March 8, 2010

marshallparthenon.com



CONFERENCE USA TOURNAMENTS PREVIEW

**SPRING SPORTS
EDITION 2010,**

SEE
PAGE
FIVE!

HERD RANKED NO. 4 IN C-USA TOURNAMENT

Herd has hard road to conference title, may face defending champions

BY KYLE HOBSTETTER
THE PARTHENON

TULSA Okla. — With a win over SMU Saturday, Marshall University's men's basketball team has posted its highest win total since the 1987-88 season. More importantly, it has a bye in the first round of the Conference USA Tournament.

It is the first time since joining C-USA in 2005 that the team has earned a bye in the tournament.

The Herd knows it has to take the chance it was given and use that extra day off to prepare.

"It's going to be tough," said senior guard Chris Lutz. "There are a lot of good teams, and the last half of the league has played really good. We have to grind it out. That's why getting that bye is really important."

What is also important is that the Herd has extra time to scout its opponent for Thursday. Marshall will take on the winner of No. 12 seed Rice against No. 5 seed Tulsa.

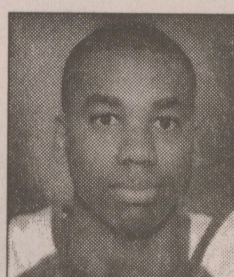
The Herd has a win over both teams, but as assistant coach Shawn Finney said about the tournament, any team has a chance.

"The tournament is going to be wide open," Finney said. "There are a lot of good teams that can put a good streak together. It's going to be exciting."

It is unlikely that Rice will beat Tulsa, as Rice has one win in conference play. The Herd easily disposed of Rice in Houston on Feb. 24, 77-54.

As for Tulsa, the Herd is at a disadvantage. The Golden Hurricane is the host team in this year's tournament. While Marshall defeated Tulsa at home on Feb. 17, 64-58, the Herd fell at Tulsa on Feb. 3, 73-69.

If the teams were to meet again, it might favor the Golden Hurricane to have the game at home.



HASSAN WHITESIDE
Freshman center

But the Herd has an advantage going into the game as Marshall has won eight of its last nine games.

Rice is on a seven-game losing streak, and Tulsa has lost six of its last nine. But whoever faces Marshall in the second round will have to deal with a high scoring Herd team.

As for the rest of the tournament, the Herd has to pull off wins against the top tier teams in the league.

Marshall can't seem to pull off wins against UTEP, UAB or Memphis, the other three teams getting byes, though the Herd has come close.

After the loss to UTEP, head coach Donnie Jones said his team is only just a few plays away from getting big wins.

"You have to make plays, and you have to get stops when you win those games," Jones said after the game. "But that's what happens when you play a really good basketball team, there is not room for error."

Although those upper echelon teams have yet to lose to the Herd, Marshall has impressed a lot of coaches in the league.

C-USA regular season champion UTEP's head coach Tony Barbee said after his team's game against the Herd, that Marshall could do something in March.

"Marshall has one of, if not the most, talented teams in the league," Barbee said. "The postseason starts out a new season. It gives everyone a new life."

When Memphis came to Huntington on Jan. 27, the Tigers escaped the Cam Henderson Center with a 75-72 win.

Tigers' head coach Josh Pastner said his team was lucky to get out of West Virginia with a win.

"We were very fortunate to get this win," Pastner said. "It was tough, but we went on the road in a tough environment and won. This is a very good win for us."

After the Memphis game, Jones said something he should repeat to his team before the start of the tournament: You have to take the next step.

"We've been right there at every game," Jones said. "But that's not good enough. You got to be able to win those close games and to take that next step. We just got to continue to work. And I know they're hurting, but they're going to be there at the end."

For Marshall to be there at the end, it has to depend on the twin towers down low. On the offensive end, it will look to leading scorer Tyler Wilkerson, who averages 13.7 points per game.

Wilkerson also brings senior leadership to the team, but he has to stay in the game and out of foul trouble.

On the defensive end of the court, Marshall has the national leader in blocks in Hassan Whiteside. The 7-foot center averages 5.5 blocks per game, but also 13.5 points and 9.2 rebounds per game.

Many think Whiteside will be a NBA draft pick one day, and he could add to his draft stock by leading the Herd to the NCAA Tournament.

The Herd has a chance to make the NCAA Tournament for the first time since the 1984-85 season. And for the Herd, it's all about the postseason.

Some think that it's already meant to happen, especially when you ask them what is the most memorable moment of the season.

"When we win the Conference," said senior guard Darryl Merthie when asked what a memorable moment would be.

The Herd starts its journey toward a storybook ending at 6:30 p.m. Thursday when it faces the winner of Tulsa vs. Rice.

Kyle Hobstetter can be contacted at hobstetter@marshall.edu.

Many storylines make up 2010 conference tournament

BY KYLE HOBSTETTER
THE PARTHENON

TULSA, Okla. — Over the past five years, this incarnation has been dominated by Memphis. The Tigers have been C-USA champions every year, and the tournament has been hosted in the Bluff City.

But this year, it seems different.

Not only is Memphis no longer the top team going into the tournament, but the tournament has found a new location.

The BOK Center in Tulsa, Okla., will host C-USA's 12 teams as each fight for a place in the NCAA Tournament.

UTEP heads into the tournament as the No. 1 seed, but head coach Tony Barbee knows it will take a lot to win the tournament this year.

"When you got teams like Marshall and UAB and Tulsa, you can never be comfortable in this league," Barbee said. "Once you get to the conference tournament, as good as the league is and with as much parity as we have, this could be one of the most exciting conference tournaments that we've had in a long time."

There are many different storylines that add to the excitement, and it seems this year any team can make the finals.

Are the Tigers Tamed?

Since 2005 the Memphis Tigers have won the C-USA Tournament and gone deep in the Big Dance, having been national runner-up in 2007-08.

But before this season began, John Calipari resigned to take over Kentucky and Josh Pastner took over the Tigers.

The Tigers started the season slow but came back into contention for an at-large bid and could cause trouble for others this week.

Memphis stands at the second seed with a 23-8 record and are 13-3 in conference play. Pastner's team of juniors and seniors is used to winning.

The shining star is a sophomore transfer from Duke University, Elliot Williams. Williams averages 18.8 points per game, is garnering attention for C-USA Player of the Year.

As Pastner leads this team into the 2010 tournament, many are seeing that winning the tournament is the team's only shot to go dancing. Memphis can make the run, but will other teams lie down to the former big bully of the conference?

We will find out Thursday as Memphis will face the winner of Wednesday's Houston/ECU game.

Who can surprise this week?

While its record might not show it, Houston can be dangerous when the tournament tips-off Wednesday.

If the Cougars can find the stroke from the field, it can beat anybody. Houston has defeated Memphis, UTEP and Marshall this season.

But when it can't find the basket, Houston can't buy a win. Houston has lost to Louisiana Tech, UT-San Antonio and conference bottom feeder Tulane.

The team's fortunes seem to hinge on star guard Aubrey Coleman. The Player of the Year candidate leads the nation in scoring with 25.6 points per game and also contributes 7.5 rebounds per game.

If Houston can click in the tournament, the entire field of teams needs to be on the lookout for the Cougars.

Houston plays East Carolina in the first game of the tournament at noon Wednesday.

Can UAB finish strong?

In the early part of the season, it looked like C-USA would be a one-bid team for the NCAA Tournament. Many experts said that one team would be UAB.

But as the season wore on, the Blazers fell too many times. Many are questioning the team's bid credentials.

A quality win over Butler still stands, but a win over Cincinnati doesn't have as much quality as it did in December. As the season went on, the Blazers we're unable to beat other top teams in the conference.

With losses to Memphis, UTEP and Marshall, the Blazers seem to be outside the Big Dance right now.

Head coach Mike Davis has to lead UAB to the C-USA Championship to be sure they will be invited to the Big Dance next week.

UAB's record stands at 23-7 and 11-4 in the C-USA. The Blazers come into the tournament as a No. 3 seed and must rely on star guard Elijah Millsap to be successful.

The 6-foot-6 junior averages 16.1 points per game and also leads the C-USA in rebounds. If Millsap can take over a game as he has previous in times this season, UAB can make a run in both the C-USA Tournament and the NCAA Tournament.

UAB will play Thursday against the winner of the Southern Miss/Tulane game.

Can the hometown team pull it off?

With a new home it may be the first time in five years the host team of the tournament might not walk away with the trophy.

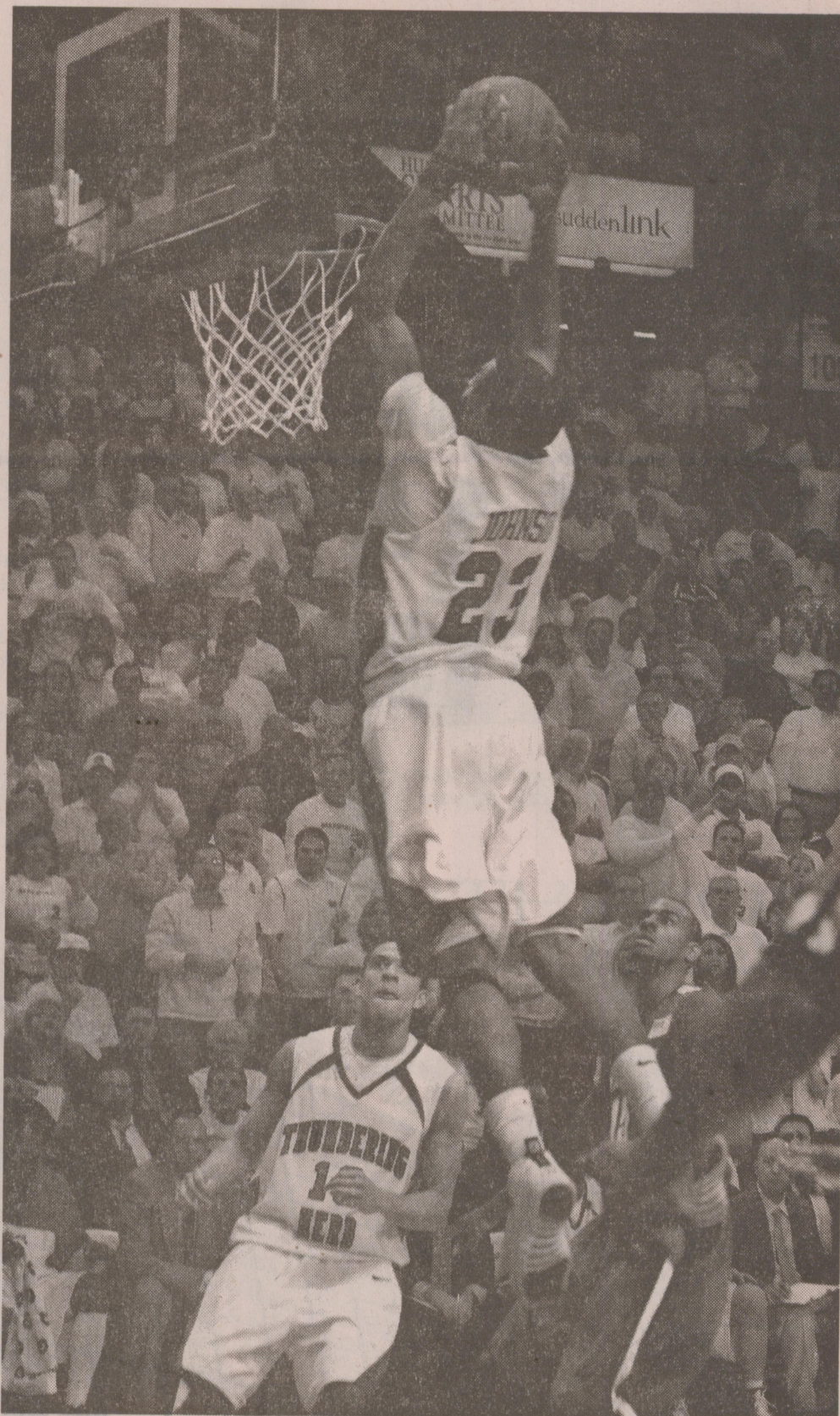
Many experts picked Tulsa to win the conference at the beginning of the year. They even had Preseason Player of the Year in center Jerome Jordan.

The Golden Hurricane could not pick up any big wins. They only have one win against the top four C-USA teams. Then it lost to Memphis twice, Marshall once and UTEP twice. If Tulsa wants to win in front of its hometown crowd, it has to learn how to win the big game.

Head coach Doug Wojcik is going to have to lean on the 7-foot Jordan and one of the best guards in the country, the team's leading scorer Ben Uzoh, who averages 15.6 points per game.

The men's tournament will be at the BOK Center in Tulsa, Okla., from March 10-13 and can be seen on CBS College Sports with the Championship Game on CBS.

Kyle Hobstetter can be contacted at hobstetter@marshall.edu.



Sophomore guard Shaquille Johnson dunks against Memphis when the Tigers visited the Cam Henderson Center on Jan. 27. The Tigers have won the Conference USA Championships for five consecutive years. However, they no longer have the home-court advantage.

C-USA TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

Wed., March 10

- (7) Houston vs. (10) East Carolina ... noon
- (6) Southern Miss vs. (11) Tulane ... 2:30 p.m.
- (5) Tulsa vs. (12) Rice ... 6 p.m.
- (8) SMU vs. (9) UCF ... 8:30 p.m.

Thurs., March 11

- (2) Memphis vs. winner of Houston/ECU ... noon
- (3) UAB vs. winner of So. Miss/Tulane ... 2:30 p.m.
- (4) Marshall vs. winner of Tulsa/Rice ... 6:30 p.m.
- (1) UTEP vs. winner of SMU/UCF ... 9 p.m.

Fri., March 12

- *Semifinal No. 1 ... 3 p.m.
- *Semifinal No. 2 ... 5:30 p.m.

Sat., March 13

Championship ... 10:35 a.m.

**highest remaining seed entering the semifinals will play at 3 p.m.*

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Marshall women prep to face defending champs

BY ANDREW RAMSPACHER
THE PARTHENON

TULSA, Okla. — Everywhere Marshall went, it heard the chant.

"UC ... UC ... UCF," jingled the Knights' players at the team hotel.

"UC ... UC ... UCF," chimed the Knights' band at Fogelman Arena.

"UC ... UC ... UCF," shouted the Knights' fans at a local restaurant.

At the 2009 Conference USA Tournament, the UCF women's basketball team took over New Orleans. From its support in the stands to its play on the court.

And now the defending C-USA champs are back. Different venue, same tournament, same team.

Marshall will get the conference's first crack at dethroning the Knights at 1 p.m. ET today at the Donald W. Reynolds Center.

"You really don't know what you're going to get out of them because they really didn't have the season everyone expected them to have," said Thundering Herd junior forward Tynikki Crook said of eighth-seeded UCF. "So you don't know if it's going to break out in the tournament and we're hoping that it doesn't."

Crook's hope is twofold. No. 1, the last thing ninth-seeded Marshall needs to face is a team clicking on all cylinders. After all, the Herd (14-15, 6-10 C-USA) has lost seven of its last eight games.

But No. 2, UCF may be one of the most dangerous eight seeds in any conference tournament in the country.

The Knights, who lost just one player from last year's championship squad, seemed like the consensus pick to repeat as queens of the conference at the beginning of this season.

They had Emma Cannon, the reigning C-USA Tournament Most Valuable Player, to provide a scoring punch in the post and Joi Williams, the reigning C-USA Coach of the Year, to provide valuable direction on the sideline.

But things haven't gone to plan.

UCF (10-15, 7-9 C-USA) lost 10 of its first 13 games, and if it weren't for a late-season surge, may have been playing in this tournament as a No. 11 or 12-seed.

"I think everyone changes as the season goes along," said Marshall coach Royce Chadwick of the Knights' inconsistency since last March. "It's a situation where you can be hot at the end of the year and go through the summer and things can change."

"You can have an injury-filled offseason and that can make a difference in your preparations for the fall."

Marshall and UCF have played each other twice this season. The Herd with Crook, its leading scorer and rebounder, beat the Knights 74-60 on Jan. 8 at the Cam Henderson Center. The Herd without Crook, who missed



Marshall vs. UCF

1 p.m. ET Today
Donald W. Reynolds Center
Radio: WMUL 88.1 FM
TV: None.

seven games because of a broken hand, fell to the Knights 56-47 in Orlando on Feb. 4.

Today, it will be with Crook.

"We're a better basketball team when we have all our people," Chadwick said. "We've played games without Veronica Ruiz and we weren't quite

as good. We've played games with Chantelle Handy not being 100 percent and we're not quite as good."

"So we're a better basketball team when we have our mainstays healthy. Fortunately for us right now, Ty's hand is bothering her some but she gets better every day."

The Herd went 2-5 without Crook, but has only won one of five games since she returned to the lineup Feb. 13 against UTEP.

She said she still feels some pain in her right hand. "I'm at about 88 percent," she said.

It may take a 110 percent effort for Crook to conquer today's matchup with Cannon.

The Preseason C-USA Player of the Year is averaging 11 points and 10 rebounds a game.

"She's really good," Crook said. "She's very physical and relentless on rebounds. She's somebody you have to play 40 minutes against because she's going to play 40 minutes."

"I have a lot of respect for her, but I just want to prove what I can do against players like that."

In their four head-to-head matchups, dating back to Jan. 31, 2008, Cannon has got the best of Crook, averaging 14 points and 10 boards against her Marshall counterpart.

Crook has just been held to an average of just nine points and six boards in those games.

"Any time you go across the board in Conference USA, there's some very intriguing matchups and fortunately, or unfortunately, they all involve Tynikki Crook for Marshall because she's our go-to girl," Chadwick said.

"And Emma Cannon's a great basketball player. She's very strong, very agile, very tenacious, tremendous rebounder, great defender. Offensively, she's extremely powerful and can explode at any moment."

"She has all the tools to be a next-level player — as does Ty. It's their strength versus our strength when those two players are going head-to-head."

First-seeded Tulane awaits the winner of Marshall-UCF. That quarterfinal matchup will tip off at 1 p.m. ET Tuesday.

Andrew Rampsbacher can be contacted at ramsbacher@marshall.edu.



Marshall women's head coach Royce Chadwick hopes Tynikki Crook will matchup well against a dangerous eight-seed, UCF.

Handy, Crook hope to relive March Moments

BY ANDREW RAMSPACHER
THE PARTHENON

TULSA, Okla. — The clock was ticking on Marshall's season and the Herd's Tania Walters was waiting patiently for the play to develop.

With 12 seconds left, it wasn't open yet so she kept dribbling, keeping an eye on the left corner of the floor.

Eleven seconds ... 10 seconds ... nine seconds ...

Walters still had the ball. The game was still hanging in the ballots.

Eight seconds ... seven seconds ... six seconds ...

Finally, she came open. Chantelle Handy, Walters' target, flashed to the corner, some 17-feet from the basket.

Five seconds ...

Walters whipped the pass. Handy caught it and took the shot.

Four seconds ...

Swish.

"Tynikki (Crook) had screened me open. If it wasn't for her, I wouldn't be open," Handy said. "They definitely made a mistake on defense. They switched and they shouldn't have."

"So I just kind of stepped up and hit the shot."

Nearly a year to the day, Handy is back on the stage that sent her into Marshall women's basketball lore.

She's back at the Conference USA Tournament.

Handy's winning jumper in last year's C-USA quarterfinal game against UTEP not only got Marshall into the semifinals for a second consecutive season, it gave the Durham, England, native the moment of her life.

"It's a shot you can't forget," Handy said.

Marshall hasn't had too many of those moments this season.

In fact, it was on the unfortunate end of a buzzer-beater by UAB's

Amber Jones on Feb. 27, giving the Herd loss No. 4 on a current five-game losing streak.

It goes without saying that come 1 p.m. ET today, Marshall could use a little of that postseason magic that it's been able to cook up the last two years.

It really needs it.

"I think there are two things you have to look at," said Herd head coach Royce Chadwick. "Yeah, No. 1, we've been there and have gotten the job done, but what happens is you begin to look ahead and start thinking about your future. Your future is now."

"Your future is this instant, this moment, this space in your career. If you don't take care of this moment there is no tomorrow."

Crook may not be peeking ahead at tomorrow, but it may be wise of her to reflect back on yesterday for a confidence boost before this year's tournament tips off.

Simply stated, Crook has owned this stage.

The junior has played in six career C-USA Tournament games. She's recorded a double-double in all of them.

"It's live or die," Crook said of her March motivation. "You live to get to another day of being out there."

"It's just live or die."

For the most part, Crook's play has kept the Herd alive in the last two tournaments.

While Handy and Kizzy Hart, a former Marshall player who nailed a game-winner in the Herd's quarterfinal win in 2008, have gotten the glory, it's been Crook who's provided Marshall's guts.

Sure, Handy hit the game's most important shot in last year's thriller in New Orleans, but the Herd may have not been in that position had Crook not hit a tough leaner in the lane some 40 seconds earlier to give Marshall a two-point lead.

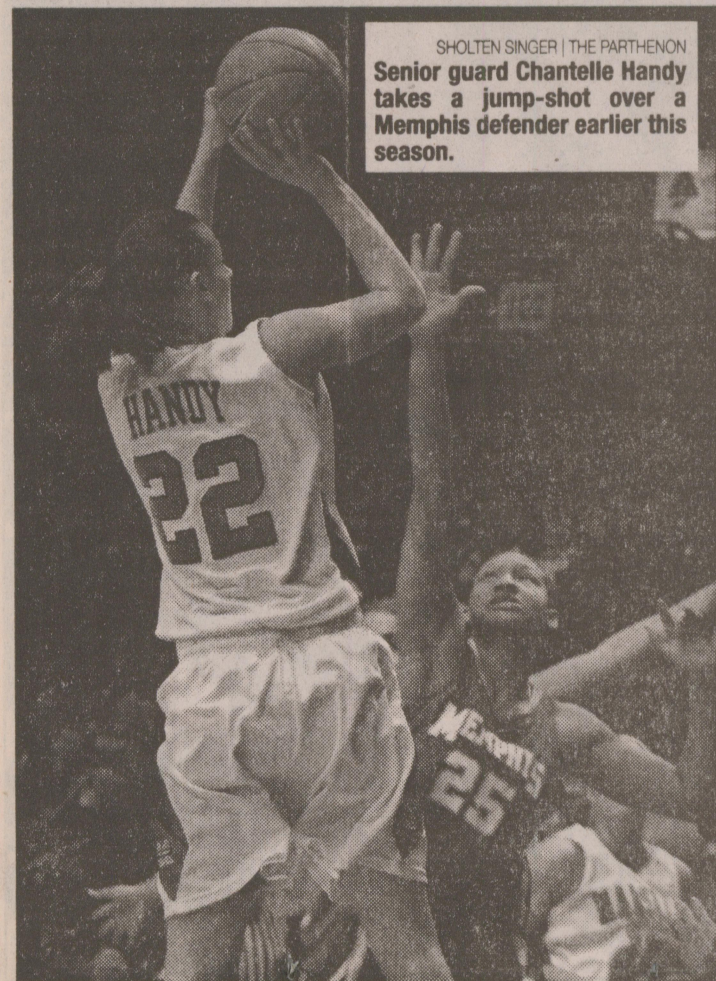
And a year earlier, prior to Hart's heroics, it was Crook who hit two free throws at the end of regulation to push the Herd's tilt with UAB to overtime.

"March is an exciting month," Crook said. "There is definitely a different feel and intensity to the game when it comes to college basketball."

"In high school, the only basketball I watched was in March. I really didn't watch the regular season."

"(In March), all I saw was how hard the players were going and I try to model myself after that."

Andrew Rampsbacher can be contacted at ramsbacher@marshall.edu.



SHOLTEN SINGER | THE PARTHENON
Senior guard Chantelle Handy takes a jump-shot over a Memphis defender earlier this season.



SHOLTEN SINGER | THE PARTHENON
Junior forward Tynikki Crook takes a jump-shot over a fallen ECU defender.

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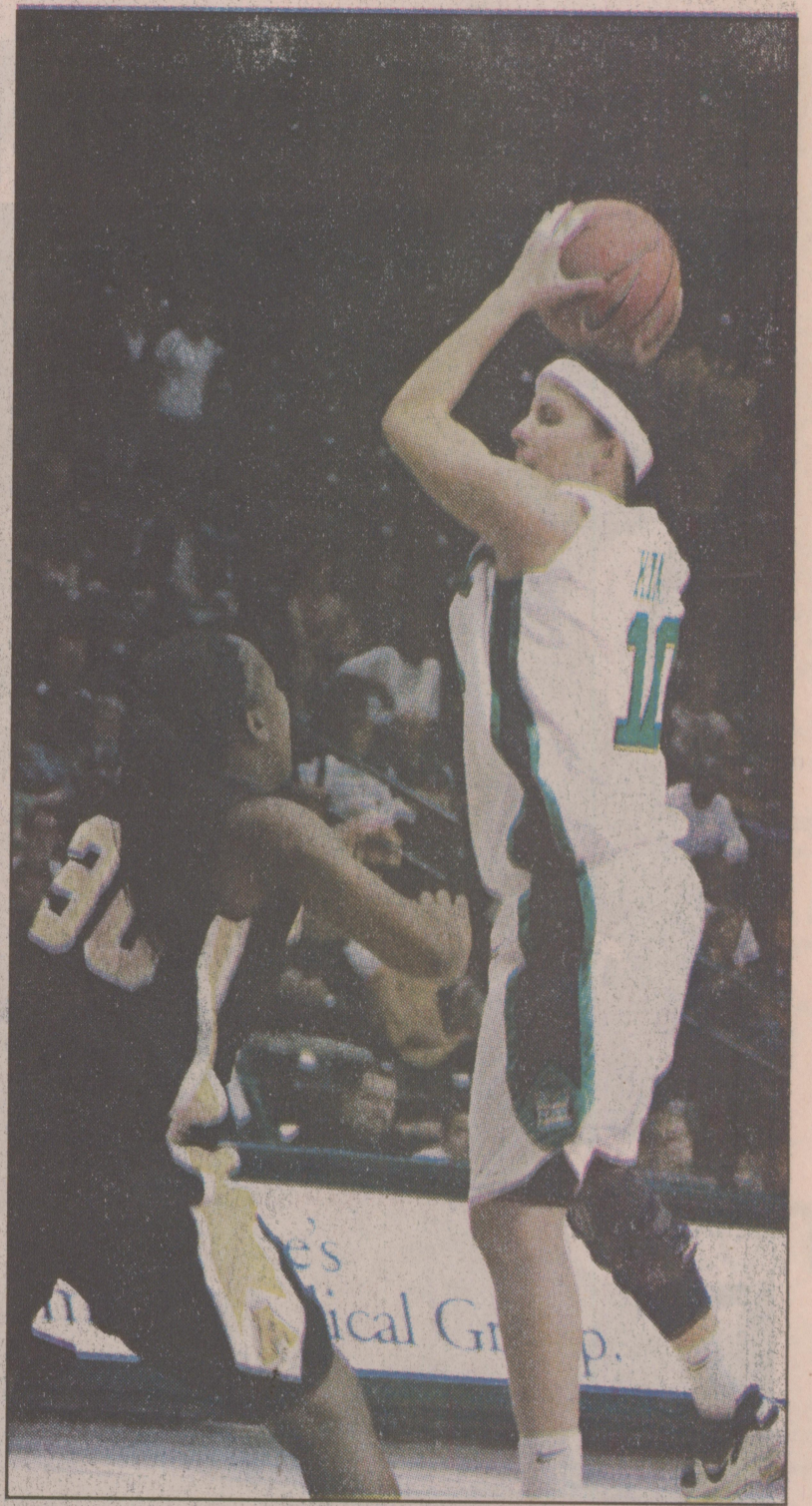
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Marshall University men's basketball team had a heck of a season. Match ups included UAB, Memphis, WVU, ECU, Tulsa, UCF and UTEP. It's record so far is 23-8 overall and 11-5 in C-USA. The team will play against Tulsa in the Conference USA Tournament on Thursday. The Marshall women's basketball team has also

seen some tough competitors in Tulane, Houston, SMU, Memphis and ECU. The team's record so far is 14-15 overall and 6-10 C-USA. The women will compete in the Conference USA Tournament against UCF at 1 p.m. today.

FILE PHOTOS

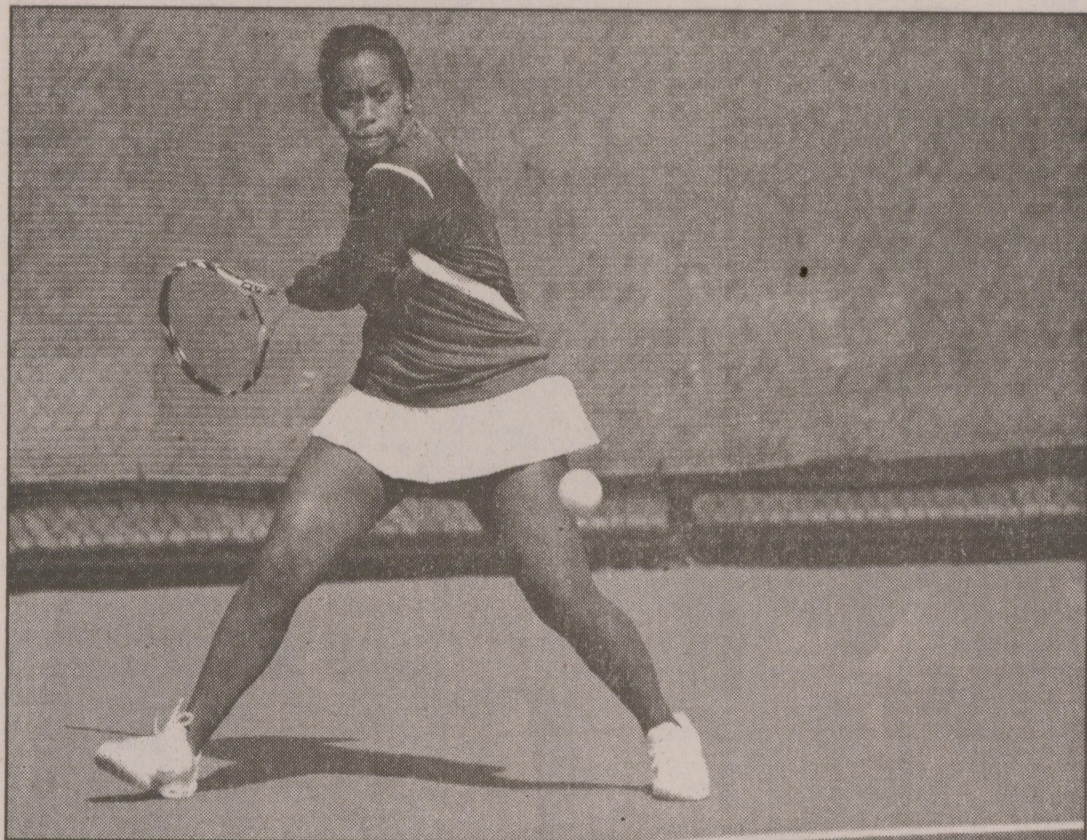


Swing into spring



INSIDE: Golf, Tennis ... page 6
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Women's tennis standout has 10-1 record



Deanna Bailey, senior tennis player for Marshall has a tennis record of 10-1. She hopes to lead her team into the conference championship.

BY ANDREA POLING
THE PARTHENON

Marshall University senior tennis player Deanna Bailey continues to impress the tennis world with an undefeated singles record of 10-1.

The Georgia native joined Marshall's tennis team last year after transferring from Elon University in North Carolina.

"I just became unhappy with sports and school," Bailey said. "It was my time to leave."

Bailey has earned several outstanding tennis awards during her college career.

According to Herdzone, Bailey became the first Elon women's tennis athlete to log First Team All-Southern Conference accolades and was named Elon's Most Valuable Player.

Since joining Marshall's team, Bailey has won the Flight B title at the Hokie Invitational and has captured the Flight B doubles title with teammate Kara Kucin.

As far as records go, in her first season at Marshall, Bailey posted a 6-5 singles and 7-4 doubles records. In spring 2009, she went 9-10 in singles and 11-10 in doubles. Fall 2009, she had 9-3 in singles and 10-3 in doubles.

"A lot of running and fitness has helped me to be successful," Bailey said. "I think maturing in tennis has allowed me to make smarter shots."

Bailey said the biggest influence on her tennis career is her sister, Josefina Bailey.

"My sister used to play tennis," Bailey said. "She is the reason I got started with tennis. My parents got her into tennis, and I began doing it because she was doing it."

Bailey said one of her biggest challenges is keeping her emotions under control while on the court.

"I have been a lot better, but I do get very emotional," Bailey said. "You have to keep your cool to make sure your opponent doesn't see you sweat."

Bailey said the team's accomplishments have motivated them to continue winning matches.

"We feel like we are the underdogs at every match," Bailey said. "I don't think too many people believed we could have a good season this year. We didn't get invited back to certain tournaments and that was definitely a motivation for us."

Bailey's goals for the rest of the season are to win the conference championship and to make it into the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

"With our ranking right now, we can't make it into NCAA, but we just need to continue to win matches," Bailey said.

She said she isn't sure what her plans are after her tennis career, but she would like to concentrate on school.

"I might teach tennis, but I kind of just want to focus on school when I am done," Bailey said.

Andrea Poling can be contacted at poling26@marshall.edu.

First match of tennis season lost to No. 44 Princeton

By Patrick Miller
THE PARTHENON

The No. 28 Marshall women's tennis team fell to No. 44 Princeton, losing their first game of the season 5-2.

During the course of the loss, previously undefeated Deanna Bailey lost her singles match, falling 6-3, 6-3 to Ashley Blakely.

The game turned south early as Marshall's doubles team of Michaela Kissell and Dominika Zapranza were shut out 8-0 by Princeton's doubles team, Taylor Marable and Hilary Bartlett. Kara Kucin and Isabell Raich lost a close doubles match against

Rachel Sainotz and Blakely, 9-8, which secured Princeton's doubles point.

Deanna Bailey and Thaddea Lock crushed Princeton's third doubles team, Sarah Hoffman and Melissa Sainotz 8-5, although this did not affect the points total.

No. 33 ranked Kissell evened the score with a 6-1, 6-2 victory over No. 70 Bartlett. Princeton won the next four singles matches to pull away from Marshall for good.

The Herd's Catherine Keller was able to take Marable to an overtime set but fell 6-3 in the final set. Raich lost a pair of close matches to Sainotz 7-6, 7-6, and Zapranza fell to Sainotz 6-2, 7-6.

In the sixth set, Kristina Koprcina defeated Hoffman 6-3, 6-3 to give Marshall its second point.

"Princeton played all the bigger points well today," said head coach John Mercer. "They were more consistent all day, but hopefully we can bounce back and get a win on Monday against Virginia."

This was Marshall's first loss after beginning the season on an eleven game winning streak. Princeton won its third straight match over a ranked opponent. Marshall faces Virginia at 2 p.m. Monday at the Huntington Tennis Club.

Patrick Miller can be contacted at miller490@marshall.edu.



Larie Lynch, senior golfer, said the break between the spring and fall makes it harder to get back into the game and doing well.

Women's golf is 13th at invitational

BY ERIN SHAVER
THE PARTHENON

The Marshall University women's golf team will rely on senior leadership and hard work to make it to the Conference USA Tournament in April.

The team finished 13th out of 16 teams last week at the USA Lady Jaguar Invitational in Mobile, Ala., their first tournament in four months.

Senior Andrea Grier shot the best of the team with scores of 77, 75 and 79 on her three rounds.

"I just got some lucky bounces," Grier said. "I was hitting it really awful on the practice round, but I had an idea about where the ball was going. It was going to the left so on the first few holes I just played it to the right to get it onto the fairways."

Senior Larie Lynch shot in the low-to-mid 80s on all three days and said the break between fall and spring makes practice complicated.

"I didn't get to practice as much, and my short game was really bad," Lynch said. "We can't practice with snow on the ground, and that's what affected my game. I didn't have any confidence."

Lynch said practicing outside golf courses is less effective.

"When you go into your spring season, there's this gap where you can't play on courses and have to practice on mats," Lynch said. "When you hit off mats, you can't see where your ball's going and can have this false impression of how you're really hitting."

Lynch said the team has better talent than last year's team, which finished last at the conference tournament, but the team needs to practice at every opportunity to be ready for this year's conference tournament.

"Andrea did really well last week, but the rest of us just weren't ready," Lynch said. "People just need to try their hardest and put in their all."

Grier said she shot a 78-average per round last fall, her best average in five years and she hopes to continue to improve throughout the season.

"I just want to finish in a good standing for myself and finish with a better stroke average than in the fall or just a good stroke average for myself," Grier said.

Lynch, who also averaged a 78 per round in the fall, said she wants to shoot well each round but thinks it is more important to play her hardest each round.

"In the past I've had goals of reaching certain scores, but this year my goal is to practice my hardest and focus every shot," Lynch said.

Grier said after this season, she plans to continue practicing and playing golf to see where it takes her as she finishes graduate school next year at Marshall.

Lynch said golf is going to become purely recreational after this season, and she plans to attend law school.

"Golf is going to become strictly fun after college," Lynch said. "I'll probably take up tennis or some other sport or, I guess, snowboarding or skiing when it's cold."

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Men's golf opens season at USF Invitational

HERDZONE.COM

HUNTINGTON, W.Va.—The Marshall University men's golf team opened the spring portion of the 2009-10 season this weekend at the USF Invitational. Play began Friday at the Lake Jovita Golf and Country Club in Dade City, Fla. Round two was Saturday with the final 18 holes Sunday.

The Herd is one of 23 teams in the field. Competitors are Arkansas State University, Austin Peay State University, Campbell University, University of Cincinnati, Columbus State University, DePaul University, Eastern Michigan University, Florida Atlantic University, Florida Southern University, Jacksonville State University, University of Louisville, Marquette University, Marshall University, Middle Tennessee State University, Missouri State University, University of Nebraska, University of North Florida, University of Rhode Island, University of South Alabama, Troy University, University of Southern Florida, Villanova University, and Xavier University. Eight of the teams (North Florida-28; Middle Tennessee-31;

Louisville-60; Eastern Michigan-66; South Alabama-85; Nebraska-86; Campbell-95; and Florida Atlantic-97) are ranked in the Golfweek Top 100.

The Marshall lineup includes Nathan Kerns, freshman from Ironton, Ohio, Bennett Boyer, sophomore from Millersburg, Pa., Bosten Miller, sophomore from Charleston, W.Va., Aaron Boggs, red shirt freshman from Madison, W.Va., and Carson Schambach, sophomore from Glen Dale, W.Va.

The Marshall men's golf team completed day one of the USF Invitational on Friday afternoon as Kerns led Marshall with an opening round score of 75.

Kerns shot a three-over-par round to tie for 61st place overall for the Thundering Herd.

Miller tied for 88th on day one with a five-over-par round of 77 and Schambach finished three strokes behind Miller placing 104th.

Boggs and Boyer rounded off the team with an 83 and 86, respectively.

The 2009 tournament runner-up, Florida Southern College, along with Middle

Tennessee State and Campbell University took the early lead as they each shot a 288 through round one. But it was the University of North Florida that shined during round two and finished day one in the lead with a 286 in the opening round.

Marshall's Miller and Boggs combined for a 10-stroke improvement on day two of the USF Invitational.

The Thundering Herd was led in round two by Miller, who shot a team-low 73 on day two. Miller posted a 77 in day one and joined Kerns at six-over-par at the conclusion of day two.

Boggs improved six strokes from round one as he went five-over-par on Saturday and headed into the third and final round with a score of 160 (83-77).

Schambach dropped one stroke to move to 17-over-par through two rounds of play. Marshall stands in 23rd place, six strokes behind the 22nd Austin Peay State.

Florida Southern College climbed one spot to first place at seven-under-par, with Middle Tennessee State five strokes behind with one round to go.

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**Check out the state of Marshall's sports
teams through the rest of the season play**

No training facility a hurdle for Track and Field

BY KELSEY THOMAS
THE PARTHENON

The Marshall University women's Track and Field team does not have a track facility to call its own.

Since 2005, the team has been practicing in a hallway on the second floor of the Cam Henderson Center, said Polly Hardy, the interim assistant coach of the women's track team. Before 2005, the team had a full-size, 400-meter track that was demolished to make room for the First Year Residence Halls and Marshall Recreation Center.

The loss of the track was very hard for the team, Hardy said. It's difficult for the team to gain support when it doesn't have any home meets.

"Change and renovation is always good, but the fact that they did not replace the track is a little heartbreaking," Hardy said. "We support everything here at Marshall. You know, our girls go to basketball games, our girls go to football games, our girls go to any and every athletic event possible, but for other athletes to support our track girls, that availability is just not there."

The university has recently supplied a large rubber mat for the team, specifically sprinters, jumpers and hurdlers, to practice on. Hardy said the mat has been very helpful because it keeps the team from practicing on the hard cement floor as it had done in the past.

The team really appreciates the mat but is a little disappointed that it took so long for the university to supply it, said Kristin Smith, member of the women's track and field team who participates in sprints and jumps.

"We can only ask so many times, and after that we just have to get over it and do what we came here to do," Smith said. "If you have the work ethic, you can do it."

Smith said it was difficult making the transition from her high school track team in Baltimore, Md., to Marshall because she went from practicing on a track every day to not having one.

Practicing in the Cam Henderson Center is

somewhat inconvenient because the team is responsible for taking out all of their own equipment and putting it back after they've finished practicing, Hardy said.

"We can't practice as hard as other teams would daily because we don't have the proper place."

Kristin Smith, member of women's track and field team

Hardy said the lack of facility sometimes negatively affects the athletes' attitudes.

"The level of confidence and the level of passion that our athletes have is sometimes very low due to the fact that they feel like the university does not care about their sport enough to provide a facility," Hardy said.

The lack of a proper facility and proper equipment also causes many injuries, Smith said.

"We can't practice as hard as other teams would daily because we don't have the proper place," she said. "If we do go hard every day, then we'll all be hurt. We have to kind of back off of training if we're inside here. At meets, we're always the team that's all bandaged up."

Both Smith and Hardy said although the team doesn't have a nice facility to call its own, the

athletes don't let it discourage them too much.

"Needless to say, we still get work done," Hardy said. "All our girls are passionate, and they love doing track, and so we put up with the have-nots."

Smith said she doesn't feel at a disadvantage to schools that have a nicer facility for training. Marshall's team can do the same things those teams with high-tech facilities can do, but they may have to work a little bit harder at it, she said.

"What you put in is what is going to come out," Smith said.

Smith said her dream track facility would consist of an indoor track because it would benefit the university as a whole.

"We could actually hold track meets and bring in more money for the university because track meets do bring in a lot of money," Smith said. "But we have to get a track first."

Hardy said there has been some preliminary discussion about building a facility for the track team in the near future.

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Marshall baseball shuts out Georgia Southern Eagles



HERDZONE.COM

STATESBORO, Ga. — Mike Mason pitched 6.2 innings of shutout work on the mound with a career-high nine strikeouts while the top five batters in the Thundering Herd lineup combined for 12 hits to lead the Marshall University baseball team past Georgia Southern University, 8-0 on Sunday afternoon at J.I. Clements Stadium.

Mason (2-0) not only had a new career-high in strikeouts, he had his career-best with 6.2 innings on the mound for the Herd, which evened its record to 5-5 on the season. The lefty tallied six of his nine strikeouts swinging and only surrendered six hits and two walks.

Tyler Gatrell threw 1.1 innings with three strikeouts and Austin Coan pitched a scoreless ninth to help preserve the first Herd shutout since the squad beat Youngstown State 4-0 on March 13.

Trent Franzago (1-1) was credited with the loss as the Eagles fell to 5-7. The right-hander worked the first 4 innings, allowing four runs on eight hits with two strikeouts.

The top five hitters in the Herd lineup combined for 12 of the team's 14 hits against the Eagles. Josh Valle and Kurt Lipton each went 3-for-5 at the plate, while Isaac Ballou, Victor Gomez and Alfredo Brito each tallied a pair of hits.

The Herd showed life in the top of the second inning when Lipton began the frame with a single to right. Brito lined a two-strike base hit to left field to put two runners on with no outs. Franzago retired Rhett Stafford on a pop up and induced a ground ball double play off the bat of Nathan Gomez

to escape the early threat from the Herd.

The Herd finally busted out in the top of the third with a two-out spurt. Ballou lined a base hit to right field and promptly stole second on the first pitch to Valle. Valle roped a line drive off the first base bag into the right field corner for a double, scoring Ballou for the first mark of the game.

In the bottom of the third, the Eagles put Mason in a jam. After the lefty struck out the first batter, the Eagles loaded the bases with consecutive singles and a walk. Mason worked his way out of the challenge by striking out cleanup hitter A.J. Wirmsberger and retiring Kevin Bowles by fly out to keep the Eagles off the scoreboard.

The Herd struggled to score in the first two games of the series, until the Herd managed a three-run breakthrough in the top of the fourth. Kris Hecktor hit two-out double down the leftfield line to plate Stafford and Nathan Gomez for the freshman's first extra base hit of his collegiate career. Hecktor would race home on a single to left field by Ballou to round out the scoring spree with the Herd up, 4-0.

Stafford hit his first homer of the season in the sixth inning against the Eagles reliever Andy Moye to extend the Herd advantage, 5-0.

In the eighth, the Herd tacked on another run to make the lead 6-0. Brito sent a base hit into left field, his second of the game. Pinch runner Justin Maynard entered and stole second and third base before running home on a sac fly from Nathan Gomez.

Victor Gomez launched a two-run hit in the top of the ninth to round out the scoring on the day, 8-0.

Victor Gomez, junior history major from Miami, Fla., had a pair of hits against the Georgia Southern Eagles during the Herd's shutout on Sunday. He hit his 31st two-run hit in the 8-0 victory. The Herd improved to 5-5 for the season.

FILE PHOTO

www.marshallparthenon.com

Herd comes up short against Eagles

HERDZONE.COM

STATESBORO, Ga. — The Marshall University baseball team held a 2-0 lead in the fifth inning, but Georgia Southern used a three-run hit in the sixth and added an insurance run in the eighth to defeat the Thundering Herd, 4-3, on Saturday at J.I. Clements Stadium.

Josh Valle and Victor Gomez each went 2-for-4 at the plate, with Gomez collecting a double. Isaac Ballou and Chris Norton each tallied RBI singles, while Eric Semeniuk scored a pair of runs as Marshall now sits at 4-5 on the season.

Georgia Southern (5-6) received two-hit games from Arthur Owens and A.J. Wirmsberger in the victory.

The Herd got on the scoreboard early against Eagles starter Matt Murray (1-0). Ballou led off the game with a walk and moved to second on an erroneous pickoff attempt. Valle laced a single to right field scoring Ballou as he easily raced home to score the first run of the game.

The Herd kept swinging the bats in the bottom of the second, adding a run on three hits in the frame. Semeniuk scored the second run for the Herd on a two-out RBI base hit from Ballou to right field.

Shane Farrell cruised through the first 5 innings on the mound for the Herd until he finally fell into trouble in the sixth. A leadoff walk to Kyle Blackburn started the frame before Wirmsberger connected for a two-run homer to left center to even the score, 2-2. The righty finished the afternoon with six strikeouts and four walks, while giving up just two earned runs on three hits.

The Eagles added another run in the sixth off reliever Arik Sikula (1-2). With runners on the corners, pinch hitter Steve Cochrane lined a single into the right-center field gap off the glove of diving centerfielder Ballou to take the one run edge.

In the bottom of the eighth, the Eagles added an insurance run which proved to be the difference in the game when Owens slapped a two-out RBI single to put the Eagles up 4-2.

The Herd wouldn't go quietly in the ninth against the Eagles closer Dexter Bobo. Semeniuk began the rally with a walk. After Bobo retired the next two batters, pinch hitter Chris Norton lined a base hit up the middle to plate Semeniuk and cut the deficit to a single run, 4-3. Bobo was able to retire the final out and earn his second save of the season for the Eagles.

Murray labored through 6.1 innings allowing eight hits but held the Herd to just two runs, only one earned, to pick up his first victory of the season.



FILE PHOTO

Shane Farrell, junior management major from Westlake, Ohio, pitched a no hitter for five innings during the Herd's loss to the Georgia State Eagles on Saturday.

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Senior pitcher Katie Murphree winds up for the pitch at the Holiday Inn-vitational on Sunday. The Herd came in second to Kent State.

SHOLTEN SINGER | THE PARTHENON

Herd takes record to 13-6 after Holiday Inn-vitational

BY HALEY THAXTON
THE PARTHENON

With the cold weather breaking, home field advantage and a couple of extra innings, the Marshall softball team placed second in the Marshall Holiday Inn-vitational Tournament.

The tournament started Friday afternoon for the Herd and ended in extra innings Sunday evening.

Marshall ended its home opening weekend winning three games and losing two, pushing the Herd's overall record to 13-6.

Head coach Shonda Stanton said she was pleased with her team's play over the weekend with the exception of a few mistakes.

"We saw some quality pitching, and we were able to compete," Stanton said. "Both Kent State and Cleveland State have great pitchers, and we were able to get hits off of both."

"We made games close with a few defensive miscues," she said. "Without the mistakes we would have had a chance to win it."

Stanton said she wants to use the warmer weather to her team's advantage.

"Now that it looks like the weather is breaking hopefully we will be able to work on defense more in practice," Stanton said. "It is hard to get as many reps as we need when we are inside."

Stanton said it was refreshing to be at home.

"It is so much more relaxing to play at home where we can be in our own beds," she said. "Being at home gives us an extra day of practice."

Stanton said the competition her team faced was

good preparation for upcoming games.

"The teams we played this weekend helped us to prepare to take on Valpo on Tuesday," Stanton said.

The other three teams participating in the tournament at Dot Hicks Field were Kent State, Cleveland State and Delaware.

Marshall's two losses on the weekend came from tournament winner Kent State. The Herd lost to Kent State 3-2 on Friday and 8-4 on Sunday.

Saturday's play brought the Herd two wins. The first came when Marshall mercy ruled Delaware 13-3 in just five innings. Marshall had a much closer second game winning 4-2 against Cleveland State.

The Herd ended the tournament facing Cleveland State for a second time during the weekend. Marshall came out with a 4-3 win in a nine-inning game that lasted almost two and half hours.

Senior pitcher Katie Murphree came in at the top of the fourth inning to help the Herd come out with a win.

"I had to be confident in myself," Murphree said. "I knew what I had to do and I had to believe that I could do it."

"In the extra innings I knew it had to go three up, three down," she said. "Then it's to batting, and our bats always come through."

Sophomore catcher Rebecca Gamby ended the game on her bat. Gamby hit a walk-off single that sent sophomore Alianna Telles from third base to home for the winning run.

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Softball clenches doubleheader

HERDZONE.COM

HUNTINGTON, W.Va.— The Marshall University softball team rolled to a 13-3 five-inning win against Delaware and edged a 4-2 victory against Cleveland State as the sun set Saturday afternoon at Dot Hicks Field.

In game one against Delaware (2-9), the Thundering Herd (12-5) posted its most electric start in a game this season with an 11-run showing in the bottom of the first. Marshall would record eight hits during the inning en route to eight different athletes crossing the plate.

Rebecca Gamby jumpstarted the Herd with a single through the right side to plate Caitlyn Jackson and Alianna Telles. Victoria Marvin then made it a 4-0 ball game with a double to right center to bring around Jessica Hughes and Melanie Stoehr.

Jasmine Valle got in on the action with a RBI single to right to score Ashley Gue. Taylor Thompson would then come home on a passed ball, unearned, to stretch a 6-0 lead. The final five runs of the inning would go unearned. Telles got her second hit of the inning with a double down the left line to bring home Valle.

Both Valle and Gamby would finish the game going 2-for-3 and two RBI. Jackson would tally a 1-for-3 clip with three RBI and two runs scored.

Jackson stepped up two batters later with a three-run hit to right center that scored Marcena Bertoldo and Telles. Stoehr followed with a back-to-back homer to cap the inning with Marshall ahead 11-0.

"I am pleased with how we came out swinging the bats in game one," said head coach Shonda Stanton. "The only thing I would have liked to see improvement on was our level of intensity and enthusiasm."

The Herd wasn't finished, as it tagged on a pair of runs in the second to extend a 13-0 lead. Valle doubled to right to send Gue across the plate and Telles hit an RBI-single to left field to plate Melissa Loesing.

Telles would finish the game 3-for-3 at the plate with two runs scored and two RBI.

The Blue Hens would break up the shutout in the top of the fourth as Michelle Grap homered to left center to score Mary Ann Magee

and Cecile Egan — putting the final mercy rule at 13-3.

Rachel Rillo snagged the win, after 2 innings and three strikeouts — moving her to 2-0 on the year. Jackson also registered 2 innings on the mound with three strikeouts, as Jessica Ferrick would close the game in the final inning and strikeout one Delaware batter.

"It was a great game in a sense that everyone had an opportunity to contribute," Stanton said. "Caitlyn, Rillo and Ferrick did a nice job for us in the circle."

Grap was the top Delaware hitter going 1-for-2, with three RBI and one run scored. Bertie Lake would take the loss after 0.1 innings of work. Amanda Stacevich and Alexa Baldasare also made appearances in the game for Delaware.

In game two, the Cleveland State Vikings (7-5) posted a run in the opening frame after Jessica Burt scored, unearned, on a Marshall error.

In the bottom of the first, Telles answered right back with a home run that went back past center field to tie the game at 1-1. The long ball is her fourth of the season.

Marshall claimed a 2-1 lead three batters later as Bertoldo ran home on a Stoehr sacrifice fly in foul territory at left field.

"I am really proud of the girls and how they responded to the challenge of creating our own dynamic," Stanton said. "We had a number of positives from two double plays, picking a runner off and getting the timely hits when we needed them. It was a total team effort and Caitlyn really stepped up big for us."

Telles continued her hot streak in the box in the second, scoring Gue on a double to right center to extend a 3-1 advantage. Telles finished the game 2-for-3 with two RBI and one run scored.

Cleveland got its second run of the game in the fourth off a Caila Ferro double that scored. The Herd closed the scoring at 4-2 in the sixth when Thompson came home in a Brianna Hope at-bat.

The Herd defense sealed the win in the top of the seventh on a pop-up double play turned by Bertoldo to Stoehr.

Jackson (3-2) garnered the win in 3.2 innings of work and three strikeouts as starter Katie Murphree came out after 3.1 innings and five strikeouts.

Amanda Macenko (6-5) took the loss for Cleveland State after going the distance and tallying five strikeouts.

Way to catch 'em



FILE PHOTO

Junior Melanie Stoehr catches for the Thundering Herd softball team. Stoehr crossed the plate for a run against Kent State on Friday.

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Marshall Falls to Kent State 3-2

HERDZONE.COM

HUNTINGTON, W.Va.— The Marshall University softball team (10-5) fell late in the game, 3-2, to the Kent State Golden Flashes on Friday.

"It was a well played game on both sides," said head coach Shonda Stanton. "We look forward to the rest of the weekend and us coming out with a little more intensity and picking up things on the offensive side."

Kent State (3-9) struck first, scoring in the third inning when Rachel Wilson came home, unearned, on a Marshall error.

The Herd then returned the favor in the fifth when freshman Ashley Gue scored on a wild pitch to even the score at 1-1. Marshall clinched the lead in the sixth after junior catcher Melanie Stoehr crossed the plate on a Kent State passed ball to put the Herd on top 2-1.

Kent State's Heather Duhon answered in the top of the seventh with a two-run round tripper to edge a 3-2 Golden Flash advantage — Holly Finchum also scored on the play.

Marshall was unable to convert runs in the bottom of the seventh as the Herd fell 3-2.

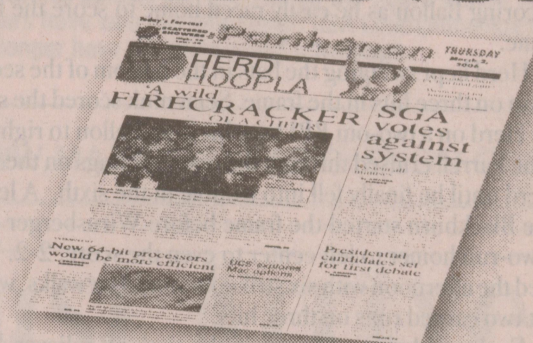
Senior Katie Murphree garnered the loss for Marshall after eight strikeouts in 6.2 innings of work.

"Going into the seventh, up 2-1, Katie pitched a great game," Stanton said. "In the seventh we have to close the door. We cannot afford to have that walk there. Offensively on the flip side we had runners in scoring position, and we were not able to get the timely hit."

Kent State's Kylie Reynolds (2-8) notched the win after going the distance with seven strikeouts. Top hitter for Kent State was Mary Holt, who went 2-for-3 at the plate.

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