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Women’s rowing team wins season opener, earns seventh Resolute Cup title

BY JACOB MARROCCO
Sports Staff Reporter

The University of Rhode Island women’s rowing team opened up their season this week, winning the first four races of the Narrow River against the Eagles, the University of Massachusetts and George Washington University.

“I thought they raced strong,” Rhode Island head coach Shelagh Donohoe said. “What I really liked is, from the top to bottom, we had consistent racing and that’s really important to me. It wasn’t just one boat, I think it was consistent throughout the whole regatta.”

Donohoe said, “It’s also very early and the [Atlantic-10 Championship] regatta is the first weekend in May. I think there’s a lot of speed to be gained by us and also by opponents.”

Rhode Island later dominated the varsity 4B+ race behind oarsmen Michelle Forte, Jess Bergen, Allison Zolnowsky and Liz Swain of Harvard University.

The Rams were able to blaze past the Eagles and the Minutemen, beating the former team by just fewer than seven seconds after clocking in at 8:47.74.

Despite finishing 10 seconds behind BC in the third varsity-eight race, the Rams were able to close out the day on a high note after claiming first place in the varsity 4C+ event.

Freshmen Lily Herberger, Alysson Ancona, Elizabeth Shadle, Cara McElchern and sophomore coxswain Kendija Bien-Aime grabbed the squad’s fourth victory on the afternoon with a time of 8:15.50.

Rhode Island will hold its Senior Day races on Saturday when Rutgers University and Dartmouth University come to Kingston.

The Rams have not matched up against Dartmouth nor have they faced Rutgers since their 2010-11 season.

Rhode Island has never beaten Dartmouth in a head-to-head match-up.

“I think it’s a matter of taking our racing and analyzing it a little bit and looking at our weak points and trying to make them not our weak points for the next race,” Donohoe said. “We’re coming in to two teams that we haven’t raced in a bit so it should be really fun. Dartmouth is also a strong regional opponent, so it’s an important race for us.”

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Governor proposes pay raise for cabinet, denied URI request for increase last April

BY HENSELY CARRASCO
Editor-in-Chief

Gov. Lincoln Chafee has proposed a two-step pay raise for 14 of his top directors within his administration.

This news comes after Chafee denounced a previously proposed pay raise for members of the University of Rhode Island faculty union, a year ago, according to the Providence Journal and Boston Globe.

The pay raise, which will total 6 percent - 3 percent in June and 3 percent in December, comes as the university and college workers were “inappropriate” at a time when Rhode Islanders are struggling and when other state employees are making a daily sacrifice to help the state remain fiscally healthy.

The news of this proposed pay raise to the governor’s directors has not yielded a positive reaction from those turned down.

“I guess the governor feels the work of his directors must be more significant than the efforts of the URI faculty to teach America’s young people,” Frank Amunniato, executive director of URI’s American Association of University Professors, told the Providence Journal.

“I hope his directors enjoy their raise and I hope the governor’s largesse will now extend to the vastly underpaid URI faculty.”

If the proposed raises are approved, each one of Chafee’s department heads will be earning more than $100,000 a year. The highest paid of the department heads will be Rosemary Booth Gallogly, a 30-year veteran and head of the department of revenue, whose pay will increase to $166,383 come Dec. 29, if the proposal is approved, according to the Providence Journal.

A state law allows a governor to propose raises for their cabinet members, on one main condition. They are required to propose the raises at a hearing that is open to public comment - which Chafee did - last Friday at 9 a.m.

In a separate report, the Providence Journal noted that an incentive for Rhode Island...
March album roundup: The Strokes, CHVRCHES, Suede

by Ryan Gibbs
Contributing Entertainment Writer

March was a pretty decent month in terms of alternative music. While nothing matched the impact of the February release of the third album by storied Irish shoegazers My Bloody Valentine, there were still some solid releases from both new and established acts.

First, lets get the mediocre album out of the way. I was in middle school when The Strokes broke out of the New York scene and onto MTV (in its last gasp of actually playing videos), magazines (when such things were actually relevant) and rock radio (when all the stations weren’t owned by Clear Channel). After their great debut “Is This It,” and its solid follow up “Room on Fire,” The Strokes kind of went into a quality freefall over the course of their next two albums.

Their 2007 “First Impressions of Earth” contained only three good songs, and not only were they the first three songs on the album, but they were also the singles. Their 2011 album “Angels” was slightly better than “First Impressions” but still left much to be desired especially considering the gap between albums that saw the band’s fifth and newest album “Comedown Machine,” only further confirms that the band completely ran out of steam two albums into their career.

The record isn’t terrible, but it is quite mediocre. The Strokes come off as a dried out husk in a desperate bid for relevance. Many other music critics have compared the overall sound of Comedown Machine to that of French indie rockers Phoenix.

They’re not kidding. On several songs, The Strokes sound so much like Phoenix that I nearly thought I was listening to a collection of Phoenix B-sides instead of the new album from a band that used to be the biggest name in indie rock. Another track, “One Way Trigger” sounds almost nothing like the Strokes at all, with Julian Casablancas crooning in an uncharacteristic falsetto to a synthesizer riff that sounds uncomfortably close to that of “Take on Me” by a-ha (in fact, I’m surprised there wasn’t a resulting lawsuit). There are quite a few songs that work on the album: ballad “80’s Comedown Machine,” despite the obvious Phoenix cues, is fairly decent.

The first single “All The Time,” is one of a few tracks on the record that sound like The Strokes of old, and its a reasonable facsimile of what made them special a decade ago. “Comedown Machine” isn’t a bloated failure like “First Impressions,” nor a stumbling block like “Angles”, but hopefully its good qualities point to a rocky album of an acrimonious ‘breakup’ many see to be all but certain at this point in their career.

Despite the predictable mediocrity of the new album from a band I loved in middle school, there was quite a lot to love about March’s new releases. My favorite release of the month wasn’t even a full album, but the debut EP by Scottish electronic trio CHVRCHES (the band name is stylized in all capitals, with a “V” in place of the “U”). Coming off the buzz and high expectations from debut single “Lies” and “I Could Run,” their debut EP “Recover” confirms that they are perhaps the band to watch in 2013. The title track, “Recover,” is a brilliant slice of electropop, informed by both his new wave stylings and dubstep. I have made my dislike for dubstep known in the past, but when used well and sparingly, it can result in some excellent compositions.

CHVRCHES have compared to the American duo Purity Ring, and while the similarities are there (both female fronted electro acts who sneak in light dubstep elements into their sound), the sound of CHVRCHES resembles more of Hot Chip and The Knife (although in some of their songs, I can see some of their songs, I can see a few obvious facsimiles come from). The title track is the obvious highlight, the other two tracks, “2V2L” and “Now Is Not The Time,” prove that the band is able to produce great songs, as opposed to just great singles. The EP is rounded out by two very good remixes of “Recover.”

The “Cid Rim” remix casts Lauren Mayberry’s vocals and synths as a chiptune-inspired ballad, while the “Curxes” remix wraps them in rave synthesizer stabs that would possibly be accompanied by a laser light show at a rave in the year the remix is named after. Overall, the “Recover EP” does a great job of wetting my appetite for their upcoming full-length album, that is supposedly due at the end of the summer. This section I have written about them honestly cannot contain my absolute astonishment with how good this group is this early in their career, and that they are a band that you have to listen to yourself to form an opinion on. If you like electronic pop music, CHVRCHES might just be your new favorite band come this summer.

Another very good release in March came from British rock heroes Suede (officially called “The London Suede” here in the US due to an early 90’s lawsuit via a folded shop) via the band’s sixth album, “Bloodsports,” is their first since 2001. For a band that hasn’t released an album in more than a decade, they not only sound fully energized, they have released a strong, satisfying album that deserves its place alongside their legendary 1993 self-titled debut and its even better follow up, 1994’s “Dog Man Star.” Janely first single “It Starts and Ends with You” soars like some of their best 90’s anthems. “Sometimes I’ll Float Away,” a personal favorite of mine from the record. Its one of many ballads in the Suede oeuvre, but its probably one of their best crafted yet, perhaps even besting the self-titled “Sleeping Pills.”

While Suede aren’t the biggest name to release an album in March (that would be Justin Timberlake, whose “20/20 Experience” was quite excellent), they did release their favorite full-length studio album of the month, and one that probably has a chance to make my top-10 year-end list come December.
BY AUGIE KING
Entertainment Editor

I should have known better. I really should have known better. Even with the entire feet-dragging going on recently in "The Walking Dead," I positively thought it would eventually amount to something in this season finale. There was a lot of buildup, some of it too drawn out, but when this show decides to get its hands dirty, it soars pretty high.

Last year's season two finale - as well as the prior penultimate episode - was a great example of bringing all of its previous plot momentum to a head and hitting a dramatic crescendo. With the death of Merle and Daryl's place for something big to happen. Needless to say, spoilers will follow from now on.

What the heck happened? With this whimper of a finale, the second half of this season turned out to be a big whiff that built up to nothing, instead going for the throat and following through on its plot thrust toward a clash of forces, the finale instead preferred to frustratingly delay the true Governor/Rick confrontation until next season, dissipating all anticipation toward that moment. The episode was going fine for a long while, but just when it felt as if something major would happen, it just cuts off.

Very quickly, the Governor commences his attack on the prison. It is a quietly tense sequence as the Woodbury army navigates a seemingly deserted prison, only for them to be stealthily ambushed and driven out in a surprise attack from Rick's group in the "tombs" of the prison. Following that is an extremely shocking and effective scene where the Woodbury people regroup and try to convince the Governor to give it up and leave the prison group alone until their crazed leader turns and mows them all down in a hail of bullets. Right there, the Governor has turned into a full-on evil figure with nothing to lose. So he turned around and went back to the prison with a death wish, right?

Wrong, he just disappears. The season ends with him and his remaining two soldiers riding off into the country. If that is supposed to be a cliffhanger for season four, it is a pretty weak one. Meanwhile, as all of this is happening, Andrea is fighting to free herself from her bindings as a slowly dying Milton (stabbed by the Governor) sits there waiting to turn into a zombie. That's a pretty clever setup for a suspenseful scene, but even this becomes tiresome. Rather than, you know, fiercely trying to cut the bindings with the pliers at hand, Andrea would prefer to frequently pause to talk to Milton or stare at him as if he has turned.

The overwhelming payoff to this subplot is that the prison group arrives to find a freed Andrea who has still bitten been by Milton. I can understand that the writers want this somber moment, instead of an explosion of gunfire, to be the finishing note, but it doesn't work at all. It is hard to feel sympathy for Andrea when she continually made stupid decisions that led to her own end. Afterward, Tyreese and a survivor of the Governor's massacre convince the remaining Woodbury people to stay with them in the prison, ending on a bit of hope.

The most interesting development in this finale occurred between Carl and a stray Woodbury soldier. After the initial ambush, the soldier runs into Carl, Hershel and Beth in the woods (they were there to be out of danger), and Carl orders him to drop his gun. Rather than drop it, the guy motions to hand the gun to him and Carl instinctively shoots and kills him. This leads a father/son talk where Rick questions Carl's actions and Carl reminds him of the past times where they let someone go and they came back to fight (i.e. the Rick/Governor talk). It is cold, although truthful response, but I can't help but feel Carl is turning into a miniature Shane.

As the final scene faded to black, I finally understood the seemingly rash decision on AMC's part to drop Glen Mazzara as the show runner. He had a good run at first that was the best the show ever...
Baseball team starts conference play on wrong foot, drops two of three at home against the University of Dayton

JONATHAN SHIDELER
Sports Staff Reporter

The University of Rhode Island's baseball team (11-14) didn't start Atlantic-10 conference play smoothly this weekend; the Rams lost two out of three games at home to the University of Dayton.

"Guys are pressing right now," URI head coach Jim Foster said. "Sometimes when guys are not doing what they should they start to try harder and get into a funk."

Despite a 4-0 win on a beautiful Saturday afternoon when senior Sean Furney faced the minimum 27 batters, allowed two hits and struck out four, the Rams weekend was disappointing.

"It's tough when juniors and seniors don't do well," Foster said. "They expect more from themselves and we need them to do more in order to win. It's just that they start pressing which is a tough way to play."

Senior Mike Bradstreet's scoreless innings streak was snapped at 32 in Friday's 6-2 scoreless innings was going smoothly for Rhody through the first five innings. He stuck out the game, but the next day he couldn't move his arm.

It was a torn labrum; his season was over. Throughout the next year, LeBel was in a sling with an awkward pad stuck between his wrist and armpit to stabilize his shoulder. He said he had to sleep in a recliner for six weeks after getting surgery.

"Rehab was tough," LeBel said of getting healthy. "It wasn't something I think you'd want to wake up and do. It's not fun, but it's something you have to take seriously if you want to come back the way you want to."

LeBel, URI's all-time home run leader, could have graduated and moved on, but he said he came back for a fifth year for one reason: to win a championship. However, things were different in the URI baseball program when LeBel came back into the fold this season.

"I'd love to keep playing if possible, but I'm definitely ready for a little blast of baseball," he said. "It's just about going your business the right way and going out and playing good baseball. We know we have a good team so that's all it takes."

With less than three months left of his college career LeBel said that he's ready to accept the responsibility of being a leader on and off the field.

"It's definitely ready for it; I was a captain my junior and senior year," LeBel said. "I played third my freshman year so it's a little blast from the past for me. I'm having a good time over there."

This season LeBel has returned to the form he showed before the injury. He is the only Ram with a home run this season, and he leads the team with 14 runs batted in. Defensively, LeBel has amassed 50 assists, second only to Caputo's 71, and a .939 fielding percentage. He is one of four Rams to have started in all 23 games this season.

As one of the oldest players on the team LeBel said that he's ready to accept the responsibility of being a leader on and off the field.

"I'm definitely ready for it; I was a captain my junior and senior year," LeBel said. "It's just about going your business the right way and going out and playing good baseball. We know we have a good team so that's all it takes."

From rehab to the hot corner, Mike LeBel back at it for the baseball team