

SPORTS

October 1, 2019

B1

WE'LL SEE YOU AT THE GAME

W. Soccer vs. UNA
Oct. 6 @ 1 p.m.

Field hockey vs. ODU
Oct. 11 @ 3 p.m.

Volleyball vs. NJIT
Oct. 11 @ 5 p.m.

M. Soccer vs. Elon
Oct. 12 @ 6 p.m.

Volleyball vs. Stetson
Oct. 13 @ 1 p.m.

W. Soccer vs. Kennesaw
Oct. 13 @ 1 p.m.

Volleyball

Liberty	Jacksonville
3	0

M. Soccer

NJIT	Liberty
3	0

Football

Liberty	UNM
17	10

Volleyball

Liberty	UNF
3	0

W. Soccer

UNF	Liberty
1	0

ICING OUT IUP

Men's hockey tops series 2-0 with IUP

GAME 1

Emily Baker
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Sophomore forward Josh Fricks earned his first goal of Thursday night's hat trick when he careened across the ice and chipped the puck above the goalie's shoulder and into the top of the net.

Fricks' goal was the first of 10 for the Flames as they laid down another dominant performance Thursday night in a 10-2 victory over the IUP Crimson Hawks. The Crimson Hawks struggled

to keep up as the Flames set a brutal pace and kept the pressure up for the entire game, outshooting IUP 63-15.

According to Flames Head Coach Kirk Handy, the game was another great step into the season.

"I think overall we're pretty happy," Handy said. "We got offensive contributions from all over the place. Anytime you put 10 goals on the board and only give up two, you're doing something right."

Fricks led the first period with two goals. He scored just over a minute and 30 seconds into the game, and he scored at the 4:32 mark when Fricks beat the Crimson Hawks goalie and rebounded his own shot after it bounced off of the crossbar.

The Flames survived a penalty kill shortly after the second goal, holding off the Crimson Hawks and bringing even more aggression once the penalty kill ended. Neither team scored for the rest of the period, going into the first intermission with Liberty leading 2-0.

But Liberty extended its lead in the second period with an early goal from senior defender Garrett Nelson, followed shortly by a fourth goal from senior forward Brock Thompson. Junior forward and captain Devin Pierce was next to score with 7:42 left in the second period when he popped the puck over the goalie's leg pad. Transfer sophomore Arturas Laukaitis scored next, earning his first goal of his Flames career and earning Liberty's sixth goal.

The Flames were interrupted with 2:34 left in the second period when IUP took advantage of a power play and snuck the puck past freshman goalie Cedric Le Sieur, bringing the score to 6-1 to end the second period.



LIZ FITCH | LIBERTY CHAMPION

See ICING, B4

ON TOP – The Flames successfully shut out the Crimson Hawks 6-0 Friday night.

Squashing offensive expectations

GAME Flames football defeats New Mexico 17-10 in defensive battle

Emily Baker
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Flames Head Coach Hugh Freeze expected an offensive shootout Saturday night against New Mexico. The game's end result was anything but offense-driven.

"The game went nothing like what I thought it was going to go," Freeze said. "I went for it on fourth and 2 on the 40-yard-line to start because I had my mind made up that this was going to be a 45-41 shootout type of game. I quickly changed my mindset, but Scott (Symons) and his staff did a phenomenal job."

The Liberty Flames football team displayed a strong defensive performance Saturday in their 17-10 victory over the University of New Mexico Lobos, a team they defeated 52-43 last season. The Flames earned a total of 466 yards – 306 passing and 160 rushing.

Saturday's win extends Liberty's win streak to three games, and Head Coach Hugh Freeze said the team's winning mentality will be crucial going into the team's second away game of the year next weekend.

"I'm really proud for them – that's something they can build on and gain confi-

dence," Freeze said. "We really need that going on the road. You have to play great defense on the road, so this is something I think we can build on."

The Flames also saw one of their own crush a school record when senior wide receiver Antonio Gandy-Golden came down in the endzone with his 28th career touchdown at the end of the first quarter, becoming the school's all-time top touchdown receiver.

The first quarter was an eight-drive deadlock between the Flames and the Lobos with New Mexico regularly closing Gandy-Golden out of the game with double coverage.

That is, until Gandy-Golden swapped formation and raced downfield 51 yards with single coverage, coming down moments later with the ball on the New Mexico 8-yard-line. Two plays later, he came down with the ball again in the endzone to snatch the school record.

But according to Gandy-Golden, the record was just that – a record.



MARK RIO | LIBERTY CHAMPION

CARRY – Tight end Jerome Jackson received one of Liberty's two touchdown passes.

See SQUASHING, B2

SPORTS

September 17, 2019

B1

Scorching the Bulls

Flames football tramples over Buffalo 35-17 for first Freeze era win

GAME

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Halfway through the second quarter of Liberty University's match-up against Buffalo, the Flames clung to a 14-7 lead, needing one more offensive spark to pull away from the Bulls and win their first game of the season.

With the offense on the field and the ball on the 33-yard line, Stephen Calvert looked to his right and lobbed a pass down the sideline to Antonio Gandy-Golden, who elevated above his defender and secured the pass. With one man left to beat, Gandy-Golden hurdled the Buffalo cornerback and danced into the endzone, stretching the Flames lead to double digits and propelling Liberty (1-2) to its first victory under Head Coach Hugh Freeze.

Freeze's offensive prowess was on full display in the Flames 35-17 victory over the Bulls (1-2). Coaching from a raised platform with a chair in his first game on the Liberty sideline, Freeze simplified the playbook for Calvert, and the team re-

sponded well to having their head coach on the sidelines.

The offense generated 401 yards of offense, 325 of those coming from passing. Gandy-Golden caught 174 yards and two highlight-reel touchdowns. After the win, Gandy-Golden and some of his teammates gave the game ball to their coach.

"This one means a lot to me," Freeze said, holding up the game ball. "I don't think that I deserve a game ball from my players, because they were the ones who made the plays. But this university, this opportunity, the chance to be back doing what you love means the world. I've had a lot of first ones of these, but this one will mean a lot."

After taking some time this week to talk through the game plan with Freeze, Calvert seemed comfortable with the playbook and his progressions. His 77 percent completion percentage is his highest of the season so far, throwing four touchdown passes.

"I met with Coach Freeze Friday night at his house to go through the plan," Calvert said. "It helped me a lot. We fig-

ured out the game plan and went through the plays and he taught me how to read them better."

For the first time this season, the Flames defense played with the lead for much of the game, rebounding from a disappointing performance against Louisiana last week. After giving up 593 yards in offense to Louisiana with 407 yards in rushing, the Flames held Buffalo to almost half of those totals, with the Bulls creating 373 yards of offense and 206 from the rushing attack. Kevin Marks carried the ball 18 times for 108 yards for the Bulls.

See SCORCHING, B3



JUMP — Antonio Gandy-Golden leaps into the endzone.

DAVID EPPINGER | LIBERTY CHAMPION

Running for the stars

Cross-country junior leads by example

PROFILE

Sarah Tate
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A junior cross-country runner is changing the game at Liberty with her quick times, determined work ethic, team-oriented mindset and servant leadership. Noel Palmer is entering her junior year on the women's cross-country team as a captain after a record-breaking sophomore season.

Due to her emphasis on serving and mentoring her team, Palmer was voted captain in her first season as an upperclassman. However, the junior expressed that leadership is not her natural talent. Throughout her years at Liberty, Palmer had had to learn how to best step into that role of team leader.

"I'm not really a natural leader at all," Palmer said. "I prefer to kind of quietly do stuff and not say a whole lot, but God has really been working on me as I become a leader. I've really enjoyed mentoring the younger athletes.... It's really put me out of



LEAH STAUFFER | LIBERTY PHOTOGRAPHY

HOME — Palmer grew up in New Jersey and moved to Lynchburg in 2011.

my comfort zone, but it's stretched me in a good way."

Rachel Johnson has already observed her growth over the first several weeks of the season.

See RUNNING, B3



DAVID EPPINGER | LIBERTY CHAMPION

STRIKE — Gabrielle Farrell led the Lady Flames to victory with her third goal of the season.

First-time win over the ACC

Women's soccer defeats Pittsburgh 1-0

GAME

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Liberty's women's soccer team (2-4-2) recorded its first win against an ACC opponent in school history on Sunday, defeating Pittsburgh 1-0 at home.

In a physical battle with 27 fouls between the two teams, Gabrielle Farrell's unassisted goal in the 51st minute won the game for the

Lady Flames. Despite outshooting the Lady Flames 12-8, a defensive mistake on a backpass cost the Panthers (3-4-1) the game.

"That was something we talked about at halftime," Head Coach Lang Wedemeyer said. "We saw some soft backpasses and wanted to capitalize on those balls. I'm glad Gabrielle saw one of those opportunities and made the most of it."

After pouncing on a sloppy pass to the goalie, Farrell

ran between the defender and goalkeeper Amaia Pena and slotted the ball into the back of the net. Flames keeper Melody Jayroe made five saves and Liberty held on in the second half to seal the win.

The Lady Flames play their next game against James Madison University at home Thursday, Sept. 19.

WYLIE is the asst. sports editor.

Field Hockey

Liberty | Lafayette
5 | 0

Volleyball

Liberty | Davidson
3 | 0

M. Soccer

GWU | Liberty
3 | 0

Field Hockey

Liberty | Yale
4 | 2

Football

Liberty | Buffalo
35 | 17

WE'LL SEE YOU AT THE GAME

M. Soccer vs. VMI
Sep. 17 @ 7 p.m.

W. Soccer vs. JMU
Sep. 19 @ 6 p.m.

Hockey vs. Duquesne
Sep. 20 @ 7 p.m.

Football vs. Hampton
Sep. 21 @ 6 p.m.

Volleyball vs. FGCU
Sep. 24 @ 6 p.m.

SPORTS

November 12, 2019

B1



DAVID EPPINGER | LIBERTY CHAMPION

HOT – Freshman Shiloh Robinson was three-for-three in shooting Friday night.

LAST FIRST Vines win

Men's basketball starts season 2-0 after victories over Radford and UMES

GAME

Emily Baker
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The Flames heated up the Vines Friday on a chilly evening as they pulled off a 66-60 victory over the Highlanders after establishing themselves early in the game, never giving up the lead despite a few close calls.

Flames Head Coach Ritchie McKay said the game was typical of Liberty and Radford's years-long rivalry.

"We've had some really close games with Radford," McKay said. "I knew they were going to come back. This is a really good team. To go up 20 in the first half, I thought we were marvelous. ... Hats off to Radford for a really tough, competitive game, but I'm really proud of our group. That could have been one that you can easily start scoreboard watching and then it gets away from you."

Liberty students made the most of the Flames home court advantage, with 7,872 fans in attendance

and sold-out general admissions tickets. Students were given cheat sheets of taunts, and both Jerry's Jokers and Liberty Lunatics showed out in force, filling the Vines with chants and cheering.

"Look, our crowd was fantastic," McKay said. "When you're trying to rebuild a program or get a program to be a contender, you have to be able to have a home court advantage, and tonight we had one."

"To the 7,800 Flames Nation, we owe them a win," McKay continued. "They should put the win on their record because if a home court is worth five or six points, they won the game for us."

But the game was also a bittersweet one, as it officially began the Flames last season playing in the Vines Center, their home for nearly 30 years since it opened in 1990.

The Flames saw contributions from all over their roster, with freshmen Shiloh Robinson and Kyle Rode shining in their Liberty de-

butts. Rode was second on the team with 12 points, following redshirt senior Caleb Homesley's 18.

McKay said the young contributions were no surprise to him.

"I think our freshmen are really good," McKay said. "I think the biggest compliment for them is our guys trust them. They think that our (freshmen) are really good, and both Shiloh and Kyle made a huge impact on our game."

The freshmen lacked experience but made up for it with aggression. Rode and Robinson recorded 20 points, five rebounds, and four assists combined. Each player assisted the other's first basket.

Rode, who is Robinson's roommate, said assisting each other and playing together was a special experience.

See LAST, B4

Scoreboard

Field Hockey

ODU	Liberty
3	1

W. Basketball

ETSU	Liberty
63	62

M. Basketball

Liberty	Radford
66	60

M. Hockey

Liberty	Ohio U
8	2

Football

BYU	Liberty
31	24



MARK RIO | LIBERTY CHAMPION

PACKED OUT – More than 3,500 students and CFAW visitors filled the LaHaye Ice Center Friday night.

Midnight memories

Hockey throws down in LaHaye

GAME

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Electrified by the 3,611 students, prospective students and their family members packing the LaHaye Ice Center for College for a Weekend (CFAW), the Flames thumped Ohio University 8-2 in a Midnight Mayhem matchup Friday night where tensions ran high.

The Liberty men's DI hockey team debuted its all-black uniforms during Friday's game, the first of two games against Ohio University this weekend.

But the game started with a bang when 21 seconds into the game, Chaydan Lauber flew across the ice and catapulted Liberty into the lead with the game's first shot. When sophomore Arturas Laukaitis slammed another goal past Ohio's goalie a mere 8 seconds later, Ohio looked shellshocked.

"Ohio has always been a top-10 program," Head Coach Kirk Handy said before the game. "We know the quality of opponent, and we think this game is going to be different because the fans know how good both teams are."

See MIDNIGHT, B2

One way or another

Lacrosse cousins own the field together

PROFILE

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Despite not living near each other for much of their lives, cousins Elijah and Caleb Britton have the chemistry common among family members as they play together on the Liberty lacrosse team.

The two cousins have

become more like brothers as they have joined each other on the team, sharing an apartment and life at college. They've started to talk like one another, act like one another and even sometimes have the same food cravings, both said.

"If one of us wasn't on the team it would be really hard," Elijah said. "We always want to do the same things. If one of us is going to practice, the other one (wants) to as well."

Growing up in different parts of the country, the Brittons mainly kept in contact over holidays or through playing Xbox online together. Elijah grew up in Kansas, focusing on sports like baseball and football, while Caleb grew up in Virginia where his dad was his lacrosse coach.



ANDREW SNYDER | LIBERTY PHOTOGRAPHY

ATTACK – Caleb (above) and his cousin Elijah Britton are both forwards on the team.

See ONE, B3

**WE'LL
SEE YOU
AT THE
GAME**

M. Basketball
vs. SC State
Nov. 12 @
7 p.m.

W. Hockey
vs. Penn State
Nov. 15 @
6:30 p.m.

M. Basketball
vs. Navy
Nov. 19 @
7 p.m.

W. Basketball
vs. UNCG
Nov. 21 @
11 a.m.

Football
vs. NM State
Nov. 30 @
2 p.m.