

# Team-Focused, Community-Minded

By Karen McCally

IT'S OFTEN SAID THAT SPORTS ARE A GREAT way to foster leadership skills. At Rochester, athletes aren't waiting until after graduation to put leadership in action.

During this spring semester, the men's and women's soccer teams, as well as the women's lacrosse team, reached into the community to show how sports can help improve bodies, minds, and quality of life.


"There's no better way for our team to get involved in the community than through sharing our passion with young girls," says Bridget Lang '13, a goalkeeper on the women's soccer team from Robbinsville, N.J.

On May 5, the team ran a clinic for girls ages 6 to 12 in the Rochester City School District. The Yellowjackets taught basic skills to the girls—many of whom had never kicked a soccer ball—played matches, and took them on a tour of the River Campus.

The Yellowjackets hope the clinic will lead to the formation of a girls team as part of the Riverflow Soccer Club, the only travel soccer club in the city of Rochester, which is currently made up only of boys' teams.

In February, the men's soccer team helped bring about the first Yellowjacket Cup soccer tournament to raise money for the Riverflow Soccer Club, as well as Grassroot Soccer Rochester, a University-wide student organization that brings evidence-based programs using sports to serve at-risk youths.

"The turnout was wonderful," says Josh Richards '12, of Grassroot Soccer Rochester. "We had 24 teams play in a World Cup-style tournament with group stages, then knockout rounds."

And in April, the women's lacrosse team teamed up with Friends of Jaclyn, an organization founded in 2004 by the family of then nine-year-old lacrosse player Jaclyn Murphy. The organization matches pediatric brain tumor patients with sponsoring sports teams. Sporting "Friends of Jaclyn" T-shirts in the warm-up before a game against Vassar College, the women joined Vassar players in honoring eight-year-old Grace Leva. 



**BASEBALL:** Jon Menke '13 earned UAA and Liberty League honors for a 7-0 shutout in April.



**TRACK:** ECAC qualifier Francisco Ramirez '12



**SOFTBALL:** All-UAA selection Nina Korn '14

## HIGHLIGHTS

# Rounding Up a Busy Spring

By Dennis O'Donnell

A BUSY SPRING FOR THE UNIVERSITY'S ATHLETIC teams included several highlights. Softball has returned to a position of prominence by attaining a regional ranking. The men's and women's tennis teams have worked their way through a schedule pockmarked with some of the strongest teams in the nation. And golf is competing for a potential NCAA bid.

As April came to a close, here's a run-down of some of the spring's highlights:

**Baseball:** The Yellowjackets went into the last two weekends of the regular season trying to battle their way into a Liberty League playoff spot. In late April, Rochester beat 18th-ranked Ithaca on the road, then

earned two victories over Vassar in the final at-bat. Jon Menke '13 threw a three-hit shutout over Clarkson to reap three individual awards. Adam Sullivan '13 was the team's closer with three saves and just one earned run allowed in 11 innings of work. Ethan Sander '14 was the top hitter, averaging .333. Nick Carlson '14 led the team in home runs (3) and RBIs (16).

**Golf:** Nick Palladino '14 won the UAA individual championship with an association record low score of 137 for 36 holes. He is the first man to win back-to-back UAA golf titles in the 25-year history of the UAA. Rochester was third at the NYU/Manhattanville Invitational and third at the McDaniel Spring Invitational. The Yellowjackets faced RPI in the first round of the



**TRACK:** Yvette Igbokwe '15 was among 18 Yellowjackets who qualified for the ECAC title meet.


Liberty League championships (match-play format) to determine which team would get the league's automatic bid to NCAAs.

**Lacrosse:** Rochester had a nice three-player attack in Niki Holmes '12 (19 goals, 8 assts., 27 pts.), Liza Maizel '13 (20-5-25), and Lindsey Randall '14 (16-4-20). The Yellowjackets defeated Becker College in Myrtle Beach, S.C., then returned north and posted a win over Bard College in Liberty League play.

**Rowing:** The Yellowjackets broke into the national rankings at No. 13 after a series of strong performances in March and early April. In successive weekends, they defeated both Ithaca and WPI, who were in the national poll. Two big races loom in May: the New York State championships, May 5-6, and the Dad Vail Regatta in Philadelphia, May 11-12.

**Softball:** Rochester earned the No. 2 seed for the Liberty League championships with an 8-2 record in league games. The Yellowjackets wrapped up April with a 25-12 record and were ranked third in the Northeast region by the NCAA Division III softball committee. Nina Korn '14 (.375) and Meg Hennessy '14 (.339) led a lineup with five .300 hitters. Korn had seven home runs by late April. Brittany Grage '15 had six. A strong pitching nucleus revolved around Grage (9-4), Sarah Wayson '15 (9-4), and Maddie Skellie '13 (6-4).

**Tennis:** The Yellowjacket women's team was 8-4 heading into the UAA championships in Florida in late April. Frances Tseng '13 was ranked No. 6 regionally and No. 45 nationally as a singles player. Rochester's record included wins over Whittier College, Ithaca, William Smith, and St. Lawrence. The men's team was 6-14, ranked No. 18 regionally.

**Track & Field:** James Vavra '12 and Lauren Norton '12 competed at the Penn Relays in late April, trying to secure a berth in the NCAA championships. Vavra ran in the 10,000 meters, Norton in the 5,000 meters. At the Alumni Invitational, Rochester earned a total of 18 qualifiers for the ECAC championships—nine apiece for men and women. At the Cortland Classic, the women's 4x400 relay ran the second fastest time in school history and the 19th fastest time in Division III in 2012. Rochester was getting set to host the New York State championships as May began. 

*O'Donnell is director of communications for the Department of Athletics and Recreation.*