

Performing Arts departments restructure amid faculty departures

By Samantha Clark

Rider's Department of Performing Arts is entering the 2026-27 academic year in a period of reconstruction, with changes in faculty and production structure, after musical theater professor Robin Lewis and arts & entertainment industries management professor Todd Dellinger announced their resignations in June.

"This was an unexpected shift in both programs," said Sean McCarther, professor and chair of the Department of Performing Arts.

Over the course of the summer, McCarther worked alongside the senior administration and remaining department faculty to cover the courses previously taught by Lewis and Dellinger.

"In these searches, our goal was to find actively working professionals at the highest levels of their fields: individuals who are not only accomplished performers, but who also have a teacher's heart," McCarther said.

In addition to finding new faculty, former adjunct professor Carol Bentley has agreed to a one-year, full-time visiting appointment, where she will oversee dance classes and the dance portion of the program's recruitment.

Due to her long-time position at the university, Bentley is well acquainted with Rider's theater program and its students, providing a "tremendous help to both [McCarther] and the department," McCarther said.

Lewis was also previously in charge of directing Rider's annual senior showcase and mainstage productions, creating more open spots for new and returning faculty.

In collaboration with his colleagues, McCarther has identified a new artistic team for the crucial capstone experience that is the senior showcase, while maintaining Rider's relationship with the external agency responsible for planning and scheduling the live New York performance.

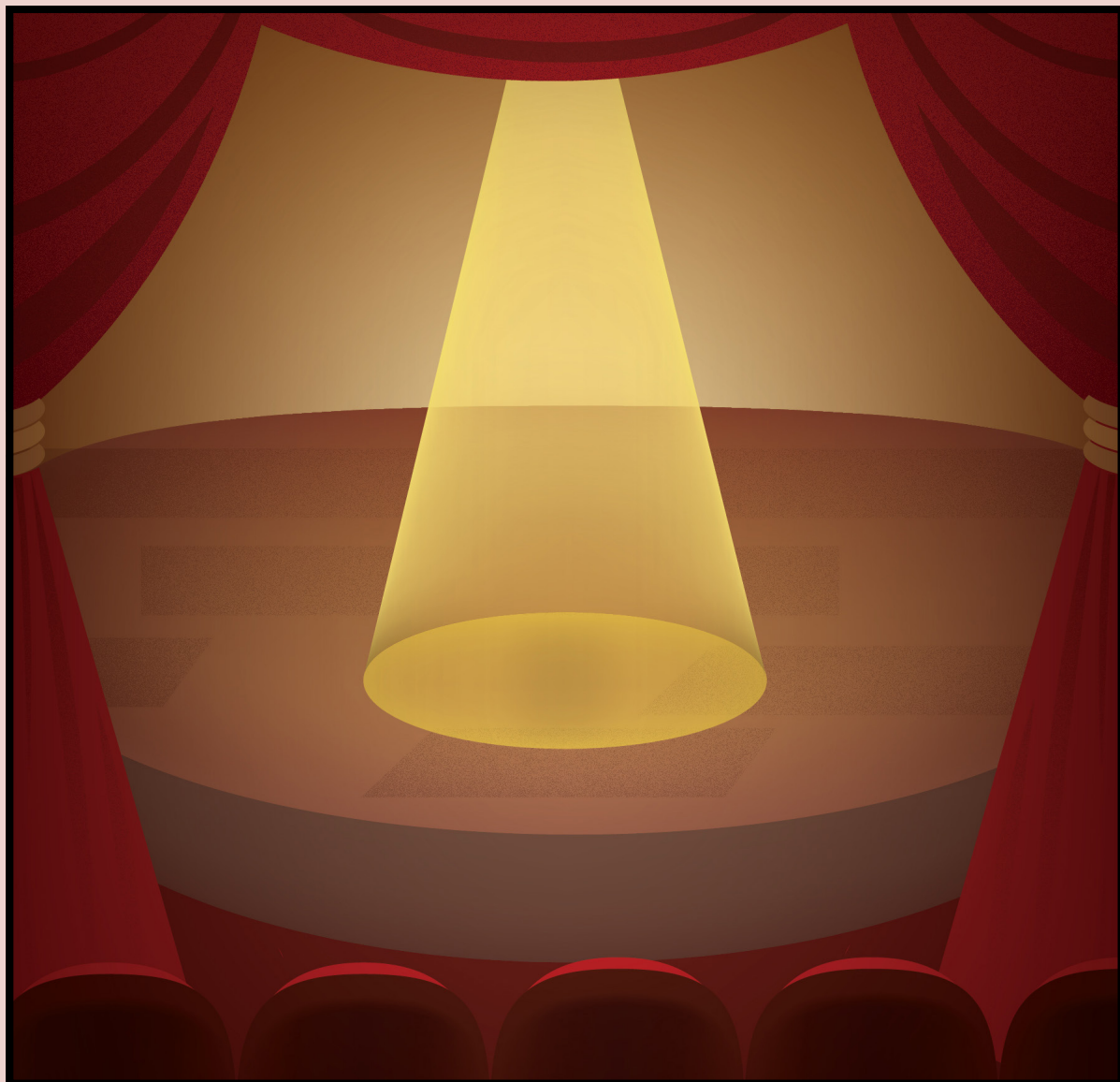
"We fully expect to offer the same experience we always do, just with a different artistic team in place," McCarther said.

Rider's 2026-27 musical season will consist of "Jesus Christ Superstar," "Catch Me If You Can" and a newly-initiated collaboration with Westminster Opera Theatre in a co-production of "The Threepenny Opera."

Due to Lewis' role in "Jesus Christ Superstar," the department, including McCarther, Musical Director Nathan Hurwitz and assistant professor T. Oliver Reid, worked over the summer to hire the fall musical's new director, Dana Iannuzzi.

"A dear friend of mine, T. Oliver Reid, who is a professor in the department, reached out mid-July and asked if I was available this fall, and I said, 'yes,'" Iannuzzi said.

Set to open on Oct. 23, "Jesus Christ Superstar" was cast prior to Lewis' resignation, as the program held all auditions in April.



Grace Juarez/The Rider News

After faculty unexpectedly departed from Rider, the Performing Arts departments work to restructure programs.

Consequently, musical directors were attached to the project, however, beyond that, Iannuzzi had full creative freedom. There were little-to-no design conversations or concept planning prior to her appointment, according to Iannuzzi.

While the department has undergone many changes, the student experience and overall community-like culture of the musical theater program has not faltered.

Senior musical theater major Presley Muirhead said, "I'm really excited to get to work with someone new. ... A lot of the team is still the same. We still have the same music director, but it'll be a new director and choreographer, which will be really cool to see their vision."

Muirhead said that positive changes have been seen in the coursework, as well, with the dance courses now being led by three rotating professors throughout the semester, allowing students to learn from guest directors and multiple new teachers.

New and returning students alike share this

optimism. Freshman musical theater major Aaron Crowell said, "A lot of people in my class who were supposed to come here decided to leave. ... For the people that stuck it out, they ended up taking a really good care of it. They got everything under control, so it seems like everything was handled in a professional way. It's good to come here with that."

Crowell spoke of the positive atmosphere that encapsulates the musical theater department at Rider, making it "hard for [him] to want to leave at this point," something that has not changed with the difference in staff.

"I have so much sympathy for the faculty. ... They got a lot of this thrown into their laps with no heads up or anything, and they've been doing a really great job to find new people, and I know they have our best interests at heart," Muirhead said. "I am so glad I chose Rider. I love the faculty, I love all of the community I've met. ... I've loved my experience in this program."

INSIDE

UPCOMING FILM FESTIVAL AT RIDER

Pragda Spanish Language Film Festival returns to campus.

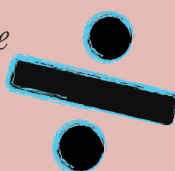
PAGE 4



ED SHEERAN CREATES A "DIVIDE" IN FANBASE

Drama spawned from the Loop Tour.

PAGE 5



BRONCS SPLIT WEEK, UNDEFEATED IN NEC PLAY

Rider field hockey won their first NEC game of the year.

PAGE 8



The cost of artificial intelligence: Environmental catastrophe

By Cal Sutton and Jorge Cevallos

Data centers have emerged at an unprecedented rate, and without proper planning, their emergence could lead to an economic disaster, all while costing the taxpayer more money on their energy bill, according to the Environmental and Energy Study Institute.

PJM grid, an independent market monitor that serves New Jersey, says data centers are responsible for 63% of the cost increase in the most recent capacity auction and will continue to cause record-high costs for electricity in the next decade.

This translates to roughly \$9.3 billion in higher electric rates, according to PJM.

According to a map that locates data centers in New Jersey, published by South Jersey Climate News, there are currently 80 active data centers in the state, with more planned and on the way.

The average data center, powered by artificial intelligence in New Jersey requires approximately 100 megawatts of power, equivalent to powering an estimated 80,000 homes in the United States.

AI data centers are cooled with clean water, which is necessary so as to not bring sediment and minerals through the delicate processors that run the center, according to an article published by The Delaware River Keeper Network, an organization that focuses on topics relating to the decisions that impact the health of the Delaware River Watershed waterways at the federal level.

Energy costs are not the only thing that individuals are worried about, as the less-obvious environmental cost of data centers can be unprecedented.

Daniel Druckenbrod, a professor of environmental science and chair of the Department of Natural and Health Sciences, said that the energy required to fuel a data center can be detrimental to the environment.

“These issues largely fall within an area that environmental scientists refer to as the ‘Food-Energy-Water Nexus’ or FEW Nexus,” Druckenbrod said. “Our use of these three kinds of resources are often interconnected and it presents challenges to sustainably manage our environment and the ecosystem benefits that our environment provides.”



Environmental and economical concerns arise as artificial intelligence data centers spread.

These environmental consequences are already beginning to take a toll in parts of New Jersey.

More recently, an article published by News 12 New Jersey says that a computer glitch caused a leak at a Data Center which then spilled 5,000 gallons of diesel fuel into a tributary of the Hackensack River, only 58 miles away from Rider by car.

This also highlights the underrisk of relying solely on technology that has been rolled out at the rate Americans have not seen since the Industrial Revolution.

“Data centers require a lot of energy ... the sources of that energy may vary by location, but when they include fossil fuels — such as natural gas, coal, diesel or oil — then they could also impact the atmosphere through air pollution and the release of additional

greenhouse gases,” Druckenbrod said.

Gabriela Smalley, an associate professor in the Department of Earth and Chemical Sciences said that AI-powered data centers can also have a large impact on freshwater.

“The impact of data centers on freshwater can come from the direct use of water to cool the servers but also from the indirect impact associated with electricity generation,” Smalley said. “In a coastal state like New Jersey, the changes in water flow and water temperature can also affect migratory species as they move from the ocean into rivers or vice versa.”

Water safety, energy costsefficiency and environmental impacts are all topics that can cause concern for New Jersey residents when it comes to the rise in AI data centers across the state.

Join us
every
Wednesday
at 4:30 p.m.
in the
Longstreet House
basement



Liliana R. Basille/The Rider News



An all-day event, Cranchella incorporated a slice of each part of typical Rider student life to show to prospective students.

Reinventing the Rider experience with Cranchella

By Jenna Munswami and Teagan Rotella

Despite clouds covering the sky, Cranchella's return to Rider shone over the open house event on Sept. 19, showcasing school spirit to prospective students.

Cranchella kicked off at 8:15 a.m. with a continental breakfast for touring students and their families in Sweigart Hall and the Science and Technology Center.

Tour guides, decked out in Rider's signature cranberry polos, conversed with students and led them around campus as they made their way to the education buildings, such as Bierenbaum Fisher Hall and Lynch Adler Hall, for panels on everything the university has to offer, ranging from club sports to mathematics.

Chris McQueen, director of campus activities, stated that his favorite part of Cranchella was hearing Rider students share their experiences during panels and involvement sessions.

"Current students were able to talk about what they're passionate about and give prospective students a glimpse into the communities they could potentially become part of," McQueen said.

Panels started at 9:30 a.m. and went until 12:15 p.m. During that time, prospective students could tailor their open-house experience and find what really interested them.

Conferences were not just for future undergraduate students; prospective graduate and

continuing-education students were also invited to join.

As the temperature warmed up, so did the volunteers. Students and staff alike, many in Cranchella baseball tees, gave informational presentations on their respective organizations. Talks that focused on certain majors even had graphs to show off student research, highlighting the opportunities that Rider grants.

After the panels wrapped up, families had the option to either go on a tour of campus or grab a bite to eat from Daly Dining Hall, which was hosted by Rider's Senior Leadership Team. There was also a men's soccer game at 1 p.m. on the Ben Cohen Field, adding onto the campus hype.

The excitement was not over yet, as Fall Fest made its debut at 3 p.m., highlighting student involvement with tabling from campus organizations.

Alongside McQueen, Christine Mehlhorn, associate vice president of student affairs, focused on organizing the Fall Fest section of Cranchella.

According to Mehlhorn, a few years ago, Cranchella was an event hosted during New Student Orientation and Welcome Week. However, Cranchella's primary focus this year was recruiting potential new students.

"[Cranchella] allows prospective students and families to interact with current students in more informal ways," Mehlhorn said. "Rather than a typical presentation or tour, families get to see the real,

everyday energy of our campus community."

Fall Fest not only showcased student involvement, but highlighted Rider's welcoming community with inflatables, food trucks and music courtesy of 107.7 The Bronc, Rider's student-run radio station.

Current and prospective students alike made their way to the food trucks once Fall Fest began. Both trucks, Bronc Bites and Rita's Italian Ice, were very popular, but many people could be seen with ice cream throughout the event.

In attendance were the co-presidents of the Gail Bierenbaum Leadership Council, senior actuarial science major Megan Rothstein and junior information systems major Tasha Ipatova. They both shared their thoughts on the new version of Cranchella.

"Rider is a very easy place to be involved in and take a leadership position. That's like our selling point. So, I feel like definitely including more of a student voice in an open house was a good move," Ipatova said.

Adding on, Rothstein said, "I think it's a good way for the students to get more involved in the open houses, but also for prospective students to see everything we have to offer, even at a smaller scale."

These new changes will hopefully encourage more commitments to Rider, adding new faces to campus in the future.

The next Cranchella event will be held on Nov. 14.

Built by passion, united by dance

By Sofia Santiago

Rider basketball halftimes and timeouts would not be the same without the energetic choreography and sharp technique of the Rider Dance Team. Their one-and-a-half minute routines are known for hyping up the crowd during games and delivering fierce performances.

However, behind these seemingly effortless routines, there are hours of hard work and preparation.

This year, tryouts for the dance team took place over the course of a four-day-long process, starting on Sept. 14, and ending on Sept. 17 in the Yvonne Theater. During the first three days, dancers learned three routines, which they then performed both solo and in groups on the last day onstage in the theater.

"We got to do auditions earlier this year. Last year there were just some complications with the club, so we had to do auditions way later. But doing them sooner actually is so much more helpful because we have more time to prepare the team for success throughout the year," said Destiny Gardner, senior entrepreneurial studies major and president of the dance team.

The past few years have been rocky for the team, navigating difficulties securing practice space and club suspensions.

Maddie "Quigs" Quigley, a senior musical theater major and the vice president of the dance team, explained, "It just felt like no one was fighting for us. It was like we kept pursuing and we kept trying to get the dance team back up because it was that important to us, so it feels pretty good now."

Throughout the process, candidates were also asked questions about why they wanted to join the team, and what commitment meant to them. Their answers, along with their execution of the choreography were

all factored into the decision of whether or not they would make the team.

"We're looking for face, we're looking for energy. Of course, we're looking for technique, but I think that the biggest thing with the dance team ... What's most important is we want confidence," Quigley said.

Amber Peynado, a sophomore human resource management major and the treasurer of the dance team, recalled her experiences, saying, "The audition process was actually a little bit harder than last year, but it was pretty smooth. Everybody was very welcoming. Everybody was encouraging. Everybody tried their best. It didn't feel like a competition. It felt like a community coming together to make the team."

The team's first rehearsal was on Sept. 21 from 9 to 11 p.m., and their practice schedule consists of meeting for two hours, three days a week. To start practice, the team does a full-body workout targeting their stamina and strength. They then learn new choreography or work on perfecting what they have already learned.

They prioritize synchronization, when the whole team is keeping their arms or legs at the same angles and hitting the same beats of the song at the same time.

Freshman entrepreneurial studies and dance major Genesis Washington commented on her experience on making the team.

"The choreo was definitely more than what I thought of. [The choreography is] definitely faster, definitely more technique based ... It was definitely a challenge, but it was fun," said Washington.

Throughout the season, the team aims to learn and perform at least one new routine a week.



Liliana R. Basille/The Rider News

The dance team rehearses two hours a day, three days a week.

The dances are all made by Gardner and Quigley.

"I choose songs with a lot of energy, something that people will get hyped to. I also try to choose songs that are trending or that a lot of people know, so that we grab the audience's attention," Gardner said.

"I actually came into school with no hip-hop experience at all, and now I choreograph hip-hop. I'll rehearse from 9 to 11 [p.m.], and then I'll go home, I'll choreograph for like an hour and a half or so, and then the next day at rehearsal, I'll teach that choreography ... there's always combos going," Quigley said.

At the end of practice, the team cools down by stretching and participating in a hype circle, in which every member of the team has the chance to be in the center.

Quigley highlighted the importance of bonding as a team, "We dance to connect. That's what makes it so special."

Traveling through cinema: upcoming film festival at Rider

By Sofia Santiago

How do a group of Rider students, faculty and community members in Lawrenceville, New Jersey get transported to another country, experience another time period or immerse themselves in a different language and culture within the span of two hours?

The answer: through film.

The, now annual, Pragda Spanish Language Film Festival offers the Rider community the free opportunity to watch contemporary films that would otherwise be difficult to find access to.

Hosted as a collaboration between the University Library and the Department of Humanities, the festival is made possible due to a grant from Pragda's Spanish Film Club and the University Library's Lozano endowment.

Cynthia Martinez, associate professor of Spanish and Latinx studies, along with Sharon Whitfield, dean of the library, and Melissa Hofmann, the humanities and bibliographic control librarian, submitted an application for the grant in advance of the start of the semester.

Pragda is an independent cultural initiative sponsored mainly by Spain's Ministry of Education and Culture and its State Secretariat for Culture. The initiative has access to rights from a catalog of an ever-increasing number of recent Spanish-language films.

"What's really cool about Pragda is that it's really contemporary films ... they're a way of spotlighting new directors, or directors doing novel stuff," Martinez said.

Martinez carefully reviews hundreds of trailers and information about the films in the catalog, then selects five of them for the upcoming festival.

"[I] see what kind of themes are going on, what the content is like, what the film is really engaging with, and then I also try to be really mindful of representing a lot of different areas of the Spanish speaking world because this is something that we advertise to the whole community," Martinez said.

Hofmann, Martinez and Whitfield first applied for the grant in 2023 after hearing about its success at other universities nearby, such as Rutgers and Princeton. Rider hosted the festival for the first time in fall 2024.

"[By] watching Spanish language films, you're engaging with cultural contexts that maybe are new to you. Through film, you can also engage with historical periods that are not yours," Martinez said.



Grace Juarez/The Rider News

The film festival is sponsored by the Department of Humanities and the University Library.

"It's a low-barrier entry into experiencing something you probably wouldn't otherwise. That's how I see film. I'm never going to be a certain person in a different country with a certain experience, but I can viscerally experience it through, depending on how the film is made, through the various techniques of cinema," Hofmann said.

This year, the film lineup includes titles and directors from the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Guatemala and Spain, and involves a wide variety of genres and themes: from a dystopian-cyber thriller to a family-centered dramedy, there is something for all tastes.

"I have something positive to say about every single one. Even if you think that the idea of the movie may not be for you, I would still encourage somebody to watch it, because it reshifts your frame a little bit," Whitfield said.

"One of the reasons why I'm really intentional about picking films from a variety of regions is because I want students to get that diversity in both the linguistic and cultural context of what they're seeing. I think there's a ton of richness pedagogically with film, but then also just in general because it's not only students studying Spanish or Latinx studies who I really want to come to these films," Martinez said.

Martinez continued, "Anyone affiliated in some way with the Rider community is invited, very invited, enthusiastically invited to come watch the films ... They are free. They're open to the public."

The first film on the schedule, "Pérez Rodríguez," was shown on Sept. 22 at 2:45 p.m. in the Rue Auditorium. "Zafari," directed by Venezuelan filmmaker Mariana Rondón, will be screened Oct. 13 at 2:45 p.m. in Lynch Adler Hall 130.

A week later, on Oct. 20, "Justicia artificial," or "Artificial Justice," will be shown at 2:45 p.m. in the Rue Auditorium.

On Nov. 3, "Madres Paralelas," or "Parallel Mothers," by internationally-acclaimed Spanish director Pedro Almodóvar, will be shown at 2:45 p.m. in the Rue Auditorium, as well.

Finally, "Temblores," or "Tremors," from Guatemalan director Jayro Bustamante, will be shown on Dec. 1 at 2:45 p.m. in the Rue Auditorium.

If people cannot make it to the in-person film screenings, all of the films will be available to view online for a week

after their showing.

All of the films will have English subtitles, and include a discussion involving all those in attendance afterwards.

"If you're not a big talker, you don't have to say anything during the discussion, but you have an opportunity to hear what people's perspectives on the film was, and that can make film viewing so much richer," Martinez said.

The organizers of Rider's Pragda Spanish Language Film Festival hope that these screenings will expose viewers to techniques, stories and types of cinema not typically seen in Hollywood.

Martinez reiterated, "I really, really hope that folks will give it a chance and come to the films."



Grace Juarez/The Rider News

Ed Sheeran creates a “divide” with his fans

On Sept. 4, American rapper and singer-songwriter Macklemore gave a politically-charged speech while opening for Ed Sheeran at MetLife Stadium, in which he proudly asserted, “Free Palestine.” Ten days later, he was kicked off the tour. Macklemore, whose off-stage name is Benjamin Hammond Haggerty, has very vocally opposed the acts of violence that Israel has been committing against the Palestinian people.

Macklemore’s removal from the tour has sparked outrage, as many people — myself included — believe that artists have the power and responsibility to use their platform to speak out against atrocities and wrongdoings in the world; and by removing Macklemore from the tour, they are silencing activists’ voices. Following the massive amount of backlash, Ed Sheeran put out a statement last week in which he says, “I am appalled by the conflict between Israel and Palestine. The suffering and pain caused on both sides is a human tragedy.” Sheeran’s initial choice to not pick a side caused even more backlash, including the loss of 500,000 followers on his Instagram.

In his first concert since Macklemore’s removal, Sheeran said that “What happened in Israel at the Nova Music Festival on Oct. 7 was horrific and compounded centuries of Jewish pain,” while also calling the events in Gaza “catastrophic and unjustifiable and disproportionate.” When mentioning the Nova Music Festival, Sheeran is referring to a tragic event in which Palestinian military forces (Hamas) attacked a music festival happening in Israel on the morning of October 7th, 2023. Casualties were later stated to be 378 individuals who had been killed and 44 having been taken hostage. There were also multiple accounts of sexual violence committed by Hamas, and soldiers going through buildings and massacring festival goers in hiding. The attacks are now the worst instance of an Israeli civilian massacre in the history of the nation.

It should be noted, however, that recent investigations show evidence of Benjamin Netanyahu and the Israeli government having knowledge of the attack before it happened, and choosing not to do anything. This could be seen as Israel wanting



Is it time to press pause on Ed Sheeran?

Palestine to make the first move in order to make mass retaliation justifiable.

Sheeran has also stated that he has never wanted to be an “activist musician,” however, this statement is quite hypocritical of Sheeran, considering he has used his platform to speak politically multiple times, including the “Love Music Hate Racism” campaign in 2019 and his public support of the Equality Act, which was put before Congress in 2021, and for Ukraine in 2022 after Russia’s invasion. Photos of that last one, especially, have been resurfacing online recently in posts calling out his hypocrisy.

Similarly, Macklemore put out a statement on Sept. 14, where he said, “Ed was in a f---- up position.” He goes on to say that Sheeran was struggling since he wanted to keep his apolitical image, and that he does not blame Sheeran, but he will still stand for his opinions, no matter the cost.

I wholeheartedly agree with what Macklemore said at MetLife, and I find his words to be a pillar of hope in a world that is so hell-bent on feeding the masses negativity and breeding polarization. As I stated previously, I am a firm believer that artists of any kind

should be using their platform and reach to speak out, and the fact that Macklemore is standing his ground, even after events that could be the end of his touring career, is incredibly admirable to see him step up and use his platform for good.

Since Macklemore’s removal from the tour, every other opening act for the tour has dropped out in support, including Sheeran’s own backing band. Furthermore, several previous openers have publicly supported Macklemore’s statements. Macklemore has gone on to say that he plans to donate \$1 million towards Palestinian relief, equivalent to what he made in his brief tenure on the tour. Meanwhile, Sheeran’s promoter — and known American Israel Public Affairs Committee donor — Robert Kraft has announced that they are going to be donating \$2 million towards an “aid for the region” fund, but did not state specifically where the funds will be going. Because of Kraft’s ties to AIPAC, it is possible to assume that, instead of going to a bipartisan effort, this donation would be solely supporting Israel.

In my opinion, Israel’s actions against Palestine in the past couple of years reflect that of a genocide. There is no apolitical stance you can take when every single day, innocent people, including children, are being starved, tortured and killed en masse. To assert indifference; to not take the side of opposition and stand by it with integrity; to turn the other way and claim it is “not your problem” because it does not affect you directly, is the same as supporting the acts of violence against the Palestinian people. No one, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation or any other possible difference, should have their life taken away from them just because they are different. Every single person on this earth deserves to be loved; deserves the chance to live; deserves to not have their life stripped away prematurely. I think that Ed Sheeran is right in admitting his mistakes, despite how his original stance sounded, but I also believe he has a lot to learn from his contemporaries; individuals like Macklemore who are unafraid of sacrifice in order to use their voice for the greater good.

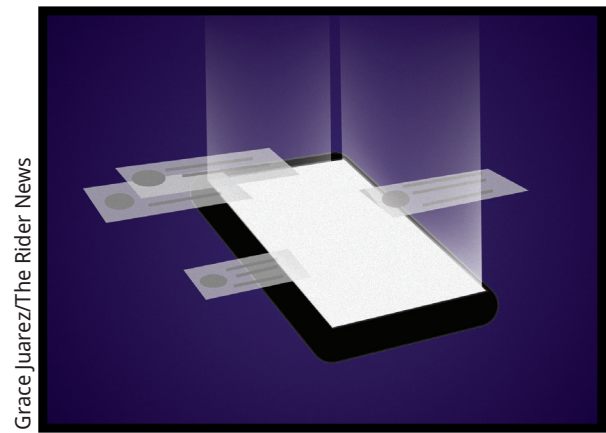
Ryan Denkovic
sophomore English major

The doom behind scrolling: A campus-wide epidemic

When I recently went on one of my daily walks around campus, I found myself looking up from my phone to see a lot of people like me. Students walking around campus, their faces bent down toward their screens heading to their next class. While I do not know their reasons to be on their phones, it made me wonder how many students chose to look down at their screens while walking around campus.

It is well known that people today have more access to technology than ever before, especially for students. Next time you take a walk around campus, try to count the number of students who are looking down at a screen — more so, try and count how many who are not.

In my case, I was scrolling through TikTok from the time I left my dorm, walked across the bridge and made it to the bookstore. I felt quite embarrassed, and a little ashamed, from how glued to my screen I was, which I think many of us can relate to.



Phones have polluted campus; students are glued to screens.

Technology has become a fundamental part of college students’ lives, as it is how we stay in touch with our family and friends at home, how assignments are submitted and a source of entertainment after a long day of classes and activities. However, it goes without saying that technology, especially smartphones, can impact students’ academic and social lives.

With how often students use the internet, it is certainly difficult to put the phone down when doing an activity, assignment or trying to go to bed. Some may think they have no willpower to turn it off, but there is science behind it. According to an article published by Psychology Today, using our phone, particularly for social media, releases dopamine into our brain, creating an addictive cycle to check our phones. So, while you may feel as though you are not disciplined enough to put the phone down, it is just how the program is designed; keeping you hooked while walking five minutes from class to your dorm!

It may not seem concerning that companies have mastered how to keep a platform growing, but take a moment and think: When was the last time you finished an assignment without scrolling on TikTok every 10 minutes? Is your screen time over six hours every day? When was the last time you took a walk around campus without staring at your phone? Did you notice how beautiful Centennial Lake looks when you are walking over the bridge? Has your phone kept you up late a night before an exam? It is these small instances that make you wonder how much a five-inch rectangle with a screen is affecting your life. I get it; going on your phone can seem like the perfect way to wind down after a long day, but your brain needs a break, too.

So, what good can putting down the phone do for you? According to the Mayo Clinic Health Systems,

cutting down your screen time can improve your physical health. It can aid in catching up on some sleep you may have lost, as the blue light from your screen signals to your brain it is not time to sleep yet! Reducing screen time can give you mental energy to get activities and tasks done. It can boost concentration, creativity and even motivation. Finally, reducing screen time can encourage more face-to-face conversations; it can aid in improving social skills and connection towards your friends and family!

For the most part, I think what most students want at the end of the day is to feel relaxed, so we instantly turn on our phones as a little reward for getting through the day, but there are alternatives! Reach for a book you have been meaning to read. Pick up a piece of paper and write how your day was. Listen to a podcast on a topic you are interested in. Go on a walk — without your phone. Catch up with others! There are so many things you can do instead of scrolling through your phone. I find myself less anxious when I purposely reduce my screen time for the week, which is something I recommend others should try!

Going on our phones is a tough habit to break; it is an action that feels innate, but it is not. Next time you are leaving class, try to focus on what surrounds you, not what is on your screen. Put your phone across the room next time you work on an assignment or even add a screen-time limit.

It will seem difficult at first; it is something I am still trying to practice. However, your brain and body will always appreciate some time to rest over scrolling through an endless amount of reels at 1 a.m.

Andi Arroyo
sophomore journalism and political science major

Adaptations and sequels: Hollywood’s most overused trend

Now, more than ever, we are seeing adaptations dominating the silver screen. Be it novels, comic books or even cultural phenomena spawned from the internet, it is safe to say that the theater is getting less original. But, is that really a bad thing? The argument has two sides: unoriginality leads to slop. Or, adapting prior work allows for modern creative liberties. Both points have their merit, and I find myself agreeing, partially, with both.

It is paramount that we examine exactly what is being talked about. I think looking at 2026 is a perfect example. Three of the largest releases have all been adaptations: “Project Hail Mary,” “Backrooms” and “The Odyssey.” Are these movies any worse because they are not original scripts? No. In fact, “The Backrooms” in specific, I believe is helped by it being an adaptation. While it was not anything stellar, I still found myself glued to the screen, seeing one of my favorite YouTube series finally on the big screen. So, while it is not wrong to say 2026 has had ‘unoriginal’ films, that cannot be seen as a demerit with the prior films mentioned.

That being said, franchises like Disney and Marvel have seen a major decline, as their entire brand is just adaptations and rehashing old properties. Disney, especially, has ruined their image by dumping out live-action remakes of beloved cartoons like “The Little Mermaid” or “The Lion King.” Those films did not change anything dramatic, not nearly enough to warrant a new movie. The only noticeable difference is that in quality, with the switch away from animation, ironically enough, making it seem lifeless and stale. It is most apparent in “The Lion King,” as it is



Grace Juarez/The Rider News

Is creativity still alive in an unoriginal Hollywood landscape?

near impossible to convey depth and emotion on a computer-generated lion’s face. To pile on, Marvel has churned out the same dissatisfying superhero movie for the last five or so years. They have become so cookie-cutter that the only difference is the costume the character is wearing.

One interesting thing with adaptations is remakes and re-imaginings. I already discussed the terrible Disney live-action remakes, but there are far more examples of this. One of the most iconic examples of this is when legendary filmmaker Stanley Kubrick made “The Shining.” The film was mired in controversy at first, especially from the author of the original novel, Stephen King. Kubrick took major creative risks, by changing much of the plot from the book. The themes, the actions of characters and

entire narrative subplots were changed completely. I would argue, however, that this is what makes the film so perfect. Kubrick turns the original story, a much simpler one about monsters and supernatural freight, into a psychological nightmare that allows for dozens of theories and interpretations to be made. There is no one way to watch and understand “The Shining” and that is what makes it so memorable and great, even though it is objectively an imperfect adaptation of the book.

To say that adaptations are killing cinema is patently false. Some pillars of film and culture have originated from books or other sources, like “The Godfather” (1972), or even Peter Jackson’s “Lord of the Rings” trilogy, which I would argue exceeds the quality of the books. That being said, it is impossible to avoid really bad films like “Elektra” or “Transformers: The Last Knight” due to the rising trend of studios taking ideas from established and popular storylines in other media. Maybe soon the theater will be entirely just spin-off movies of “The Big Bang Theory” or “Condiment King.” I want to see the landscape of cinema to be balanced; the last thing the theater needs is every new release to be a remake or sequel. Because while there will always be a diamond in the rough, it becomes more difficult to find those diamonds when they are all buried beneath the big-budget studios’ attempts to shove their slop down our throats all the time.

Alfie Eville
sophomore history and secondary education major

OUT ON CAMPUS

Queer individuals deserve to take up space

Media representation of diverse identities is extremely important because it fosters understanding, solidarity and a sense of belonging for queer individuals.

While some media representations are approached in a way that make queerness seem like a novelty, or perhaps, too obnoxiously portrayed, there are a multitude of actors who identify themselves as being part of the LGBTQIA+ community and break that stereotype.

One of my favorites, Jim Parsons, is a gay actor, well-known for his roles as Sheldon on the show “The Big Bang Theory” and as Oh in the movie “Home.” Parsons has won and been nominated for many awards throughout his time as an actor, alongside being out to the public since the early 2010s — shining light on the fact that LGBTQIA+ individuals can be, and are, very successful.

Ben Platt is an actor who came out as gay in 2019 and married his husband in 2024. He is well-known for his Broadway and film roles as Evan Hansen in “Dear Evan Hansen.” He has also successfully made music; my favorite song of his being “Share Your Address.”

Jack Haven is another openly queer actor, with my favorite of any film or television show they starred in being, “I Saw the TV Glow.” This movie changed my life in more ways than one. They have also acted in “Atypical,” playing the role of Casey Gardner. Being an openly transgender individual, using

they/them pronouns, they have given themselves much room to grow over their time in the acting world. In an interview about starring in “I Saw The TV Glow,” Haven said, “I’m excited to give myself the gift of being an out trans person.”

LGBTQIA+ identities can be, and are, found in many spaces. From film and television to politics, these individuals make queerness more accepted and acknowledged in public spaces.

Sarah McBride is a Democratic State Congresswoman representing the state of Delaware. McBride is a transgender woman — the first openly trans individual to be elected to Congress. Transgender representation in United States politics and government is very important to constituents who identify as LGBTQIA+, as representation gives diverse individuals a voice.

Harvey Milk was also the first openly gay elected official in the state of California, starting his term in January 1978, serving until November of that same year. He was open about his homosexuality for his entire life; running for office while the AIDS epidemic was beginning to spread, but prior to the “true” first case of the disease being diagnosed. He was assassinated by a man who was opposed to a bill he sponsored, proposing a ban to discrimination against queer individuals. Milk is regarded as a trailblazer and a martyr in the LGBTQIA+ community.

Some of the most popular, and some of my favorite,

musicians also happen to identify as LGBTQIA+. Freddie Mercury, a bisexual man and rock icon, was the lead singer of the band “Queen.” Cavetown is a newer-generation musician who came out as transgender in 2020; previously writing songs such as “Dysphoric” and “This is Home,” both commonly regarded as “anthems” by transgender individuals today.

Queer people deserve to take up space. They deserve to hold seats in government, be in star-studded films and television shows, have spots on the Billboard charts and simply exist.

The openness and acceptance of LGBTQIA+ individuals in many facets of typical life is imperative to spread awareness and make queerness less stigmatized.

Cal Sutton
junior journalism major



This article is part of the Out on Campus column by Cal Sutton to spread awareness and shine light on LGBTQIA+ identities.

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Rider suffers heartbreaking last-minute defeat

By Joey Poto

After a hard-fought battle, Rider women's soccer suffered a heartbreaking 1-0 loss to Canisius University on a late goal.

Controlling the half

Starting off as a slower game for action, Rider's first advance into the offensive zone was offsidess.

Senior forward Ava Ferrie took the opening shot of the match, and a few minutes later, junior forward Annie Small's shot missed high.

With three fouls from the Broncos and one from the Golden Griffins, the pace of play settled back down until a newfound Rider attack in the 30th minute.

Freshman forward Cali Friedel took the first shot, then junior forward Tess Ferrie launched the second at the bottom left corner, but it was saved by the Golden Griffins' goalkeeper.

A counterattack immediately initiated where the Broncos survived a pair of shots, one of which was saved by sophomore goalkeeper Ashley Moore.

In another quick flip of the field, Rider turned back into the offensive zone with a corner.

That corner led to a set of chances for senior back Courtney Carter, each of them being stopped by the Golden Griffins' defense.

Following that point, the Broncos would not produce another shot for the remainder of the half.

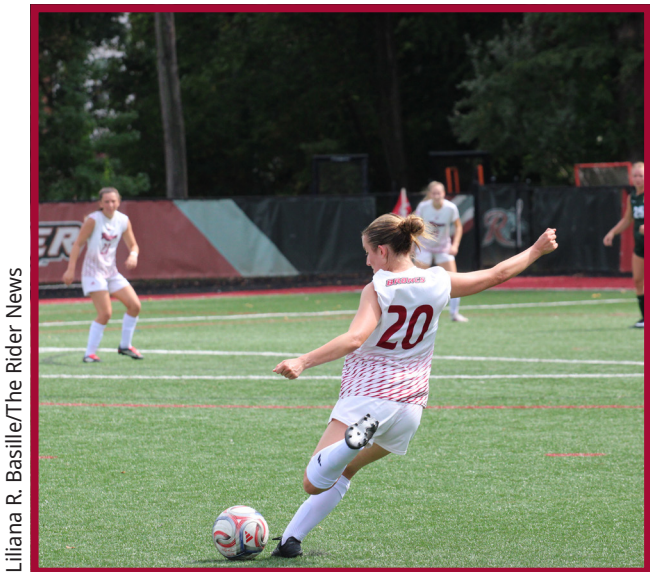
After another trio of fouls from Rider and one from Canisius, the Golden Griffins closed out the first half with a corner kick opportunity.

The first half of the game was all Rider, winning the shot battle 8-4.

Through the first 45 minutes, Rider looked like the better team.

The main killer were fouls, as Rider committed eight fouls to the Golden Griffins' four.

The Broncos committed double the amount of fouls that Canisius did, slowing the pace that they could operate with in the game.



Liliana R. Basille/The Rider News

Junior midfielder **Ava DeGeorge** sending the ball into the box.

Heartbreak strikes

In the second half, while the fouling calmed down for Rider, it actually increased on Canisius' side, but the Broncos were not able to generate as much offense.

In the opening minute of the second half, Tess found a chance at the net, which was saved by the Golden Griffins' goalkeeper.

A pair of corner kicks followed after, but the Broncos were unable to break through in their rush at the Canisius net.

Three fouls and a shot for the Golden Griffins and a pair of corner kicks for each side preceded a cold stretch of offensive chances.

That was until a 72nd-minute Rider corner and an 82nd-minute Canisius shot.

Friedel took a shot just a few minutes later before Canisius took control of the momentum in the final minutes of the game..

After a save from Moore, the Golden Griffins broke through at the flip into the final minute for a 1-0 lead of the match for Canisius.

The late score was devastating but the Broncos would create one final chance.

Junior midfielder Ava DeGeorge produced a shot just after, but did not find the net, sealing a 1-0 loss on a late goal conceded.

Shot totals were fairly even throughout the match with the Golden Griffins holding the advantage 11-9.

Both sides made three saves across the 90 minutes of action.

The Broncos produced four corner kicks on the day to the Golden Griffins two, however, they were outshot 7-3 in the second half and eventually surrendered to the pressure.

Across the match there were 25 fouls between the two sides.

The Broncos ended with 13 fouls and the Golden Griffins had 12 fouls.

Tess looked at the match on how the team can improve moving forward and where the intensity begins for the Broncos.

"I think we can take what we did well in this game and bring it into practice," said Tess. "Our practices are always intense ... when it's time for our next game, we'll already be used to that level of competition and effort."

While dropping the first two Metro matchups of the season, Tess put into perspective the mindset early to get back on track.

"It is disappointing not to get any points as we definitely deserved more from the game based on how the team played," Head Coach Drayson Hounscome told Rider Athletics.

The Broncos return to Ben Cohen Field to face Mount St. Mary's University on Sept. 23, which will be streamed on ESPN+. The Broncos will then return to the road against St. Peter's University on Sept. 26.

VOLLEYBALL

Rider falls for eighth straight to end road trip

By Lindsay Scarola

Rider volleyball ended their early season road trip, falling to the University of Pennsylvania, 3-0, and losing its last non-conference game before Metro play.

Station shutdown

The Broncos jumped out to a 3-1 lead in the opening set against the Quakers on Sept. 16 behind a kill and a block from senior right side Anja Kelly.

Penn would respond back by having an 8-0 run to take the lead by six over Rider, who ended that sequence with a kill from sophomore middle blocker Annabell Zachritz.

Trailing 10-4, the Broncos needed a quick run to cut into Penn's lead. A Quaker's service error, followed by an ace from freshman libero Olivia DeSaro and another attack error by Penn, brought the Broncos within three.

However, the Quakers answered with a 6-1 run, where a kill from senior outside hitter Rylah Robinson split it up into a pair of three-point runs.

In that sequence, the Quakers had doubled their lead against the Broncos, 16-8.

Rider continued to battle back through a 6-1 run in response started by a pair of errors.

Then, senior middle hitter Molly Rohde produced kills on the Broncos' next three points as the run closed with junior outside hitter Aubrey Baker getting the final kill.

Despite their challenge, Penn closed out the opening set, 25-18.

The Broncos tried to hold Penn in set two, as they were only down 6-4, but the Quakers scored four-straight to go up 11-4.

The Quakers continued to build momentum, using a 6-1 run after leading 11-6 to pull away on a 6-1 run and take a 2-0 lead in sets.

The third set followed a similar pattern to the first two, with the score tied at three early.

Penn continuing the trend, seized control with a 6-1 run to build an early advantage.

Holding a 13-8 advantage, the Quakers closed out the match with a dominant 12-3 run.

Penn secured the 25-11 set victory, Rider losing its final out-of-conference game of the 2026 season.



Photo courtesy of Faith Capolupo

Senior setter **Makenna Mason** preparing to set the ball.

With conference play approaching, Rohde expressed what improvement is needed moving forward as a team.

"I think, defensively, we need to focus on communicating more and trusting each other. Against Penn, there were moments where we could have been more disciplined and worked better together as a unit," Rohde said.

Completing a trio of invitationals and their non-conference run with a 1-8 record, the Broncos hope to take lessons into Metro play.

Head Coach Jeff Rotondo also emphasized what the Broncos will need to focus on moving forward for conference matchups.

"Serve and pass for sure, we need to be better at staying in system and getting other teams off the nets with their offense. As we head into conference play ... we need to definitely be more resilient and convicted in our goals and confidence," Rotondo said.

Now with all their scheduled non-Metro games out of the way, Rider will return home in the newly renamed Canastra Hammer Arena.

The Broncos will have back-to-back home games against Marist University on Sept. 25 and Siena University on Sept. 26 for two 6 p.m. matches, which will be streamed on ESPN+, and then the Broncos will travel to Saint Peter's University on Sept. 29 for another 6 p.m. matchup.

FIELD HOCKEY

Broncs undefeated in NEC play, drop one against the Hoyas

By Liliana R. Basille and Emma Geremia-Hartigan

Opening their Northeast-Conference play, Rider field hockey won their first game of the season, winning 4-0 over Long Island University before falling in a non-conference matchup to Georgetown, 2-1, at home.

Shark week triumph

The tension was already high on Sept. 18 against the Sharks, with the Broncs hungry to break their six-game losing streak.

The Broncs wasted no time in racking up shots on goal, with sophomore midfielder Ryleigh Dammingier breaking through later in the first period for the Broncs' first goal.

By the end of the first quarter, Rider produced five shots on goal, earning two penalty corner opportunities in that stretch.

In the last five minutes of the second half, the Broncs applied the pressure on the Sharks, leading to a goal scored by senior forward Liv Cox for a two-goal advantage for Rider.

The Broncs charged into the offensive circle in the first minute of the second half when senior defender Emma Bonshak found the back of the net for a 3-0 lead.

The last goal came with just under three minutes remaining, when freshman midfielder Eja-Maylin Mahdaoui scored the first goal of her collegiate career to close the scoring.

The Broncs finished the game with 20 shots on goal, 10 penalty corners and junior goalkeeper Jade Regnart made seven saves to secure the shutout and a 1-0 NEC record.

Battle to the final whistle

A back-and-forth battle in open play left the first opportunity to the Hoyas on Sept. 20, with a penalty corner that the Broncs fended off.

In the 10th minute, Georgetown turned up the heat with a penalty corner, however, Rider's defense blocked the Hoyas' shot.

A few minutes later, Regnart fought off a flurry of attacks, where she kept her composure to make three

saves. "[Regnart] was really fired up today to play," Head Coach Gina Carey-Smith said. "Usually when a goalkeeper has a great save, I know as a field player, that motivates me to be that much better. Our kids have to learn to bounce off of those great saves."

The Broncs first shot came in the second period when freshman midfielder Caroline Mauer's shot was blocked.

Regnart made four saves to keep Georgetown off the scoreboard.

Rider came out of halftime looking to create more chances with a penalty corner that, once again, had Mauer's shot blocked.

Georgetown found the first score in the third quarter and, just over a minute later, the Hoyas added another goal.

Senior midfielder Ang Borisow put the Broncs on the board off an assist from Bonshak, cutting the Georgetown lead to one.

"That was a big energy booster. I think we just have to keep that up and continue getting goals after that," Bonshak said.

Pulling their goalkeeper and adding an extra attacker for the final six minutes, Rider held an offensive push heading into the final quarter.

On four corner-penalty chances in the final few minutes, the Broncs were unable to score.

While they were doubled in shot output, the Broncs put up a hard fight to the Hoyas, finishing the game with eight penalty corners, including seven in the second half alone.

Throughout the day, Regnart made a group of stellar saves, whether in open play or from penalty corners, ending with nine saves.

Bonshak believed fans gave the team energy, but the Broncs need to create more offensively.

"I think it was a great turnout with a great audience here," Bonshak said. "We need to contribute more offensively and help out our goalie with all those saves."

Carey-Smith said Rider made mistakes, but the team showed improvement in overall play.



Photo courtesy of Peter G. Borg

Junior goalkeeper **Jade Regnart** preparing for a shot.

"We were making some errors, but in general we played very well," Carey-Smith said. "We were playing team field hockey, not individual hockey. Some old habits we had, came back to haunt us, so we have to fix those errors."

After collecting their first win of the season and a strong showing in their narrow home loss, Rider field hockey will return to NEC action on the road against New Haven University on Sept. 25 at 12 p.m. and Quinnipiac University on Sept. 27 at 1 p.m.

Carey-Smith said Rider's mistakes allowed some of its previous habits to return, but she still felt the team showed improvement in its overall play.

"We were making some errors, but in general we played very well," Carey-Smith said. "We were playing team field hockey, not individual hockey. Some of the old habits we had, came back to haunt us, so we have to fix those errors."

After collecting their first win of the season and a strong showing in their narrow home loss, Rider field hockey will return to NEC action on the road against New Haven University on Sept. 25 at 12 p.m. and Quinnipiac University on Sept. 27 at 1 p.m.

MEN'S SOCCER

Tense Metro opener ends with the Broncs falling just short

By Joshua Yuhas

Following their successful non-conference slate, Rider men's soccer took to Ben Cohen Field for their Metro Conference opener in a tense back and forth battle against Quinnipiac University.

Early charge

The Bobcats got the first chance early in the Sept. 19 game, but the physicality led to a run of fouls between each side.

About halfway through, the Broncs sent a low cross that found freshman forward Chiemeka Azurunwa, but his shot was saved.

On the following corner, the ball was headed off to the side to end the five-minute run.

Junior forward Emmanuel Dan-Adokiene came in as a substitute in the 27th minute and immediately pushed the pressure down the right side to force a corner.

"We had a lot of control. As you can see on the field, we had a lot of chances, just weren't able to put it away," Dan-Adokiene said.

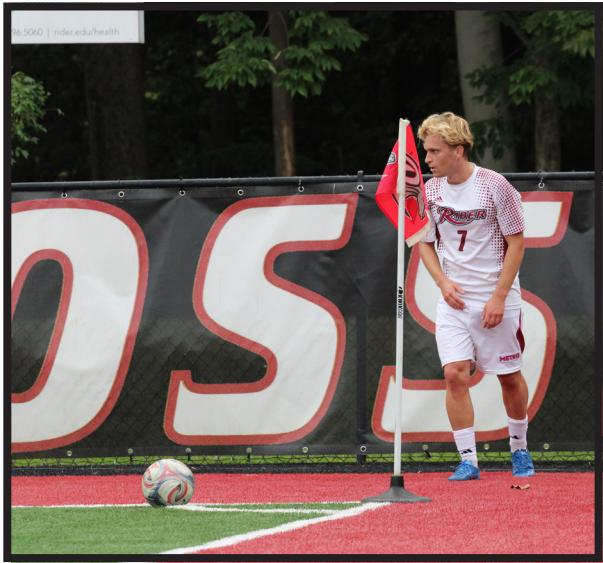
A common trend of the night, the Quinnipiac defense tipped the crosses to not allow a clean pass into the box for Rider.

At the 32nd minute, the Bobcats worked into the box where graduate student goalkeeper Marius Helias made a save at the right post.

After a Bobcat foul minutes later, sophomore forward Drew Heil worked off a quick free kick, and took a shot that missed high.

Late in the first half, the Bobcats made an advance with a shot initially saved by Helias, but back-to-back

Liliana R. Basille/The Rider News



Sophomore midfielder **Axel Lucas** setting up for corner kick. rebounds led to the ball finding the back of the net.

While a lengthy review was held to confirm the goal, the decision ended with the goal confirmed, leaving a 1-0 deficit for the Broncs into halftime.

In the opening half, there were 11 total fouls committed between Rider and Quinnipiac, with seven from the Bobcats and four for the Broncs.

Missing the final piece

The physicality remained in the second half and the Broncs' defense was put to the test when fending off an attack that Quinnipiac called for a review on, but no penalty was ruled.

"That's the classic conference game right there. It's going to be a battle at every roll of the ball with coaches yelling, that's the Metro," Head Coach Chad Duernberger said.

Another opening broke free for the Bobcats with open space to attack Helias, but he got his hands up and caught the shot.

Rider then produced a corner kick opportunity that found the head of Azurunwa, but just missed over the net.

In a physical back-and-forth sequence, the Broncs launched multiple crossing attempts into the box, but none would connect.

Rider came around with a major push around the 70th minute when two shot attempts from Heil were fended off before senior defender Ryan Vaubel's attempt was saved.

At the end of the half, the Broncs maintained their pressure with multiple pass and cross attempts into the box, but once again the Bobcats ensured there was not a clean chance.

In the final minute, Rider earned a free kick, but the Broncs were called for a foul and the match came to a close with a 1-0 defeat.

The Broncs nine corner kick opportunities left Rider feeling they were right there.

"I thought we were good in possession and entering the final third, building through the thirds. It was just the final piece," Duernberger said. "We couldn't make the right runs. We couldn't find the right penetrating pass."

The Broncs travel for their first road Metro Conference matchup of the season against Canisius University on Sept. 26 at 1 p.m.