



Bombs away

Jim Rice of the Boston Red Sox christened the exhibition baseball season with its first home run, which came off Detroit Tiger pitcher Dave Romema. The Grapefruit League season opened yesterday.

Young netmen open season away

By RANDY BUFFINGTON
Daily Collegian Sports Writer

Although this year's men's tennis team is young and lacks experience, there is a strong desire to make the season a successful one.

"Our weakness is a lack of experience, but our strength is a willingness to work hard," said Penn State coach Holmes Cathrall.

Cathrall, entering his 15th year at Penn State, will probably include four freshmen in his six-man singles lineup when the season starts at 1:00 p.m. Sunday at Rochester.

The team has prepared for the upcoming season by touring the South during spring break and competing against 11 teams in 12 days.

Cathrall described the tour as "boot camp" for his players. "You send a man to boot camp before you send him to war. That's what we accomplished on the trip. We tried to prepare ourselves first," Cathrall said.

But youth and inexperience aren't the only problems facing Cathrall. This year's schedule has been upgraded to include Harvard, Columbia and Hampton Institute.

Last year Penn State recorded a school record of 18 victories in 21 matches and Cathrall said his team has a chance to repeat that performance.

"We hope for a winning season right now, and I take them one at a time, but there's a good chance for us to be a really good team," Cathrall said.

That enthusiasm is also expressed by junior Tim McAvoy, the team's No. 1 singles player. McAvoy also said the team could repeat last year's performance.

"We're shaping up to be a good ball club, and that will be the goal (18 wins) we'll be shooting for," McAvoy said.

McAvoy will have to replace Mark Darby, who went professional after last season, but Cathrall said the junior should respond to the challenge.

"He (Darby) was a fine, number one player and a good leader. But we have a fine person in McAvoy, who has the potential to beat quite a few good players," Cathrall said.

But McAvoy must also work with team

captain Alex Davidson in molding the team together.

"If we can just hold together and stay loose, even if things go bad, then we'll be all right," Davidson said.

Davidson also expressed faith in McAvoy. "McAvoy can play under pressure. The loss of Mark Darby takes away from our depth, but McAvoy has a chance to be just as good," Davidson said.

McAvoy and the rest of the team will find out just how good they are on Sunday when they face a Rochester squad that was beaten quite easily by last year's Penn State team.

"I would say we're going to have a good season, but that could blow up in my face," Davidson said.

Now Reed is relieved not to start

CLEARWATER, Fla. (AP) — Ron Reed once felt that relief pitchers ought to receive relief checks instead of six figure salaries.

After all, Reed was a starter for eight major league seasons, one of those special types who worked once every fourth or fifth day. Reed is the first to admit that starting to him once was what pitching was all about.

But in the off season of 1975, Reed was dealt by the St. Louis Cardinals to the Philadelphia Phillies. He was sent to the bullpen and designated a reliever.

It was a shock and Reed was tempted to rebel. But the 6-foot-6 one-time Notre Dame basketball player swallowed his pride. What he didn't know then was that it was the best move in his career.

Reed, who features a bullet-like fastball, and has developed a fork ball that baffles some of the best hitters in the National League, has become one of the game's premier relievers. He's had 46 saves in three seasons.

Last year, Reed was in 66 games, saved 17, retired the last two Pittsburgh batters in the game that clinched the Phillies' third consecutive Eastern Division title. He also discovered that relief pitching was not a synonym for relief check. Baseball firemen are paid pretty well, some more than starters.

Now, there is a rumor circulating the Phillies' spring training camp that if the Personnel Director Paul Owens doesn't come up with another starter to replace the injured Larry Christenson, Reed

might be reborn in that role. Nobody is more anxious for Owens to make that trade than Reed. He wants to stay a reliever.

Reed said he has spoken with Manager Danny Ozark on the subject.

"He felt like he was going to do his best not to make me a starter," Reed said. "He said he would rather have me out in the bullpen, especially the way I've thrown the last three years out of the pen."

Ozark fed Reed the same line the pitcher once told himself.

"He said, 'anyway, you don't want to work one day and then sit around for four,'" Reed recalled. "If you're a reliever, everyday you come to the park

you've got a chance to be in the game."

Reed didn't argue the point.

"I'd rather do it that way," Reed told his manager.

Reed admitted he never thought he'd hear himself say those words.

"But I found that for some unknown reason my arm was able to bounce back, and I'm able to pitch three or four days in a row out of the pen," he said.

Reed was asked if winning a fourth consecutive division title would be enough for the team.

"No, I don't think winning a division title is enough for any team whether it's the first one or the fourth one," Reed replied. "Naturally when you get that far you want to go to the World Series and win that too."

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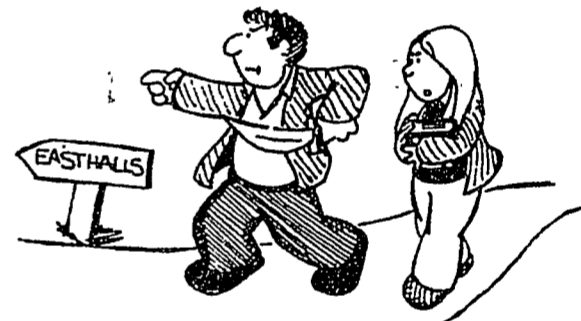
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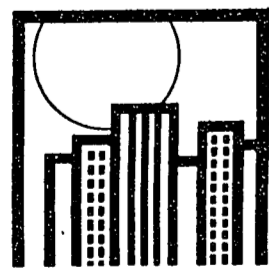
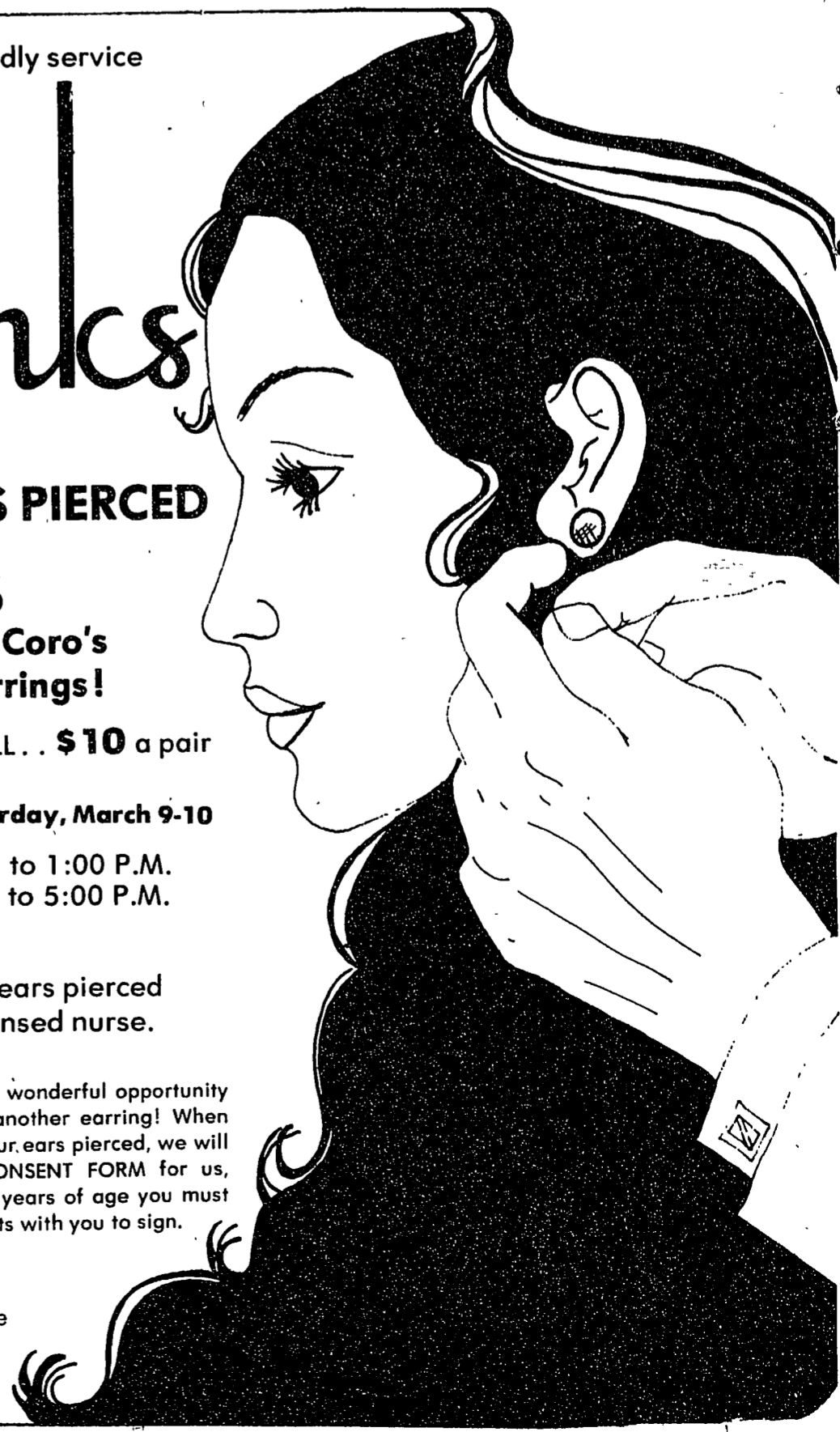
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