

March Madness

In March the Engineering and Physics Department featured its own “March Madness” events. On the Monday evening before the NCAA men’s basketball tournament started, 22 students and three faculty gathered in the department for a bracket party. Between conversations, friendly banter, and snacks, all 25 submitted predictions for all six rounds of the tournament. At the end of the tournament, 3rd-year Engineering major Anthony Davala separated himself from the pack. Anthony correctly identified 24/32 1st round winners, half of the Sweet 16, 5 of the Elite Eight, 2 of the Final Four participants and correctly identified Duke as champion. Runners-up first year students Evan Pallante and Jordon Nelson were tied and leading the competition heading into the championship game. They would have won the contest if Michigan State had prevailed. Anthony and the two runners-up were each awarded gift cards to Amazon.

While the top NCAA teams competing at venues across the nation, at Thompson Gymnasium here on the Etown Campus an equally dramatic basketball tournament unfolded. Ten 3-person teams competed in a multi-round tournament with all teams playing at least 4 games. The teams included an all-women’s team featuring some deadly outside shooting and a faculty



team of Professors Wunderlich, Estrada, and DeGoede. All participating students and faculty were from the Engineering and Physics Department. Several other students came by to watch and cheer. Buck Kauffman, an observer, had to make an emergency substitution for an injured Pat Kelly. Buck played out the remaining games for that team playing in street clothes. Pat’s injury was not serious, and he was back on his feet soon. Teams were divided into two 5-team brackets and played



all 4 teams in their bracket before the top two teams from each bracket competed in a championship final four tournament. The faculty team had a great time and even managed to eke out a win in the round-robin play. The team of senior soccer players succeeded in transferring their skills from the pitch to the hardwood, winning the championship. David Boretti, Justin Signora, and Eric Borkowicz

defeated the only team that had beaten them in round-robin play in the final game. The winning team was awarded Amazon gift cards and the admiration of all.

Senior Tyler Athey, whose team lost that championship game, organized both events and said of the 3-on-3 tournament “I thought it would be a great opportunity for the students and faculty in the department to get together and take their minds off of work and just have a good time playing together and interacting as a department. Our team was formed more or less because we always work together on homework and all have an interest in basketball. There was good sportsmanship all around. There weren't any referees so whenever a call was debatable it was almost always certain that each team insisted the other team have the ball. ... it was a great time and a great bonding experience for the entire department...”

Another team of 3 students from France connected the basketball to their engineering project work. Marten Fevre reflected “... we decided to rely on our tallest player [6' 6" Paul Lecurieux-Lafayette] who could easily score points ... similar to what happens during a team project. We divide tasks based on each member's skills and abilities. Being a short player, I was asked to make passes. ... During a group project, the outcome can only be positive if everyone gets to do what they're good at, and if the team members encourage [each other]... I haven't participated in many engineering events since I first came here, but this fun basketball tournament really made me want to be more involved in activities offered by the department.” Teammate Nathan Copros expanded on the value of good teamwork noting that the team did better when they all participated and did not rely only on ‘Tall Paul,’ and win or lose everyone had a great time.

