

An Inside
Look at

LEHMAN COLLEGE ATHLETICS

Lightning Softball Season Comes To An End



HEAD COACH

Lehman College first year softball coach Kim Santoiemma made the transition from player to coach this season.

After a season in which the Lehman College women's softball team advanced to the CUNY championship game, the 2004 softball season was a rebuilding year with a new head coach and a host of new players to try and continue the growth of the Lightning program. The 2004 softball team concluded the season with a 5-3 loss to John Jay College in the CUNY Athletic Conference Softball Quarterfinals, concluding the Lightning season with a 10-15 overall record. The quarterfinal loss was earliest exit for Lehman, since the 1996 season.

For first-year coach Kim Santoiemma, her adjustment from player to coach was an adjustment. As a former player at Lehman (1998-2001), Santoiemma was a utility player who played a role in helping the team compete, now it was her turn to lead the team with her knowledge of the game.

"This first year was very exciting for me as a coach," said Santoiemma. "We had a great group of young ladies this season, who really emphasized Lehman athletics."

While struggling through the rigorous CUNY schedule (4-8 CUNY), Lehman showed impressive play with wins over non-conference foes SUNY Old Westbury, and St. Elizabeth's. Senior shortstop Stephanie Rodriguez led the Lightning with a .522 batting average. The three-time CUNY all-star ranked in many of the top statistical categories in the CUNY

(15), runs batted in (35) and slugging percentage (.797). Rodriguez was the only returning starter from last year's CUNY finalist team.

Freshman pitcher Olga Torres showed a glimpse of the future, as she led the Lightning with fifty-eight strikeouts, while posting an 8.66 earned run average. Torres, became the ace of this young Lehman pitching staff, making nineteen appearances, recording five of the Lightning's wins this season. Freshman

catcher Shirley Arrieta combined with Torres to form the youngest battery in the CUNY conference. Arrieta, the starting point guard on the women's basketball team, led the Lightning in runs scored (34).

"Olga Torres was a huge surprise for the Lightning squad this year," Santoiemma added. "Her ability to dominate a game with speed and accuracy will be very helpful in her future here at Lehman College."

Coach Santoiemma and the Lightning are very optimistic about the future of Lehman softball. With just three graduating seniors, the Lightning faithful are looking to the duo of Torres and

Arrieta to return Lehman to their championship form. A spark will also be provided by underclassmen Marleny Felipe, and Maria Adorno. Felipe started all twenty-five games for the Lightning, while Adorno was a spark at third-base. The coaching staff is currently working on a solid recruiting class which should help Lehman College during the 2005 season.



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