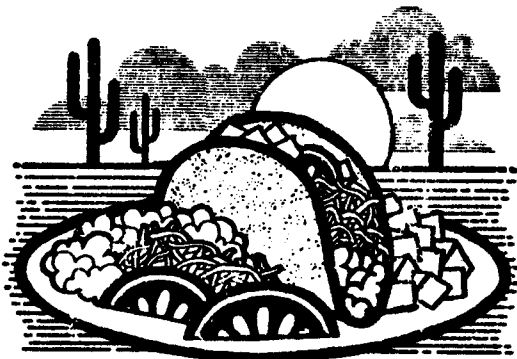




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Short roster won't harm baseball team's spirit

By Angelo Vecchio

Winter's worst has delayed the opening of Capitol's baseball season, forcing the team to cancel the first three games.

Pending more favorable weather conditions, the team will travel to Maryland on Saturday for a double-header against St. Mary's.

"We hope to come away 2 and 0. It's a good game to start with," said junior shortstop Barry Richards.

But poor weather is not the only obstacle the players face.

"The question is: are we going to have a season?" said Coach Ron Melchiorre. Melchiorre said the team had 31 guys out in Sept., but the number has been reduced to 13. Of the eighteen players no longer on the roster, fifteen are academically ineligible, and three 'just quit'.

Faced with the possibility of only 11 players, the team will "in effect have no substitutes" and a 35 game schedule, said Melchiorre. He added that he hopes "nobody gets hurt, there are no sore arms, and that it rains a lot."

"We were going to cancel the Capitol spring baseball, but when we went to announce that we weren't going to start the season, the team talked us into seeing how far we can go," said Melchiorre.

Senior pitcher and centerfielder Greg Livingston added, "we are going to do the best we can. We've worked hard throughout Jan. and Feb."

The players have engaged in individual training programs since September and have practiced indoors since January, according to Melchiorre.

"I think we will go as far as possible. We have got a lot of good guys on the team," said Richards. "The guys we do have are tight, we play as one team, not individuals."

Last year the Capitol baseball team finished with a 17-12 record and went to the playoffs. Seven players received all district honors and one player was honored as an All-American, according to Melchiorre.

"It's really a tragedy to see all this go down the drain," he added. Melchiorre expressed disappointment over the fact that "there are people on campus who can really play and help the team, but for one reason or another prefer not." Others, he said, "let me down and the campus down, they told me they would play and didn't."

However, "the kids we have now are a tremendous bunch," he added. Their goal? Not necessarily to win games, but said Melchiorre, "it is to ask the people we have to do the best they can do under the circumstances."



Photo by Jeffrey G. Shatzer

The baseball diamond at Capitol hasn't seen much action this season.