Heartbreak in quarterfinal



PHOTOS | JULIAN MARKESE

Midfielder Kasper Murzinski, a sophomore, lies face down on the field.

By Julian Markese
Sports Editor

The men's soccer team's season ended in defeat in Garden City, New York. The Owls lost 4–2 to Adelphi University on Saturday, Nov. 8 in the NE10 quarterfinals.

"We start in January to get to this day. This is the day that you train for. These are the days that you wake up early and do the extra work for," Head Coach Kevin Anderson said.

The team fought, as they have all season with valiance.

"We created a family. This is a family," defender Edward Mensah, a graduate, said.

Scoring started early: midfielder Ryad Benmessaoud, a freshman, expertly struck a free kick past the keeper in just the second minute.

Benmessaoud was an impressive player all season, physical and always demanding of his teammates. He finished with three goals and two assists on the year.

The early goal was not detrimental to the Panthers' spirit. They responded in less than 10 minutes with a goal of their own.

For the rest of the half, with the game tied at one, intensity continued to build. Tough challenges from both teams led the referee into his pocket. Both Benmessaoud and midfielder Jeremy Martin, a graduate, picked up yellow cards in the first half.

Following a contentious run of play, Mensah was fouled and momentarily left the game due to injury. Upon his return, Mensah made immediate impact.

Martin curled in a corner kick and the resultant shot was parried by the keeper. Mensah guided the rebound into the net with his head.

Jubilant celebration ensued. The Owls held a 2–1 lead heading into the half.

"If you would have told me from the first game that we played, that we would get to this level, and compete and compete and compete; I would tell you that it wasn't gonna happen," Mensah said.

The second half was a relentless battle. Martin was handed a second yellow and subsequent red card. The team was gutted. Martin, who led the team in goals and assists, would spend the final 30 minutes in the locker room.

The Owls played the remainder of the game with 10 men. Defenders Jah Nyanforh, a freshman, and Tyler Doherty, a senior, did the thankless job of holding together the backline.

The Panthers converted the man advantage into a tying goal. Undisciplined passing at the back meant goalkeeper Diego Flores, a freshman, saw the ball fly over his head and into the net.

Shortly after tying the match, the Panthers' goal scorer was sent off for pulling the hair of an Owls player.

The game was made anew: tied at two with both teams fielding 10 men.

Forward Jake Novoshelski, a graduate, played with impetus. Novoshelski and midfielder Sam Sandler, a sophomore, caused frantic defending from Adelphi with their runs several times.

Novoshelski, in particular, was a sparkplug for the Owls this season. No one on the field played with more speed or urgency than him.

The offensive efforts of the Owls amounted to naught, and just when the game appeared to be headed for overtime, their defenses buckled.

The Owls threw 80 minutes of good soccer out of the window. A routine back pass was misplayed and became a dribbling own goal which dashed the hopes of the Owls.

"It's not about the play. It's not about the mistake. It's about how you go about it as a group," Anderson said.

At 3–2, with only 10 minutes remaining, the team gritted their teeth and went on. Sandler made more threatening runs on the right wing, earning a corner in the dying breaths of the game.

Flores came up field to aid the corner effort, leaving the Owls goal open, which allowed the Panthers to hammer the final nail into the coffin.

"This is a tough one," Anderson said. "This is painful."

For the home team, it was ecstasy; for the Owls, despondence. Upon the final whistle, most of the team collapsed on the field. The 4–2 scoreline was unfair.

"It's a game of football. Sometimes, it goes like this. We all know how soccer is," Mensah said. "I promise we're gonna make it next time. We're gonna make it; we're gonna make it. Trust me; we're gonna make it."

The journey, in the most painful way, was over. The team huddled together one last time. Mensah continued to lead. Anderson pressed his forehead against the foreheads of his sobbing players.

Anderson constantly speaks highly of his players but offered a particularly strong endorsement of one of his graduating seniors.

"Tyler Doherty is the greatest teammate that I've ever seen," Anderson said. "He's selfless. He'll do whatever it takes for as long as it takes or as little as it takes. He is a driving force behind a healthy environment that pushes us to get better."

Anderson must tend to that environment immediately. Next week, he said, they will begin scouting and recruiting for next season, starting the journey again.

For Mensah, it was his final collegiate game. Through tears, the captain contextualized his love and dedication to the sport.

"Whenever I'm stressed, whenever I'm going through a lot, I step on the field, and it changes everything in my life. It changes everything that goes on in my life," Mensah said. "This is what helps me to become who I am. To me, soccer is therapy."



Midfielder Jeremy Martin, a graduate, takes on five Panther defenders.

Weekly Recap

Women's basketball: 0–0 (0–0)

Next: 11/15 vs. Georgian Court University, 4:30 p.m.
11/16 vs. Mercy University, 3:30 p.m.

Men's basketball: 0–0 (0–0)

Next: 11/14 @ Post University, 5 p.m.
11/16 @ Bridgeport University, 5 p.m.

Football: 3–6 (3–3)

L 38-7 @ Franklin Pierce University

The team suffered their second 31 point loss in as many weeks. Quarterback Brandon Jorgensen, a senior, ran for the only Owls' touchdown of the day. The team returns home to celebrate senior day against Post University on Saturday, Nov 15. They lost 39–30 in their first matchup against Post earlier this season.

Next: 11/15 vs. Post University, 12 p.m.

Field hockey: 9–10 (6–6)

L 4-3 @ Adelphi University (OT)

The team reached the NE10 tournament for the first time in 12 years, where they fell to Adelphi University in overtime. Forward Keana Criscuolo, a sophomore, scored twice in the loss.

Volleyball: 14–6 (5–2)

L 3-1 @ American International College

The Owls look poised to make the postseason for the first time since 2022. The team's regular season will conclude at home against Saint Anselm College on Friday, Nov. 14.

Next: 11/11 vs. Adelphi University, 5 p.m.
11/14 vs. Saint Anselm College, 5 p.m.

Interim softball coach takes job full time

By Draven Dabrowski
Sports Writer

After guiding the university's softball team as interim head coach last season, Kate Bowen was promoted this past summer to head coach, officially taking charge of the Owls' program.

Bowen said that softball has always been a passion for her, and she always knew she wanted to end up in a coaching position.

"Teaching and coaching go very well together. I always knew going through my undergrad experience, I would love to be a coach," Bowen said.

Bowen's path to this university is filled with years of experience as both a player and coach. She was a four-year starter at NCAA Division I Manhattan College, twice being named Manhattan's Female Student-Athlete of the Year.

Following her college career, Bowen played professionally for the Stratford Brakettes. She helped the team capture three consecutive Major Softball National Championships.

She then shifted into coaching, first as a graduate assistant at Springfield College before being named the program's interim head coach in 2017.

Over eight seasons, she compiled a 180–88–1 record that highlighted her ability to build a competitive program.

In 2024, Bowen arrived with more than a decade of softball experience, taking over as interim head coach.

When the university offered her a promotion this summer, Bowen knew she could not turn it down.

"I couldn't be more excited to be here in this program," Bowen said. "I was always drawn to the competitiveness of this program. It's important to me to be here."

Since stepping into the role, Bowen's emphasis has been on building relationships with her players and creating a culture of accountability and resilience.

She wants her athletes to feel supported on the field as well as off the field, including in the classroom.

Bowen's promotion gave the Owls a steadying presence and a leader they have already come to trust.

Her emphasis on accountability and growth has stood out, giving athletes confidence that the program is moving in the right direction.

"I'm happy that she got the opportunity to be able to now do those things again and take this program to the next level," pitcher Ashley Lewis, a senior, said.

The sense of growth has been especially clear to Bowen's upperclassmen who have seen the team evolve under her leadership.

"She holds us accountable," catcher Karley Austin, sophomore, said. "She pushes you to your very best to make you better."

As Bowen looks ahead to the next season, she is focused on making sure the team takes it one game at a time.

She intends to turn last year's foundation into concrete results. Bowen's message to players, students and fans is clear: the program is moving forward, and the team is ready to contend with high expectations.



PHOTO | SCSU ATHLETICS

Head Coach of the softball team Kate Bowen.

Op-ed: Celtics build future



By Draven Dabrowski
Sports Writer

The Boston Celtics will always stand as one of the NBA's most iconic franchises.

From the era of Larry Bird to the rise of Jayson Tatum, Boston's identity has long been tied to banners, toughness and the expectation that every season should end in June.

But this year is different, and not in the "something feels off about this team" way.

For the first time in a while, no one is circling championship or bust. There is no parade vision board, no pressure-soaked headlines, no overwhelming talk of "this is our year."

It is not that the Celtics cannot win, it is that no one is expecting them to.

There is still talent. There is still pride. But this season is about learning who steps up when roles shift, when comfort disappears.

Jaylen Brown is the clearest example of that.

With Tatum sidelined, Brown has stepped into the No. 1 role, averaging 27.7 points per game along with 4.3 assists and 4.4 rebounds.

Yes, there have been some hair-raising moments, but this season is about seeing how he handles being the No. 1 option.

When it comes to Tatum's injury, it did not just take a superstar off the floor; it changed the Celtics' entire timeline.

The original plan was built around continuity: Tatum and Brown co-leading a championship run in their prime, surrounded by a roster designed to maximize their window.

With Tatum out, the structure shifts.

Suddenly, roles expand. Responsibilities change. The offense looks different. The team has to learn how to play without the gravitational force that every defense has planned for.

The downside is clear; the Celtics lose their closer, their engine. Some games simply slip away without him.

But the bright side is just as real: Brown gets a chance to shine, Josh Minnott, Sam Hauser and others are forced into meaningful usage. The coaching staff gets to see what lineups actually work, not just which ones look good next to Tatum.

Payton Pritchard has shown progress, with back-to-back 18-point outings earlier this month and a season-high four three pointers against the Utah Jazz. He is averaging 15.3 points, 5.2 assists and 4.0 rebounds.

But even with those performances, this Celtics team is not trying to look unstoppable, not chasing perfection. They are finding themselves.

They are winning some games, staying around the middle-upper mix of the East. But the urgency, the firestorm intensity this fanbase is used to, is not the story right now.

Instead, the focus is on development and letting the young pieces breathe. It is about seeing what Brown looks like as the centerpiece, finding out who can carry the weight and who needs guidance.

The difference is no one is sounding alarms. Because for once, the Celtics are not chasing a banner, they are building toward the next one.