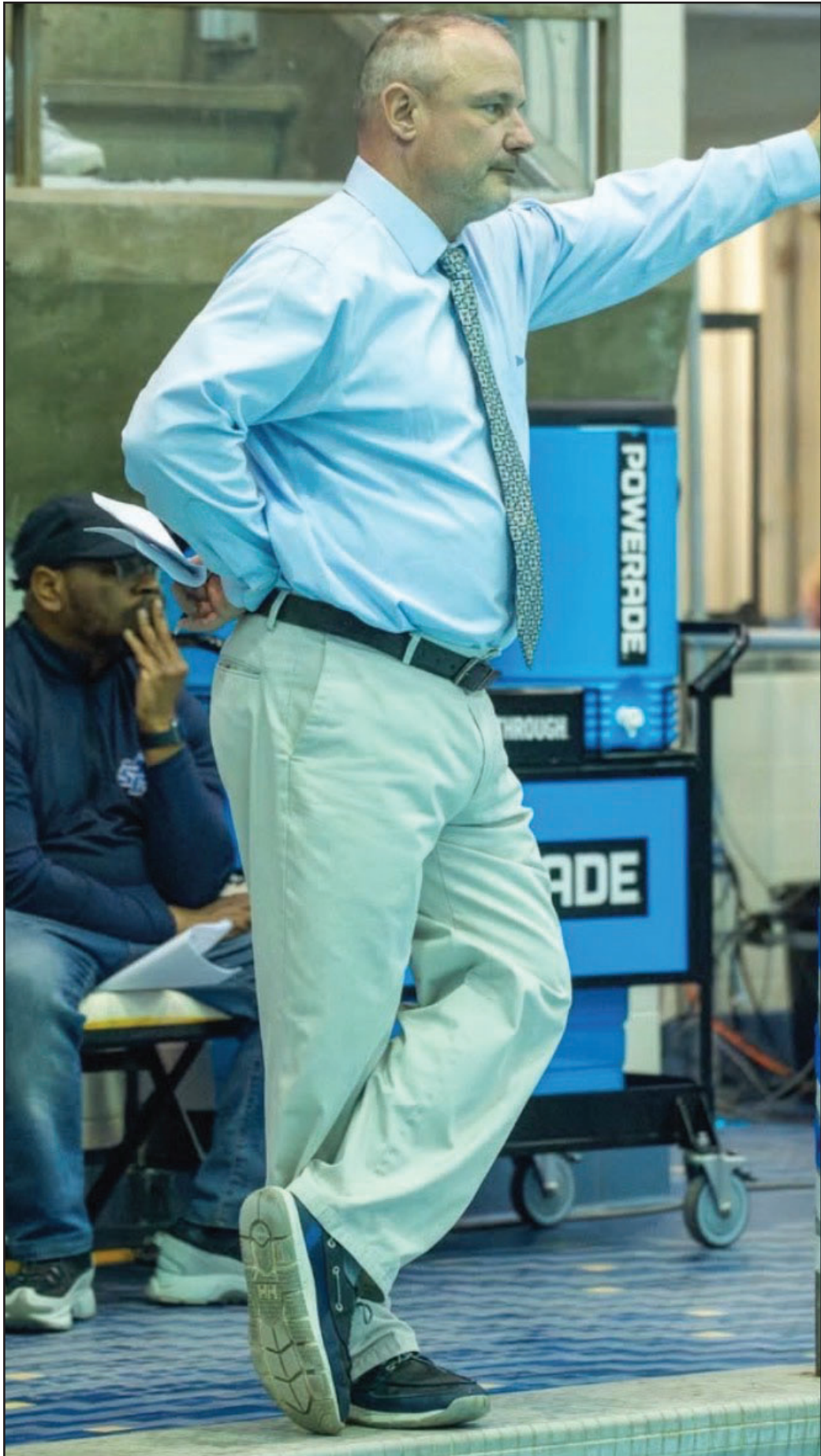


University mourns loss of Tim Quill



Tim Quill, the longtime head coach of the university's swimming and diving teams.

By Julian Markese  
Sports Editor

The swimming and diving teams competed with heavy hearts this weekend. For the first time in almost thirty years, they were without their beloved coach, Tim Quill, who died last week.

The women won their sixth straight NE10 championship. The men finished fourth. Molly Kennedy, a junior, broke the NE10 record in the 100 freestyle and won gold. Diver Elliott Speckhard, a sophomore, won a silver medal in the 100 meter dive.

The immense success of the university's swim program is credited to Quill.

"For nearly three decades, Tim devoted his life to the sport he loved and to the students he mentored. He built one of the most successful athletic programs in Southern Connecticut State University history and in the Northeast-10 Conference," Interim President Sandra Bulmer said in a statement released to the university community.

During Quill's 28-year tenure, he led the women's and men's teams to 17 NE10 titles each. He was also a mentor for young swimmers. He coached the SoNoCo Swim Club and the Cheshire YMCA swim team.

Natalie Starling, an associate professor in the Psychology Department, learned from Quill when she was in high school. She spoke about the impact Quill had on her.

"His lessons beyond the pool have had a profound impact on my path in life, and I'm incredibly grateful for those memories. His coaching was grounded in perseverance, teamwork and leadership which have shaped my lifelong professional development

and helped me give back to the Southern community," Starling said.

Starling's experience with Quill is a small snapshot of the footprint he left.

"Mine is only one of many stories of Coach Quill's impact. He is and will continue to be greatly missed as a shining star of Southern's legacy," Starling said.

Quill coached 121 National American Swimmers. He graduated Alfred University in 1989, where he was a four-time All American swimmer himself.

Quill's influence cannot be measured. The university's community is heartbroken and in shock.

The athletes on the swimming and diving teams continued to compete despite their loss. They are an embodiment of what Tim Quill's legacy will be at the university.

"His commitment, his steadiness and his genuine care for our student-athletes made him a pillar of this community. Tim's legacy is one of service, mentorship and heart. We honor his life, his work and the profound mark he left on every student he coached," Athletic Director Terrance Jones said in a statement released by the Athletic Department.

Quill is survived by his wife, Brenda, and children Lilianna and Timothy. Both Lilianna and Timothy are students at the university. He was 58 years old.

"In moments like these, I am deeply grateful for our caring, close-knit university community. Counseling and support services will be available to students, faculty and staff in the coming days," Bulmer said.

Funeral arrangements have not been announced.

Column:  
World Cup comes to U.S.



By Jay'Mi Vazquez  
Managing Editor

The upcoming FIFA World Cup coming to the United States feels like a historic and genuinely exciting moment.

The U.S. hosting the tournament places the sport on one of the largest stages available. It gives American fans the rare opportunity to experience the world's game in person rather than through a screen.

For young athletes especially, this kind of exposure can be transformative. When young people see elite players competing at the highest level on home soil, it makes their dreams feel more tangible and realistic.

When the spotlight is this bright, it tends to draw more attention to domestic leagues and youth programs. I imagine more children signing up to play, more families investing time in the sport and more communities pushing for improved facilities.

One of the most powerful aspects of the World Cup is how it brings cultures together. I love the idea of fans from different countries gathering in the same stadium, sharing songs, traditions and pride.

The infrastructure improvements and media attention could leave a lasting impact that benefits American soccer well beyond the final whistle.

In that sense, I see the tournament as an opportunity for the sport to deepen its roots in a country where it has often been overshadowed. At the same time, I cannot ignore how profit-driven the event feels. I worry that ticket prices will be so high that many everyday fans simply will not be able to attend.

When I see the emphasis on corporate sponsorships and luxury seating, I cannot help but wonder if access is limited to those who can afford premium experiences.

I am also concerned about how welcoming the atmosphere will feel for international visitors. With increased immigration enforcement and the visibility of agencies like U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, some fans might feel hesitant about traveling here.

Even if those fears are not universal, perception plays a powerful role. A tournament meant to celebrate global unity should not leave people feeling anxious.

The World Cup has incredible potential, but it needs to feel accessible and inclusive if it truly wants to reflect the spirit of the game.

R. Steinauer drops 31 on Yellow Jackets



Forward Rheyne Steinauer, a senior, shoots a three pointer.

By Draven Dabrowski  
Sports Writer

After a tough loss to Assumption University last week, the Owls bounced back with a dominant 74-59 win over American International College on Saturday, Feb. 14 at James Moore Field House.

Forward Rheyne Steinauer, a senior, led the way with a career-high 31 points, shooting with efficiency from the field and drained multiple three pointers, giving the team a big lead early.

"Anytime you need her, you call on her," Head Coach Kate Lynch said. "She gets the job done."

The game started with both teams trading baskets. The university used the 13-2 run to take control of the game.

Steinauer scored eight of her 31 points during

this stretch as the Owls built a 17-6 lead.

AIC responded with a brief push, but the Owls held a 21-13 advantage at the end of the first quarter.

Despite the Yellow Jackets outscoring the Owls 17-16 in the second quarter, the university was poised and in constant motion. They maintained their composure and limited second chance opportunities through strong rebounding from forward Tish Blackwood, a freshman.

Blackwood posted her 10th double-double of the year, with 20 points and 16 rebounds to help the Owls on the glass.

The connection between Steinauer and Blackwood has been evident all season, playing a key role in the Owls' success.

"Tish is always push-

ing me to be better. I want to be Tish," Steinauer said. "I am so honored that I get to play with her."

The respect for each other goes both ways on and off the court.

"We have good IQ when it comes to each other. They may try to double team us, but we always end up finding each other," Blackwood said.

During halftime, the university saw a performance by the dance team, who were joined by BLEACH!, a drag queen who is a university alumni.

The third quarter opened, and the Owls came out from the locker room hungry for a win. They created separation early and went on a 15-5 run to extend its lead to 52-35.

Steinauer and guard Jillian Martin, a graduate, each contributed four

points during their surge, as the Owls capitalized on defensive stops and efficient ball movement.

AIC tried making one final push in the fourth quarter, using a 9-2 run to narrow the margin to 60-53 with just over seven minutes remaining. But the Owls extended their lead back to double digits and closed the game on a 10-2 run to secure the 74-59 victory.

With this win, the Owls

improved to 18-5 overall and 15-5 in NE10 standings, strengthening their position in the standings as the regular season winds down.

The university will travel to face Adelphi University on Wednesday, Feb. 18 before returning home for their regular season finale and Senior Day against Saint Michael's College on Saturday, Feb. 21 at home.



Forward Rheyne Steinauer, a senior, and guards Maya Henry and Hope Fox, seniors, and Jillian Martin, a graduate, huddle up.

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Men's basketball wins too

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