

THE PLAY MAKER

November 2012

Lakers Live!

DISCOVERING WHAT GOES INTO LIVE COVERAGE OF OSWEGO STATE SPORTING EVENTS

.....

Wrestling / A force to be reckoned with

Basketball / Looks to continue winning ways

Fall Recaps / Summarizing Laker action





Senior forward Chris Ayotte
shoots toward the net against
SUNY Cortland.

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BRING CAMPUS, SPORTS CLOSER

Location, location, location. It is a term heard most often when someone is trying to get the most out of their business, complex or any other structure. While less considered, location also plays a big part in the fan attendance of a sporting event, especially at Oswego State.

Only a few years ago, all of the Oswego State athletic events were held on the other side of campus in either Laker Hall, Romney Field House or outside, near the facilities. Once the Campus Center was completed in 2006, the Laker hockey teams were brought to the center of campus, to play in its state-of-the-art ice arena.

Instead of having to make the roughly half-mile walk or car ride, students can make the reasonable trip from their dorms to the Campus Center and watch Oswego State's most popular athletic program play. Each game attracts, on average, more than 2,500 people. "Whiteout Weekend" consistently sells out, with the line to get in to the SUNY Plattsburgh game stretching from the entrance of the arena to Poucher Hall.

But, out of all of Oswego State's athletic programs, hockey is the only one that gets this kind of attendance. Some may argue that it is due to the performance of the teams, or the sport in general, but location is part of the issue as well. It is common to hear students say, "I would attend that game, but I don't want to walk over to Laker." There are shuttles that can take students over there and plenty of parking for anyone that feels like driving. Even the walk over is not that bad for people that do not mind walking, but, for the events that take place when it gets colder, that small population dies off.

With the hockey rink in the Campus Center, those cold walks are tolerable



and much more convenient for the students that live on campus. It also helps the media organizations to have the hockey rink in the same building to improve their coverage.

All athletic programs get their share of coverage at times, but, by being on the other side of Route 104, they can be forgotten easily. By bringing more sports to main campus, they will all benefit. It will bring more attention to each sport and in return hopefully bigger crowds will be in attendance.

The Oswego State men's basketball team is probably the next largest team in popularity and, being located in Laker Hall, is able to attract a decent-sized crowd, but not nearly the size they are capable of attracting. Coming off of a terrific season last year, the basketball team would be a great athletic program to experiment with bringing to main campus. During the men's basketball exhibition game against Queen's University on Nov. 2, about half of the stands

were filled, but many left after the first half. Having the games located on main campus not only would retain the audience at Laker Hall, but significantly increase it.

The hockey rink is 200 feet by 85 feet, while the basketball court is 94 feet by 50 feet. If the rink can be altered for an Oswego State version of "The Hunger Games," then there is no reason not to try out a basketball game in the rink as well.

Oswego State has shown it isn't afraid to make renovations or build new buildings. With the renovation of Romney Field House, students could be interested to see the facility and check out more sporting events, but it probably would not hurt to look into bringing more athletic programs to main campus as they did with the hockey programs.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nick Graziano".

FAN RESPONSE CONTROLS HOCKEY GAME ENVIRONMENT

During my time here at Oswego State I have been lucky enough to see the Lakers from two different perspectives: as a fan and as a journalist. Regardless of whether I am seated in the press box or the student section, I am always cheering for our Lakers to win. Something I get to do that most people don't is view the fans in two different forms: being one of them while sitting with other students and as an outsider from the other side of the arena. So far this season I have noticed from the press box some new student-section behaviors that had not been evident before; some of them are good, and some of them are not.

Maybe I never noticed them before because we rarely ever lose, but something I noticed recently is that when the Lakers go down, the fans go silent. This silence was especially apparent during the exhibition game against the U.S. Under-18 National team. The final score

was 2-0, and for the majority of the game the Lakers weren't out for the count. While they didn't score, they did have chances; they could have scored. This made it all the more surprising that there was an eerie silence that fell over the arena during the better half of the game. There were points in the second and third periods where the loudest sound was the puck slapping against a player's stick on a pass; at a Laker hockey game that should never happen. I'm not going to say that more fan support would have changed the outcome of the game, but it is possible that it could have fired up the team and given them some extra drive. The exhibition did take place on Family and Friends Weekend, so I would like to think that contributed to the lack of support.

With that being said, the student section has picked it up in the past few games in terms of positive Laker pride. A few observations from the press box have been some clever new traditions by fans that I hope will

continue through the season. My personal favorite was the "bad ham" sign held by some fans behind the goal. The word "bad" accompanied by a picture of some ham is a hilarious way to show support for forward Kyle Badham, and that is something we can all appreciate. At the Elmira game on Oct. 27 there was another group who spelled "TITANIC" on their chests for forward David Titanic. Other people in the section wore funny wigs, costumes and a few people were still trying to run with the morph suit thing. I would love to see more people cheering in different ways like this; maybe if it becomes popular enough they will even get their own article in *The Oswegonian*. These are great ways to show Laker pride and also create a sense of camaraderie in the student-section that has been lacking as of late.

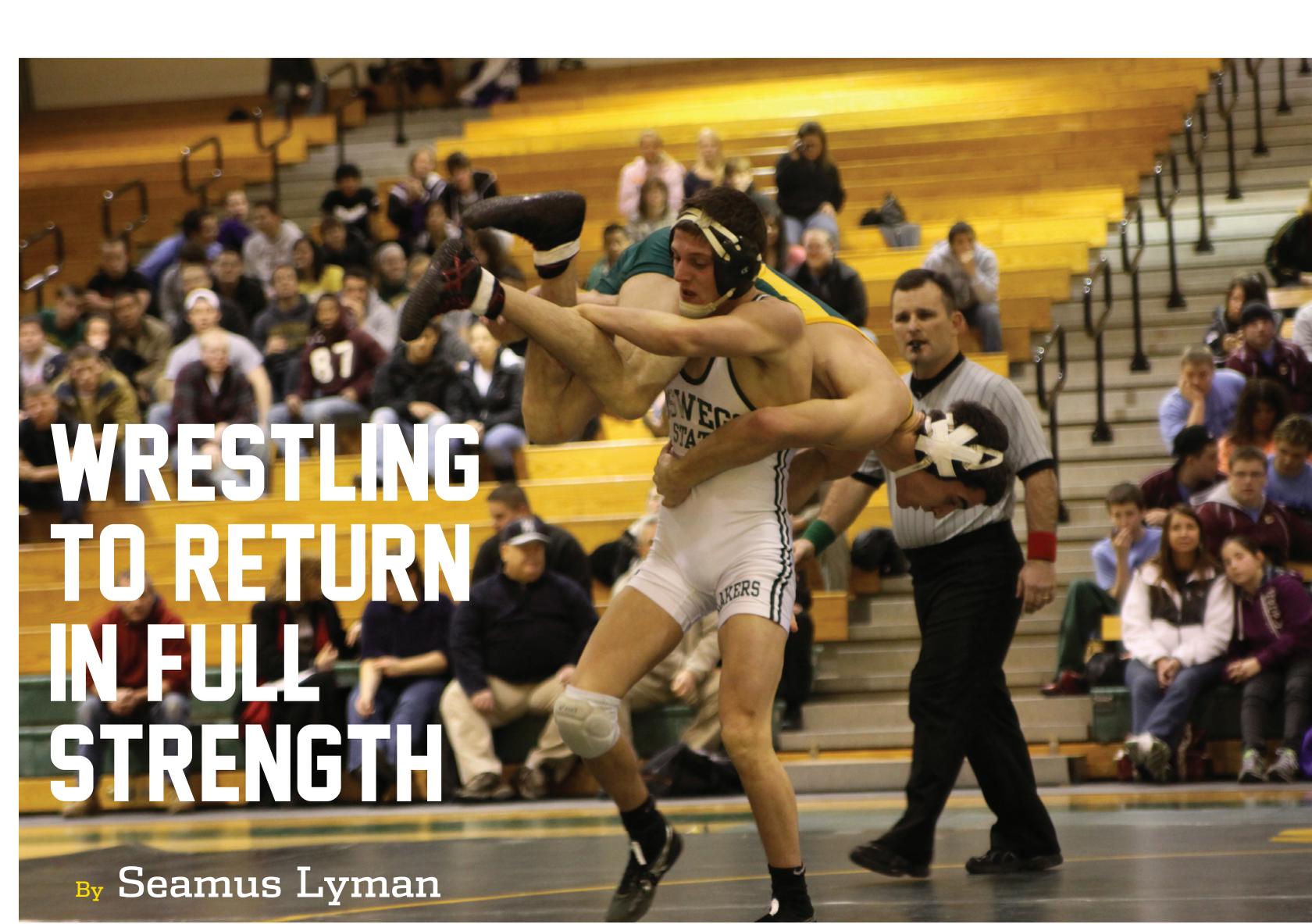
Something else that I appreciated during the game against Cortland on Oct. 26 was the fact that the fans cheered when the Lakers were down, and the team really needed it. Seeing this happen definitely made me feel pride for our fans after I had lost a little respect following the exhibition game. We went down 2-0 against Cortland, a pretty devastating way to start the first game of the regular season, and it could have been the Lakers' demise. However, the fans never stopped cheering and, lo-and-behold, the Lakers made a comeback.

Lately the student-section still indulges in its usual cheers of "see you, sit down b--h" when

the other team gets a penalty and of course its berating of the opposite goalie with "it's all your fault" whenever we score in the first or third. However, it seems like these cheers are starting to die a bit, which actually might be for the best. I mean seriously, the opposite goalie isn't listening when he is being screamed at- if he can even understand what is being said, which I'm pretty sure he can't. These cheers may seem like tradition, but wouldn't it be better to have traditions that don't make us all seem like huge jerks? I know we are the best, but that does not mean we cannot be gracious about it.

It should be interesting to see how fans act this semester, especially with "Whiteout Weekend" happening in the fall this year. The Plattsburgh game is one of those positive points of Laker pride that make me love Oswego State hockey more than anything else, and I hope that tradition never changes. I can only hope that while traditions like "Whiteout Weekend" remain strong, new ones are developed that we can be proud of as Oswego State students. I want more "bad-ham" signs and more guys painting their chests, and more cheering when we are down (on those rare occasions when we are down) and "let's go Lakers" rants even when we are up 9-0. Those are the traditions that will turn us from a good fan-base into a great one.





WRESTLING TO RETURN IN FULL STRENGTH

By Seamus Lyman

Written above the doors at the entrance of the Oswego State Lakers' wrestling room reads, "Through these portals pass the hardest nosed wrestlers in the east." These words hold true for the Lakers.

The Lakers wrestling team is looking to show improvement after a 2011-2012 dual record of 3-12. The Lakers placed 7th out of eight teams in the Empire Collegiate Wrestling Conference.

The team was young last year with 16 freshmen, four sophomores, three juniors and four seniors. This year, the team is once again bringing in 15 younger athletes to add to their roster along with 25 Lakers returning. This year the team looks to take the now-sophomores' one year of experience and use that to its advantage.

"Everyone's working hard and showing improvement this year," head coach Michael Howard said. "The young kids are doing a nice job at transitioning."

Howard is also relying on the upperclassmen to step up and be leaders on the team, saying that several returners have already shown their leadership skills.

Omar Santiago is a senior and this will be his second-year as captain of the Lakers, while senior Kyle Sheridan will also fill the role of captain for his first time this year.

Santiago will be wrestling in the 133-pound weight class and has a combined record of 53-35 during his first three years. He finished sixth at the ECWC Championships last year, he also placed 8th at the New York State Championships his freshman year. Santiago is nationally ranked, going into his senior season 10th in Brute National polls.

"Being ranked 10th nationally shows that my hard work is paying off," Santiago said. "I have big hopes, I didn't think that would happen, so it's exciting just to know that."

Sheridan will be the Lakers' 285-pound wrestler this season. He's coming in after a 23-11 season and after placing 5th at the ECWC Championships. Sheridan made the move from 197 pounds to heavyweight last year in order to fill the gap left by the injured senior Joe Pesce.

Both captains see the Lakers as being a force to reckon with this year.

"I think we have a lot of talent and I believe we have what it takes to make a big

impact this season," Sheridan said.

"We still have a strong team and we're going to make some noise this year," Santiago said.

As captains, they play important roles for the team. They keep the morale high in the room and set examples for the rest of the team.

"Every day we keep the focus, you know, morning lifts then practice in the afternoon,

**"Everyone's
working hard
and showing
improvement
this year."**

HEAD COACH MICHAEL HOWARD

keeping everyone on the same page and motivated," Santiago said.

"As a captain I don't try to act as an authoritative figure, I think teammates respect that more," Sheridan said. "I keep morale high by leading by example, everything I do I give 100 percent in hopes the team will follow."

Howard noted that senior Justin Patus, junior Matt Callari and senior Blake Fisher are also doing what is needed to lead the team. Patus transferred to Oswego State for his sophomore year after one year of wrestling at Hofstra University. He has a record of 13-19 since joining the Lakers in 2010. Callari returns after a 5-7 record last year. Fisher, a former captain of the team, returns after taking a year off.

The Lakers are moving from the ECWC to a regional set up that was introduced after last season. The team is now a member of the NCAA Northeast Region. This season the team will compete in a regional championship at the end of the season to decide who will move on to nationals. The move guarantees the top three wrestlers in each weight class will move on to nationals. This resolves problems that have been seen in past years.

"It's less political," Howard said. "We'll know who is going to nationals right away rather than having a coaches meeting to decide who else will go to nationals, it lets the athletes perform on the mat."

The Lakers have struggled at the end of the season due to injuries in one of the most physical sports in the NCAA.

"It's a long season, it goes on for months," Howard said. "Injuries will impact how we perform at the end of the season."

Howard still sees the team as a strong force in the region saying that they may not win regionals but he expects the team to finish top six in the region.

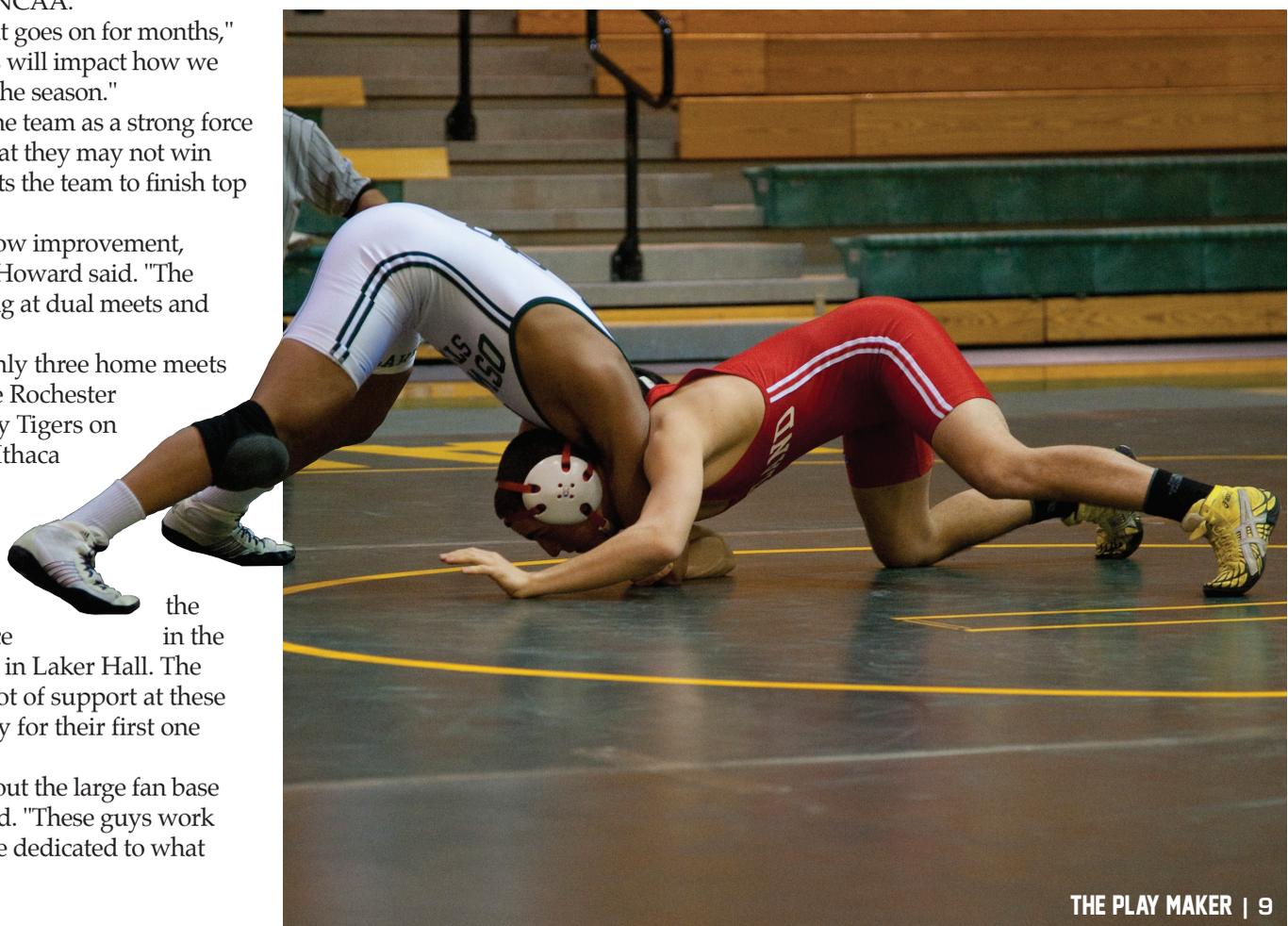
"It's key that we show improvement, not to win regionals," Howard said. "The goal is to be performing at dual meets and tournaments."

The Lakers have only three home meets this season against the Rochester Institute of Technology Tigers on Nov. 10 at 1 p.m., the Ithaca Bombers on Dec. 8 at 4:30 p.m. and the Oneonta State Red Dragons on Jan. 26 at 12 p.m. All of the matches will take place in the Maz Ziel Gymnasium in Laker Hall. The team is looking for a lot of support at these home meets, especially for their first one against R.I.T.

"We want to bring out the large fan base for R.I.T.," Howard said. "These guys work extremely hard and are dedicated to what they do."

2011-2012 Team Results

Date	Location	Event	Results
11/4/2011	Ithaca, NY	Ithaca Invitational	4th
11/5/2011	Ithaca, NY	Ithaca Invitational	7th
11/12/2011	Rochester, NY	R.I.T.	L
11/19/2011	Springfield, MA	Springfield Invitational	T-12th
12/3/2011	Rochester, NY	R.I.T. Invitational	4th
12/10/2011	Ithaca, NY	Ithaca	L
1/7/2012	Williamsport, PA	NY/PA Duals-Lycoming	L
1/7/2012	Williamsport, PA	NY/PA Duals-King's College	L
1/13/2012	Williamsport, PA	Springfield College	L
1/13/2012	Williamsport, PA	Muskingum	W
1/13/2012	Williamsport, PA	Williams	L
1/14/2012	Williamsport, PA	Trine	L
1/14/2012	Williamsport, PA	King's College	W
1/21/2012	Ithaca, NY	43rd NYSCC	15th
1/25/2012	Oswego, NY	Brockport	L
1/28/2012	Oneonta, NY	Oneonta	L
2/8/2012	Oswego, NY	Cortland	L
2/11/2012	Middletown, CT	Wesleyan University	L
2/12/2012	Williamstown, MA	University of Southern Maine	L
2/12/2012	Williamstown, MA	Williams College	W
2/25/2012	Brockport, NY	ECWC Championships	7th





06:39:28

10 Sports LIVE



CAM 5



CLOCK



CAM 1



CAM 2

BRINGING IT LIVE

Students provide professional quality sports broadcasts

By RYAN DEFFENBAUGH

It is Friday Oct. 26, the night of the first game of the season for the Oswego State men's ice hockey team. The perennial powerhouse Lakers are coming off a season in which the team advanced to its third straight Division III Frozen Four. With three hours before game time, very few players have emerged from the locker room and the ice is currently being used for practice by the Oswego State figure skating club. The arena, however, is bustling with activity, as students shuffle in and out, carrying cameras, monitors and other various equipment in preparation for the broadcast of the night's game.

The students involved in WTOP-10's "Hockey Night in Oswego" broadcast arrive usually three to four hours before game time to begin set-up, which involves lugging all of the gear for the broadcast from their office in the middle of Campus Center down the hall to the arena. The crew, usually consisting of around 15 students, sets up cameras on both blue lines and one even with glass to the side of the goal on the north end of the arena. An additional camera is set up in front of a table in the north corner of the arena, a closed off section of the rink that serves as the booth for the pre and post-game shows.

Away from the arena, students involved with the broadcast are in the control room of WTOP-10's Al Roker Studio, named after the NBC television personality and 1976 Oswego State graduate, checking the equipment and designing graphics to be used during the broadcast.

The set-up for the broadcasts is unpredictable and often dependent on the cooperation of the equipment, forcing the broadcasting crew to begin set-up before the actual teams step foot in the locker room.

"It's a process that takes anywhere from an hour and a half where you've got no problems during it, to where you've hit every snag in the road and it's 6:30 and it's showtime and you're still trying to fix things," said Brian Tosti, director of the game's broadcast and sports director of WTOP-10. "It's sometimes trial and error. Which is a tough situation, but we try to get it done as quickly as we can so we can fix snags as soon as we hit them."

This is the second home game for the Lakers, thus the second broadcast for the WTOP-10 team. As the team falls behind early by two goals to a SUNY Cortland team that it outscored 11-2 in two games last season, the "Hockey Night in Oswego" crew also struggles to shake off some rust.

The server jams during the pre-game show, preventing the broadcast team from being able to cut to pre-taped highlight packages, also forcing the program to cut earlier than usual to the in-game announcers, who improvise to fill the extra time before the start of the game.

"There's a learning curve, for sure," said Tosti, who was directing the broadcast for the first time. "But by the time that we hit the second and third period, it becomes less directed and more instinctual."

As the Lakers on the ice began to shape back into form, scoring three unanswered goals to take the lead heading into the first intermission, so to did the broadcast team.

"The more you do it, the more repetitions you get, the better concept you get for how to set up and how the show works," Tosti said.

The broadcast ran with quick replays following goals and penalties, and several graphics, including one that ran with every replay. Following the end of the second intermission, there was noticeable excitement in the control room when Tosti

had the replay manager run the footage of the zamboni cleaning the ice in reverse, creating a time-lapse like effect of the entire intermission before heading into a commercial break. "That was awesome, who's taking credit for that idea?" a voice of a crew member could be heard asking over the control room's intercom, as Tosti and the rest of the control room high-fived and cheered.

Former WTOP-10 sports director Justin Andrews said that it is this mixture of a business-like atmosphere and fun that makes working at the station a unique experience.

"We're students and we're doing this for free and it's great experience and exposure," Andrews said. "But you're also out there to have a good time with your friends and colleagues."

Following the post-game show, Tosti led a meeting in the studio with the rest of the crew. Tosti opened the meeting by asking how many of the crew members were at their position for the first time that night, before scanning the room filled with mostly



“We think of ourselves as one of the top Division III broadcasts in the country, and we’d like to think that people think the same.”

MICHAEL KEELEY

Steve Levy '87
PRESS BOX



raised hands.

“We had a lot of people who couldn’t make it or went home for the weekend,” Tosti said. “So we ended up with six new people in the control room.”

WTOP-10’s status as an all student organization can often create schedule conflicts like this, which is why Tosti said that he likes to have the crew for weekend games decided by Tuesday.

“Everybody will know exactly what they’re doing and if they have any questions, they can come to you and ask and see what’s going on,” Tosti said.

While the circumstance of this game allowed several students to step into new roles, Tosti said that the hockey broadcasts are generally manned by more experienced members of the station.

“People don’t like to think of it as a hierarchy system, but it kind of is,” said Tosti, who began his career at the station by manning cameras at hockey games as a freshman and worked his way up to becoming an in-game commentator and sports director his senior year. “It’s about how long you’ve been here and based on your experience

and what you’ve done.”

However, similar to a college sports team, the most experienced and talented members are lost each year, requiring that younger students get the hands-on experience that is needed in order to fill in for them when the time comes.

“We’ve done a good job of dividing up the spots and giving other guys chances when they need to,” Tosti said, pointing out that last year the station lost Andrews, who called and directed hockey games, and Brady Farkas, who called the basketball games and filled various roles in other broadcasts.

The quality of the broadcasts is taken extremely seriously by the entire station, who view it as a duty to uphold Oswego State’s reputation as a top broadcasting school.

“It’s almost expected of us at this point,” said Blaise Hill, a sophomore and assistant sports director. “Oswego has a long line of great broadcasters, so these quality broadcasts are expected of us.”

“If I’m putting something out there, I want to make it the best we can possibly make it,” said Andrews, adding that he constantly looked for ways to improve

each broadcast during his time as director.

This commitment to excellence extends beyond television, as Michael Keeley, the sports director of student-run radio station WNYO, said that he takes great pride in his station’s coverage of games.

“We think of ourselves as one of the top Division III broadcasts in the country, and we’d like to think that people think the same,” said Keeley, who has been calling hockey games for the station since his freshman year.

The radio crew has the advantage of being able to follow the team on the road, calling all the team’s away games.

“It definitely gives you an advantage broadcast wise,” Keeley said. “You can see trends in the team much better than if you’re only able to see home games.”

Keeley said that the station is able to draw more listeners for the away games, as it becomes students’ and Laker fans’ only way to follow the team.

While the hockey broadcasts and the hockey team in general have always been staples of Oswego State’s culture, the rise in prominence of the basketball program, along with the increase in basketball



NCAA tournament appearances and have won a SUNYAC title. The sudden success of the team, coupled with the increased coverage, has helped carve out a place for basketball in the hockey-crazed university.

"The coverage has certainly increased our visibility," said Jason Leone, second-year men's basketball coach. "It helps create a certain electricity on game nights that all big-time programs at our level have."

While the hockey crew positions are often the most coveted, and reserved for more experienced students, the basketball coverage opened up spots for younger students to get hands-on experience.

"If it's just hockey, you've got 15 people to fill out the crew," said Hill, who got his first experience as a freshman hosting a women's basketball pre-game show. "Add in basketball and that's ten more people, so it's more opportunities for everyone."

"I was psyched, I was able to get my first hosting gig freshman year with men's basketball," said junior Adam Rupczyk, who began doing camera for hockey his freshman year but since has worked several basketball games either as a host or color commentator.

However, bringing a whole new kind of broadcast to WTOP-10 provided Andrews a large number of challenges in his first year as sports director. With Laker Hall, the team's home court, located across Route 104 from campus, the crew was often forced to load up Andrews' car with both crew and equipment.

"We would find a way to fit six or seven people plus equipment into a five person car," Hill said.

Once there, the crew faces the task of setting up for a broadcast completely away from their own studio. While the hockey arena has hookups that allow the camera's feeds to go directly to the control room, the feed from Laker Hall must be sent back to the studio through an Internet connection. This forces WTOP-10 to work in conjunction with Campus Technology Services to ensure that all connections are able to submit the feed.

To prepare for the opening game of this season, Hill said that he began the set-up process at 11:30 a.m. the day before, making multiple trips between Laker Hall, the studio and the CTS office.

Laker Hall itself provides the broadcast team with unique challenges. While the Campus Center Arena has a press box and a booth for pre and post-game shows, Laker Hall broadcasts

are called and hosted directly from the bleachers. Andrews said that this can create problems with crowd interference during the show.

"We were in the middle of a pre-game show once, and this guy suddenly just waltzed right in front of the camera," Andrews said.

Despite some interference, the broadcast crew said that they enjoy the atmosphere that the bleachers provide them.

"It felt like 'College Gameday,' the way fans just surrounded us during the show," Rupczyk said.

While acknowledging that the broadcast quality of basketball games is not yet up to par with that of hockey games, Hill said that he and Tosti have plans to improve the broadcast. The games are now broadcasted in digital and include two additional cameras and a sideline reporter.

"It would be foolish not to try to improve it," Hill said. "Especially considering we have the avenues to do it."

While broadcasting multiple games per week can take up a large amount of each student's sparse free time, the crew members still find the job rewarding.

"Parents from Alaska and Switzerland would write in and say they appreciate the coverage and that they got to see their son, daughter or whatever relation, play for the first time in a long time," Andrews said. "Hearing stuff like that would always make my day and bring a smile to my face."

The students also are able to gain a great amount of hands-on experience in a field that they will soon be pursuing a career in.

"I'm getting to do exactly what I want to do professionally, which is call hockey games," Keeley said.

This experience is one that the students agree was allowed to them largely by the advantage of being at Oswego State.

"It's a perfect combination of getting the opportunity, because we're not at a large school, but at the same time, getting the same type of experience you would want at a larger school," said Keeley, who has called multiple SUNYAC and NCAA tournament games while covering the Lakers.

"I don't think I could have gone to any other school in the country where I could have gotten this much learning experience in my first two semesters," Hill said. "I feel like this door was open for me and I was at the door step and all I had to do was walk in."

coverage, have been new developments in the last couple of years.

When Andrews began his first semester as sports director of WTOP-10 in the fall of 2010, he said he wanted to put more emphasis on the coverage of basketball games.

"Everyone here loves hockey, and I do too, but at the same time it felt like we weren't even covering a team that had a really good backbone as a program," Andrews said.

It was in this same season that the men's basketball team, led by All-American forward Chad Burrige, was en route to its first ever NCAA tournament appearance.

"I felt they weren't covered enough or getting enough exposure that year for a team that was having just as much success as the hockey team," Andrews said, adding that the amount of viewers increased with each basketball broadcast.

In the two years of increased coverage, the men's basketball team has made two

KEEPING CORE VALUES KEY TO SUCCESS IN NEW BASKETBALL SEASON

By **Joe Manganiello**

After the best playing tenure Oswego State basketball has seen in over five decades, two-time SUNYAC player of the year Chad Burrridge has graduated. A three-time captain who is second all-time in Laker points, rebounds and tops in blocks, Burrridge leaves the Oswego State program as the winningest player in Laker history.

Along with Burrridge, four-year players Conor Monaghan and Ryan Sheridan, three-year player Brian Gebhardt and last season's successful transfer Josh Delfino have graduated from the program as well, forming the program's most accomplished and storied senior class.

In just his second season under the helm, head coach Jason Leone has been handed the task of following consecutive NCAA tournament runs, the first two NCAA tournament appearances in team history, while also having to replace 46.6 percent of the team's offense from last season.

How does Leone intend on keeping the Lakers in the mix in the conference and in the national polls? He is going to ask his players to stick to three core values.

"We are going to emphasize possessions, limiting turnovers and inside/outside play through post players and penetrating guards," Leone said. "Personnel might change how we do some things, but our values will remain the same."

Taking a deeper look into the team's roster, the team has five seniors and seven freshmen, with a single junior and sophomore in between. Leone believes that the only way to combat the loss of last season's leaders and the youth of the current team is to ride the upperclassmen they still have.

"Any top 25 team starts with their juniors and seniors," Leone said. "We will be as good as our older guys are. We are going to rely on their experience in big games and grind."

The Seniors:

HAYDEN WARD

After averaging 15.7 ppg and 9.1 rpg per game last season, Ward was selected to the first-team All-SUNYAC and was





arguably the most complete big man in the conference. He is multi-talented: Ward was third on the team in three-pointers on .347 shooting and led the team in steals last season, while leading the team in scoring 14 times.

Leone praised the big man's preparation heading into his senior season, saying he has "never had a player attack an offseason" in the weight room and in leading offseason workouts like this.

SEAN MICHELE

Michele was the starting point guard in all 59 games the last two seasons, overseeing two trips to the NCAA tournament and the first conference title in school history. Michele had the third-highest three-point percentage in the country last year (.497) and is on track to become the only player in school history to finish in the top five in three-point percentage steals and assists.

"He has a coaches' mentality," Leone said. "Part of his high percentage last year is because he always takes a good shot. He is a leader and he echoes what (the coaches) say."

Michele brings an incredible knowledge base to the starting lineup and to a group of guards that is unbelievably young. In many ways, Michele's return is as important off the court as it is on the court, where he earned a second-team All-SUNYAC selection last year.

CHRIS GILKES

For consecutive seasons, Gilkes pieced together at least 9.5 ppg and 3.7 rpg. But in '11-'12, his assist totals rose from 24 to 68, as he finished second on the team with 2.3 dishes a night. Gilkes ability to make plays at both the two-guard and small forward position is invaluable for this season's team.

"Chris is a matchup problem. He is our most efficient player; he doesn't command too many shots and shoots a high percentage," Leone said. "He can take a step forward with commitment to consistency and intangibles. He is a great player who is aware of how to win and he puts his teammates first."

BRENDEN NOLLET AND ALEX MIRABITO

Nollet is coming off a season-ending injury which occurred three games into last year. In just his third full season with the team, he hopes to make up for lost time by replacing some of Burridge and Delfino's size from a year ago. Nollet is six-foot-seven and will see minutes in relief of Ward.

Mirabito's playing time fluctuated last season depending on the night, but he was a plus shooter from behind the arc and provided big minutes in conference games against New Paltz (11 points in a Feb. 11 victory) and Fredonia State (six points, three assists in a Feb. 18 victory). Mirabito could carve out a role as the first guard off the bench this fall.

No Burridge on offense does not mean more pressure:

Leone does not want Ward or any of the upperclassmen to feel obligated to do more in the absence of Burridge.

"Ward doesn't need to press to score more. Chris doesn't have to press to do more," Leone said. "When you talk about that

type of player, like a Hayden (Ward) or Chris (Gilkes) or Sean (Michele), it is a small margin to go from good to great. You just have to put yourself in the best position."

Rashawn Powell (the sophomore):

"I'd make an argument that (Powell) has made the biggest jump of any returning player," Leone said. "He has a much better grip on the system and is improving defensively. We typically see these developments from year one to year two, but he will determine just how much ability he will give us this season."

Powell is a lengthy, physically gifted forward. Powell played in just 20 games last season, as he struggled to cement a spot in Leone's rotation. But in '12-'13, Powell figures to exceed 20 minutes per game and could be a sleeper candidate to lead the team in rebounding.

Daniel Ross and the seven freshmen:

Headlining Leone's first full recruiting class is a transfer out of division II, Daniel Ross. The six-foot-two guard/forward and Syracuse native figures to step on the court right away for Leone, as he has impressed Leone early on in areas of need for the team.

Leone says Ross "can do many things well" and possesses "great vision." Ross is familiar with the team and many of the players on roster, particularly Gilkes, as he attended Westhill High School in Syracuse, where he was first-team All State at basketball. In two seasons with Virginia Intermont, Ross averaged 13.8 ppg, 4.0 rpg and 1.4 apg. Ross will get playing time at both forward spots.

Regarding the seven true freshmen, Leone did not say

much about playing time, particularly early in the season. He did speak very highly, however, of the trait that they all consistently possessed: character.

"We brought in good character," Leone said. "You never know when the freshmen will be called upon during a season. I'm excited because part of our plan is to bring in freshman who will not get outworked and that are about each other."

Season expectations:

Leone has a great grasp on the differences between last year and this year. He acknowledges that last season he had to trust the seniors, like Burrridge, because he was adjusting to a brand new team. In year two, he is able to do more coaching; preaching humility and fundamentals to a roster that is shaped in his vision.

"This team can win together, but we will also be able to lose together," Leone said. "We had a great resolve last season. If we prove that we have that again, we will have a great year."

Oswego State enters the season with the largest target of any SUNYAC school. Leone sees this as a learning experience for a mixed-bag roster of some of the most successful players in program history and, by contrast, one of the largest freshman classes in recent memory.

"We got eight new guys. I am creating a teaching environment, committing to a winning formula," Leone said. "Sticking to core values is important in coaching. We will give our seniors a lot of latitude. We are going to play good half-court defense, share the basketball and play our best in March."

The Lakers will look to defend their 21-game winning streak in conference play on Nov. 30 against Plattsburgh in Max Ziel. During the fall and spring semesters, the Lakers play eight home regular season games while classes are in session. The Lakers enter the season receiving 58 votes in the national poll, good enough for 32nd in the country.



FALL RECAPS



Men's Soccer

The Oswego State men's soccer team started its season with a shutout victory over Old Westbury on Aug. 31, but that would be one of only a few positives for the Lakers in 2012. The Lakers would then go on

a seven-game losing streak and lose eight of their next nine games in total.

Oswego State was able to pick things up following Alumni Weekend, winning three consecutive games, including back-to-back shutouts of SUNY Fredonia and Buffalo State on Oct. 5 and 6, respectively.

The Lakers would drop their final two outings to end the season 4-10-1. The Lakers have not achieved a winning record since 2006 when the team went 11-9-1.



Women's Soccer

The Lakers were able to end their season on a two-game winning streak, but the Oswego State women's soccer team was unable to register a second consecutive winning season.

The Lakers hovered around .500 for most of the season, sitting at 4-4 after their first eight games. After dropping five consecutive games, any hopes of a postseason berth ended.

The Lakers were able to set a program milestone, however, as they snapped their losing streak with a 1-0 overtime victory over SUNY Cortland on Oct. 20. The win was Oswego State's first victory over the Red Dragons in eight years, and only the second in team history.



Field Hockey

The Oswego State field hockey team got off to a rough start in 2012, dropping its first three games of the season. The Lakers were able to snap the streak with a home win over Morrisville State on Sept. 14, but they went on to lose their

next four.

The Lakers headed into their final home game on Oct. 20 against SUNY Brockport with just three wins on the season, but they were able to earn a Senior Day victory with a 1-0 shutout.

Oswego State would go on to win its final two games to salvage the season with a three-game winning streak and a 6-10 record.



Volleyball

After a 2011 season filled with turmoil and two coaches, the Oswego State volleyball team advanced to the postseason for the first time since 1996 under first-year head coach J.J. O'Connell.

The season seemed to be in trouble early on, as the Lakers went 2-4 in their first six games, but they were able to even up their record by winning four of the next six games.

Oswego State remained around .500 for a majority of the season, sitting at 10-10 prior to its home game against Hilbert College on Oct. 10. They would go on to finish the regular season 12-18.

But despite the sub-.500 mark, Oswego State advanced to the SUNYAC playoffs losing in the first round to SUNY New Paltz.



Men's Tennis

The Lakers' fall season was cut short due to a rainout, adding to the frustration this year. The team recorded just one win in four matches, the lone win coming on Sept. 21 in a 9-0 shutout against Cazenovia College.

The season began with a 9-0 sweep at the hands of Roberts Wesleyan on Sept. 7., but Oswego State bounced back with the win against Cazenovia. They were unable to continue the momentum, however, ending the season with back-to-back losses to Alfred University and Elmira College. Their final match against Daemen College was rained out and postponed until the spring season.



Women's Tennis

The Oswego State women's tennis team lost its opening six matches to start the fall season, the beginning of what would turn out to be a rough 2012 for the Lakers.

They were able to pick things up moving forward, going 2-2 over their next four matches, including an 8-1 victory over Wells College on Oct. 1 and their final victory of the season on Oct. 3 against St. John Fisher.

Senior Kelly Corwin led the team with seven singles wins, and was the only member of the team to finish with a .500 record. Sophomore Haley Miller followed with four wins on the year.



"Trust your
swing and you
won't go left."

-Dan North

"Please don't
serve this out."

-Sabrina Sutton





"I wonder if my backhand shot will go over the net?"

-Kelly Corwin

What were they thinking?

"I need to take the defenseman out of the play and kick the puck to my linemates."

-David Titanic



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