

Braves' softball goes 4-1 at FMU Invitational

By Matt Smith
Sports Editor

The UNCP softball team posted a 4-1 overall record at the 2010 Francis Marion Patriot Invitational held March 12-14 at Freedom Florence Complex, picking up wins over Saint Leo, Alderson-Broaddus, St. Andrews and Queens.

The Braves opened the tournament with a 13-2 trashing of Saint Leo and followed the win with a 8-1 victory over Alderson-Broaddus, a 7-2 win over St. Andrews and a 4-0 win over Queens.

The team's six-game win streak was snapped in the Braves' final game of the tournament, as No. 22 Lenoir-Rhyne took a 2-0 shutout win over the Black and Gold for the team's only loss of the tournament.

In the Black and Gold's first game against Saint Leo, the Braves used a 12-run seventh inning to best the Lions after St. Leo held onto an

early 2-1 lead.

The Braves collected 14 hits in the inning, including 12 consecutive hits to route St. Leo.

The Braves' rally started with the inning's first batter, as senior Randi Pruitt homered to left field to tie the game. Sophomore Jamie Burwell made it back-to-back home runs for the Black and Gold, as the Braves' pitcher lifted another shot over left field to take the lead for good. The Braves would post 12 more hits in the inning, including seven consecutive singles by Loren Bartz, Lynn Grantham, Ashley Harrell, Jelena Shaw, Morgan Patrick, Courtney Hill and Holly Berry.

Burwell picked up the win on the mound for the Braves, pitching four innings of relief for starter Caroline Newman. Burwell allowed just one hit and earned five strikeouts in the contest.

In the Black and Gold's second game, the

Braves blew past Alderson-Broaddus 8-1 as Hill and Berry each went 2-for-4 at the plate. Both collected two RBIs in the Braves' 7-run win as the team posted four runs in the top of the sixth inning to cruise past the Battlers.

UNCP opened the game posting runs in the first and second inning before Alderson-Broaddus posted a run in the third inning to cut the lead to just one. UNCP would put up a run apiece in the fourth and fifth inning before a double by Hill scored Shaw and Harrell. The Braves posed two more runs on a double by Berry.

UNCP freshman Alex Hartshorn picked up her seventh win of the year on the mound after allowing just one earned run on two hits in four innings of work.

Knights downed

In the team's third game, the Braves took down a 3-21 St. Andrews squad 7-3.



UNCP head coach Lacinda Melanson (right center) speaks to the team before their game.

UNCP took an early 2-0 lead in the first inning and never trailed as the team posted runs in the first six innings to down the Knights.

Three different Braves picked up three hits in the game, as Shaw and Patrick finished 3-for-5 at the plate with Berry posting a 3-for-4 mark. Bartz finished the game with two RBIs to lead the Braves.

UNCP opened the game with a homer by Shaw on the first at-bat of the contest and added another run on a throwing error by the Knights. The Black and Gold would go on to post a run in the second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth innings to keep the Knights at bay.

St. Andrews managed just eight hits in the game and only two players managed more than a hit in the loss.

Hartshorn again picked up the win for the Braves, hurling five innings on the mound while allowing just two

runs. Hartshorn picked up four strikeouts in the win.

The Braves continued their winning ways in the fourth game of the tournament, picking up a 4-0 shutout victory over Queens.

The Braves picked up a run in the first and third inning before closing out the contest with two runs in the seventh inning.

UNCP picked up their first run of the game after Shaw reached base on a hit by pitch. Shaw stole second and advanced to third on a sacrifice bunt by Patrick. Shaw scored on the next at-bat on a wild pitch.

Shaw picked up the Braves' second run in the third on a home run to center field. UNCP closed out two more runs in the top of the seventh inning on a 2-run homer by Bartz.

Bartz led the Braves with two hits and two RBIs, as the Braves were only able to muster up three hits in the 4-run win.

Hartshorn picked up

her third win in the tournament after pitching all seven innings for the Braves. She allowed just five hits in the contest and recorded six strikeouts.

Bears snap streak

UNCP entered their final game of the tournament on a six-game winning streak, but the No. 22 Lander Bears stopped the Braves cold with a 2-0 loss to send the Braves home with a 4-1 record at the event.

The Black and Gold managed just two hits in the game, as Shaw and Patrick tallied a hit apiece.

Lenoir-Rhyne picked up two runs in the third inning, as the Bears powered back-to-back homers for the game's only two scores of the day.

Newman picked up the loss for the Braves on the mound after allowing just two hits and two earned runs.

Hartshorn closed the game for the Braves, pitching two hitless innings to close the game.



Black and Gold second baseman Jamie Burwell reaches down for a groundball.

Photo by Matt Smith

Brackett, Kemp honored by Peach Belt Conference

By Matt Smith
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The UNCP men's and women's basketball teams each had a member of their respective squads honored March 6, as freshman guard Shahmel Brackett and junior forward JaToya Kemp each picked up honors from the Peach Belt Conference for their impressive 2009-2010 seasons.

Brackett, a Florence, S.C., native, earned the Peach Belt Conference's men's basketball Freshman of the Year award while Kemp was named to the Peach Belt All-Conference second team.

"I'm really excited about winning Freshman of the Year [award], but I feel that I wouldn't have been able to win this honor without my teammates' help on the court," Brackett said. "I'm really looking forward to next year because we plan on playing more basketball around this time next year."

Brackett became only the second player from UNCP to earn the prestigious Freshman of the Year award, joining former Black and Gold great Frank Smith who earned

the honor during the 1993-1994 season.

The guard led UNCP in scoring, totaling 14.5 points per game. Brackett finished the year shooting almost 41 percent from the floor for the Braves, including a 34 percent mark from behind the 3-point line.

Brackett finished the year ranked 11th in the Peach Belt Conference in scoring and posted double digits in 19 games.

Brackett averaged close to three rebounds a game in his first season for the Black and Gold and was third on the team with 68 assists in 26 games for UNCP.

"I'm very happy for Shahmel and just want to say congratulations for this well-deserved award," UNCP head coach Ben Miller said. "We asked a lot from him as a freshman and he stepped up and delivered in a big way."

Ben Madgen of Augusta State picked up Conference Player of the Year honors while Augusta State's head Coach, Dip Metress, picked up the conference's Coach of the Year honors after leading the Jaguars to a 17-1 conference record and the regu-

lar season conference championship.

Kemp recognized

Joining Brackett atop UNCP's basketball award honorees, Kemp was named to the all-Peach Belt Conference second team.

The Elizabethtown, N.C., native put together a monster 2009-2010 season for the Black and Gold, leading the Lady Braves in scoring and rebounding this year.

Kemp averaged 18.1 points a contest this season while grabbing over eight rebounds a game.

"It is an honor to be recognized and to be named to an all-Conference team," Kemp said. "Of course none of my success would be possible without my teammates and my coaches who put me in a situation to be successful. Personal accomplishments are ok and I am happy about it, but I am looking forward to next year and hoping for my team to be recognized for our accomplishments we are looking forward to making next year."

"How successful the team is matters to me more than any personal accomplishments, but I do



Black and Gold freshman Shahmel Brackett drives to the basket for a layup.

Photo by Gabrielle Lovel

appreciate being named, and I am ready to work even harder next year to put my team in a situation to be successful," she said.

The junior finished the year ranked first in the conference in scoring and fielding goal percentage and placed sixth in rebounds per game.

Kemp's biggest game this season came against Armstrong Atlantic when the forward exploded for a

career-high 41 points against the Jaguars. Kemp finished the night 15-of-22 from the floor and went a perfect 11-for-11 at the free throw line. Kemp started in 26 of the Lady Braves' 28 games this season.

"We are certainly proud of JaToya and her accomplishments this season," UNCP women's basketball coach John Haskins said. "She is an unselfish young lady who

works hard every day. I am also proud of the efforts of her teammates to help her reach her goals."

Kemp was the only Lady Braves' representative on the all-Peach Belt squads.

Columbus State's Phebe Smith took home Conference Player of the Year honors while Lander's Kevin Pederson took home the Coach of the Year award.