

February 1978

# sunblazers

## newsletter

Quarterly Newsletter of the Sunblazers Club Florida International University



*Breaking ten individual and team school records, the 1977 FIU Sunblazer Soccer team recorded its best season ever with a 17-2-1 mark. Play was intense, even during this intrasquad scrimmage as can be seen in the expressions of Russ Hodges(16), Greg Preston(8), Luis Cordova(17) and fallen George Lezaca(21).*

### 1977 SOCCER SEASON ENDS WITH EXCEPTIONAL RESULTS

For the third consecutive season the Florida International University Sunblazers Soccer team, under Head Coach Bill Nuttall, has had a winning year.

When the 1977 season ended, the Sunblazer Booters had captured every conceivable record in the Florida International University history. Incredibly, this magnificent team won seventeen games while losing only two and tying one. The two loses came to the hands of Quincy College (3-0), the 1977 NAIA champions, and to Alabama A & M University, who defeated the Sunblazers 4-0 in the quarter finals of the NCAA Division II Soccer Tournament. A & M went on to win the Division II Tournament, which was hosted here at F.I.U.

"This season was a culmination of a

considerable amount of hard work coupled with a team effort", said a gratified Coach Nuttall. "After the Jacksonville Tournament (which FIU won) I felt we could have a successful season because we played with an aggressive drive and maintained our composure."

Other season highlights included first place in the Tom-Mae Tournament. This took place in Nassau, Bahamas, on August 28 and 29. Also, a first place in the U.S. Naval Academy Tournament, which was held at Annapolis, Md.

When asked about the outlook for the 1978 season, Coach Nuttall replied, "It is going to be extremely difficult to duplicate this past season. I am guardedly optimistic for next season with recruiting already in progress."



## **FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL'S NUTTALL SOUTH REGION COACH OF THE YEAR**

Florida International University's Head Soccer Coach Bill Nuttall, expanding on a successful season, has been named the South Region Coach of the Year.

Nuttall, 29, who came to F.I.U. in 1974 and has been Head Coach for three years, was nominated by his coaching peers for leading the Sunblazers to their best record in the school's history, 17-2-1.

Coach Nuttall, is now in contention with seven other regional winners for Coach of the Year honors. The victor will be presented the award at the National Coaches Convention in mid-January in Boston, Mass.

"I think we had a very successful season," said Nuttall. "We established pride and tradition here at F.I.U. and the south Florida area. This year we went to the NCAA Playoffs, next year we'll win!"

## **"THE GOOD TIMES ROLL" FOR F.I.U. SOCCER PLAYERS**

In a season that has been blessed with flourishing accomplishments, the Sunblazer Booters invariably are still drawing well deserved recognition.

It was announced that three (3) members of the Florida International Soccer Team (17-2-1) were named to the All-South Team. In addition to this, six (6) members were named to the All-State Team.

The All-South players were: Coral Park High School graduate Les Peterson, 1st team, a senior defender; Neville Prince, 2nd team, also a senior

defender, and Al Njie, 3rd team, a junior forward.

The above three players also were named to the All-State 1st team. Completing the All-State selections were; junior forward, Julio Avilez, 2nd team; senior forward, Wayne Guthrie, Hon. Men. and junior mid-fielder, Miguel Solozaball, Hon. Men.

Coach Bill Nuttall was asked his feelings on post-season distinguishments after a season of hardwork. "Can you imagine the thrill, the sense of accomplishment. The team has been playing solid soccer," Coach Nuttall said. "It's nice to win."

## **FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY HOSTS NCAA DIVISION II SOCCER TOURNAMENT**

In the bright sunshine of Miami the 1977 NCAA Division II Soccer Championships glided along at Florida International University.

In the Championship game Alabama A&M University held off a stubborn Seattle Pacific University team and won 2-1 for the NCAA Division II title.

"There is no better place to have a tournament than in Miami", expressed a relieved Salah Yousif, Head Coach of Alabama A&M. "I have coached three national tournaments and this was, beyond comparison, the finest organized tournament of all. Athletic Director Tom Wonderling and the Florida International University Athletic Department deserve a lot of credit for a job well done."

## **MEN'S TENNIS TEAM IS PREPARED FOR A PROMISING SEASON**

Even though graduation has struck the Sunblazers Men's Tennis Team, this should be the most powerful team in the Florida International University history. The nerve of the team will be its depth.

Last year's top player, Jim Doerr, and this year's Captain, Harlan Armster, are the only returning

members from the 1976-77 (9-18) squad. Doerr should be in competition for the All-American status at the season's end.

The remainder of the team includes three players from Miami-Dade Community College-South. They are Ruben Zarate, the 1976-77 National Junior College Doubles Champion, Ford Oliver and Louis Vaelejo. These three racquetmen led Dade-South to a number two ranking in Junior Colleges throughout the United States. Steve Kappinger, from Miami-Dade New World Center, who was ranked 27th in Florida, should give the team depth it was missing a year ago. Rich Kohn and Bruce Kaplan complete the remainder of the roster.

"Our goal this season is to have a dual match record strong enough to place four players in the NCAA II Tournament", said Head Coach Don Petrine, "If we accomplish this we should finish in the top ten in the national rankings."

The 1977-78 schedule will include Division I powers such as the University of Miami, Memphis State University, University of Florida and University of South Florida. The Division II forces on the Sunblazers' schedule will include Rollins College and Florida Tech University.

"Our work is cut out for us," said Coach Petrine, "but with sincere dedication the experience and depth this team has will turn in outstanding performances."

## **LES PETERSON NAMED TO NSCA ALL-AMERICAN TEAM**

For the first time in Florida International University Soccer history a player has been named to the All-American Team.

Senior Les Peterson, who has been nominated to the All-State First Team and the All-South First Team, has now been selected Honorable Mention on the National Soccer Coaches Association (NSCA) All-American Team.

Peterson was among fifty-five athletes chosen for First and Second Team plus Honorable Mention

recognition. He is also the only player representing the state of Florida.

Peterson, a defensive stalwart, was the Sunblazers Co-captin this year. His leadership enabled the team to compile 17 wins, while only losing twice and tying once.

"I am very proud of the recognition the NSCA has given the South Florida area," said Peterson, "but soccer is a team sport and I owe a great deal to my teammates and coach."

Peterson can also play offense, as he demonstrated this season with five goals and three assists for 13 points. He led the Florida International Sunblazers to soccer glory with their first post-season tournament play.

Peterson was selected as a candidate for the Bob Herman Trophy. In the soccer world the Bob Herman Trophy is equivalent to the Heisman Trophy annually awarded to the best college football player in the United States. The nominees were chosen by The Sporting News, with the NSCA voting on the winner.

Even though Les Peterson is the first Sunblazer to be selected All-American, the last four years have seen Florida International graduates drafted each year and playing in the NASL.

So far this season several professional teams have shown interest in Peterson's talents. Hopefully, this will be his year.

## **INJURIES HIT WRESTLING TEAM**

The 1977-78 Sunblazers Wrestling Squad has found the going tough so far this season. Injuries and sickness has struck Coach Sid Huitema's grapplers and has left him without wrestlers in the 128 pound, 150 pound and 190 pound weight class.

Although the situation has been difficult, heavyweight R. Phil Jones and Bill Sopko, wrestling in the 158 pound class, are turning in superb results.

Jones has recorded 22 wins while losing only 5, for a percentage of .814. Sopko has gained 24 victories while losing 7 for a percentage of .774. Jones is leading the team in pins with seven.



*Captain Betty Williams flies through the air with the greatest of ease for the 1977 Sunblazer Women's Volleyball team who finished the year with a 24-18 record and a second place finish in the AIAW Region III Small College Tournament at Columbus, Mississippi.*

## SEASON ENDS IN MISSISSIPPI FOR SUNBLAZERS WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

As soon as the Regional Tournaments were over, Coach Linda Miskovic tried to recall exactly what had happened. "It was good to participate in the Regional Finals at Mississippi University for Women, but grinning would be much easier if we had won."

The Lady Sunblazers came in second in the AIAW Region III Small College Tournament at the Mississippi University for Women, Columbus, Miss.

Florida International opened pool play by defeating Berry College of Mr. Berry, Ga., 15-6, 15-3; then eased passed Judson College of Marion, Ala., 15-6, 15-5. Also in pool play, the Sunblazers effortlessly mastered Columbus College of Columbus, Ga., 15-0, 15-4; then edged Tuskegee Institute of Ala., 15-8, 16-14 in gaining a position in the Championship round.

In the Championship competition,

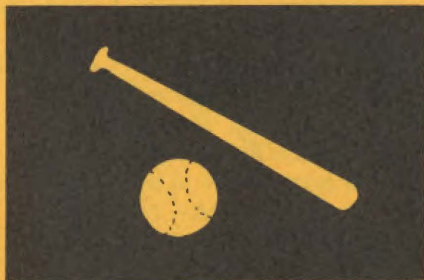
the Sunblazers eliminated Univ. of Montevallo of Alabama, 15-3, 15-5, 9-15, 15-6; but then lost to Florida Tech, 3-15, 9-15, 8-15 in the Championship game.

"I believe we did a good job", Coach Miskovic said, "considering we lacked depth and height on this year's roster."

As for the volleyball team itself, there are several notable accomplishments — Shirley Coleman and Betty Williams were named to the All-Regional Team.

The squad also placed second in the State Tournament, again losing to Florida Tech.

Departing from this year's club are Wendy Martin, Debbie Davis, Judy Garrow, Shirley Coleman and Betty Williams. Coach Miskovic is counting on Juniors Linda McTague, Dana Smoot and Letha Brown along with next year's recruits to anchor a successful 1978 season.



## FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY SUNBLAZER BASEBALL PREVIEW

Although there are encouraging signs that the 1978 Sunblazer Baseball Team will be a winner, there is a haunting suspicion amid the coaching staff that graduation and the professional draft could obstruct success.

Departing from this year's squad to the professional ranks is Lloyd Ard, who led last year's team in every offensive category. This could be a big blow to the '78 accomplishments. In addition to his productive hitting, Ard was a reliable pitcher.

Also signing professional baseball contracts were center fielder Mark Oestreich and pitcher Scott Winston. Winston was a superlative pitcher on last year's squad.

Despite the skepticism about the Sunblazer's overall quality this year, many of the new faces should lend support to the seven returning seniors.

Reappearing on the 1978 roster is Co-captain Kevin Ruffler, a dependable catcher who batted .350 with nine homeruns. At second and shortstop positions, Steve Jordan and Rick Jendra will glove all ground balls hit up the middle. In addition, these two are a threat to steal whenever on base. In 1977 their combined thievery netted forty-two bases.

Versatile George Karr will divide his playing time between the outfield and infield. Probably the team's best hitter is Drew Siemon. The left-handed hitting outfielder, along with Ruffler, supply the Sunblazers with the long ball.

At first base, for the second straight

year, will be Steve Weiss. Defensively he is a stalwart, with a steady .280 batting average. Keith Snyder, used in the utility role last year, will have a starting assignment as the team's designated hitter. The pitching staff will be composed of newcomers. The starting rotation will be led by Frank Areneo, a right hander from Valencia Junior College, the Florida State Junior College champs, Dan LedDuke, a right hander from Hudson Valley Community College (N.Y.), and a right hander, Scott Hodge from Lurleen Wallace Community College (Ala.)

The bullpen will consist of left hander Wally Pero from Miami-Dade New World Center (Fla.) and Doug Fowler, a right hander from Seminole Junior College (Fla.)

Assistant Coach Gerry Hunsicker feels that even though this year's moundmen lack experience, their abilities will enable them to be outstanding college pitchers. "The nice thing about this year's staff," said Hunsicker, "is that everyone knows how to pitch. This will be a contributing factor in the team's success. Last year we were forced to depend on two pitchers throughout the entire season."

Completing the starting lineup will be third baseman Don Jacoby from Brookdale Community College (N.J.) or Dennis Rixie from Lurleen Wallace Community College (Ala.). In the outfield Drew Siemon will be in left, centerfield will be covered by Jose Fernandez, a local product from Miami-Dade New World Center, and Joe Kubit from Valencia Junior College (Fla.) will hold down right field. Anxiously awaiting a starting assignment will be Mark Campbell, an outstanding catching prospect from Monroe Community College (N.Y.) who will be used in the utility role either in the outfield or infield.

Head Coach Tom Wonderling says, "This team may prove to be one of the best I have coached at Florida International University. This is a coachable group that communicates well on and off the field. What they lack in experience they make up in their desire and hustle."

Although 1978 may be considered a "rebuilding season" things are likely to improve.



## **F.I.U. HIRES WOMEN'S BASKETBALL COACH**

Cindy Russo, Assistant Women's Basketball Coach at Old Dominion University, has been named Head Women's Basketball Coach at Florida International University.

Ms. Russo began her coaching career in 1970 at Portsmouth Catholic High School in Portsmouth, Virginia. Her teams at Portsmouth won the championship each year she coached.

At Old Dominion Coach Russo's main responsibility was recruiting. Top recruits were Nancy Lieberman, a Silver Medalist in the 1976 Olympics, and Inge Nissen, a 6'5" player from Denmark, who played on the French Nationalist Team for two years.

In addition to coaching at Old Dominion, Coach Russo was a member of the Women's Basketball Team for four years. She was one of the first women in the Panthers' history to receive an athletic scholarship.

"She has an outstanding record as a player and a coach", Athletic Director Tom Wonderling said of Russo. "Her choice is indicative of the goal of Florida International University; to have an Intercollegiate program of excellence."

## **WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM FACES DIFFICULT SCHEDULE**

Florida International University Athletic Director Tom Wonderling announced the 1978 Sunblazer Women's Basketball schedule.

For new Coach Cindy Russo and her Lady Sunblazers' team, improvement

on last year's record of 7-11 will be the number one goal this season.

Returning to this year's squad are Seniors Shirley Coleman and Betty Williams. These two led last year's team in scoring with a 13 point-per-game average and 11 point-per-game average respectively. Coach Russo says, "Our success this season will hinge on Shirley's and Betty's leadership."

A pleasant addition to the squad is Pia Hakansson, a six foot, 150 pound player from Goteburg, Sweden.

Linda Miskovic, Coordinator of Women's Sports, says, "Pia's disciplined methods of training will be a tremendous assist to our athletic program."

Coach Russo is delighted with the addition of Dana Smoot and Gail Fitzgerald to the '78 roundball team. She is certain that Dana will help on the offensive and defensive boards, while Gail's experience, coupled with her desire, will be a positive aspect toward the team's success.

The remainder of the team includes Melody Van Valkenburg, Janet Goliger and Peggy Egan.

"We are going to be ready to play.", the first year Coach points out. "There are several good teams on the schedule which could beat us if we're not at our best. This year's team will play a very aggressive style of basketball."

## **FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL ADDS STEPHENS TO STAFF**

Coach Cindy Russo announced that Cee Stephens has been chosen as her assistant for the upcoming of 1978 Women's Basketball season.

Coach Stephens is a graduate of the University of Virginia in Charlottesville; She was active in Intramural basketball, volleyball and softball at the University. She also has coached and refereed CYO basketball.

Ms. Stephens is married to William C. Crenshaw, an attorney for Mahoney, Hadlow & Adams. She is currently working on her Masters Degree at F.I.U.

## **"KIT" VAN ALLEN APPOINTED WOMEN'S TENNIS COACH AT FIU**

Katherine "Kit" A. Van Allen, who was Captain of the University of Miami Women's Tennis Team from 1974 to 1976, was named Women's Tennis Coach at Florida International University.

The new 'Sunblazer' coach was Most Valuable Player at the U. of M. for three years, with a collegiate ranking of 17th in the state of Florida. Prior to that she was Most Valuable Player for the Cardinal Mooney High School Men's Tennis Team in Rochester, N.Y.

"Kit's playing record speaks for itself, and her dedication to the development of tennis in this area is second to none", FIU Athletic Director, Tom Wonderling, said. "We feel that attracting a coach with Kit's abilities represents a major step forward in our Athletic Program."

Ms. Van Allen's success has also been displayed off the tennis courts. At the U. of M. she was on the Dean's Honor List for six semesters, named to the President's Honor Roll in 1975, initiated into the O.D.K. National Honor Society in 1976 and graduated Cum Laude in May, 1976.

Presently Kit, 22, coaches three women's tennis teams for the City of Hialeah and teaches adult tennis classes.

## **1977-78 WOMEN'S TENNIS TEAM EXPECT PROMISING RESULTS**

The 1977-78 Lady Sunblazers' Tennis Team should volley as one of the finest in Florida International University history. First-year Head Coach Katherine "Kit" Van Allen has blended a team of promising Juniors and experienced Seniors that will furnish tennis fans with very fine racquet play.

"This team has potential and the athletic ability to win", said Coach Van Allen.

The team is composed entirely of Florida players, and is led by Junior Captains Diana Bean and Rosie Secada. Bean, from Key West, Florida, is an exciting doubles player, while

Secada, from Hialeah, Florida, has extensive experience in tournament play. The remaining Juniors on the team are Diane Aten, from Miami, Florida, Kendra Copeland, from Brandon, Florida, and Joann Follien, from Miami, Florida.

The experience on this year's team will be supplied by Seniors Linda Kavanaugh, from Miami Lakes, and Rose Brown, from North Miami Beach. The two will add depth to the team.

The schedule will include out-of-state powerhouse Dartmouth University and in-state dominators such as the University of Miami, Rollins College and Stetson University.

The Sunblazers will be competing in the Small College Division in the Southeastern Region along with Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi.

"Playing in the Small College Division should provide the course to the AIAW National Championships in California", said Coach Van Allen.



## **SUNBLAZERS CELEBRITY GOLF INVITATION A SUCCESS**

The First Annual Steve Clark Sunblazers Celebrity Golf Invitational proved to be the highest profit making event in the Sunblazers Club history.

The Invitational, which took place on Sunday, December 4, 1977 at the LeJeune Golf Course, saw many celebrities in attendance.

Some of the luminaries included; from T.V. Walt Cronise, Sean McGraw, Bob Weaver, Wayne Shattuck and Dick Fennel; golf pros Tom Shaw and Ed Furgol, professional football players Les Baety and Bill Stanfill, and pro bowler Don Carter.

Total number of participants was eighty golfers and fifteen hole sponsors.

The coordinator of this event,



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F.I.U.'s Head Men's Golf Coach Bobby Shave said, "I wish to express our thanks and gratitude to all who helped us in this fund raiser."

To join the Sunblazers Club and help boost the University's athletic programs, plus take advantage of the many membership privileges, contact the Sunblazers Club office at 552-2756.

## WOMEN'S GOLF TEAM IS READY TO RESUME SCHEDULE

With four of the five starters returning in addition to securing the top two players from Miami-Dade Community College-North, Jeanne Hartman and Meredith Marshall, the outlook is very promising. To put the frosting on the cake, Becky Pearson and Brenda Rego, former Miami-Dade North stars who spent their junior year at the University of Hawaii, have returned to the mainland and have chosen to finish their college careers at Florida International University.

Already this fall Becky has broken every F.I.U. individual record, scoring a 68 (4 under par) course record at the Seminole Invitational in Tallahassee and a 73-70-72215 (4 under par) for a 36 and 54 hole record while winning the first Pat Bradley Invitational Championship. The F.I.U. team 18 and 54 hole records of 293 and 895 were set at the Pat Bradley Invitational Golf Tournament, and the 36 hole record of

590 at the Seminole Invitational this fall.

Although F.I.U. was runner-up to the 1977 National Collegiate Champions in the first tournament (losing by two strokes), they bounced back to win the second tournament of the season by 25 strokes over their nearest competitors. The Lady Sunblazers team is definitely considered one of the top contenders for the 1978 State and National AIAW championships.

## MEN'S GOLF SCHEDULE RESUMES AT JACARANDA

The Sunblazers 1978 Men's Golf Team got underway on January 12, 1978 at the Jacaranda Golf Course in Ft. Lauderdale.

Participating in this tournament along with Florida International University was a strong University of Miami team, Biscayne College, Florida Atlantic University and Roger Williams College of Bristol, Rhode Island.

For Coach Bobby Shave and his golfers this will be a rebuilding year. Missing from last year's team that won the University of Miami Invitational is Clarence Jones, who had the lowest individual scoring average of 734 in the 1976-77 season. Jones has since joined the professional ranks. In addition, the team will be without eight members who graduated last year.

When asked what his chances are for this tournament, Coach Shave replied, "I hope this Classic will lend experience to the younger players so they will be ready for a strong spring season."

The second round was held at the Ft. Lauderdale Country Club on January 13th.

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