SPRING SPORTS PREVIEW

MEN’S BASKETBALL
Both the men’s and women’s teams cracked the College Insider Mid-Major Top 25 this season, boosting the growing national reputation of RMU basketball. The Big Dance beckons, but first the Colonials will have to take care of business in the NEC championships.

THE BIG GAMES: MEN NEC QUARTERFINALS: MARCH 1 SEMIFINALS: MARCH 4 FINAL: MARCH 7

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL
The super-octane Colonials offense has led the NCAA in scoring for two years running – a feat last achieved by Virginia 15 years ago. The team also knocked off its first nationally-ranked opponent last year when it beat Bucknell. New coach Andrew McMinn, the former offensive coordinator, will have to figure out how to adjust schemes for players like star midfielder and NEC Scholar-Athlete of the Year Kiel Matisz now that the three leading scorers have moved on.

THE BIG GAMES: MEN NEC QUARTERFINALS: MARCH 3 SEMIFINALS: MARCH 6 FINAL: MARCH 11

MEN’S HOCKEY
Next year RMU hosts the NCAA Frozen Four here in Pittsburgh. This year the Colonials can focus on just getting in the tournament. Almost 5,000 cheering fans watched the Colonials take No. 4 Ohio State to the wire in December at the Consol Energy Center, a highlight in another big season. Now the Colonials are vying to host an Atlantic Hockey quarterfinal on their Neville Island ice, with the winner heading to Rochester, N.Y., to play for the conference title and NCAA bid.

THE BIG GAMES: MARCH 9-11 MEN’S AHA QUARTERFINALS

WOMEN’S HOCKEY
As an assistant coach, Paul Colontino helped Mercyhurst qualify for the NCAA tournament each of his five years there, including two Frozen Fours. Now that he’s taken the reins at RMU, can he take the Colonials past the Lakers? New assistant coach and Team USA goalie Bri McLaughlin, whose banner hangs in the Clearview Arena, figures to play an inspirational role too.

THE BIG GAMES: MARCH 2-3 WOMEN’S CHA TOURNEY RMU CLEARVIEW ARENA

MEN’S LACROSSE
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THE BIG GAME: MARCH 27 VS. CANISIUS
Come watch the Colonials play under the lights. The team takes on Canisius for the first-ever night lacrosse game at Joe Walton Stadium.

WOMEN’S LACROSSE
As defending regular season champs, the Colonials will rely on the strong bat of Allie Patton and speedy arm of Alexa Bryson, seniors who earned All-NEC and All-Tournament honors.

THE BIG DOUBLEHEADER: APRIL 29 VS. CENT. CONN. ST.

SOFTBALL
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STARS TO WATCH
#25 BROOKS OSTEGARD
The goalie was named AHA Goaltender of the Month in December after posting a .955 save percentage for the month. Backstopping RMU to an eight-game unbeaten streak, the team’s longest ever, Ostergard notched a 32-save shutout of RIT and stopped 47 shots in a win over Niagara.

#14 MARY DUROJAYE
The British rebound specialist led the NEC in offensive boards through the first half of the season. Durojaye also is the team’s most accurate shooter, and her .521 field goal percentage at midyear was third in the conference.

RACHEL KOTULA
Kotula won her collegiate debut last year with a 45.77-meter throw that was long enough to immediately qualify for the IC4A/ECAC Championships in Princeton. At that event, the freshman placed third and earned All-East Coast honors with her second-best throw of the season, at 45.74 meters.

> KOTULA

> CHECK RMUCOLONIALS.COM FOR THE LATEST ON GAME TIMES, VENUES, AND SCORES.

THE BIG GAME
We pick some of the big games this season. And we give you the inside skinny.

THE BIG GAMES: MARCH 9-11
WOMEN’S
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MEN’S
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MEN’S NEC QUARTERFINALS
THE BIG GAMES: MARCH 6
WOMEN NEC QUARTERFINALS
THE BIG GAMES: MARCH 7
MEN’S AHA QUARTERFINALS

MEN’S NEC QUARTERFINALS THURS., MARCH 1
WOMEN’S NEC QUARTERFINALS SAT., MARCH 3
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RMU CLEARVIEW ARENA
THE BIG GAME: APRIL 7 VS. QUINNIPAC
THE BIG DOUBLEHEADER: APRIL 29 VS. CENT. CONN. ST.

LACROSSE
MEN vs. CANISIUS TUES., MARCH 27, 7 P.M.
WOMEN vs. QUINNIPAC SAT., APR. 7, 11 A.M.
THE BIG GAMES: MARCH 9-11
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WOMEN’S CHA TOURNEY
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SIX STRAIGHT WINS AT THE CLEARVIEW ARENA, FIGURES TO PLAY AN INSPIRATIONAL ROLE TOO.

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