

Rider lifts indoor mask mandate regardless of vaccination status

By Shaun Chornobroff

CLASSROOMS and public indoor spaces like Alumni Gym and the Student Recreation Center littered with students and faculty wearing masks may be a sight of the past at Rider.

With New Jersey, Gov. Phil Murphy’s recent announcement lifting mask requirements in K-12 schools, along with updated guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and New Jersey Department of Health, Rider’s COVID-19 implementation team announced it was repealing its indoor mask mandate in an email to the university community on March 1.

The change in protocol goes into effect on March 5 and lifts the requirement for anybody to wear masks, regardless of vaccination status.


“This is encouraging news as we continue to live with the virus. It also speaks to your vigilance in abiding by our COVID-19 protocols,” the email from the implementation team said.

The decision comes not long after the CDC changed how it measures COVID-19 activity in each county. The updated CDC measures list Mercer County’s COVID-19 community level as low. Additionally, in its most recent update, Rider’s COVID-19 dashboard recorded only four positive COVID-19 cases from Feb. 19-25, the lowest total of the semester.

“Across the nation, we’re seeing a drop in COVID cases overall and that’s a good thing. I think it’s also indicative of just that, for the most part, people have been following our protocols to help keep the number of cases down across the entire community,” said Debbie Stasolla, Rider’s vice president for strategic initiatives and planning and secretary to the board, as well as a leader of the implementation team.

Students and employees will still be required to mask six to 10 days after quarantine or isolation, 10 days after exposure if you are a close contact who is not required to quarantine and at the student health center, the email stated.

The COVID-19 dashboard, which is updated every Friday has reported more than 703 tests administered in the spring



THE Rider News

COVID-19 COUNTER

Confirmed Cases:

Last updated: Feb. 25, 2022

55

Cumulative total of laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19 at Rider University (Since January 2022)

COVID-19 cases reported to Rider University by week:

Month/Year	Student Case Reports	Employee Case Reports
Feb. 19-25	2	2
Feb. 12-18	6	1

Rider University reports its testing numbers and other coronavirus statistics every Friday at rider.edu/dashboard

On Campus Student Testing:

Weeks	Health Center	Surveillance Testing
Feb. 19-25	7	151
Feb. 12-18	67	159
Feb. 5- 11	7	145
Jan. 29- Feb. 4	3	134
Total	38	703

Information courtesy of rider.edu

Student Quarantine and Isolation:

Students in quarantine have been identified as close contacts of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, are completing their travel advisory required quarantine or have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and are awaiting test results. Students in isolation have tested positive for COVID-19. This week there are:

0

 student(s) quarantining on campus

0

 student(s) quarantining off campus

0

 student(s) isolating on campus

0

 student(s) isolating off campus

AAUP upbeat despite tension with administraton

By Shaun Chornobroff

DESPITE rising tensions between the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the administration, AAUP President Barbara Franz said the union had a positive atmosphere in its meeting on March 1.

The meeting occurred the day before the planned “Save Rider Rally” the AAUP executive committee is holding to coincide with the Board of Trustees meeting on campus.



The AAUP scheduled a rally to take place in front of the Bart Luedeke Center on March 2 from 12-1 p.m.

“[The meeting] was surprisingly good. ... considering that we are asking our faculty to stand up for their rights and to stand up to continue representing the position that they have, which is, the board should wake up to the economic situation the university finds itself in because of the mismanagement of the current administration,” said Franz. “I think people are ready to put some action behind our words.”

The rally is scheduled to take place in front of the Bart Luedeke Center on March 2 from 12-1 p.m. and is supposed to serve as a message to the Rider Board of Trustees to remove Rider President Greg Dell’Omo.

Student Government Association (SGA) President Elizabeth O’Hara said SGA is not explicitly encouraging students to attend or sit out of the rally; however, she wants students to know that SGA is an ally.

“I think it’s important to let [students] know that [SGA] is always here to answer their questions and collect their feedback and opinion on the matter, even if it’s not going to a demonstration such as this one. I think students should speak up and ask questions, express their viewpoints on all these issues,” said O’Hara, a senior computer science major.

Prioritization Progress

One source of continued tension across the Rider community has been the voluntary separation program, as well as the academic and administrative prioritization processes that are designed to trim Rider’s projected \$20 million deficit.

In an email sent on March 1, Dell’Omo updated the university on the voluntary separation program. The program is a “workforce reduction strategy” the school announced in January, allowing full-time, non-faculty employees to voluntarily leave the university with a financial package.

The school received 49 applications for voluntary separation, of those only 29 were approved for the program, the email said. The employees approved will be departing the university between March 4 and Sept. 4.

The email said an initial analysis indicates the program will lead to long-term savings of approximately \$2.5 million.

“This is a positive step forward towards addressing Rider’s budget challenges,” Dell’Omo said in the email.

Dell’Omo said in the communication he expects to receive a final recommendation from the academic prioritization task force this week and is expecting a similar report from the administrative task force by mid-March.


Sarah Siock contributed to this story.

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COMPETING WITH THE GAELS

Rider men’s basketball gave Iona a run for its money after defeating Niagara.

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RALLYING AT RIDER


The Rider News editorial board appeals to students in light of persistent faculty and administrative tensions.

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MAKING A MOVE

Rider dance team’s halftime shows have hyped up the crowd at the men and women’s basketball games on campus.

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SECURITY BRIEFS

BY SARAH SIOCK

Mischief in Lincoln Hall

A rowdy day. On Feb. 22 around 12:45 p.m., Residence Life staff alerted Public Safety of vandalism that occurred in Lincoln Hall sometime over the weekend. Damages included furniture overturned in one of the lounges, pool balls missing, damage to exit signs and door numbers and students' belongings thrown out in hallways. The incident remains under investigation, and Facilities Management was notified to fix the damages.

Unwanted guests

Only students allowed. On Feb 25 at 2:23 a.m., Public Safety was called to Wright Hall for suspected marijuana. However, when they were checking the A-wing they discovered three males in the lounge that were not Rider students. The men would not disclose how they entered the campus and were banned from university grounds.

Allergy alert

Annoying allergies. On Feb. 23 at 2:50 p.m., Public Safety was dispatched to the Student Health Center for a student having an allergic reaction. Public Safety was informed an ambulance had been requested and that the student's allergic reaction was due to something they ate off-campus. Once arrived, the student refused medical care from the ambulance.

- Information provided by Public Safety Capt. Matthew Babcock

Students required to be fully vaccinated for 2022-23 school year

CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

semester, as of Feb. 25. However, the implementation team said in the email it will be ending surveillance testing for unvaccinated students and employees on March 30.

"I was really surprised that it was stopping," said Christopher Maiorana, a junior business analytics major, who was one of the students required to take part in weekly surveillance testing. "It does take a lot of time — I don't mind doing it weekly if that was really the way they felt safe, but now that I don't have to do it, it's less time taken away for me."

"We're finding that it is not an effective preventive tool. That's given our own experience, it's in line with updated guidance because we know that even those of us who have been vaccinated and boosted can still contract COVID and we can also transmit COVID," Stasolla said. "We're learning more information and we're changing our protocols in line with ... what we're learning more and more about the nature of this virus."

The implementation team also announced that it will require all students for the 2022-23 school year to be fully vaccinated unless they have a religious or

medical exemption. Stasolla said students with an exemption this school year will have to reapply for one for the upcoming school year. However, the school will not be requiring a booster, with Stasolla and the team deciding to allow that to be a student decision.

"What we're trying to do is this, leave it in the hands of individuals to make the decision as to whether they should get boosted or not. ... We will continue to encourage members of our community, students, faculty and staff to get boosted, but we have decided not to require the booster," Stasolla said.

Despite this major step toward normalcy at Rider, the email warned "should circumstances change, we may return to enforcement of our indoor masking and or testing requirements."

"I hope that members of our community, most members of our community, are going to feel pretty confident about lifting some of our protocols," Stasolla said. "But should circumstances change, we want people to know we may have to reconsider as we continue monitoring COVID-19."

Vice president of enrollment discusses tuition affordability

By Sarah Siock

WITH college becoming more unaffordable for students, Gov. Phil Murphy signed legislation that funds two years of free tuition to students enrolled at public colleges in New Jersey whose family's adjusted gross income is between \$0 and \$65,000 annually. However, for private universities such as Rider who are unable to access these funds, this new legislation could pose a threat to their enrollment.

The legislation is part of New Jersey's Garden State Guarantee, which is the state's promise to make a college degree more accessible and affordable. According to NJ.Gov, the Garden State Guarantee was signed into law as part of New Jersey's 2022 budget in June and will be implemented for the 2022-23 academic year. Qualifying students will receive a tuition reduction during their third and fourth years of study.

Some universities, such as Rutgers New Brunswick, have expanded the Garden State Guarantee to offer four years of free tuition if families earn less than \$65,000 a year. According to the university's website, nearly 7,600 students are expected to take advantage of the program.

However, Rider's Vice President of Enrollment Management Drew Aromando said the Garden State Guarantee does not eliminate the university's ability to compete with public universities.

"It sort of tips the scales obviously from the affordability side in the public institution's favor. I would argue though that having the experience you have at Rider with the professors and the small campus for students who want that, you're not going to beat that," said Aromando.

Aromando did say the Garden State Guarantee may affect the number of students who transfer to Rider since the tuition reduction is for students' later years in college. He said nearly 180 new students transfer to Rider each year.

In recent years, Rider's enrollment has dwindled. Aromando explained that nationally fewer students are graduating from high school, and the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated enrollment decline. At the fall convocation, Rider President Gregory Dell'Omo said Rider's undergraduate returning student rate dropped from 80.3% to 76.8% this past year. Additionally, Rider's total enrollment is at 3,827 students, which is a decrease from 4,218 students the previous year.

The Garden State Guarantee also provides a discounted rate to those who have an adjusted gross income between \$65,001 and \$80,000, stating they will pay a net price of no more than \$7,500 for tuition and fees. Political science professor Micah Rasmussen provided insight into why the state may have implemented a program like this during the pandemic.

"A lot of families and a lot of students say we just can't afford to [pay for college] right now. I know that to a progressive governor like Gov. Murphy that has to be like nails on a chalkboard to hear that. When you think about higher education for your children being an important part of the American dream, I think that hearing concerns like that make [Murphy] want to address that," said Rasmussen.

Aromando pointed to Rider's "Lifting Barriers" initiative that was announced in 2020, as an effective way to compete with the Garden State Guarantee at public universities. Lifting Barriers cut tuition rates by over \$10,000 and dropped the university's tuition sticker price, or its price before discounts and aid, to \$45,120 to \$35,000 a year.

"One of the many things [Lifting Barriers] focused on was driving an affordability model that meets every income level. For students that fall into this income level, we're doing pretty good as far as getting close to them having an extremely low cost or no cost on tuition and fees. ... At that income level, with New Jersey tag resources and federal pell resources, which are included in this for the state institutions, we're getting pretty close to zero [tuition], if not getting them to zero," said Aromando.

Looking at the future, Aromando said the continued decline in high school enrollment will be the largest obstacle for the university to overcome.

"Where we need to tweak, we are working on those tweaks. ... [Adjustments] are not always easy, but the worst thing you could do is either ignore them and pretend they don't exist or do nothing about them. ... There are challenges, no doubt about it, but I wouldn't be here if I didn't believe in the university," said Aromando.



Courtesy of Rider University

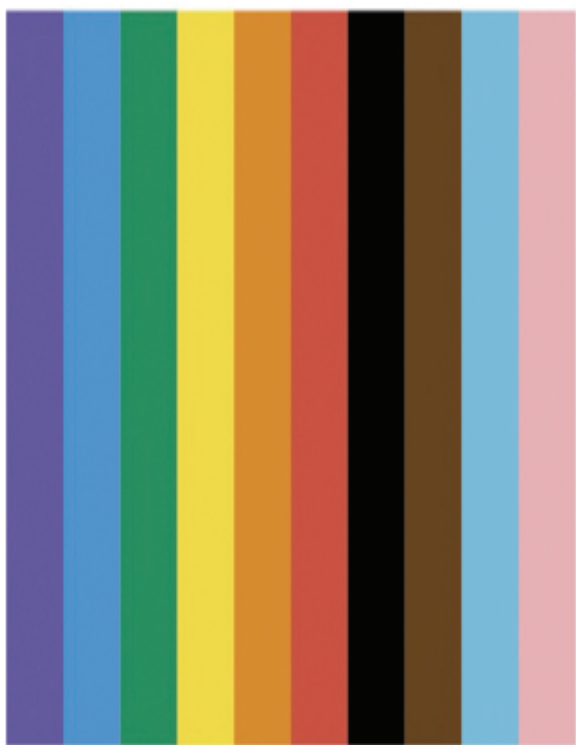
Vice President of Enrollment Management **Drew Aromando** does not think that the Garden State Guarantee will stop Rider from competing with public universities.

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SPEAK OUT

TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 2022 | 11:30 A.M. TO 1 P.M.
CENTER FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
LIVING ROOM



Speak Out will provide a space for our Rider community to come together and share inspirational coming-out stories, as we know our stories can be powerful to each other.

Light refreshments will be provided.

A collaboration between the Center for Diversity and Inclusion and Counseling Services

The Stainman Family Fund distributes another year of scholarships

By Olivia Nicoletti

ARTHUR J. Stainman '65 is the definition of giving back. Since he graduated from Rider, his continuous dedication has not been overlooked.

In 2015, he and his family created the Stainman Family Fund, consisting of \$2.5 million that grants juniors and seniors scholarships.

Apart from attracting the brightest students, the fund allows for financial stability making Rider more accessible.

According to the Feb. 8 university press release, “Stainman views the fund as a way to express appreciation for his own educational opportunities while helping promising students who face financial challenges.”

This year the fund granted eight students scholarships, with four of them receiving it for a second year.

Meghan Mulhearn, a marketing major, Christopher Lynch, an accounting major, Avery Thomson, an organizational psychology major and Ryan Won, an accounting major, were the seniors whose scholarships were renewed.

Mulhearn found the Stainman Family Fund to be rewarding, as her loans were a burden for her even before coming to college.

“This scholarship has impacted my four years at Rider, due to knowing my junior and senior years here are now being helped out financially, and without this scholarship, there has been a significant amount of pressure lifted,” Mulhearn said. “I feel as if I can do more of the things I enjoy while being at college and not worry so much about the money spending aspect, since I tend to spend money on a good amount of things here. Whether that be going out to eat with friends, dues for my sorority [Delta Phi Epsilon], or just even buying myself a coffee to treat myself.”

According to Mulhearn, the scholarship was a random selection among students with a 3.5 grade-point average or higher, but she is grateful to have been chosen.

“It has made me feel more welcomed at Rider because it’s like they knew what I was worried about,” said Mulhearn. “The sense of belongingness is unmatched.”

Junior marketing major Amaya Pegeron, Xyaire Merriweather, a graduate student in the master’s of business communication program, Alyxandria Batty, a senior musical theater major, and Ethan Manton, a senior arts and entertainment industry management major, who received the scholarship for the first time, are the other recipients of the fund.

Pegeron described the Stainman Family Fund as an “unexpected blessing,” after receiving a scholarship from it for the first time in November of 2021.

“This scholarship took a huge weight off my shoulders,” Pegeron said.

“As a first-generation college student, I am paying for school all on my own and Mr. Stainman’s scholarship helped me out in such a tremendous way.”

Because Pegeron entire junior year was paid off, it has “motivated [her] to finish strong.”

According to Pegeron, she is “so grateful for the scholarship, so grateful for the Stainman family and so grateful to be a Rider student.”

Merriweather, who also got a full year’s worth of tuition said, “[this scholarship] is definitely a huge weight lifted off my shoulders, and not just my shoulders, but my parents ... I’ve obviously benefited financially, but ... I’m happy to have a school that does appreciate and acknowledge students who are working hard beyond just maybe athletics or the arts departments, but also more academically, proving themselves here on campus. So it was nice to feel supported in that way.”

All the recipients were thankful for Stainman and his family’s dedication for recognizing students on campus who are achieving academic greatness.

“Thank you to the Stainman family once again for everything you continue to do for Rider and its students,” said Mulhearn. “I will be talking about this with my family for a very long time, and it has made my education more enjoyable.”



Courtesy of Rider University

The eight recipients of the Stainman Family Fund stand with **Arthur J. Stainman** and President **Gregory Dell’Omo**.

French film brings the community together and creates conversation



Danielle Tyson/The Rider News

On Feb. 24, a zoom screening of “A Dramatic Film” continued the Albertine Cinémathèque French film festival.

By Danielle Tyson

THE Albertine Cinémathèque French film festival continued on Feb. 24 with a Zoom screening of “A Dramatic Film.” The second annual film festival was sponsored by the Rider University Libraries, the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures, the Department of Film and Television, the Center of Diversity and Inclusion and the Mercer County Library.

The movie followed the lives of 22 kids living in the improvised areas surrounding Paris.

All of the kids were given cameras and created vignettes of them coming of age, growing up and learning about themselves.

In the film, the students were allowed to be heard and create spontaneously.

“I think one of the things that was seen is a childlike viewpoint in the world and how simplistic a child’s view could make looking at the world, adults complicate issues,” said Sharon Whitfield, electronic resources and user access librarian for the Moore Library. “These kids take very complex issues and simplify them. What I would like people to take away from these movies is just a new lens on seeing different issues.”

Throughout the screening, viewers had the opportunity to witness the beauty within the innocence of these children.

The children show a side of France that most people choose to not see: impoverished areas, litter on the streets and homeless immigrants passing through.

“A Dramatic Film” is the third of the six films that are within this series of films that will be shown throughout the film festival.

The film festival facilitates conversation and helps encourage discussion and create questions within the viewer since individuals have the chance to discuss after the screenings.

“Rider University Libraries is committed to fostering lifelong learning in its students and the surrounding community. Rider University also fosters global perspectives in its curricula so our students will be responsible citizens in an international and culturally diverse world,” said Melissa Hofmann, associate professor librarian for Moore Library. “Also, multicultural competency for the entire University community is a goal in our inclusive excellence. The Albertine Cinémathèque Film Festival is an exciting and engaging avenue to all of these goals, appealing to a wide audience.”

The next film, “35 Shots of Rum,” will be shown via Zoom on March 10 at 6:30 p.m.

“We want Albertine to really open up the Rider community, also the Mercer County library community, to things that they are not going to see while utilizing just a streaming service,” said Whitfield.

The film festival continues to be virtual this year, so it is easier for students and community members to attend.

“I think it increases attendance,” said Hoffman. “It’s a hard balance because it’s hard to get people to come to things on campus.”



Danielle Tyson/The Rider News

Mary Poteau-Tralie hosts a discussion with the audience after the viewing of the movie.

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Womxn's History Month 2022

WOMXN PROVIDING HEALING, PROMOTING HOPE

Rider University celebrates Womxn’s History Month *

* The spelling womxn is used to respect the dynamic and fluid nature of gender identity and expression and to be inclusive of all people who identify as women.

March 9

The Bad Girls Club

6:30 to 8 p.m., Rue Auditorium (Sweigart 115)

Dr. Wilson’s presentation interrogates Black womxn’s existence in R&B and Hip Hop music.

Sponsored by the Center for Diversity and Inclusion

March 21

RIDER WOMXN OF POWER:
Marking a Milestone;
Continuing the Momentum

6:30 to 8 p.m., NJM Community Room
in the Bart Luedeke Center

An International Women’s Day forum with Rider Womxn Leaders of Clubs and Orgs. Leaders will discuss topics of leadership, equity and inclusion, and womxn’s ceaseless contributions to hope and healing.

Sponsored by the SGA Equity and Inclusion Committee

March 24

Albertine Cinémathèque
online French film festival:
Little Girl (Petite Fille)

6:30 p.m., register in advance,
rider.edu/frenchfilmfestival

We are excited to be able to screen a series of films drawn from across the French-speaking world, thanks to Albertine Cinémathèque (formerly Tournées). The series continues through March 31st. The selected films include documentary and narrative films by both influential veteran filmmakers and first-time directors. They touch on a wide range of subjects. All screenings will be virtual, but registration is required. All screenings are FREE and open to the Rider community and members of the Mercer County Library.

Sponsored by the Rider University Libraries; the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures; the Department of Film and Television; the Center for Diversity and Inclusion; and the Mercer County Library

March 28

Celebrating Womxn in
Rider Athletics

6 to 7:30 p.m., Cavalla Room in the Bart Luedeke Center

Join Rider Athletics, Rider Women’s Basketball team, Rider Recreation Programs, and the Center for Diversity and Inclusion for a reception honoring our womxn student athletes, in the areas of leadership, community service, and academic excellence. A distinguished Rider alumna athlete will provide remarks about her time at the university and lessons she learned that have helped her excel in life and her career. You won’t want to miss the opportunity to mix ‘n’ mingle with these impactful womxn role models! All are welcome to “dress to impress!”

Sponsored by Rider Athletics, Rider Women’s Basketball, Rider Recreation Programs, and the Center for Diversity and Inclusion

March 29

Fighting the Good Fight of
Faith: An Interfaith Dialogue
Addressing Race, Equity, and
Inclusion

11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., hybrid event
In-person at Rue Auditorium (Sweigart 115)
or through Zoom
Register in advance, rider.edu/goodfight

Students, educators, and alumni of our Rider community will explore the topics of race, equity and social justice in the capacity of one’s faith to promote an inclusive, interfaith environment. Breakout sessions led by student peer leaders paired with alumni and/or faculty and administrators will provide an opportunity to explore how individuals can embrace their faith while accepting diverse perspectives. Statements, quotes, and comments from students will be used to create two displays outside the Center for Diversity and Inclusion for others to see and continue to foster respectful dialogue.

Sponsored by the Center for Diversity and Inclusion

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

March 8

Speak Out

11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., CDI Living Room

Speak Out will provide a space for our Rider community to come together and share inspirational coming-out stories, as we know our stories can be powerful to each other. Light refreshments will be provided.

Sponsored by the Counseling Center and the Center for Diversity and Inclusion

March 10

Albertine Cinémathèque
online French film festival:
35 Shots of Rum (35 Rhums)

6:30 p.m., register in advance,
rider.edu/frenchfilmfestival

March 31

Albertine Cinémathèque
online French film festival:
The Society of the Spectacle
(La Société du Spectacle)

6:30 p.m., register in advance,
rider.edu/frenchfilmfestival

We are excited to be able to screen a series of films drawn from across the French-speaking world, thanks to Albertine Cinémathèque (formerly Tournées). The series continues through March 31st. The selected films include documentary and narrative films by both influential veteran filmmakers and first-time directors. They touch on a wide range of subjects. All screenings will be virtual, but registration is required. All screenings are FREE and open to the Rider community and members of the Mercer County Library.

Sponsored by the Rider University Libraries; the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures; the Department of Film and Television; the Center for Diversity and Inclusion; and the Mercer County Library

RIDER.EDU/WOMXNS-HISTORY-MONTH



CENTER FOR
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
Unity + Diversity = University

These events are partially funded by
the mandatory student activity fee.
Approved by Campus Life – 4/1/22

The Rider Dance Team returns to the court

By **Tristan Leach**

RUNNING onto the court in cranberry and black, the team takes their positions. The music starts and the crowd cheers. The Rider Dance Team is about to begin its halftime performance. The team is best known for their performances at the



Junior criminal justice major **McKenzie Jones** performing in front of the dance team at a women’s basketball game.

men’s and women’s basketball games but also at other events including Awareness Day. They are a beloved part of the Rider community, with friends and family members attending events to watch the team dance.

It has been over a year since the team has performed for a crowd. The team was at the MAAC Tournament with Rider’s basketball teams when COVID-19 shut down the competition in 2020.

McKenzie Jones is a junior criminal justice major and vice president of the dance team.

Jones said, “Unfortunately, I lost most of my time because that’s when COVID did hit. Right at the end of our season and going to the MAAC Tournament. We did do dance team on Zoom though.”

However, The Rider Dance Team has made a triumphant return, picking up where they left off. Almost two years later on March 8, the team is returning to the place where the world was turned upside down — the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) Tournament. The team hopes that their performances will uplift all in attendance and be seen as a welcome back to normalcy.

“I think that we’re a source of entertainment,” said Jones. “It’s like the game is hype, whether we are winning or losing, once the dance team comes out it should bring a source of energy, of excitement. We’re definitely a source of entertainment to liven up the place.”

And liven up they did. On Feb. 26 at the women’s basketball game, the team performed for a large crowd of students, staff and guests. This game was centered around National Girls and Women in Sports Day.

Before performing, the team met with girls ages five to 17. The goal of this event was to encourage young girls to get involved in sports.

Marissa Stellato, a sophomore dance performance major, said, “I’ve never been a part of a team before. A lot of dancers here are competition dancers, and I never did that. I was just a recreational dancer, and I wanted to try something new. I thought it would be a good experience, and it is.”

However, there are still goals that the team wishes to achieve, such as performing at other venues and becoming a part of Rider athletics. The Rider Dance Team is not officially recognized as a part of athletics at Rider, but the team has pushed and continues to push for its recognition.

“I would like to see dance team grow as a true athletic. I think we are a part of a club sport on Rider’s campus. I think we should be taken as seriously as an athletic, which cheer is taken as. We practice just as hard, just as long. I would like to see dance team be taken a little more seriously,” said Jones.

Stellato hopes that the team will be able to expand outside of Rider such as going to competitions just like the cheer team. “I can totally see us expanding outside of Rider, going to Universal Dance Association and

dancing for the 76ers,” said Stellato.

While the season is winding down, the team is preparing to follow the men’s and women’s basketball teams to the MAAC Tournament. As always, they are ready to perform their hearts out and represent Rider.



Sophomore dance performance major **Marissa Stellato** entertains the loud crowd at the women’s basketball game.



The Rider Dance Team waits to begin their performance on the basketball court.

Women’s wrestling joins roster of club sports

By Zachary Klein

RIDER added too its extensive repertoire of club sports, announcing womens’ wrestling as the newest option at the school. Women’s wrestling is something that is not found on many college campuses, and its addition is a monumental step in creating gender equality in all sports at Rider.

Women’s wrestling has been a rare option for a club or varsity sports at colleges, said Timothy Trivisonno, head coach of the women’s wrestling club. However, women’s wrestling is starting to flourish on a collegiate level with colleges such as Princeton University, Rutgers University, New Jersey City University and East Stroudsburg University adding the sport at either the club or varsity level.

“There are 34 states that sanction girls’ high school wrestling as a sport,” said Trivisonno. “There’s so many

girls who wrestle at the high school level and there’s not enough opportunity for them to wrestle at the next level, and it kind of hurts the growth at the lower levels where there’s just nowhere to go at that upper level.”

Director of Recreation Programs Dianna Clauss agreed with Trivisonno about the necessity of founding this club sport.

“We need to do this,” she said. “Universities and colleges need to provide opportunities for women to compete in sports such as this.”

It was Clauss’ idea to pitch a women’s wrestling team to the club sports council, who make the final decision on what should and should not become a sanctioned club on campus.

“Similar to what we did with the esports club, we saw the growth across the country,” Clauss said. “Before we even had the students in place we started creating the club constitution, budget and contacts on campus.”

The club sports council was able to help with the creation of these three important elements, and the women’s wrestling club was born.

According to Trivisonno, the club hopes to be competing by the 2022-23 season, as they are actively recruiting several incoming freshmen. They are also looking to recruit any girls on campus who might be interested in competing.

“We are recruiting people through the process of admissions, and my goal is to have a full team down the line, whether that’s 10, 15, 20 girls,” Trivisonno said. “We just are trying to get these girls through admissions and getting them into practice.”

Clauss added that the club is not ready to go yet as they are in what she called an “active recruitment phase.” Currently, they are just searching for interested students and have not practiced nor competed in any tournaments.

Once a team can be formed, they need to find opponents. There are several schools in the area that could be possible matchups, but Trivisonno also expressed interest in attending a large competition, including the Southern Scuffle, located in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Clauss said that women’s wrestling was a sport

where high school state champions had nowhere to go. In any other sport, state champions normally compete a collegiate level. Rider is trying to change that by being open, inclusive and ahead of the game by creating this unique opportunity.

There are about 70 Division I men’s programs, said Trivisonno, a former wrestler at Rider himself.

“Having wrestled for 22 years, it is probably the most inclusive sport,” Trivisonno said. “There was a men’s wrestler who won the national tournament with one leg. I just saw someone in Virginia who won the state tournament with no legs. Everybody can do it ... and this is an opportunity that we can provide to females to wrestle and continue their athletic careers, not just their academic careers.”



Dianna Clauss took the idea of women’s wrestling to the club sports council, allowing it to form.



Timothy Trivisonno is the head coach for the women’s wrestling club.

Relay for Life: spreading cancer awareness on campus

By Hannah Newman

THIS year marks the 13th anniversary of Relay for Life at Rider, with the cancer research event returning in person for the first time since 2019.

Over 1.6 million people are diagnosed with cancer each year. Around 600,000 Americans will die from it this year, making cancer the second leading cause of death in the United States according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Relay for Life is the world’s largest community fundraising event, giving people the chance to come together and raise money for the American Cancer Society.

The event, which will be held on the Campus Mall on April 12 from 5 p.m. to 11 p.m., consists of music, games and live entertainment while participants take laps walking or running around the track. Participants can bring lawn chairs and pitch tents to relax in between activities. This year’s theme is Once Upon a Cure; a Disney theme that allows participants to customize their tents and enter them in a contest for a most spirited award.

Fundraising for this event will take place online or in person. Participants make teams of one or more to raise money, which gives people the chance to partner with their friends and peers.

The Relay for Life executive committee defined Relay for Life as a “love fest” and described this year’s event as “reinventing relay.” The committee explained that this year’s event has been modified to fit



Relay for Life committee at their kick-off event that announced this year’s relay theme: Disney.

more students’ schedules with the hope of increasing participation.

The chair of Relay for Life, junior human resource management major Jenna Muller, discussed the changes to the event.

“I am really excited to be the chair of Relay this year and get the chance to reinvent it as a whole new event outside and just get a lot more involvement than we’ve ever had before,” said Muller.

In prior years, Relay took place indoors and was 12 hours long. The duration of this year’s event has been

condensed, and it has been moved outdoors so more people are enticed to participate in supporting this cause.

Relay for Life advisor and graduate student Gabrielle Orszulak ’20 shared her experience being involved in Relay over the years.

“This is my fourth year doing this event, and it is my favorite Rider tradition. I love the event, and I think that it really brings students, community, faculty and staff together for a great cause while having fun and making a difference at the same time,” said Orszulak.

A tradition at Rider’s Relay for Life event is the Luminaria Ceremony, a time where people recognize those who are currently battling cancer, whose lives have been lost and whose lives have been affected by the disease.

With a \$10 donation participants can decorate and fill a bag with anything that reminds them of someone in need of recognition.

Those bags will line the track and be lit up while there is a walk in silence. Survivors will take the first lap.

There will also be a dinner for survivors who have a connection to someone at Rider, which will take place before the event. A form will be sent out to students to sign up for the dinner.

Anyone who has questions or would like to perform or host an activity at this year’s event can contact relayforlife@rider.edu for more information.

Encouraging student civic engagement

CONSISTENT criticism regarding President Gregory Dell’Omo’s administration and lack of action from the Board of Trustees has culminated in the planning of a “Save Rider Rally.” The event, taking place on March 2 from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. in front of the Bart Luedeke Center, was organized by Rider’s chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), who sent a mass communication to their colleagues on Feb. 25 urging the inclusion of “friends and fellow faculty members.” Communication via the AAUP’s Instagram also encouraged student attendance.

In an educational environment overcome with trickled-down tensions from these administrative conflicts, students may stand to gain a lot of perspective from attending the demonstration, whether that be to back their professors or take a keener eye into the issues being contested by faculty.

Senior journalism major and Executive Editor of The Rider News Sarah Siock said, “If someone is educated about it and understands why they’re holding a rally then I think definitely students should join. ... If you feel strongly about it, you should be able to express that, and you should express it.”

But even for students who may lack full context as to the ins and outs of administrative upheaval, this event comes at a pivotal time for the university – a time in which everyone should truly evaluate what Rider means to them and what they want out of their educational experience, not only as paying students but dedicated community members.

Junior sports media major and The Rider News Managing Editor Shaun Chornobroff delivered this message for students contemplating attending the rally: “Do it if it means something to you.”

Senior journalism major and Sports Editor Dylan Manfre said, “Fight for your university, fight for a better future for your university and the legacy of what will directly affect you.”

Understandably, many students may still be in the dark as to why the tensions between faculty and the administration are at a historic high – communication from the university and Student Government Association (SGA) alike has not been entirely consistent, transparent or forthcoming. But that does not change the reality that the AAUP has voted 86% no confidence in Dell’Omo and asked for the first time in university history for the removal of a president: those actions have weight.

Sophomore journalism major and The Rider News Features and Entertainment Editor Tristan Leach said, “Even if you give a fraction of a care to your everyday education ... then you’ll go and you’ll learn because it’s your investment every day.”

Let this moment in Rider’s history serve as a learning experience. It’s OK for students to not be certain where they stand on each issue at play, but perhaps being in attendance will allow them to decipher their feelings.

Students have a responsibility to themselves to ask questions, think critically and function as civically engaged members of their community, not only for the sake of the remainder of their time at Rider but their lasting connection to the university as they transition into their professional lives.

*This editorial expresses the unanimous opinion of The Rider News Editorial Board.
This week’s editorial was written by Opinion Editor Kaitlyn McCormick*

Kaitlyn McCormick



Adrienne Unfreed/ The Rider News

THE Rider News

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A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Faculty is fed up: university professor criticizes Dell'omo's decisions

NTrustee Guarino’s response to the overwhelming call to remove President Dell’Omo by 86% of Rider’s faculty, he lauds Dell’Omo’s “integrity, fairness, authenticity and especially his equanimity as he confronts circumstances beyond his control.”

Let me address just two of these — “integrity” and “circumstances beyond his control.”

Integrity requires ethical principles. Dell’Omo demonstrates he lacks such principles.

When he asked faculty to participate in the 2015 prioritization process, they agreed. Before they had done their work, President Dell’Omo unilaterally canceled 14 student programs and issued layoff notices to 14 faculty. The lessons? To this president, faculty input on academic matters doesn’t matter. Nor does trust. Why should a faculty betrayed participate in another dishonest endeavor?

In the wake of his cancellations, Dell’Omo instructed faculty to advise the now-homeless majors and minors to transfer into other majors or to simply leave Rider. Yes, faculty were ordered to pick up Dell’Omo’s pieces and make things right with students. Rider may be student-centered, but Dell’Omo’s actions were not.

Then, Dell’Omo announced he planned to move Westminster, sell the campus and use the proceeds to build an engineering program in Lawrenceville. He did this without the authorization of the Board of Trustees. A responsible board would have fired him for insubordination.

But Rider’s board did not.

Rider faculty voted no confidence in Dell’Omo’s leadership in 2017, sending their clear message to the Board that Dell’Omo’s actions were harming the university.

The Board of Trustees rewarded Dell’Omo by giving him more money and a contract extension. Perhaps they figured when a university’s core employees are unhappy, its president must be doing a swell job.

When Westminster and Rider merged, Rider made a formal agreement in

which it promised to “(1) preserve, promote and enhance the existing mission, purposes, programs and traditions of Westminster ... ; (2) ensure that the separate identity of WCC ... will be recognized ...; and (3) utilize WCC’s resources in support of WCC’s programs.”

As Rider’s president, Dell’Omo was required to uphold that agreement. Instead, he tried to sell WCC and planned to spend that cash on other things in Lawrenceville.

What is the ethical distinction between liquidating a charitable trust and using the proceeds outside of the trust’s restrictions and money laundering? If only we had a philosophy department to answer this question. But Dell’Omo eliminated the philosophy department, the academic discipline to which ethics belongs.

In their recent petition, WCC students complain they can no longer buy anything with Westminster’s name on it. Rider Promise broken.

Dell’Omo spent \$2 million to move WCC to Lawrenceville where no adequate facility exists for the performance and rehearsal of choral music. Rider Promise broken.

A campus built for choral music earns Rider \$2,000 per month as a parking lot. The avalanche of Dell’Omo’s poor decisions has resulted in the loss of tens of millions of dollars and hundreds of students in enrollment. Rider Broken.

And THEN, the pandemic hit. Finally, a circumstance beyond Dell’Omo’s control.

Mr. Guarino, blind loyalty to this president has placed Rider in an existential crisis. Please save the laudatory remarks for the announcement that Greg plans to spend more time with his family.

Joel Phillips, professor of music theory and composition
Westminster Choir College

GREEN CORNER

The pitfalls of fast fashion: assessing environmental harm

As the classic trope goes, most college students do not have much of a disposable income. So, where do many resort to when they need new clothes for a Friday outing, attire for the Cranberry and White affair or maybe just to spruce up their wardrobe? Most of us will opt to get cheap clothing items from big-name brands like Forever 21, Shein, ROMWE or any retailer that has trendy, affordable clothing. While these fast fashion companies may help a college student stay in line with the latest trends for less, they, in turn, create great environmental harm in the countries in which they are produced.

“Fast fashion” refers to clothing items that are rapidly produced in large volumes, that often only last a couple of wears. These items do not cost much to the consumer nor to the manufacturer, but they are not created to withstand regular and long-term use. To cut costs and maximize profits, fast fashion companies will often base their operations in developing countries like China, India, Bangladesh, Vietnam and Indonesia among others. Due to limited environmental regulations in these countries, emissions and pollution created by fast fashion companies’ operations there greatly affect the surrounding communities. According to a 2020 Borgen Magazine article by Grace Ganz, the combination of emissions and water pollution created by clothing dyes, chemicals and other waste from the operation of these companies leads to environmental poverty in those areas.

A 2012 ScienceDirect article by Lee Lie, defines environmental poverty as “the lack of the healthy environment needed for society's survival and development as a direct result of human-induced environmental degradation.” Now, you may be wondering how the fast fashion industry contributes to environmental poverty. Take the Noyyal River, for example, which stretches over 3,500 square kilometers through India. Waste such as chemicals, dyes and other waste from the textiles industry pollute this river to such an extent that as it flows, it froths over with foam.

Despite this pollution, the river is meant to sustain at least two million people. This means that regardless of its condition, at least two million people rely on this river as a source of drinking water, cooking water, water for irrigation, water for bathing, water to feed their animals and so on. Looping back to the definition of environmental poverty, the Noyyal River is a prime example of the destruction that is possible. Due to cheap production costs, companies choose to base manufacturing here which in turn pollutes the local environment – furthering the divide between developed and developing countries.

In German media outlet Deutsche Welle’s youtube video “India: How our clothes cause water pollution,” posted to the channel DW Planet A, social activist Prithiviraj Sinnathambi raised an important point. He said, “This dyeing and bleaching doesn’t exist in developed countries because they don’t want to pollute their water. If somebody raises the issue of pollution in Europe or North America, suddenly there will be a knee-jerk reaction from the corporations.” At what point does this stop being treated as an economic opportunity and start being viewed as a human rights issue?

As a college student, there are many ways that you can stop supporting these practices. Faith Patterson, a senior health sciences major said, “Sustainable clothes are rarely affordable, and affordable clothes are rarely sustainable. As a college student, I can't afford expensive sustainable clothing, so I try to thrift as

often as possible to promote sustainable and affordable practices.”

Speaking of thrift stores, Kerrie Sendall, a Rider professor who taught the course “Sustainable Fashion: Is It Possible?” said the following, “If you want to buy more sustainably from thrift stores, check the tags and try to buy clothing made from 100% cotton, linen and other non-synthetic materials. And [in general] if you are looking to invest in a sustainable wardrobe, you can use information from nonprofits such as Climate Neutral to research companies that are worth spending your hard-earned money on. Some of my new favorites are Ministry of Supply and Toad & Co, and I can't forget my old standby Patagonia.”

Another easy way to avoid fast fashion is to be mindful of what you are purchasing. Opt for clothes that can be worn timelessly over very trendy clothes. Or say you really want that vibrant top– try waiting two weeks and if you still want to purchase, then go for it.

If you have some extra money to splurge, there are companies that are taking steps in the right direction. For example, Patagonia is a part of 1% for the Planet and donates 1% of its annual profits to grassroot organizations. The clothing brand tentree plants ten trees for every item sold, and to date has planted over 72 million trees. Need new activewear? Check out the brand Girlfriend Collective which provides a sustainability report for every item on their site.

This week is clothing and textiles week in the Campus Race 2 Zero Waste, a nationwide campus recycling awareness program. Check out the @bronscgogreen Instagram and TikTok or @RiderLawEcoReps on Facebook for more facts about sustainable textiles.

Kayley Tezbir
Campus Eco Rep



MAAC TOURNAMENT COVERAGE

X-FACTOR PLAYERS



PPG: 4.3 APG: 3.8
RPG: 2.1

"TOOMEY'S CONSISTENCY
OFF THE BENCH AND MOBLEY'S
LEADERSHIP ON THE COURT
MIGHT BE ENOUGH TO GET
RIDER A ROUND-ONE WIN."

- SPORTS EDITOR
DYLAN MANFRE



PPG: 4.0 APG: 1.3
RPG: 3.1



PPG: 10.7 APG: 1.3
RPG: 4.9

"WITH MERVIN'S DEFENSE AND
VERSETILITY ON THE FLOOR,
PAIRED WITH A FINALLY
CONSISTENT SHOOTING
POWELL, THE BRONCS CAN
REACH THEIR ZENITH IF
THEY CAN HOLD IT
TOGETHER."

- SPORTS EDITOR
CAROLO PASCALE



PPG: 11.6 APG: 2.5
RPG: 1.8

MEN’S BASKETBALL

‘We’re not that far off’; Broncs split weekend games



The Broncs sit tied for sixth in the MAAC with five other teams after an encouraging weekend.

By Carolo Pascale and Jake Tiger

WITH the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) Tournament right around the corner, the Broncs looked to make up ground in the standings on Feb. 25 and Feb. 27, taking on Niagara and Iona in close games that resulted in the Broncs defeating the Purple Eagles 70-68 and falling to the Gaels 67-61.

‘We needed this one’

Returning home after a rough two-game stretch on the road, the Broncs looked to bounce back in front of a raucous crowd at Alumni Gym on Feb. 25, when they took on the Niagara Purple Eagles. Defense was the name of the game for this one, and the Broncs stood tall, defeating Niagara 70-68.

“Good win for us. We closed the game out,” said Head Coach Kevin Baggett. “We made it interesting. But start-to-finish, I thought our guys did a really good job.”

The defense was the biggest factor of the game and the Broncs put on a clinic in the first half. The Broncs were running a high-press, high-tempo defense that



Junior guard Allen Powell scored 19 points in the loss to Iona on Feb. 27.

forced the Niagara shooters into ISO situations.

“We just focused on that end. We’ve been working on some different things, we made some adjustments when teams tried to isolate us at times, those kinds of things,” said Baggett.

Both teams were very stingy in terms of allowing points, but when points did come for Rider, they came off the hands of senior forward Ajiri Ogemuno-Johnson. His eight points led the Broncs at the end of the first half.

Once the first half horn sounded, the Broncs held a 29-21 point lead. The defense held strong and managed to hold the MAAC’s second-leading scorer, Marcus Hammond, to zero points in the first half.

“You try to take away their best player. Our guys weren’t going to allow him to get any breathing room,” Baggett said.

The second half saw the Purple Eagles find some cracks in the Broncs defensive scheme, chipping away at Rider’s lead early in the half.

But the Broncs were able to adjust and hold the lead, never letting it dip below seven points.

Sophomore guard Corey McKeithan and junior forward Mervin James were crucial for the Broncs, both playing lights out defensively, helping the Broncs maintain a lead for much of the second half.

With about three minutes left, Ogemuno-Johnson threw down a monster slam dunk that sent the crowd into a frenzy.

“During practice, guys try to tell me to dunk every opportunity I get. It’s more of a momentum changer for us,” said Ogemuno-Johnson.

That dunk helped the Broncs jump out to a 13 point lead, the team’s largest of the game.

Hammond was a lifeline for the Purple Eagles, hitting two miraculous triples to get the score within two, but he sent Broncs junior guard Allen Powell to the free-throw line with just three seconds left, putting the Broncs up by four and sealing the game.

“We’ve never doubted ourselves from the first game that we have a good team,” said Baggett, “We needed this one. We needed to get off that losing streak and we needed to win at home.”

Senior guard Dwight Murray Jr. led the Broncs in points with 18, while Powell finished with 14, and Ogemuno-Johnson with 13.

‘Close, but not close enough’

The Rider faithful created a vibrant sea of cranberry in Alumni Gym on Feb. 27 and watched anxiously as the Broncs nearly toppled the top-seeded Iona Gaels.

Despite an inspiring second-half turnaround, Rider fell short of completing its comeback, losing 67-61.

“They’ve got some good players. It would not surprise me if we were in the finals and they were in the finals. It would not surprise me if we both got knocked out in the first round,” said Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame inductee and Iona Head

Coach Rick Pitino. “This league is really close.”

The game began with a surprise, as Baggett opted to start junior guard Sedrick Altman in place of James, making Rider’s already undersized starting five even smaller.

When asked about his reasoning for benching James, Baggett offered no comment.

Iona’s size advantage was evident and fully utilized, as it smothered Rider in the paint, routinely pinning their layups to the backboard or swatting them into the stands.

The Gaels finished with eight blocks as a team and showed why they are third in the nation in blocks per game.

“I feel like I did okay,” said Powell. “Everyone had to win their matchup today and we didn’t.”

Powell led Rider in scoring with 19 points, but nobody on Rider was able to score efficiently as the Broncs shot 30.8% from the field while Iona shot 42.8%.

“Tough loss. They made more shots,” said Baggett. “Our guys played hard and it was close, but not close enough.”

With just three minutes left to play, a Murray triple cut Iona’s lead down to three and the Broncs had a real shot at victory.

Though, Iona’s all-around superiority would ultimately outshine Rider’s effort and hustle, as Iona sank consecutive threes in the closing minutes and put the game out of reach.

“We’re not that far off. It’s just the little mistakes at the end that make us lose games. We gotta fix that,” said Powell.

While a win against Iona would have been huge for the Broncs, they certainly gave the Gaels a run for their money, and Baggett expressed confidence in his team going forward, believing his men would come through when it mattered.

“This team can beat anybody, including Iona,” said Baggett. “When we get to Atlantic City, I like our chances just as much as anybody [else’s].”

After the loss, the Broncs find themselves at the bottom of a five-way tie for sixth in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC). If the standings stood as is, the Broncs would enter the tournament as the 10th seed, but with two games remaining, a big leap in the standings is still possible.

Rider will attempt to make one final push before the MAAC Tournament, starting with a trip to Fairfield on March 3.



Junior forward Mervin James scored eight points against Niagara and nine points against Iona.

Sports

INSIDE

MAAC TOURNAMENT COVERAGE
Check out who are the men's and women's basketball teams X-factor players for the upcoming MAAC Tournament.
FIND THE GRAPHIC ON PAGE 10

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Rider finally beats a top team after loss to Iona



Junior guard **Jessika Schiffer** hit a late 3-pointer to seal a 57-50 victory against Saint Peter's on Feb. 26.

By **Dylan Manfre**

RIDER finally experienced the parity of the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC). It has been desperate for that feeling for so long. It achieved that with a home win over a Saint Peter's team in the top half of the MAAC, but not before a loss on the road to Iona.

A poor shooting performance

If there was ever a must-win game for the Broncos, this was it. No match-up with bigger conference tournament implications than the Feb. 24 game against Iona.

Both teams entered the game 6-10 in the MAAC standings and Iona held the eight seed by way of its 23-point win over Rider earlier this year.

The Broncos lost the possibility of moving up via the tiebreaker, losing to the Gaels 65-58, keeping Rider in the ninth seed. Head Coach Lynn Milligan did not talk about standings with the team but assumed her players are privy to the fickleness of the MAAC.

"We want to focus on what we can do and have control over," Milligan said. "At this point of the year, there's only three games left so I'm sure that they are aware of where we are in the standings."

Rider began the game shooting 1 of 10 from the field; highly reminiscent of its first meeting with the Gaels when the Broncos could not find a bucket. Ending the first quarter in New Rochelle, New York, shooting 25% was a minor improvement from the last time Rider played Iona, but it sure did not feel like one as the Broncos only scored nine points.

Senior guard Lenaejha Evans made the first comeback attempt on her own, scoring Rider's first seven points to cut the deficit to four.

Rider was lucky that Iona guard Juana Camilion did not hit her shots early as she finished the first half 2-for-10 from the field. The Gaels as a whole struggled in the second quarter and did not score for over eight minutes. Gaels guard Oliva Velandenos was hitting her shots, however, scoring 10 of Iona's 23 first-half points.

The supporting cast for the Broncos seemed

nonexistent. Junior guard Jessika Schiffer had a bucket, sophomore guard Makayla Firebaugh had none. Neither did junior forward Anna Ekerstedt, senior guard Amanda Mobley or junior center Victoria Toomey.

Firebaugh helped cut Iona's lead to one after the Gaels went up 10 early in the third quarter. Iona was unfazed. Especially when it has guards like Vezaldenos and Camilion and a key contributor in Ketsia Athias who had six points and eight boards midway through the third quarter. They responded with a 10-0 run and guard Shyan Mwai had three treys in the period.

Rider diversified its scoring output as the game progressed. Sophomore forward Raphaela Toussaint led the way with a double-double scoring 14 points and 12 rebounds. Schiffer eventually got involved more in the second half, ending the game with 11.

In the fourth quarter, Evans was given a technical foul for taunting as she flexed her arms at Mwai when Rider was down seven with around six minutes left. Milligan said she did not see the play. Evans believed it should not have been called.

"I feel like we should just be able to play the game," Evans said. "Basketball comes with emotion. I think it was a weak call."

A huge win

Rider got its taste of the MAAC's parity with a 57-50 victory over Saint Peter's in the final home game of the season.

Schiffer's late-game heroics saw her team hold strong to the lead it gained at the start of the second half. She hit a 3-pointer on the first possession of the third quarter giving Rider a 27-25 lead and Saint Peter's never came back.

The Broncos got consistent scoring from its guards and defensive stops recording 11 blocks in the game.

The Broncos were only up three with 33 seconds left in the game. Firebaugh hit two key free throws putting the Broncos up 55-50, and creating a two-possession game. Saint Peter's kept Rider in check.

The time remaining and score indicated a tense final few seconds but not to Milligan. It was anything

but that for the Broncos.

"Earlier in the season that would absolutely been tension for us but [it] didn't feel that at all today," Milligan said. "I really felt like we were locked in ... I didn't feel like there was any panic or tension today and I feel like that's a big growth step for us."

In other games this season such as the one-point loss to Niagara, Rider has gotten flustered and caved under the pressure of an opponent's comeback. This one felt different.

"There was that confidence [to] not letting [the lead] go," sophomore guard Makayla Firebaugh said.

The Broncos first lead came on the opening possession of the third quarter from a Schiffer bucket that sparked a mighty 9-0 run and 83% shooting from the field through the first 4:15.

Saint Peter's Head Coach Marc Mitchell called a timeout after the Broncos strong start to the second half that featured a defensive blog from Firebaugh. Saint Peter's never came back in the third quarter but did pull to within two after Peacocks guard Rachel Kuhl hit 2 of 3 free throws.

Schiffer knocked down another 3-pointer with 5:51 left that sent Alumni Gym into a frenzy as Rider went up 48-39. She smiled when asked about it. She knew it lit a fire under the team to keep the lead and never look back.

"It was perfect timing with [Makayla] running on the other side. Everyone was going toward her and that opened up my shot," Schiffer said.

Next up

Rider has Fairfield and Quinnipiac left on its schedule and with Quinnipiac being the team the Broncos opened MAAC play with, they are hoping for a positive bookend to a subpar conference slate.

Firebaugh is confident going into the matchups citing the growth the team has made since they last played Quinnipiac.

"A better team," Firebaugh said on what Fairfield and Quinnipiac will see. "I think we have a better chance because we've grown a lot. I don't know about them but I think we've grown more."

ONLINE

'I'M EXTREMELY PROUD OF THIS TEAM'
Club ice hockey fell in the first round of the ACHA Regional Tournament on Feb. 25 to OSU.

FIND THE STORY AT [THERIDERNEWS.COM](https://theridernews.com)

MEN'S AND WOMEN'S BASKETBALL PHOTO GALLERIES
Check out photo galleries of both men's and women's basketball games from this weekend.

FIND THEM ON [THERIDERNEWS.COM](https://theridernews.com)

'YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE GAMES LIKE THAT'
Baseball saw its first two losses of the season during a four game stretch over the weekend.

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