

V-Ball Travels to Syracuse Seeking Redemption

By REENA GILANI
Sun Contributor

After having a rough time at the Cornell Invitational, which concluded in a 0-3 loss to Buffalo, the volleyball team is heading further upstate in hopes of acquiring a win. The Red will play Syracuse tonight at 7 p.m. at the Manley Field House in Syracuse, N.Y., hoping to improve its 2-7 record.

Volleyball

Cornell



vs.



Syracuse

Tonight, 7 p.m.
Syracuse, N.Y.

The Orange (9-4) came to Newman Arena last September for the 2008 home opener, trouncing the Red 3-0 in the teams' only matchup of the season.

"They have a few key hitters that are very quick and are very dynamic offensively, so we'll have to keep track of them," said head coach Sarah Bernson. "A good test for us will be that those hitters are on the outside, middle and right, so we're not able to key in on just one position."

Bernson noted that the Red's experience playing the Orange in the past will help the team catch its opponent off guard.

In addition, Bernson said that the Red is working on its passing and ball control, as the team had some troubles with this during the Invitational. These passing problems were most prominent when the Red was facing Colgate — a match that ended in a 3-1 Cornell loss.

"We'll need to be really consistent in our offense," Bernson said, noting that the passing troubles inhibited the Red's ability to execute its offense effectively. "Blocking is going to be key here."

Bernson wants a focus on ball control and setting distribution as part of this offensive strategy. Again, the biggest concern will be consistency in ball allocation.

She mentioned that the Red's strength include the team's scrappiness, which is the ability to keep plays



DAN SALISBURY / SUN SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER

Bend and snap | Head coach Sarah Bernson hopes senior co-captain Megan Mushovic will play a prominent offensive role in tonight's contest against Syracuse.

alive out on the court. One player she recommends looking out for is senior co-captain libero Megan Mushovic. Bernson hopes Mushovic will have a big night in terms of digs and hitting.

"We want to prove ourselves," Mushovic said,

expressing the team's positive outlook and determination heading into this match.

Because the Red has played the Orange before, the territory is not as unfamiliar as it was with the teams from the Invitational.

"They're a tough opponent, but we know them," she said. "They're feisty, and I hope we can rise to the challenge."

Some things the Red needs to improve upon, according to Mushovic, include being more aggressive and making the opposition feel intimidated.

Freshman outside hitter Deveney Pula, who was both overwhelmed and surprised when she earned all-tournament honors this past weekend, echoed this sentiment.

"Our strategy's going to be to take them out of their system," Pula said.

But in addition to the Orange being out of its system, the Red needs to work more on being in its own.

"We've been playing really well as a team these past few [matches] and have been losing by only three or four points each game," Pula said. "The team needs to work more on doing the extra little things — like making sure you get further back and getting into your right spot — and it's these little things that will help us win."

"We're going to play calmly and not let the other team get under our skin," Pula added.

Going in with a mindset to actively unsettle the Orange and trying to target the shortcomings that the Red displayed in previous games, the energy of the team appears to be very positive and prepared for this last match before Ivy League play begins.

"The team's energy is good because we want to improve upon this past weekend of play, and we think this is a great opportunity to work things out before we play Ivy," Bernson said.

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When Too Fair Goes Too Far

During the past two decades, I spent an absurd amount of time worshipping the NFL. I operated dozens of fantasy football teams, bought the latest Madden videogame as a rite of fall and spent upwards of

ed. On the other hand, teams that overpay players are often crippled for years. As a result, teams like the Detroit Pistons, San Antonio Spurs and Phoenix Suns were consistently great throughout the last several seasons as they reaped the



Zack Slabotsky

Eight Miles From 8 Mile

200 Sundays parked in front of a television watching football. That all changed before last season when I decided that the NFL had become too fair.

The NFL has zoomed past competitive balance and landed in a state of borderline randomness. Thanks to a rigid salary cap and non-guaranteed player contracts, it is nearly impossible for any team to maintain a long-term edge. In the NBA, which has a "soft" salary cap that most teams exceed by varying degrees, teams that make prudent decisions are rewarded. NBA teams that lock up players to long-term deals below their market value are reward-

benefits of shrewd front office decisions.

In the NFL, such sustained success can typically only be achieved in one way: finding a dominant quarterback. While the Tom Bradys and Peyton Mannings of the world can break the mold, teams without such a quarterback have almost no chance of fielding a consistent winner. Each season every NFL team has the same budget to spend on players — the salary cap — and virtually every player's contract can be renegotiated. A huge percentage of players hit the free agent

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M. Soccer Hosts Local Rival Bearcats

By HANNAH FILLAS
Sun Contributor

Tonight will be an eventful night for the men's soccer team; not only will the players be celebrating International Student Day — an event planned in honor of the team's six represented countries — but they will also be returning to their home turf to face off against local rival Binghamton.

M. Soccer

Binghamton



vs.



Cornell

Tonight, 7 p.m.
Berman Field

There is no doubt that Binghamton (3-3-0) will prove to be quite the challenge. With a young roster and a solid defensive line, the Bearcats will definitely be putting the Red (3-2-1) to the test.

"We've got a challenging opponent coming up," said head coach Jaro Zawislanski. "They've always been in or on the verge of making the NCAA playoffs, so our team has to be ready from the first minute on."

Cornell leads Binghamton, 8-3, in the all-time series between the two teams. However, the last time the Bearcats showed up at Berman Field, the Red emerged with a stinging 1-0 loss.

But this is a new year, and a new team for Cornell. A fresh, reenergized roster has allowed for a great deal of depth and frequent rotation of subs. And with three wins and seven goals in six games, the Red has already far surpassed its 1-15 record from last season.

"We've scored in every game, and our defense has done well so far," said senior forward Matt Bouraee. "We seem to be very motivated, and very excited to play and make up for last season."

That is precisely what the Red has been doing seemingly every time the players step onto the field. In fact, this weekend's matchup against Fairleigh Dickinson resulted in a satisfying 1-0 victory for Cornell — an achievement that can be utilized as momentum for tonight's game against the Bearcats.



TINA CHOU / SUN STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

We gonna run this town tonight | Matt Bouraee has provided senior leadership for the Red.

"We're on a high note from that win," said junior midfielder Scott Caldwell. "So we don't want to change our game plan up too much ... it's been working well for us."

But that's not to say the players have become complacent with their recent success on the field. Instead, the Red is constantly striving to improve as a whole, in order to be prepared for every opponent that it encounters this season.

"Each game is a fresh start. ... I expect the guys to be prepared and organized, and execute the game

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