EMU Spring Sports Kicking off the ‘03 Season

The Pressure is on the Pitchers

By Wayne Paxton
Contributing Writer

As spring rolls in and the athletic focus of the campus is on baseball, the EMU softball squad plays with less attention.

The Lady Royals only have 10 active players, barely enough to field a team. Head coach Karla Alderfer, now entering her fourth year as skipper, attributes the slim numbers to broken commitments and injuries.

“We originally had two other pitchers on the roster, but one left and another could not commit to playing due to academic issues,” said Alderfer. “I had stopped recruiting pitchers because we had four, an ideal number. To lose two is a big loss, and Molly (Beidermann) and Erin (Partee) have a long season ahead of them.”

Unlike baseball, the under-arm motion of a softball pitcher is natural, and the hurler can pitch longer and more frequently. The two-person pitching staff, therefore, is not as inadequate as it may seem.

So far the team is 2-6, coming off of a rough tournament at Ferrum, where top pitcher Beidermann injured her thumb and was unable to play. Partee was the only remaining pitcher. The team recently swept Randolph-Macon Women’s College in a doubleheader.

“The ODAC doesn’t know what to expect from them yet.”

With only one senior, Simone Bourdon, the Lady Royals are a young team, and can be optimistic about the future. And with loads of home games, Alderfer calls the EMU community to come out and cheer the women on. “We would love to see tons of fans at our games,” Alderfer said.

The top six teams are awarded a spot in the tournament, but now that Guilford has been added to the mix, the race for the post-season has become a bit more strenuous.

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“Our goal is to make the ODAC tournament, something we did last year for the first time in six years.”

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