Calling All Hawks Cheerleader Alumni!

Don’t miss the chance to get together with other former cheerleaders to reminisce about your times cheering on the Hawks. For information on a reunion planned for next fall, e-mail uofhcheer@hartford.edu.

Hawks Women to Face UConn in Chase Family Arena

Next December, the UConn women’s basketball team will make its first appearance on the Hawks’ home court since 1990. The game, scheduled for Dec. 22, 2012, will be the first of a new, three-game women’s basketball series between the two teams. The series will continue through the 2014–15 season, with the other two games played either at Gampel Pavilion on the UConn campus or at the XL Center in downtown Hartford.

Historically, the Hawks women’s basketball team began playing the Huskies in 1985 after joining Division I play. The Huskies’ last meeting at the University was in December 1990, shortly after the Sports Center opened. Since head coach Jennifer Rizzotti’s arrival at the University of Hartford, the Hawks have played a six-game series against Connecticut, with all six games being played at the XL Center.

Tickets for the game will become available this summer. Contact the Malcolm and Brenda Berman Athletics Ticket Office at 860.768.4295 or tickets@hartford.edu to be included on a waiting list of those who will be notified as soon as tickets are available.

Hawks Basketball Making Late-Season Noise

As the Observer headed to press, the men’s and women’s basketball teams were both wrapping up their regular seasons, readying for the America East Men’s and Women’s Championship, presented by Newman’s Own and hosted for the third consecutive year by the University of Hartford.

With six freshmen averaging double digits in minutes played, men’s head coach John Gallagher has preached patience. The youthful Hawks responded from a winless November and December with three consecutive victories in mid-January. Hartford then reeled off its first four-game winning streak in five years, with February’s success, both the men’s and women’s teams had individuals honored by America East. On Feb. 13, freshman Nate Sikma was named conference Rookie of the Week, averaging 14.5 points and eight rebounds in wins over UMBC and Binghamton. The following week, freshman teammate Mark Nwakamma earned the same honor, averaging 16 points and shooting a sizzling 82 percent from the floor.

Junior Ruthanne Doherty was named America East Women’s Basketball Player of the Week for the period ending Feb. 19. She followed up a 19-point performance at Maine with a 16-point, 11-rebound gem in the win over UMBC.

Former Hawks cheerleaders from the late 1990s attended a men’s basketball game on Feb. 12, 2012. In addition to meeting the current cheerleading squad at the University, the group placed flowers at a tree planted previously on campus in memory of Amy Beth Callaghan, a freshman cheerleader who died in an automobile accident in 1995.


Cheering on the Hawks—Past and Present

“I’m ecstatic about my young players,” Gallagher says. “To be in the position we are in [battling for fourth place in America East with a 7-7 league record at press time] is a huge feat, looking back two months ago.”

The women’s team was riding a seven-game winning streak following a 66-54 victory over UMBC (University of Maryland–Baltimore County) in a Feb. 19 game that was nationally televised on CBS Sports Network.

Hartford was in first-class company early in the season, joining Notre Dame, Baylor, and UCLA in reaching the final four of the preseason WNIT. A loss at Notre Dame was the only setback for the Hawks over the first five games of the season.

The team headed into conference play with a 9-5 record, but then dropped its first three league games, and five of eight, before beginning its string of consecutive victories with a convincing 63-44 win over Stony Brook on Jan. 25.

“We’re definitely moving in the direction of the type of team that has won championships in the past,” says Hartford head coach Jennifer Rizzotti, who again has her team playing best when it matters the most.

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