



Women end slide with 20T triumph

Veit shoots Pioneers past Carroll; Opsahl-Lister powers them by Lawrence

By Kevin Byrne
Staff Writer

Women's basketball has a difficult road ahead of them, with three road games against Beloit, Monmouth, and Carroll.

But after last weekend's contests, nothing seems too difficult for the Pioneers.

"It felt great to be shooting well after the previous weekend we had," Anna Veit '05 said. "The whole team really stepped up."

The entire team did step up in big situations throughout both games. On Saturday, Grinnell beat a Lawrence team that was 4-4 in Midwest Conference play, and two spots in front of them in the standings. Behind a double-double (21 points, 11 rebounds) from center Marie Opsahl-Lister '03, the Pioneers won 64-51. The victory put Grinnell right back in the hunt for a respectable conference season and was last weekend's second victory over a conference opponent.

The game of the week, however, occurred on Friday night, when the Pioneers of Grinnell faced off against the Pioneers of Carroll College. In front of 500 screaming spectators, a sight that is becoming common at women's games, Grinnell put on a show that had people talking the entire weekend.

Grinnell came into the match-up on a four game skid and desperately seeking a home victory. They were facing off against a Carroll team that had beaten them by 61 points when they played during last year's winless season. It wasn't easy, but after two overtime periods, the Grinnell College Pioneers prevailed 91-87.

Against Carroll, the women's team was coached by the men's basketball team's head coach, Dave Arseneault, on account of the women's head coach Andy Hamilton having to fulfill family obligations. This made for an interesting situation for both the players and for Coach Arseneault.

"I was very nervous going into the game," Arseneault commented. "It has been ten years since I have had to think so much about a game. I was very proud of them with the way they took ownership of their program and guided me through the evening."

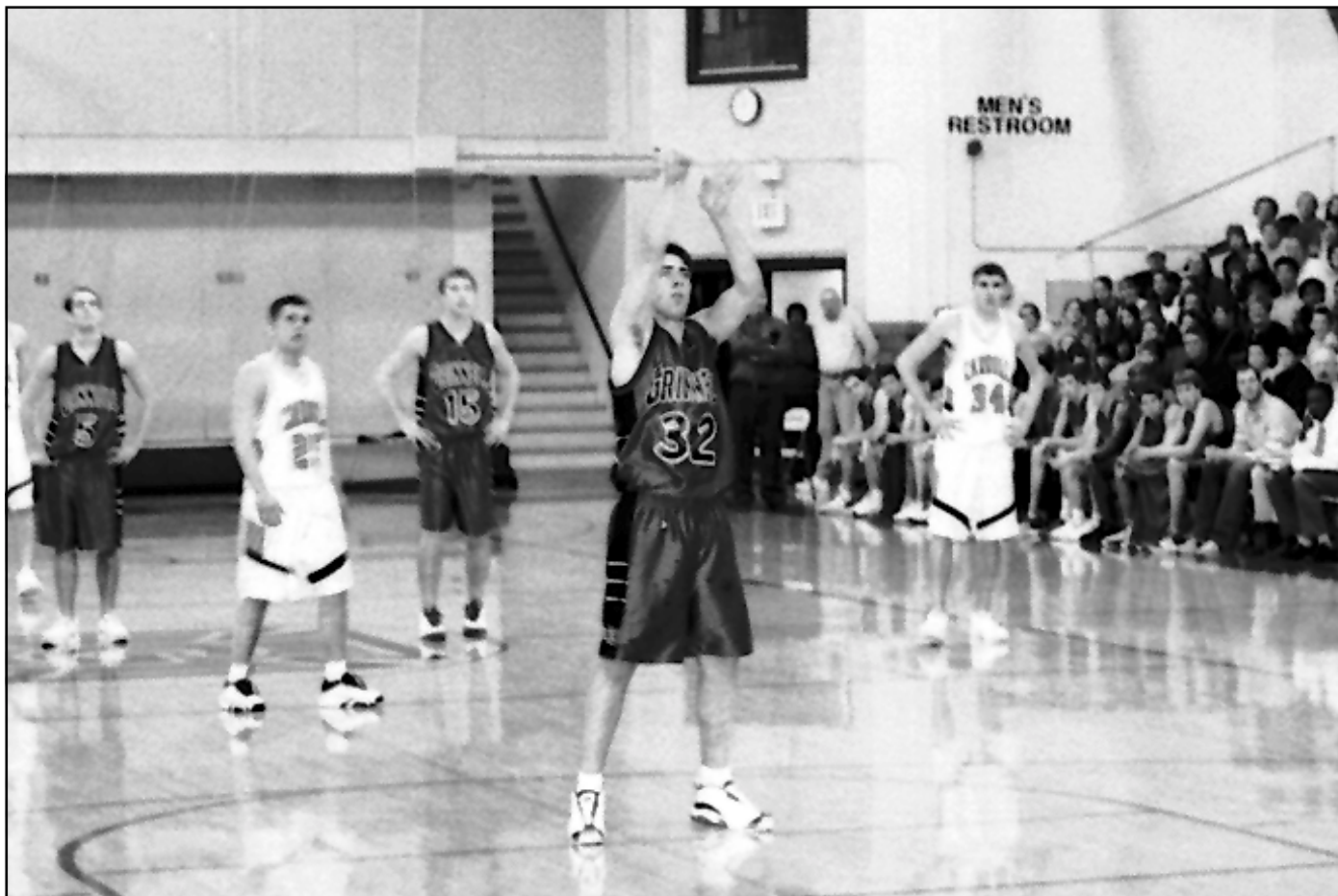
One player who certainly guided the team through the game was shooting guard Veit. She stole the show, scoring 32 points, 27 of those from behind the 3-point arc. Her nine three-treys were a team record. Katy Bowen '06 had 18 points, 8 rebounds, and three blocks. Lindsay Peter '05 and Acrivia Coromelas '04 each hit clutch free throws late in the game to give Grinnell the slim leads they enjoyed. Coromelas' 11 points and Peter's six points were complimented well by Opsahl-Lister's 14 points, but Opsahl-Lister fouled out late in regulation and was replaced by center Molly Kafka '06. The reserve forward played 20 solid minutes, including most of the overtime periods, and chipped in five points and eight rebounds.

"I know I'm not a big scorer, so I had to find other ways to help the team," Kafka said. "At the end of that exhausting game, it was the best feeling to know I was a part of the win."

That feeling was almost not felt by the Grinnell team, who had a three point lead with under ten seconds remaining in regulation when Carroll guard Jenni Poch hit a three-pointer as time expired to force the first overtime. Each team scored seven points in the first overtime, but Grinnell eventually outscored Carroll 8-4 in the second extra period to secure the win.

The two wins ended a dry spell for the Pioneers in which they lost four in a row in the first two weeks of January. They improved their conference record to 3-5 and their overall record to 8-5.

"If we keep playing strong, we can finish in the top four and make it to the tournament," Opsahl-Lister remarked. "I'm taking it one game at a time though. I want this season to last as long as possible. I'm having a great time."



Men grab momentum in Midwest Conference

Three-game winning streak punctuated by triple-overtime win over visiting conference leader

By Joe Geni
Editor

The Pioneers—with some difficulty and no small amount of frayed nerves—have defended their home court. Now they've got to go on the road.

Starting tonight at Beloit College, Grinnell faces three straight road games against the Buccaneers, Carroll, and Monmouth, before coming home to face St. Norbert on Feb. 7.

"Each of our opponents next week is in the middle of a dogfight for a possible playoff berth and playing on their home court," cautioned head coach Dave Arseneault in anticipation of road games against three teams with a combined overall mark of 14-30. "When you play someone, and where you play them, can really affect a team's overall competitiveness, and we will have to play exceedingly well to beat any of them."

"They're important games," added Cole Robertson '05. "It's tough to win on the road, so every game's important, especially if we want to win conference and host the tournament. Our fate is in our own hands, so we take each of these games as seriously as the others."

Such desirable mastery of their own destiny has come the way of the Pioneers, who were treading water in the midst of a Midwest Conference logjam a fortnight ago, thanks largely to their performance last weekend. On Saturday, Steve Wood '04, fresh off a 31-point effort the previous night, scored a career-high 48 points and finished one assist shy of a triple-double to lead Grinnell in a 150-149 triple-overtime heartstopper over visiting and first-place Lawrence. The win put the Pioneers in prime position to repeat as Midwest Confer-

ence champs.

Thus ended a spectacular weekend for Grinnell hoops, with both the men's and women's teams sweeping through a pivotal pair of conference games. After effectively removing Carroll from the playoff picture on Friday night, the Pioneers (10-4, 5-2 MWC) moved to within a half-game of Lawrence (12-3, 6-2) in the race for the conference title. By virtue of their win, the Pioneers also own the tie-breaker against the Vikings.

"Saturday's game was the best I've ever been associated with," said Arseneault. "It resembled a fifteen-round title fight between two evenly matched opponents. Some individuals have the ability to ignore fatigue. On Saturday, you witnessed two teams with that ability."

The Pioneers shot a middling 27 percent from the 3-point line, but made up for it by hitting 30 of 37 free throw attempts, including a blistering 18 of 19, or 94.7 percent in the first half. Still, Grinnell had to fight from behind for most of the contest, and didn't get its first lead until just 10 minutes remained in regulation. When Wood missed a falling turnaround as time expired, the game, knotted at 106-106, headed into overtime.

"Saturday's game was the best I've been associated with."

— Dave Arseneault



Top: Steve Wood '04 shoots a technical foul free throw in Grinnell's 133-125 victory over Carroll Friday night. Above: Zach Carlson puts up a 3-pointer over the top of the Carroll defense in the first half. Photos by Mitch Herz

Conference recap

- Dec. 7, @ Lake Forest Win, 127-114
- Jan. 8, vs. Knox Win, 108-88
- Jan. 11, @ Illinois C. Loss, 114-106
- Jan. 17, @ Ripon Loss, 137-130
- Jan 24, @ St. Norbert Win, 124-114
- Jan. 25, vs. Carroll Win, 133-125
- Jan 28, vs. Lawrence Win, 150-149 (30T)



Indoor track starts season at Iowa St.

By Jenni Niemiec
Staff Writer

Grinnell has always had successful and competitive track teams, and this year should be no exception. Both teams are ready to open the season in full stride, and, as always, are looking to improve on last year's successful campaign.

The men's and women's track teams are heading to Buena Vista this weekend for their second meet of the season. It will be a big and fairly important meet with good competition, though only about half of each team's members will be competing. The rest of the team will continue training in Grinnell until the entire team is ready to compete in every event.

"It's our first meet, and a lot of people are still getting into shape for competition," explained Liz Jarvis '04.

For the men, third-place finishers indoors at conference a year ago, it's the same story; a powerful team of long-distance runners coupled with a capable, promising sprinters' corps trying to keep pace.

"Our strength, as always, will be in the distance events," said head coach Will Freeman of this weekend's upcoming competition.

He is expecting Mitch Herz '05, Justin Riley '06 and Adam Beals '06, among others, to run some extremely good times.

Last weekend, the team competed at Iowa State and put up some impressive times. Pat Knoedler '03 ran a 50.77 in the 400m, good for third overall in Grinnell Indoor Track history. Yaw Nti-Addae '04 ran the 60m in 7.33 seconds, and Herz and Tom Beaudin '03 both ran the 3k with good early-season times (9:09 and 9:21 respectively).

On the women's side, Grinnell is looking to improve on last season's impressive fourth place finish at conference. Grinnell will have to do so without All-American Nicole Cueno '02, who graduated, but likes their chances nonetheless.

"So far training is going well," said Jarvis. "The distance runners have been training outside as much as possible despite the cold and really working hard. The greatest aspect of our team is definitely the unity and support we give each other. We are proud to be women beasts!"

"Our strength, as always, will be in the distance events."
— Will Freeman

Swimming hot at right time

Three-game swing ends in a pair of victories as conference looms

By Matt Dank
Staff Writer

How is it possible for a team to make the transition from warm, sandy beaches to the arctic tundra that is Grinnell? Well, for one thing, swimming is an indoor event.

But after some quality training outdoors, with only one day of cold, the swim team cut a swath from the South to the Midwest with swimming domination. The last three meets (the Sewanee Meet, Grinnell Invite, and Loras Duel Meet) the Pioneers have proved that they are peaking at just the right time for conference.

The first meet on Grinnell's return home tour was the Sewanee Meet in Tennessee.

"It was very exciting," said Eric Blevins '04. "After 13 long hours on the bus we stopped in Tennessee for a meet against a very good team.

Despite the effects the bus ride had on the team, we were edged by just one point, the closest we've ever come to winning the meet."

This meet very well may have been an omen of things to come in Grinnell's upcoming meets, starting with the Grinnell Invite, which took place on the weekend of Jan. 18-19. Both men's and women's blew away the competition with tremendous victories, with both placing first out of 11 teams. This is a good sign for the defending Midwest Conference Champions (both men and women).

"Four out of the five relays, for both men and women, won their respective races," stated Erik Larson '06. "Both 800 meter relays did not win, but still had strong showings."

Men grab momentum in Midwest Conference

Basketball, cont. from p. 16

"It was pretty emotional," said Robertson, who had 20 points and shot 81.8 percent from the floor. "We thought we had it won, and then the other team came back, and so it was up and down. But each time it started the new period, we were coming out with the same intensity we started the game with. We were starting off 0-0, trying to come out and win that period."

The third time, it worked, though the hosts escaped by the slimmest of margins. Lawrence, which turned over the ball 31 times and attempted 40 fewer shots, nearly stole the game behind the stellar play of post man Chris Braier, who corralled 23 boards and had 45 points, nearly all on layups and free throws, and forward Brendan Falls, who added 34 more for the visitors.

But Wood proved to be too much for Lawrence to handle. To go with

One of the more impressive victories occurred in the women's 100 butterfly. Joanne Perino '06 placed first, Emma Samuels '04 placed second and Leah Blasiak '03 got third. Blasiak and Samuels tied in the 50 freestyle, as well.

Their latest meet, at Loras, allowed for a good time with swimmers being able to compete in events they normally don't swim in.

"Personally, I've been improving all season and have yet to put together the 'perfect meet.'"

— Eric Blevins '04

On an individual note, one member was able to achieve the one elusive goal of his young diving career. Blevins was able to qualify for Nationals at the meet on Saturday, at Loras.

"Personally, I've been improving all season and have yet to put together the 'perfect meet,'" Blevins had said earlier. "I have come really close though."

Fittingly, a week after uttering those words, he qualified for nationals in what many would consider one of his best performances.

The swim teams travel to Augustana this weekend to further prep for conference, which will be at home the weekend of February 14.

"It is nice to be able to get a time for an event you usually don't get to swim," said Blasiak.

But the team, despite the seemingly relaxed conditions, showed true resilience in winning the meet despite the absence of their coach, Erin Hurley. According to a number of team members, assistant coach Tim Pulkabeck stepped in nicely and was able to lead the men's and women's teams to victory.

Results from break

home meets in CAPS

MEN'S SWIMMING
Jan. 2-14 @ Naples, FL
Jan. 13 @ Univ. of the South L 122-121
Jan. 17-18 GRINNELL
INVITE W 1st of 11 teams
Jan. 25 @ Loras College W 135-86
Feb. 2 @ Augustana College
Feb. 14-6 MWC FINALS
Feb. 21-2 Midwest Invite @ Kenosha, WI.
Mar. 20-2 DIII Nationals

WOMEN'S SWIMMING
Jan. 2-14 @ Naples, FL
Jan. 13 @ Univ. of the South L 124-107
Jan. 17-18 GRINNELL
INVITE W 1st of 11 teams
Jan. 25 @ Loras College W 144-90
Feb. 2 @ Augustana College
Feb. 14-6 MWC FINALS
Feb. 21-2 Midwest Invite @ Kenosha, WI
Mar. 20-2 DIII Nationals

his gaudy point total, Wood grabbed 10 rebounds, dished out nine assists and nabbed six steals. To polish it off, he hit the game-winning layup with 14.1 seconds to go.

Said Arseneault afterwards, "The difference in the outcome was the will of Steve Wood."

Wood was fouled on his final basket play and missed the free throw, only his second miss from the line in 15 attempts, and left the Pioneers up by only a point. But when Lawrence missed a game-winning 17-footer as time expired, Darby Gym erupted in celebration.

The victory makes it three straight for Grinnell, a streak that also includes a 124-114 victory at St. Norbert on Jan. 18, where the Pioneers lost in the playoffs last year. And despite dropping a pair of road games at Illinois College and Ripon the week before, the Pioneers have returned to form and look ready for a stretch run.