

Softball adds talent to returning Core



Courtesy of the Athletic Department

Co-RRAC player of the year Haley Butler

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The Texas Wesleyan softball team is reaching for nationals, adding a new assistant coach and five newcomers.

"We have the same team as last year, but we are a little smaller and more disciplined," Head Coach Shannon Gower said. "We are working the girls harder and changing our work ethic."

Assistant Coach Shian Smitherman is entering her first season at Texas Wesleyan. Smitherman graduated from Texas Women's University where she played two seasons under Coach Randy Porter. Smitherman coached with the Fusion U16 select team and is also a private batting instructor.

"Coach Smitherman has

brought a lot of new ideas to our team," said sophomore first baseman Christina Kelley. "We have changed the way we workout and are better conditioned mentally and physically."

The Lady Rams are reaching for the same goal as last season but with more determination.

"We will take each game day by day, but our overall goal is to make it to the national tournament," Gowen said. "We have 10 returners this season, including two seniors, pitcher Ashley Oldham and utility Lauren Garza."

"Our seniors are great leaders and their experience will take us far," Kelley said. "The freshmen are really strong and will contribute a lot this year. The entire team is set on winning the conference tour-

namment and going to nationals."

Last season, six members of the Texas Wesleyan softball team were named by the Red River Athletic Conference to the 2009 All-Conference softball team while junior catcher Haley Butler was named co-player of the year.

With a record of 18-32 last season, the Lady Rams are expecting greater results and preparing for top competition.

According to Gowen, the team's biggest competitor within the Red River Athletic Conference is Northwood University and Bacone College.

The Lady Rams begin their season against the University of Science and Arts Feb. 19. The first conference match is at Texas College, Feb. 24.

Wesleyan week-in-sports

- The Lady Rams Basketball team (16-6, 12-2 RRAC) gained sole possession of second place in the conference standings with 60-56 win at Southwestern Assemblies of God University Feb. 11.
- The Rams Basketball team (18-7, 11-3 RRAC) secured a 72-63 win at Southwestern Assemblies of God University Feb. 11.
- The Rams Baseball team's junior pitcher Drew Cavender has been named the Red River Athletic Conference player of the week for the period Feb. 1-7 after allowing just one hit in 5.2 innings of relief.

Hazinski goes all the way, wins TWU open

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The Texas Wesleyan Table tennis team hosted the Texas Wesleyan Open, bringing Mark Hazinski to another victory for the Rams.

Mark Hazinski, national collegiate champion, won the open singles event after defeating Timothy Wang in the final match.

Hazinski progressed throughout the tournament defending his win against teammates, both men and women, and table tennis players of all ages. The tournament consisted of eight crossovers, with the winners proceeding to the next round, not knowing who would be their next competitor.

The Rams kicked off the event at 9 a.m. Feb. 13 in the Sid Richardson Gym. It was a long day for all participants, but the competition was high in each event.

Players consisted of Wesleyan students, children, adults and any table tennis player who is a member with USA Table Tennis or the International Table Tennis Federation and wanted to compete.

Hazinski was awarded \$300 for his win in the main event of the day. Awards for the other events ranged from trophies to \$60 to \$200 for first place. The entrance cost for each participant in the event was \$25.

A few of the Rams who advanced in the crossovers were Ines Perhoc, Chance Friend

and Oliviu Vasilca.

"The Open provided great practice for everyone," said Ines Perhoc, collegiate national champion. "The many different types of players with their unique styles allowed us to experience many aspects of the game in one day."

The Rams will continue to host tournaments on campus with the upcoming Newgy Texas Wesleyan Open in March. According to Perhoc, the level of competition will increase.

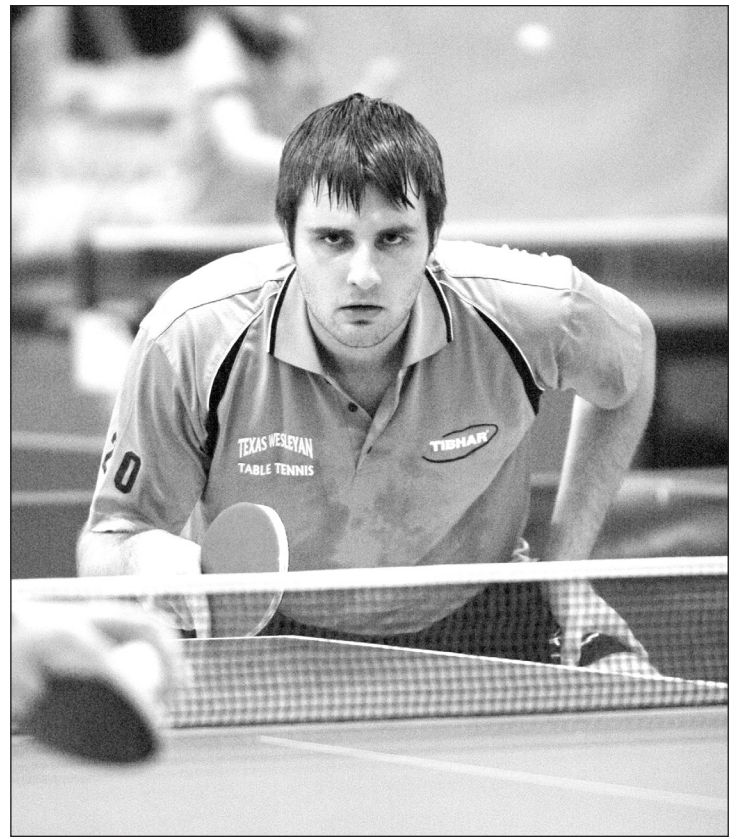
"I am looking forward to getting the competitive practice to better myself for na-

tionals," Perhoc said.

The Newgy Open is a USATT 4-Star sanctioned tournament with a total cash prize of \$9,000.

"The prize will definitely draw more competitors into the tournament and increase the variety of skilled players even more," Perhoc said.

The Texas Wesleyan table tennis team is part of the NCTTA and has won 38 of a possible 52 National Championships in the last eight seasons.



Mark Hazinski

Courtesy of Athletic Department

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David Coleman
Sports Commentator