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BEST OF BATMAN

READ MORE P. 6

TABLE OF CONTENTS

NEWS

PAGE 3 Spring 2022 commencement information

PAGE 4 How UNC Charlotte is paying for COVID-19 services

PAGE 4 The ninth annual golden reel festival

OPINION

PAGE 5 A war beyond borders

ARTS & CULTURE

PAGE 6 Ranking all of the theatrical Batman films

PAGE 8 Dear Niner Times; How do I succeed at online classes?

SPORTS

PAGE 9 Ballin' in Uptown

PAGE 10 Behind the numbers

PAGE 11 Full sprint ahead

PAGE 12 Historic ending

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SPRING 2022 COMMENCEMENT INFORMATION

Registrar announces important dates and times for spring 2022 commencement

by Kathryn Caudill
Staff Writer

The registrar announced spring commencement dates via email to students of senior status on March 17, 2022.

The undergraduate ceremony for Belk College of Business, Williams States Lee College of Engineering and the College of Health & Human Services will be on May 13, 2022, at 9:30 a.m. Also, on Friday, May 13 at 6:00 p.m., the graduate school ceremony for Doctoral, Master's and graduate certificates for all programs will be held.

On Saturday, May 14, at 9:30 a.m., the College of Arts + Architecture, College of Computing & Informatics, Cato College of Education, and the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences will hold their commencement ceremony.

All ceremonies will occur in the Jerry Richardson Football Stadium, rain or shine. The stadium's policy of clear bags will be upheld during commencement ceremonies, and umbrellas and balloons will not be allowed in the stadium.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, this will be UNC Charlotte's second year having graduation ceremonies in the football stadium. Halton Arena in the Student Activities Center was used for

both May and December commencement ceremonies for many years prior.

Ceremonies are held for graduates in the term their degree is completed. This means that graduation can be completed in the fall, spring or summer terms; however, commencement is only held twice in May and December. Therefore, if you graduate in the summer or fall, the commencement ceremony will be held in December.

Graduates should receive more detailed information on March 29 through their University emails on how to RSVP for the ceremony— a mandatory step. If a response is not complete, there will not be an assigned seat for that student's major and time, nor will guest tickets be available. To complete the RSVP process, a student must have a valid UNC Charlotte ID or government-issued photo ID and their UNC Charlotte ID number.

It is unclear at this time if there will be a limit on the number of guest tickets that can be reserved. In the past, due to COVID-19 regulations, a maximum of three guest tickets could be reserved.

It has also not been reported if there will be a live stream or recorded ceremony to accommodate long-distance relatives or friends such as the one provided last May.

March 30 will mark the day of the Commencement Fair, where students will be able to pick up their free caps and gowns from the campus bookstore. Pre-order is not necessary, and honor cords for Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude and Summa Cum Laude will be available for purchase.

If you are not on campus on March 30, an online order can be placed through the Oak Hall company beginning April 10 and ending April 24. Doctoral candidates will need to purchase custom regalia through Oak Hall by March 25 to receive them prior to graduation.

To have accurate name pronunciation and display, UNC Charlotte will be utilizing "MarchingOrder" technology. More information on this will be provided via email on April 11. The deadline for graduates to record their names is April 19.

On the appropriate commencement date, students will receive a name card with a barcode that will be scanned as they walk across the stage, producing the name on the screen.

The Commencement Office will provide additional information via email or on their website. Any specific questions can be sent to commencement@uncc.edu.



Charlotte students at a previous commencement ceremony. This year's ceremony is held outdoors
Photo courtesy of Charlotte Alumni Association



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HOW UNC CHARLOTTE IS PAYING FOR COVID-19 SERVICES

The Niner Times speaks with the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) about COVID-19 funding

by Evelin Vicente-Rodriguez
Contributor

The COVID-19 pandemic began to affect UNC Charlotte in March 2020. Niner Times has since investigated how the University is paying for COVID services and personal protective equipment (PPE), such as free masks, testing and vaccinations.

UNC Charlotte's safety protocols have required students, faculty and staff to wear masks during indoor gatherings to reduce the risks of others catching the virus. The University's protocols have also included regular COVID testing and encouraging vaccinations and boosters. For the most recent COVID protocols, visit <https://emergency.charlotte.edu/coronavirus>.

Chris Gonyar, director of the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), spoke

with the Niner Times about how COVID services are paid for, as well as how the department helps students, faculty and staff.

"The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is responsible for emergency planning and preparedness efforts, as well as coordinating response and recovery, at UNC Charlotte," said Gonyar. "This preparedness takes an all-hazards approach to threats and hazards, of which COVID-19 is one."

Gonyar explained how the OEM assists other departments in COVID protective efforts. "OEM creates institution-wide plans to help coordinate the efforts of other departments who have direct responsibility for dealing with impacts from COVID-19," said Gonyar.

Gonyar further explains what other collaboration OEM assists with at UNC Charlotte to help students' health. "The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) also manages the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for the institution which acts as the information hub and centralized command and control center," said Gonyar.

"The OEM began formally providing masks during the return to campus for fall 2020 via the return-to-campus packs that were made available to all students, faculty and staff."

"Funding for the COVID-19 response has come from a variety of sources, but primarily from federal and state funding sources. This also applies to the masks that have been

provided to campus free of charge."

If a student needs masks on campus, OEM has provided masks within the following locations: Atkins Library, Niner Central, University Advising Center and the information desk at Popp Martin Student Union.

VaxVan, a company that manages UNC Charlotte's testing sites, has partnered with the University to provide testing for students, faculty and staff. "They are responsible for all aspects of testing, from registration to sample collection and reporting of test results," said Gonyar. "Funding for testing also comes from federal and state funding sources."

THE NINTH ANNUAL GOLDEN REEL FESTIVAL

Student film festival to be held on April 28, 2022

by Madison Dobrzanski
News Editor

UNC Charlotte's student film festival, the Golden Reel, is in production and set to take place in McKnight Hall on April 28, 2022, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. The festival is presented by the UNC Charlotte Student Film Club.

According to a press release written by Samantha Mayer, copywriter of the festival's marketing team, the festival is "made by students for students." The goal of the festival is to "celebrate UNC Charlotte's students and the art of film."

The festival is taking submissions until April 12; students can submit

their work through Google Forms. The link to submit work is <https://forms.gle/M8wzzb8uR7F3snG7A>.

According to a press release, the students of UNC Charlotte have produced a student film festival every year since 2008, specifically the "Golden Reel" festival since its inaugural year, 2014. The festival was held online in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As of March 20, the 2022 Golden Reel Festival will be in person. However, the press release for the festival states that the festival may be moved online if necessary for safety reasons. In

addition, the press release states that all safety precautions and measures will be mandatory and enforced for the festival.

According to the Niner Nation Cares website, current COVID protocols that apply to this event include using 50% of the space's room capacity; however, masks are optional for attendees.

In the past, fundraising has taken place to promote the festival and its participants. According to the press release written by Mayer, the festivals have varied in theme, time, location and types of submissions accepted. For

example, the festival has previously accepted national and international submissions. This year, the festival is focused purely on UNC Charlotte students to "allow their films to shine without the potential overshadowing of city-wide, national or international submissions."

People interested in the festival can stay updated on the festival production through their Instagram @cltgoldenreel or by emailing Mayer at smayer4@uncc.edu.

A WAR BEYOND BORDERS

HOW THE INVASION OF UKRAINE IMPACTS THE WORLD



by Darian Daniels
Staff Writer

Photo of city of Kyiv
by Zoya Zalevskiy

Not even three months into the year, 2022 has managed to be just as eventful as the years before it. If you carry a cellphone or watch cable news, you know about the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

This conflict did not start in Feb. 2022 but goes back to the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. More recently, in Feb. 2014, Vladimir Putin planned for Ukraine's former leader, Victor Yanukovich, to sign the European Union. This attempt failed and led to Russia attacking Ukraine's southern region, Crimea, starting what has been an eight-year-long conflict. Putin has long called for attacks on Ukraine and views the nation as a security threat in no uncertain terms. But why does he see them as a threat?

On Feb. 24, 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine. This occurred after the Ukrainian government showed interest in joining NATO, a government alliance protecting member states with military action. With Ukraine joining NATO, other countries may follow suit, challenging Russia's dominance in Eastern Europe. In addition, many speculate that Putin wishes to restore the Soviet Union, who's dissolution has been cited by Putin to be a great tragedy.

On state television, Putin immediately

declared a "special military operation" in Ukraine to demilitarize and "denazify" the country. As a result of this invasion, PBS reports that nearly 6.5 million people have been displaced, and 3.2 million people have fled the country. According to Statista, Ukraine has faced 875 civilian casualties and 1,407 injuries as of March 17.

The State Department has advised U.S. citizens not to travel to Ukraine, which may be stressful for international students whose families live there. At this rate, many students abroad may not be able to go home, even after a potential ceasefire.

For the average student, this invasion may not feel personal. But that isn't the case for everyone. For first-year Ukrainian student Abby Falkner, this invasion is her new reality. "In a deep sense, this war has completely messed with both me and my family's life. I'm worried about not visiting Ukraine. It's destroyed land now. I don't think I'll ever be able to," Falkner said. "It's not an issue that I can forget. Although many people see this as major news now, it won't be in two weeks. For me, though, it's never-ending."

During the summer of 2021, awareness posts and GoFundMe links for Palestine were widely shared, but one random day, the attention disappeared. The

voices that were once so loud suddenly fell eerily silent. It was as if the conflict in Palestine had ended, even though it has progressively gotten worse.

We must keep the energy we have at this moment for months and even years to come. We have the power to be vocal at all times; it is essential to be persistently aware.

This war impacts students like Falkner, but it also negatively impacts those not of Ukrainian descent.

Recently, countries around the globe have been seeing a devastating hit to their economy. According to BBC News, Europe is enduring an energy crisis, with prices in Germany as high as \$9.12 as of March 14.

The Seattle Times reported that inflation in the U.S. has risen to 7.9%, which Biden has directly blamed on Putin and the Kremlin--the Russian government. This is because many sought-after imports such as oil and agricultural products have been disconnected from Russia.

According to the New York Times, the U.S. gas average has hit a new high: \$4.17 per gallon. These prices have sent many into a panic. I'm sure many of you can relate, but I live on a very tight budget as a college student. I also live hours away from home, meaning that it will be more expensive to visit my family and travel elsewhere.

Along with rising gas prices, the price of food and other consumer goods has skyrocketed. Meat, produce, dairy and almost any other food available for consumption will be in shorter supply this year.

According to Reuters, "Russia's trade and industry ministry has recommended the country's fertilizer producers temporarily halt exports." Russia is a huge fertilizer producer, causing our farmers to depend on them to grow their crops. With the U.S. disinvesting in Russia, it is more difficult and more expensive for farmers to bring food to market.

I share a significant concern for those fighting the war in Ukraine and those protesting in Russia, as well as those whose loved ones have suffered all around the world. I cannot imagine having to fight for a conflict that isn't mine. Although Biden explicitly stated he wants nothing to do with this, this invasion is just as much of our concern as anyone else's.

Stay informed about the war and encourage others to do the same. Contact your local legislators with concerns to send aid to families in Ukraine and those impacted by this war in your area.

RANKING ALL OF THE THEATRICAL BATMAN FILMS

My personal favorites of the caped crusader

by Gabe Lapalombella
Staff Writer

Photos courtesy of
IMDB.com

The cinematic history of a character like Batman is incredibly vast. Having been around in media since the 1960s, the interpretations of the character have taken many different forms. In honor of Matt Reeves's "The Batman" being released in theaters, I decided to outline the character's legacy. To best honor the caped crusader, it was an obvious choice to rank all the theatrical Batman adventures. Consider this a walk-through of the character's history from 1966 to 2022. This list certainly won't be to everyone's liking, but it summarizes my favorite adventures.

14. "BATMAN & ROBIN" (1997)

"Batman & Robin" at the bottom of this list shouldn't be a surprise to anyone. The George Clooney, Uma Thurman and Arnold Schwarzenegger feature is laughably bad. Director Joel Schumacher was fighting an uphill battle in what he wanted the film to be versus what the studio expected. Schumacher infamously wanted to make it similar to the animated series meeting the 60s cartoons. The studio wanted to do nothing more than just sell toys. It's a noticeable conflict of ideas that forces this cast to sound like buffoons, thanks to a script that feels like a marketing ploy. Between Schwarzenegger laying the ice puns on thick and Clooney sounding like a robot, it's obvious no one wanted to be there. What's undeniable is that there's fun in this complete misfire.

13. "JUSTICE LEAGUE" (2017)

This third piece in the Zack Snyder universe was one people were eagerly anticipating from the moment when it was announced. When Snyder had to leave due to his daughter's tragic passing, Joss Whedon ("The Avengers") stepped in. Many assumed that this could "save" the film, but those

folks (myself included) were wrong. Not all Batman interpretations have been winners, but none have missed the mark this much. Every ounce of seriousness and intrigue that was established in "Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice" was stripped away for dull comedy. It wastes Ben Affleck's talents and makes a frustrating final product.

12. "BATMAN FOREVER" (1995)

Before the disaster of "Batman & Robin," Joel Schumacher stepped behind the camera with "Batman Forever." The cast that included Val Kilmer, Tommy Lee Jones, Jim Carrey and Nicole Kidman drew many eyes. The finished product was more cartoony than most fans expected but delivered on the silliness of this world. A guy who dresses up in spandex to fight villains named "The Riddler" and "Two-Face" is admittedly ridiculous. Schumacher embraces this crazy nature and delivers a film that feels closest to a cartoon. Kilmer is also in on the zaniness and gives a Bruce Wayne/Batman that fits in the world. It's certainly not one of the best portrayals, but one that embraces what it is.

11. "BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE" (2016)

Snyder's DC Universe is one of the more controversial adaptations of these classic characters. Some love his interpretations, whereas I always have mixed responses. "Batman v Superman" was an attempt to build out a universe but was never as exciting as it could be. Snyder wants to cram so much story and character into one film, that it's a chore to sit through. It's crammed with dark imagery and self-seriousness, making it a dull adventure. Besides a scattered plot with some terrible performances, especially from Jesse Eisenberg, there is one

saving grace: our introduction to Affleck as a dark and angry Batman. This Batman has been through a lot, and he sells that grizzled persona. It's one of my favorite versions of the character, and it delivers.

10. "BATMAN: THE MOVIE" (1966)

Many great actors have taken on the role of "Batman," but none are as iconic as Adam West. His version of the caped crusader was considered by many to be a parody of what the character was. Alongside Burt Ward as Robin and Cesar Romero as Joker, this adaptation plays like a feature-length episode of the series. Your enjoyment depends on how far you are willing to go with the silly-natured Batman. West embraces that humor and delivers an entertaining, fun and period-specific portrayal of the character. Many won't be used to it, but it does offer quite a bit of entertainment.

9. "ZACK SYNDER'S JUSTICE LEAGUE" (2021)

In 2021, Snyder completed his vision with the infamous "Snyder Cut." Fans were thrilled that Snyder's vision could be completed, even with a four-hour running time. The biggest highlight of the four-hour epic for this critic is Ben Affleck's Batman. It's a bloated story, but this version of Batman is a well-rounded and perfect continuation of what was started in 2016. We know and understand his world-weariness and can finally realize why he wants this team together. It's undeniably a self-serious version of the character but is effective in what it sets out to do.

8. "BATMAN RETURNS" (1992)

Many consider Michael Keaton's Batman/Bruce Wayne the version of their childhood. Keaton nailed the balance between suaveness and mystery with a dash of needed heroism. It's a sort of portrayal that anchors a film, which unfortunately teeters too often into





weirdness. Burton's eccentric nature, particularly with Danny Devito's portrayal of The Penguin, made this one an oddity. Whenever Keaton is doing his thing (or simply having charged chemistry with Michelle Pfeiffer), it's a beautiful version of the character. What makes it far from perfect is an imbalance between what works and what doesn't. The material is so weird that the chemistry scenes feel few and far between.

7. "THE DARK KNIGHT RISES" (2012)

Christian Bale and director Christopher Nolan's trilogy is considered a staple of the character. Coming off the heels of "The Dark Knight," audiences were eager to see how the trilogy would conclude. Besides some very annoying plot twists, Bale's portrayal ends a legacy. What makes the film the weakest of the trilogy is what came before. Even by the same creators, it's hard to consider how someone could top what "The Dark Knight" did for superhero culture. As a Batman adventure, "The Dark Knight Rises" is a serviceable one that delivers on the thrills. It manages to balance those thrills with closure for the fans that have been here since "Batman Begins" in 2005. The misstep is not giving audiences anything they haven't seen before.

6. "BATMAN" (1989)

Many consider Michael Keaton to be the definitive Batman of their youths. With Tim Burton behind the camera, this version proved to be an homage to Batman cartoons. Besides Jack Nicholson's iconic portrayal of The Joker, we were given a fully realized Bruce Wayne. It certainly suffers from the typical Burton weirdness, but Keaton gave us a heroic character. Giving the weird world an anchor steeped in heroism made him a fan-favorite Batman for many. There is definitely a nostalgia factor for those who grew up with this version of the character. These reasons, along with feeling like the animated television show come to life, make it one of the better interpretations of the character.

5. "BATMAN: MASK OF THE PHANTASM" (1993)

A year after "Batman Returns," we were treated to our first animated Batman adventure. Kevin Conroy's Batman is a fan-favorite interpretation of the character. This version of Bruce Wayne has to deal with one thing he hasn't had to before: love. This creates a fascinating balancing act of a brooding Batman and a guarded Bruce Wayne. It's the sort of portrayal that we had never seen up to this point that made it all the better. Even being a box office bomb upon its release, fans have heralded it as one of the better comic adaptations. It was simultaneously an improvement on the film from 1992 and a look at the darker stories of this character.

4. "BATMAN BEGINS" (2005)

"Batman Begins" had the tough job of being the first live-action Batman film since "Batman & Robin" in 1997. When people heard the name Christian Bale, it left them scratching their heads. Its release in 2005 helped revolutionize the character and make him palatable for a modern audience. Bale's portrayal of both Bruce Wayne and Batman had a similar tone to the comics. With Nolan's direction treating the story like a drama, it was something fresh and exciting.

3. "THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE" (2017)

Besides being a love letter to Batman lore, it also gave us a voice performance to rival Kevin Conroy. Will Arnett's Bruce Wayne and Batman had to manage a tricky tone balance. Arnett nails the suave playboy and dark and brooding superhero. What makes this Lego outing so high on the list is that the film asks him to be a father. The plot point of adopting Robin (Michael Cera) as a son and superhero sidekick gives him surprising depth. Yes, it's nice to see him interact with classic villains like the Joker, but the film wisely focuses on humanizing him. Arnett embraced this newfound take and made a Batman unlike any other.

2. "THE BATMAN" (2022)

Not a single film on this list has been as faithful to the source material as "The Batman." Matt Reeves' crime-fueled take on the character allows Robert Pattinson to shine. Some complain that this Bruce Wayne is emo and moody, but this is only his second year of crime-fighting. He's messy, volatile, brutal and doesn't quite understand the hero Gotham city is in desperate need of. Pattinson plays this moral dilemma beautifully and creates a version of Bruce Wayne and Batman unlike any other. It's the rare first in a trilogy that made me more excited to see the hero's growth than what villain he could fight in the sequel. The combination of Reeves's direction and Pattinson's near-silent performance earned a high place on this list.

1. "THE DARK KNIGHT" (2009)

After "Batman Begins" and a tease of the Joker, people were eager to see what Bale and Nolan did next. The movie's real strength comes from Heath Ledger's brilliant and haunting performance as the Joker. As he says in the story, this version of the character is someone who "just wants to watch the world burn." This sort of monstrous villain brings out the true essence of the Batman hero. It allows him to make heroic sacrifices in the name of a greater good, making him the hero he is. Giving Bruce Wayne a true hero's journey in the backdrop of a crime story made this more than a superhero movie. It is a crime drama disguised as a superhero epic.



DEAR NINER TIMES,

How do I SUCCEED AT ONLINE CLASSES?

by Sylvia Srinivas
Staff Writer

Online classes are no joke—it can be hard to stay engaged and learn material virtually. Although we are hopefully in the tail end of the COVID-19 pandemic, many classes are still virtual or following a hybrid model. Fortunately, you can take steps to succeed in your online classes. Here are five tips:

Establish a productive learning environment

It may be tempting to join the Zoom call from the comfort of your bed. However, it is more effective to have a designated workspace, such as a desk where you sit to complete assignments and attend online classes. Your workspace should have few distractions, so lounging on your bed and scrolling through TikTok with class in the background isn't the best idea. Try to keep your phone away from your workspace to stay focused.

Treat it like a normal class

Don't roll out of bed two minutes before class starts. Instead, carry out the routine you'd perform to start your day before going to an in-person class. This might include washing your face, getting dressed and having breakfast.

Take notes

Some people like pencil and paper

notes, while others prefer to type them or write on an iPad. Whatever your favorite method is, make sure to take notes during class. Doing so will keep you engaged more than if you just sit back and listen.

Manage your time by making a plan and sticking to it

Read the course calendars in your syllabi at the beginning of the semester. Write down important due dates and exam dates. It can help to make daily or weekly assignment to-do lists and check them off as you go; you can do this in a planner or spreadsheet. Remember to set aside time in your schedule to do things that boost your physical and mental health, such as going to the gym or for a walk, calling a friend or meeting someone for lunch.

Turn your camera on!

If you were in-person, everyone would see your face anyway, so why not turn your camera on during an online lecture? It will keep you accountable and encourage you to pay attention.

Try turning these tips into consistent study habits, and you may see an improvement in your content retention and overall performance in class!

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BALLIN' IN UPTOWN

49ers baseball takes talents to Uptown, wins series against WKU

by Sam Perry
Staff Writer

Charlotte opened up the Conference USA (C-USA) season with a 7-5 loss to Western Kentucky at Truist Field in Uptown Charlotte on Friday, March 18. The 49ers ultimately won the series taking the final two games played at Hayes Stadium and winning those games 3-1 and 13-12.

Charlotte moved to 13-6 on the season and 2-1 in conference play. WKU moved to 9-10 on the season and 1-2 in the conference.

"That's a really good Western Kentucky team that fought extremely hard every single pitch of the weekend," said Head Coach Robert Woodard.

Truist Field

Truist Field is the home to the local minor league baseball team, the Charlotte Knights. The Knights are the Triple-A minor league affiliate of the Chicago White Sox.

Playing at Truist Field in the heart of Uptown Charlotte has become a favorite part of the season for many 49ers players.

"[It's] one of the most beautiful places I've ever been to. The surface is great, the backdrop of the skyline is amazing. Just a beautiful place to play baseball and to be able to play there as college kids is a really cool experience and something that I'm super excited for every single year that we get to do it," said sophomore infielder David McCabe.

Charlotte has played a game there every season going back to 2016 except for 2020 when the game was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The first game the 49ers played there was against the Georgia Bulldogs on March 8, 2016, where Charlotte won 10-5.

Game one

The Hilltoppers took the first game of the series 7-5 in Uptown after a strong offensive output in the mid to late innings.

The game was in jeopardy of being rained out, much like their first scheduled game at Truist Field this season, but the teams ensured they played even through the heavy rain hitting the field when the first pitch was thrown. Luckily, the rain subsided early on and allowed the game to be played without any delays.

"As a coach, you want to play your best every time you put the uniform on and be firing on all cylinders, and clearly, that was not the case last night [Friday night]," said Woodard.

Western Kentucky claimed the lead first with a sacrifice fly in the top of the second inning. In the bottom of the second inning, the 49ers responded, putting up two runs on a Blake Jackson RBI double and an RBI single from Jack Dragum.

The score stayed steady until the fifth inning. When it got to the fifth, the

Hilltoppers struck hard, scoring three runs on a lead-off solo home run by Ty Batusich, then a sacrifice fly by AJ Fiechter, and an RBI double by Matthew Meyer. WKU took the lead 4-2.

The next half-inning, Charlotte put up a run of their own with Austin Knight's first official at-bat of the game after being hit by both of the first pitches he faced. On the second pitch of the at-bat, Knight made contact and crushed a home run to left field. The 49ers trailed 4-3 at the end of the fifth.

Charlotte struggled to get outs the next three innings giving up one run in each of those innings. They scored in the sixth on double play, in the seventh on an RBI fielder's choice and in the eighth on a sacrifice fly. WKU led 7-3 going into the bottom of the eighth inning.

In the eight, Charlotte scored two runs to give them some momentum to carry into the rest of the weekend. The runs were scored on an RBI single from Jackson and a sacrifice fly to cut Western Kentucky's lead down to 7-5 going into the final inning.

The Hilltoppers held on to win the C-USA opener 7-5, with their starter Jake Kates getting the win while their reliever Mason Vinyard getting the save. Charlotte's starter Spencer Giesting in his fourth start of the year and fifth appearance of the year got his first loss of the season.

Game two

The second game of the series saw Charlotte win a pitcher's duel back at Hayes Stadium beating Western Kentucky 3-1.

Jake Cunningham and Josh Madole provided strong offensive support in the pitcher's duel, both hitting 2-4 with a home run each.

49ers pitchers Will Lancaster and Cameron Hansen combined for nine innings pitched, giving up just one run on six hits and one walk. They also struck out five batters.

"I couldn't be more proud of how our guys responded today. Will [Lancaster] led us off and battled into the fourth inning, and then Cameron [Hansen] was sensational with six shutout innings and not walking a single hitter out of the bullpen," said Woodard.

49ers' Hansen got the win while WKU's Aristotle Peter got the loss in the contest.

Game three

Charlotte took the third game of the series, winning 13-12 over WKU to win the first C-USA series of the season.

The 49ers' offense had a strong eight-run fifth inning in which the 49ers reclaimed the lead and grew it drastically to 11-4. However, the Hilltoppers battled back, scoring four runs over the next two innings to cut Charlotte's lead to 11-8.

In the ninth inning, WKU tied



Charlotte baseball played one of its three games in Uptown over the weekend
Photo by Chris Crews

the game up with a three-run homer making it 11-11. Another home run in the ninth inning gave the Hilltoppers the 12-11 lead. Charlotte tied it back up in the ninth inning with a walk with the bases loaded, making it 12-12.

In the bottom of the ninth inning, Kaden Hopson hit a walk-off single for the 49ers to win 13-12.

“The spirit and the love for the game, the love for competing that our players showed was inspiring... for our guys

to hang in there and do what they did, I’m short of words,” said Woodard.

Collin Kramer got the win for the 49ers while Vinyard took the loss for the Hilltoppers.

Key Players

Hansen on Saturday had an excellent pitching performance coming out of the bullpen throwing six innings while only allowing three hits, no walks and striking out five on his way to the victory.

Madole had a good weekend, hitting two home runs over the weekend, batting 4-13 with three RBIs and scoring three runs.

Knight also performed well over the weekend, hitting two home runs while batting 4-12 with two RBIs and scoring three runs.

What’s Next

Charlotte has two midweek games coming up, both being played in minor league ballparks. The first game on

Tuesday, March 22 at 6 p.m. is against the Campbell Camels at Atrium Health Ballpark located in Downtown Kannapolis, home of the Kannapolis Cannon Ballers. The second game is on Wednesday, March 23, at 7:05 p.m., back at Truist Field to take on the Davidson Wildcats.

BEHIND THE NUMBERS

An explanation of Charlotte’s successful start to the 2022 softball season

by Joey Ellsworth
Staff Writer

The Charlotte softball team is off to a hot start this season as they boast a 20-8 record. This season has seen the 49ers knock off No. 6 Virginia Tech and receive their first national ranking of No. 24 in the polls. If you dive into the numbers, the team is putting up some impressive statistics that rival some of the best teams in program history.

Even though the team has dropped out of the national rankings, they still sit 13 of 301 NCAA softball teams in RPI. RPI, the rating power index, uses three components to rank a team. The components are a team’s winning percentage, average opponent’s winning percentage and average opponents’ winning percentage.

Let’s take a look at Charlotte softball by the numbers as of Friday, March 18:

Team Statistics

30: Charlotte ranks in the top 30 in the NCAA for home runs, triples per game, triples, doubles and slugging percentage. The 49ers have nine triples on the season, which ties them for ninth among all NCAA teams, while their 40 doubles put them 17.

60: Charlotte is in the top 60 in the NCAA for many categories, including batting average, doubles per game, home runs per game, on-base percentage, runs per game and more.

128: Taking a look at their pitching stats,

you can see part of Charlotte’s struggles. They sit 128 for ERA; that’s worse than over 67% of the listed NCAA D1 softball teams, according to NCAA.com.

97 & 100: The 49ers rank 100th in shutouts and 97th in strikeouts which is an area Charlotte will need to improve upon in the second half of the season.

3: When comparing their stats to the rest of Conference USA (C-USA), Charlotte is top three in batting average, at-bats, runs, hits, doubles, triples, home runs, RBIs, total bases, slugging percentage, walks and fielding percentage.

Individual Statistics

1: Bailey Vannoy has been leading the charge for the 49ers. She is first on the squad in batting average, on-base

percentage, at-bats, runs, hits, doubles, triples, homers, RBIs, slugging percentage and total bases. Vannoy also leads the team with four stolen bases on five attempts.

Before Charlotte’s series against UTSA on Friday, March 18 through Sunday, March 20, her .894 slugging percentage led the C-USA.

76: Vannoy has 76 total bases on the season, with only three players having more.

20: With three triples on the year, she is in the top twenty in the NCAA.

50: Vannoy is top 50 in the NCAA for runs per game and home runs per game.

Vannoy was named to the D1 Softball Power Rankings twice due to her outstanding play. Vannoy is the first 49er to be selected as a candidate for

the 2022 Softball Senior Class Award.

15: With a batting average of .367, Cori Henderson finds herself in the top 15 for C-USA batters. The junior shortstop is in the top 15 in the C-USA for hits, doubles and total bases.

20: Ella Chancey has been a significant contributor for the 49ers this year.

Chancey is batting .341, which is top 20 in the C-USA, while her 16 runs put her just outside of the top 20.

12: Chancy has 19 RBIs, 47 total bases, 28 hits and five home runs on the year, which puts her in the top 12 for all four categories. She has been struck out the fifth most in C-USA, and her on-base percentage of 0.382 are areas where the freshman has room to grow.

18: Lindsey Walljapser’s ERA of 2.6 puts her 18th in the C-USA and is a big part of her impressive 8-2 record.

2.57: Amelia Wiercioch has a stellar 6-2 record with an impressive ERA of 2.57. She is just one of nine C-USA pitchers to have not allowed a single triple yet. Wiercioch is one of five to allow one or fewer home runs.

Next up

Charlotte will be back in action on Wednesday, March 23, against the South Carolina Gamecocks at Sue M. Daughtridge Stadium. The first pitch is scheduled for 6 p.m.



The Charlotte softball team during pre-game festivities
Photo by Kendal Edward



by Bryson Foster
Asst. Sports Editor

The Charlotte track and field team starts their outdoor season by hosting the 49er Classic
photo by Kendal Edward

After a successful indoor season, the Charlotte track and field team started their outdoor season hosting the 49er Classic on Thursday, March 17 through Saturday, March 19. The team had multiple accomplishments over the weekend and are off to a great start to the second half of the season. The men's team is coming off an Indoor Conference USA (C-USA) Championship.

The team's had a fantastic weekend by recording 15 first-place finishes, 14 second-place finishes and nine third-place finishes. Multiple underclassmen made their impact with top finishes throughout the weekend.

Sophomore Ta-Halia Fairman won the women's 100m with a time of 11.59. Taylor Boykin-Roach, Sharnae Alston and Imani Rivas all finished in the top five for the 49ers in the event.

In the women's 200m, junior Maya

Singletary and freshman JaNeya Hammond finished first and second with a 24.28 and 24.60, respectively. Hammond followed things by winning the women's 400m hurdles with a time of 1:02.99, while teammate Liyah Jones finished second with a 1:05.19. Charlotte won the women's 4X100M relay with a 45.47, nearly 1.5 seconds ahead of second-place finisher South Carolina Upstate.

Senior Maci Bunting and Junior Alex Wolf recorded another 1-2 finish in the women's high jump. Bunting won the event with a 1.68m, just shy of her personal best, while Wolf recorded a 1.63m. Wolf won the women's long jump with a 5.85m. Sophomore Sarah Brown won the women's pole vault with a 4.20m while freshman Alicia Johnson finished second with a 3.60m.

Freshman Elizabeth Bailey began her

49ers javelin career by almost breaking an eight-year-old school record. Bailey finished third with a 41.51m, which was .21 meters off the school record set by Aubrey Dowding in 2014.

Junior Christian Palmer won the men's 400m hurdles with a 54.12m while Sophomore Justin Leaston came home the third with a 55.01m. Charlotte won the men's 4X400M relay with a time of 3:14.48 on the final day of the event. Sophomore Avery Scott won the men's triple jump with a 14.90m.

Sophomore Jacob Soorus placed first in the men's discus with 47.34 meters, ranking seventh all-time in 49ers history. Soorus was second in the shot put with a distance of 16.85m, the fifth-best in school history.

Charlotte sophomore Jurcek Korpik Lesjak won the men's hammer throw with a 58.36m distance. Freshman Thomas

Olesen won the men's long jump with a 5.40m and the pole vault with a 4.30m.

Freshman Maddon Muhammed finished first in the men's 3,000m with an impressive time of 8:23.10, the fifth-best time on the 49ers' all-time top 10 list. It is the fastest time since Ryan Jank set the school record with an 8:21.54 in 2008.

Sophomore Avery Scott finished first in the men's triple jump with a 14.90m vault outside the 49ers' all-time top 10 list.

Next Up

Charlotte will be back in action on Thursday, March 24, through Saturday, March 26, in the Raleigh Relays at the North Carolina State University. The 49ers will look to keep the momentum going in the upcoming meet.

SCOREBOARD

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Mar. 19
1st Round NCAA Tournament:
Charlotte 51, Indiana 85

BASEBALL

Mar. 15: Presbyterian 1, Charlotte 4

Mar. 18: Western Kentucky
7, Charlotte 5

Mar. 19: Western Kentucky
1, Charlotte 3

Mar. 20: Western Kentucky
12, Charlotte 13

SOFTBALL

Mar. 15: UNCG 8, Charlotte 1

Mar. 18: UTSA 11, Charlotte 4

Mar. 19: UTSA 4, Charlotte 2

Mar. 20: UTSA9, Charlotte 14

WOMEN'S TENNIS

Mar. 20:
Furman 4, Charlotte 2

HISTORIC ENDING

Charlotte sees historic season come to and end in Indiana

by Juwan Watson
Staff Writer

Charlotte's historic run came to an end in the first round of the NCAA tournament
photo courtesy of Charlotte Athletics

The Charlotte women's basketball team season came to an end on Saturday in Bloomington, Ind., as they lost to the Indiana Hoosiers in the first round of the NCAA Tournament. But they didn't let that loss define their historic season.

The 49ers finished the year with a 22-10 record, regular-season champions, conference tournament champions, and making the NCAA Tournament. Along with having the Player of the Year in Octavia Jett-Wilson, Defensive Player of the Year in Keke McKinney and Coach of the Year in Cara Consuegra.

Jett-Wilson came back for her fifth year with the 49ers, and she had her goals set out for her. She wanted to make the big dance with her teammates and win the conference, and she did exactly that.

She was pre-season Player of the Year and was the outright Player of the Year in the end. She averaged 19.1 points per game, shooting 38.7% from the field.

"I would say one thing about leaving here is that everyone is going to remember my name. So all good memories, all good things. I'm just happy that I got the chance to put on my Charlotte uniform again, and I'll never take that for granted," said Jett-Wilson.

Coach Consuegra gave her statement on what it meant to her for Jett-Wilson to come back for a fifth year.

"She made the decision to come back and use her COVID year, and when she came back, she said she wanted to win a championship at Charlotte. It hadn't

been done in a long time," mentioned Consuegra. "And for a young lady to have the target on her back that she's had all year and for her to lead us there, that's hard to do, and I'm proud of her."

This team had a fire to it that was special. No matter what the score was,

they would always continue to play and fight hard against their opponents.

"I think for us and myself, it was just play until the clock hits zeroes. As y'all could see (in the Indiana game), we never gave up even down the stretch when we were down, however much we were down.

I think that shows how this program is built. We're never going to back down," said Jett-Wilson.

Jett-Wilson wasn't the only one to contribute to the team's success and determination to keep fighting. Players like Jada McMillian, Mikayla Boykin and Molina Williams also helped the team get to the tournament.

The fight in the team was crucial, and it meant a lot for Coach Consuegra and her squad to reach the NCAA tournament.

"It meant a lot for us. Our players were excited to be here. They were excited for the opportunity because it didn't come easy," said Consuegra.

