

Men's lacrosse hits Fisher

CONTRIBUTING WRITER
SHARON ALLEN

St. John Fisher's new lacrosse coach, Craig Camp, has low expectations but lots of enthusiasm for his young team.

"There's a lot of promise for us although no one expects much of us," said Camp. "Our motto is 'getting better'."

Camp, 31, spoke to a class of about 30 St. John Fisher students about his goals and hopes for his team. This is the first year the college will have a men's lacrosse team.

"To say we're a young team is an understatement," said Camp. "We have 23 players that are walk-ons who have never played before."

Of the team's 33 players, only three were recruited athletes. This was because Camp didn't start recruiting until June, when most athletes had already chosen their colleges.

"Our biggest handicap is lack of game experience," said Camp. "We are part of the Empire 8 Conference which is one of the toughest in the country."

Other teams in this conference include Hartwick, Ithaca, Utica, RIT, Nazareth, Elmira, and Alfred. Fisher will not play Nazareth this year, although Camp is hopeful that in the future a rivalry develops between the two.

"Rivalries are very important," said Camp. "Rivalries build tradition."

Camp was hired in June of last year after finishing out the season as head coach for Monroe Commu-

nity College's (MCC) lacrosse team. Initially he had respectfully declined Fisher's offer, but said he would be interested after the last game of his team at MCC.

Camp said the major differences between Fisher and MCC are the students, the team relationships that develop, and the spectator support. He said that at two-year schools there isn't enough time for the students and team to become established and grow together.

"I'm used to coaching more experienced players," Camp said. "My biggest challenge at Fisher is patience and making sure that we have the basic foundation of offense and defense philosophies."

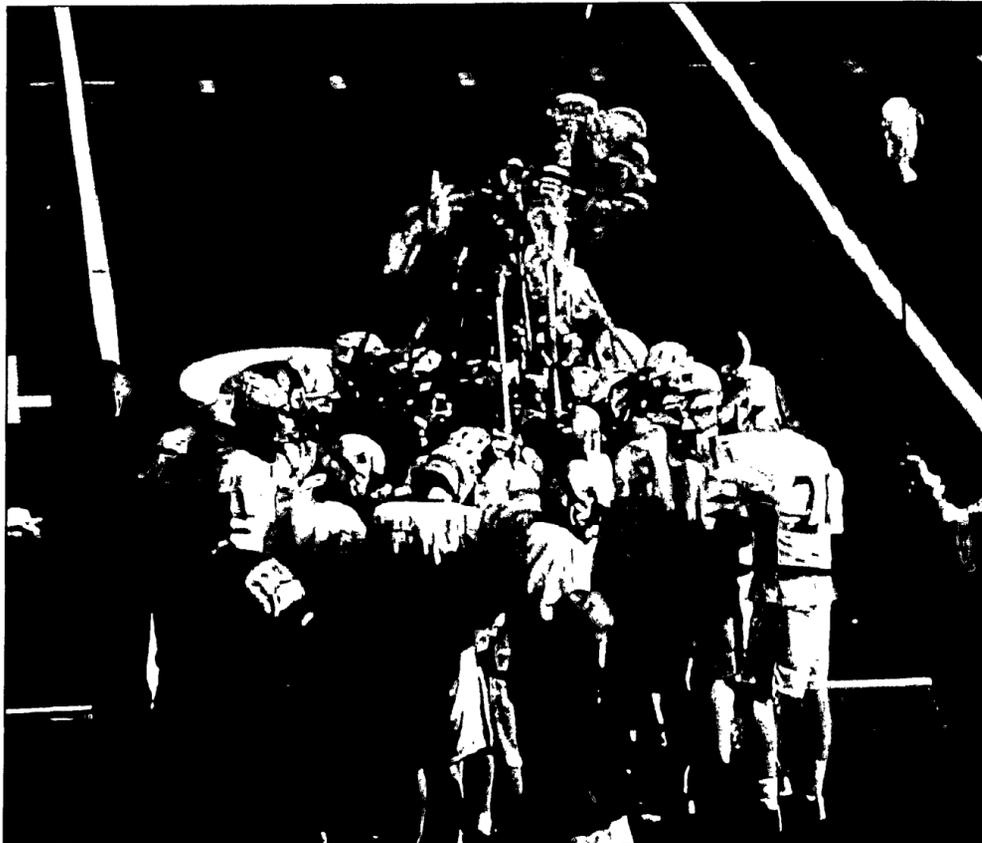
Camp's position is part time which means he is working another full time job. In addition to his full work schedule, he and his wife had a baby girl in December.

Camp took the time to make the team's spring trip to Tampa Bay, Fl. in March. He believes that spring trips are important for team unity.

"If there are two guys on the team who don't like each other, I put them together and make them roommates," said Camp. "It makes for interesting meals."

The team raised money for the trip from raffles and shirt sales, generating \$12,000 between October and February. This amazed Camp, who said that other team's members had to pay for airfare out of their own pockets.

According to Camp, lacrosse, hockey and football are the most expensive sports. He said it costs at least \$325 to fully equip each



Alexis Speck

Fisher's first ever men's lacrosse team huddles together with their signature sticks in the air.

player.

"Right now we don't have a budget," said Camp. "A start-up budget is huge."

Camp said he can't predict what

his budget will look like, but under ideal circumstances, the budget would run \$25,000 or more.

Camp said recruiting is going well and he already has verbal

commitments from athletes at West Genesee High School in Syracuse. He told students the key to being a good coach is being exposed to other coaches.

Women's softball earns national ranking

CONTRIBUTING WRITER
JOE VENNIRO

When you think of St. John Fisher College Softball, the first thought that enters your mind is winning. In 1999, the team set a school record for wins with 39. Last year, Fisher earned a birth into the prestigious NCAA Division III tournament for the first time in school history.

This year is no different, as the Cardinals are off to the best start in school history with a 21-3-1 record in its first 25 games. In addition, Fisher is nationally ranked for the first time in school history. Even with the fast start, Fisher head coach Len Maiorani says the team still has room for improvement.

"We're not hitting the ball the way we should," said Maiorani, "and the defense hasn't been exactly what we have expected, but the pitching has been very good."

During the first 25 games this season, Fisher has outscored its opponents 163-51. The team has nine shutouts this season and has allowed two runs or less in 19 games.

Maiorani gives most of the credit for the team's fast start to his five seniors, first baseman Jen Constantino, pitcher Marti Hawkins, third baseman Nicole Lanieu, catcher Bari Mance and designated hitter Mollie Schnieble.

"The seniors have been tremendous this year," says Maiorani. What can you say about Lanieu? She's having her typical All-American type-season. Mollie's (Schnieble) been leading the team in hitting and Bari (Mance) has stepped up big time. She's always

shown that she has the ability to be a great catcher, but she had never played more than 10-12 games a year before this year. Marti (Hawkins) has been pitching great for us all four years and this year is no exception. Cos (Constantino) is having a career season and is becoming a team leader on and off the field."

Constantino, Lanieu and Schnieble have played in all 25 games, with Schnieble, the team's designated hitter, leading the team with 34 hits, 25 runs scored and 13 stolen bases in as many attempts, while maintaining a .400 batting average.

Constantino is right behind Schnieble with a .391 average, but leads the team with four home runs and 30 runs batted in, also contributing a team-high 13 walks and eight doubles.

Lanieu is batting .322, with a team-high three triples. She has also chipped in with seven doubles, two home runs and 22 runs batted in. Mance got off to a hot start in Florida and has maintained it, batting .290 with one home run and six RBIs.

Hawkins is 8-1 in nine appearances this season with a 1.33 earned run average in 59 innings. With the bat, Hawkins is batting a robust .857 (6-for-7) and has reached base in nine of her 10 plate appearances this year.

In addition to the seniors, Fisher has received significant contributions on offense from outfielders Amanda Kent and Jen Telle. Kent, who already holds the career record for home runs and was a Second Team All-American in 2001, is off to another fine start, batting .356 with three homers



courtesy of Jen Telle

Sophomore Nikki Cordaro throws the ball to Jen Constantino, a senior, during a game.

and 25 RBIs. The junior has 10 stolen bases in 11 attempts. Telle, a sophomore, is batting a team-high .447, with 17 hits in 38 at-bats.

Perhaps the biggest surprise this season has been the contribution of pitcher Jen Dauer. Dauer, a freshman from Clay, NY, is 8-0 this season, with five shutouts, including two no-hitters, and an unheard of 0.40 earned run average. In 53 innings, Dauer has allowed three earned runs. On March 8, Dauer threw a no-hitter in just her third career start, striking out four against previously unbeaten Clark College. Dauer's next no-hitter would come in grand fashion.

Dauer says stepping in as freshman and making an impact has gone smoothly because of her teammates.

"It's easy with this team," says Dauer. "I know if the ball gets hit, they're going to take care of it."

On April 12, Sophomore Keely Forbes and Dauer threw back-to-back no-hitters in a doubleheader against D'Youville College, a feat that has never been accomplished in school history to date. In game one, Forbes struck out 11, including nine of the first ten batters in a 9-0 win. Right after, Dauer equaled Forbes' dominance, striking out 10 in an 8-0 victory.

That was the second career no-

hitter for Forbes who set a Fisher record for most wins in a season last year with 18. This season, the left-hander is off to another fine start with a 5-2 record and 0.80 earned run average.

Despite a 7-1-1 record in March at the Gene Cusis Classic in Florida, Maiorani felt he needed to make a drastic overhaul of his left side of the infield.

He moved four-year starting shortstop Nicole Lanieu over to third base, while moving incumbent third baseman Nikki Cordaro over to second. Next, he inserted freshman Gwen Nesselbeck into Cordaro's spot at shortstop. Maiorani said it was a move that was necessary.

"Nikki (Cordaro) struggled a little bit defensively down in Florida, and third base is such a quick moving position, I wanted to move her over to second where she will be able to have the extra time to make plays," Maiorani said. "Lanieu is such a great athlete, I knew she would be able to make the change down to third without a problem. Gwen (Nesselbeck) is a great shortstop who steps in and gives us solid defense."

Cordaro's hat has been key in Fisher's hot start as she and Constantino share the team lead with four homers.

Lanieu said the move was able to work so well because of the way everyone gets along and respects each other.

"The biggest key is our team unity," Lanieu says. "Everybody clicks, we have great team chemistry."

Constantino agrees.

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