



PHOTOS | MATEUSZ GAZDZICKI

Men's Soccer 2-2 draw

By Noah Nunez
General Reporter

After a long and tough game, the Owls' lapse in defense left opponent Franklin Pierce University to score a last-minute goal in the second half of the game, ending the match in 2-2 on Friday, Sept. 18.

Going into the game, the university was confident in their team building and abilities even against a difficult opponent like Franklin Pierce.

"This was a tough, a really tough team we were playing against; Franklin Pierce is no joke. We knew their record, but we also believed in ourselves, and we knew that for us to get something out of this game, we would have to dig it out," Head Coach Reuben Ayarna said.

In terms of digging out the win, the university opened the game with the first goal by midfielder Gisli Agústsson, a freshman, scoring his first goal.

This goal was then followed by Franklin Pierce scoring in turn, leaving the first half tied but with the Owls still feeling confident.

"We felt good," Agústsson said. "We felt we were better than them for the first time; there was not really much they did better than us."

Going into the second half, midfielder Jeremy Martin, a graduate, was able to score the second goal for the university, bringing them ahead with what he believed to be great team building from his team.

This attitude is something the Owls have been prioritizing, given the new team, building up new players' confidence not only in the game but out of it as well.

"It's a new team, a lot of internationals, so we're kind of still gelling, still finding our way, so these games help with that, and



Midfielder Jeremy Martin, a graduate, kicking the ball into play.

Home opener win



PHOTO | MATEUSZ GAZDZICKI

Men's Football team standing on sidelines before the start of the game.

By Noah Nunez
General Reporter

The university's first home game of the season ended with a dominant win against American International College, leading 30-19 on Saturday, Sept 19.

With this being an early game in the season, men's football were practicing hard mentally and physically to make sure their first appearance at home this year would be one to remember.

"We were quietly confident, with some apprehension. You're always a little nervous going in to early in the season. We felt good going in, but we knew that they're gonna present challenges," Head Coach Joe Loth said.

Men's football started off the game strong less than two minutes in with a 37-yard pass to defensive back Seth Weston, a graduate, to make an early statement about how they wanted this game to go.

This aggressive start showed exactly how their knowledge of American International College offense was paying off, being able to take control of the game and capitalize

on some important openings.

"As far as offence goes, we knew what to expect on what down," Weston said. "If it was third and short, we knew what they were going to do; if it was first and ten, we knew what was going on. We had answers dialed up at every stop."

The mental fortitude of each player is something the university has been specifically working on in the lead up to the game, focusing on making sure players know how to handle any situation thrown at them.

They put in time studying up on their opponent, looking at how exactly AIC plays, given Men's Football had more information available to them and more time to work against what they had seen. Practice makes perfect.

"We felt like we could compete with these guys; we had two weeks to prepare for these guys, so we finally got a good preparation. It was just coming out here and doing it," running back John Amaning, a graduate, said.

The application part of the plan is where they have struggled the most, leaving a lot of gaps between their

scores and not capitalizing on openings.

"We felt like we left a lot of points on the table; that if we were to execute it the way we could have, we could have been the first offensive. If we were to score touchdowns, this would have been a different game, not as close in the middle," Loth said.

This gap, however, became much more of a nonissue as the game continued, with the Owls able to make another touchdown in the fourth quarter, widening the gap to the point that AIC could not come back.

Even with this win, the Owls still reflected on specific things they know they should be working on and want to improve.

"Penalties jumping off-sides holding cannot do that," Weston said. "Half-time was just like, alright, we have to stay locked in; can't let up."

Overall, this game was a display of where the Owls are right now and what they need to improve throughout the season.

A great start for their home games, but one that shows signs of improvement that should be coming soon.

Tough battle ends in a loss

By Valentina Toro
Managing Editor
By Lily Rand
Photo Editor

The university Women's Volleyball team fell to Mercy University in three sets on Sept. 15, at Pelz Gymnasium.

Mercy entered the match undefeated and won 25-15, 25-17 and 25-14. The loss moved the Owls to 7-3 overall, while Mercy improved to 8-0.

"I thought we were scrappy defensively," Head Coach Lisa Barbaro, said. "Mercy's a very good team. They're undefeated coming into the season. They have a lot of offensive weapons."

The team finished with 24 kills compared with Mercy's 46. The Owls recorded seven service aces and six blocks, but Mercy's offense finished the match with a .324 hitting percentage.

Barbaro said she was pleased with her team's defensive competitiveness, an area the Owls had been emphasizing in practice.

The university kept plays alive defensively but struggled to turn those opportunities into points.

"We've really been trying to focus in on that — make an effort, go for

every ball," Barbaro said. "I think they did that. I think we kept a lot of balls off the floor. We just didn't execute by putting balls away."

The volleyball team had its best offensive performance in the second set, recording nine kills and a .162 hitting percentage.

The Owls remained within four points of Mercy at 18-14 before the Mavericks pulled away to take the set 25-17.

Setter Kimi Mitchell, a sophomore, finished with a team-high 18 assists while adding eight digs and two service aces. Mitchell said the Owls needed to respond better when Mercy increased the pressure.

"It's a game of mistakes, and the fewer mistakes you make, the better the outcome is going to be," Mitchell said. "I think we just have to focus on what to do in the next moment and how to score."

Barbaro adjusted the team's lineup during the match, moving to a 6-2 formation after the Owls struggled to involve their middle hitters.

The change was designed to give them another attacking option and keep three hitters available in the front row.

Mercy continued to

control the attack in the third set, recording 15 kills with only two attacking errors. The Mavericks hit .394 in the final set compared with the Owls .030.

Defensively, liberos Sarah Henault, a senior, and Alyssa Ferreira, a sophomore, led with nine digs each.

Right side Hitter Sydney Bennett, a graduate, and middle blocker Sarah Stark, a senior, each contributed three total blocks.

Outside hitter Kerrigan Habing, a senior, led the Owls offensively with six kills and two service aces.

Bennett said the team knew Mercy would present a challenge but entered the match focused on competing with confidence.

"Just come out strong and realize they are a good team, but so are we," Bennett said. "Just come out confident and play hard and play for every moment."

Despite the loss, Bennett said the Owls can use the performance as an opportunity to improve as they continue through the season.

"We work really hard every day, and sometimes it's not always translating on game day, but we learn from it, and we move on," Bennett said.



PHOTO | LILY RAND

Setter and right side hitter Katie Bardak, a junior, spiking the ball.

Sports recap



By Draven Dabrowski
Sports Columnist

If there is one thing the Owls has shown early this fall, it is that there will be plenty to talk about each week.

From football picking up its first win to women's soccer team refusing to allow anyone to score, the Owls had another eventful week across the board.

Starting on the pitch, Women's Soccer has been nearly perfect to begin the season.

The university improved to 5-0-2 after defeating Pace University 2-0 in its first NE10 Conference game of the season. Seven games into the year, the Owls have yet to allow a single goal.

Seven games, seven shutouts and 630 minutes without allowing a goal.

Goalkeeper Makenzi Pastrek, a sophomore has been a major reason for the defensive success. She made five saves against Pace and has started all seven games for the Owls.

However, the defense in front of her deserves just as much recognition.

Opponents have managed only 14 shots on goal against the Owls this season.

While the defense has been shutting teams down, forward Elizabeth Bishop, a senior has been handling business on the other end of the field.

Bishop scored her team leading fifth goal of the season against Pace before assisting forward Gigi Pena, a freshman on the universities second goal.

Bishop now has six points over her last three games, and if the Owls can continue getting that combination of offense and defense, this team will be one to watch as conference play gets underway.

Moving from soccer to football, the university's football team claimed its first win of the season.

After opening the year with a difficult matchup against Division I Wagner College, the Owls returned to Jess Dow Field and defeated American International College 30-19 in their home opener.

Running back John Amaning, a graduate, had himself a day, rushing for 158 yards on 22 carries.

Quarterback Brandon Jorgensen, a graduate, threw for 215 yards, while wide receiver Seth Westover, a graduate, was his favorite target, finishing with 137 receiving yards and a touchdown.

The Owls never trailed in the game and pulled away in the fourth quarter, highlighted by defensive back Alex Perez, a graduate, blocking an AIC punt that defensive back Kelvin McKnight, a freshman, recovered and returned for a touchdown.

It was the type of performance the Owls needed as they continue their second season under Head Coach Joe Loth.

Football and soccer were not the only teams making noise this week.

Both cross-country teams put together impressive performances at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.

As September continues, conference play is beginning to get underway, and we are starting to get a much better idea of what these teams could become.

For more on this story visit thesouthernnews.org