



Baseball Partners with Team Impact

The defending NCAA East Regional champion Franklin Pierce University baseball team met its newest member last October during fall practice, as the team began its relationship with seven-year-old Domanik of Winchester, N.H. Domanik came to the team through Team Impact, which works to improve the quality of life for children facing life-threatening illnesses. He will have the opportunity to join the Ravens at events throughout the 2013-14 season and beyond.

Part of Domanik's day with the Ravens on Oct. 21 included a contract signing as part of Team Impact's "Draft Day" process. Analogous to a recruit signing a National Letter of Intent, Draft Day outlined the relationship between the draftee and the team and served to welcome Domanik to the Ravens baseball family. Domanik listed his favorite foods as pizza and strawberries, and Head Coach **Jayson King** made sure plenty of both were on hand at the Dr. Arthur and Martha Pappas Field for the afternoon. Rocky the Raven stopped by for the festivities as well!

The Ravens also had a bat distributor at practice that day, which proved fortuitous for young Domanik; the team was able to present him with a brand-new wooden bat – signed by all of his new friends – along with a selection of Franklin Pierce baseball gear. After the Draft Day proceedings and presentations, the

Ravens got to work for the afternoon, and Domanik was able to watch batting practice and interact with his new teammates next to the batting cage.

"It was a great event, and I know our players got just as much out of it as Domanik did," King said. "He is a terrific little boy, and we look forward to having him help our team achieve the goals we have set for ourselves in 2014."

Draft Day hasn't been the only time Dom got together with his new teammates. He joined the Ravens several more times during the fall season at the Bubble, including a pizza party with the team in December in the clubhouse to celebrate the end of the semester.

Team Impact is a nonprofit organization; core to its model is harnessing the power of teamwork by matching courageous kids facing life-threatening illnesses with collegiate athletic teams. Team Impact children are drafted onto local college teams and, to the greatest extent possible, become official members of the team for the duration of their treatment and beyond. For more information, visit <http://goteamimpact.org/>.

~ By Matt Janik, Assistant Director of Athletics



Photos by Brianna Somers



Tyler Bishop Quickly Gets into the Swing with Golf Programs

Tyler Bishop '08 is not new to the game of golf or Franklin Pierce University. His family has been involved in the game of golf for his entire life, and Bishop became quite the amateur player himself in high school. But he had to choose between golf and baseball growing up and focused more on the latter, which landed him at Franklin Pierce where he became one of the top closers in program history. His love for the school enabled him to remain at Franklin Pierce for the last several years as a development officer for the Office of Institutional Advancement.

Bishop's love of sports remained, and when Franklin Pierce announced last spring that it was adding women's golf to its stable of varsity sports, he jumped at the chance to take on a new challenge by becoming the head coach of both the men's and women's programs in Rindge. So far, the new challenge has been everything Bishop imagined.

"Building our women's golf program from the ground up has been a very exciting process for me," Bishop said. "Not too many people get the chance to start a collegiate program from square one, and I feel very fortunate to be able to do so." While the challenge of starting a new program has been rewarding, Bishop must also strike a perfect balance in working with the men's program as well.

"I have taken the approach of dedicating an equal amount of time and energy into both our men's and women's golf programs," he said. "Since the women's program is starting next season, I have spent most of my time on the recruiting trail to bring in high quality student-athletes to help build our program and be competitive from the start. For the men's team, I have spent more time developing our current players, while



Photo by Franklin Pierce Athletics Communications

also adding some key recruits for next year's team."

Bishop did a tremendous job working with the men's golf team during the past fall season. The Ravens hosted the 2013 Northeast-10 Conference Championship at Bretwood Country Club in Keene in late September, and got hot late in the season by producing a runner-up finish at the Saint Rose Fall Shootout in mid-October. Then they turned in a program-best, seventh-place finish out of 38 teams (including several Division I schools) at the prestigious NEIGA Championship in late October. The high finishes late in the fall helped vault the Ravens into the conversation for a potential at-large bid to the NCAA Regional in May 2014.

With the recent success of the men's program, Bishop believes he can parlay that into immediate success for the women's program. Since both programs will be under the guidance of the same head coach, Bishop thinks the teams will push each other to grow.

"Both the men's and women's program will be able to benefit from each other immensely. Each program will push the other program to be better on the golf course and in the classroom. However, I think the biggest benefit is for our University. Having two collegiate golf teams increases our exposure and brings a very high quality student-athlete to our school."

With men's golf already showing impressive results in the fall, and a number of female student-athletes already committed to the program, Bishop has proven his ability to get into the swing of things very quickly.

~ By Doug DeBiase, Director of Athletics Communications

(Author's Note: Franklin Pierce Women's Golf will begin competition in the fall of 2014).



Volleyball Raises Money for Rare Cancer Research

The Franklin Pierce University volleyball team once again proved to be difference-makers in the community in 2013 by raising \$5,000 for rare cancer research through the “Dig Lavender” initiative last fall. The initiative was held in conjunction with Bentley University volleyball and six other programs throughout the Northeast; the eight teams raised \$20,000 in total, which was presented to the Dana Farber/Brigham and Women’s Cancer Institute in Boston in early December.

The fundraising drive was organized by Bentley, whose head coach Sandy Hoffman was diagnosed with Adrenal Cortical Carcinoma (ACC) earlier this year and has been treated at Dana Farber/Brigham and Women’s since that time. ACC is one of the world’s rarest cancers; the color lavender is used as an awareness tool for various forms of rare cancer, just like pink is used for breast cancer awareness.

The teams raised funds throughout the fall season. Franklin Pierce held a Dig Lavender game in late October with the Ravens donning lavender colored warm-up shirts that were also sold on the athletic department’s online team store (proceeds from the sales also went to Dana Farber).

The Ravens also solicited donations from family and friends for the worthy cause, led by junior **Catie Swiderski**, who served as the team organizer for the lavender money. Swiderski has served in that role for the last three seasons. Franklin Pierce brought in money for breast cancer research through the “Dig Pink” initiative the two previous seasons. Under Swiderski’s leadership, the Ravens raised \$1,500 her freshman year, topped it with \$3,000 her sophomore year, and then went \$2,000 beyond that to raise \$5,000 her junior year.

“The goal each year is to raise more than the previous season,” Swiderski said. “We had our team meeting in the preseason and each player had the chance to set a personal goal for themselves. Mine was to break last year’s total for Coach Hoffman and her courageous battle. Bentley and Franklin Pierce might be rivals on the court, but we, as a volleyball community, should look out for each other off the court. I was glad to be a part of this important cause.”

Head coach **Stephanie Dragan** was pleased with the response from her team, as she stresses to her student-athletes the importance of winning off the court as well as on it.

“Our decision to support Dig Lavender as a program was a personal one,” she said. “Sandy provided a personal connection for us. I am continuously amazed at the team’s effort in support of cancer awareness and research through their fundraising. Each year we set a goal to raise more than the previous year, and I am appreciative of everyone that has helped us in obtaining our goal. We are happy we can help (as little as it may be), in the battle against this ugly disease.”

Ravens volleyball has proven to be one of the top all-around programs in the Franklin Pierce Department of Athletics over the past two seasons. In addition to qualifying for the NCAA Division II Tournament twice during that time, the Ravens have posted one of the highest team GPAs in the department and the Northeast-10 Conference. They also took part in several community outreach initiatives such as cancer awareness and fundraising for the victims of the Boston Marathon bombing last April.

~ By Doug DeBiase, Director of Athletics Communications



Photos by Dan Forget



Catie Swiderski, who led the charge.



Kim Berit Making Strides as New Bowling Coach

In just five short months, **Kim Berit** has proven herself quite capable as a first-time head coach and leader of the new Franklin Pierce University women's bowling program. Since Sept. 1, Berit has hit the ground running (or driving for that matter), traveling several times each month to New York and New Jersey to scout prospective recruits, secure a home facility for the new program, and look into conference affiliation.

The hard work has paid off. Berit has secured commitments from multiple student-athletes and found a home for the Ravens at Gardner Ten Pins in Gardner, Mass. – a facility that more than adequately fits the needs of a collegiate bowling program. The new recruits are starting to take notice of the advances in the new program.

“The girls who signed are very excited to be a part of the program,” Berit said. “They have been updating me throughout their season and also asked how the program is coming along. They already want to be a part of the program and help get the team off the ground as soon as possible.”

Berit's drive and maturity are quickly evident, and that determination has helped pave the way for the aforementioned advances. It can be easy to forget that she is a first-time head coach and only graduated from Adelphi University in 2012, where she was a member of the school's bowling program. Her recent experience, though, as a student-athlete has helped serve her well in working with University administrators on growing the program, while connecting with the potential recruits.

“This year has been very exciting,” Berit said. “Everyone has been supportive of the new program, and it has made me confident that I will put a successful program together. Having a supportive university makes the process easier, because bowling is a sport that can very easily go unnoticed, and I want to make sure that does not happen when the girls attend in the fall.”

Berit is also excited about the new venture between the school and the Gardner Ten Pins bowling alley. Gardner Ten Pins is a privately owned facility and is a member of the Bowling Proprietors Association of America. Private ownership means Gardner Ten Pins is better equipped to help facilitate Franklin Pierce's needs for preparation of upcoming collegiate tournaments; they can set up the exact shot patterns the Ravens will face for each particular competition.

Student-athletes will be able to train on lanes that will be properly cared for using a Kegel oil machine, while also staying current on their scoring average with the QubicaAMF scoring system. The facility also features a fully stocked pro shop and works with all the top brands and distributors in the Northeast region.

“They are just as excited as we are to work with them,” Berit said. “They are new owners, so they are hoping we can help them with their exposure by opening their house to us. Not only will we use them for practice, but we plan on working with them in the future for fundraising events and eventually tournaments.”

After just five short months, it is easy to see why there is so much buzz around the new program and its new head coach.

~ By Doug DeBiase, Director of Athletics Communications

(Author's Note: Franklin Pierce Bowling will begin its inaugural season in the fall of 2014).



Photo by Franklin Pierce Athletics Communications

