

# Sports

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## BASEBALL

# Engineers earn top seed for tournament

## *RPI takes three of four from RIT; will play Tigers again on Thursday*

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Senior Reporter

THE ENGINEERS TRAILED AFTER FIVE innings in their first game of two against the Rochester Institute of Technology Tigers last Saturday. A solo home run in the sixth inning by RPI senior starting pitcher Jared Jensen tied the game at two.

The game went to extra innings. In the bottom of the eighth, senior rightfielder Shane Matthews led off with a double and took third on a passed ball. Then, the Tigers walked Jensen and senior second baseman Tim LeSuer to create easier force-out opportunities. It didn't work though, as senior shortstop Nick Palmiero singled to left field to bring in Matthews and give the Engineers a key 3-2 victory.

Jensen pitched a complete game, giving up just two earned runs on five hits and striking out six. Palmiero also doubled in the game while junior centerfielder Nick Annunziata recorded his 27th hit of the season on a single in the bottom of the fifth inning.

In the second game, Rensselaer tallied two runs in the third and fifth innings and rolled to an easy 4-1 win. Junior pitcher Greg Echeverria went the distance for the home squad, allowing just one run on six hits and striking out seven in seven innings of play.

Matthews started the third inning rally for RPI with a lead-off double to the left field gap. Later, with one out, Jensen hit a sharp groundball past Tigers third baseman Phil Sammon to put the Engineers in front. Then, after Jensen stole second, LeSuer singled to left field to bring in Jensen and give the home team a 2-0 edge.

Senior leftfielder Tyler Listing added a one-out single in the bottom of the fifth and subsequently scored on a sacrifice bunt by LeSuer. Then, two wild pitches by RIT starting pitcher



Jack Wellhofer/The Polytechnic

**JUNIOR CATCHER CHRIS HOLOMAKOFF TAKES A RIP AT a pitch in a match against the Tigers. Holomakoff caught two wins in the RIT series.**

Brandon Cohall allowed Jensen to score his second run of the game.

A run by Tiger centerfielder CJ Bolorin in the sixth inning failed to ignite an RIT comeback and the Engineers won both games of the afternoon and secured the top seed in the upcoming Liberty League tournament.

In a back and forth affair on Sunday afternoon, the Engineers saw themselves fall behind early after a slew of RIT hits allowed the visiting Tigers to take a 4-1 lead into the third inning.

RPI responded quickly. Singles by Listing, LeSuer, and Palmiero earned the Engineers a run in the top of the third. Then, a two-out rally in the top of the fourth was capped by a Jensen three-run

homer, his second of the weekend and seventh of the season.

The Engineers took a 7-4 lead into the bottom of the sixth after scoring two unearned runs off of a two-out error by Sammon and a subsequent RBI single by Palmiero. The lead wouldn't last long, though. Five Tiger hits, including two two-out doubles, allowed RIT to score five runs and earn a needed 9-7 victory over Rensselaer.

In defeat, Matthews, Jensen, LeSuer, and Palmiero each recorded two hits, while sophomore first baseman Sam Lawrence, sophomore designated hitter Thomas Desmond, and Listing each had one. Desmond also recorded his 30th RBI of the season with his single in the top of the first.

RIT starting pitcher Conor Herlihy pitched a complete game, giving up seven runs on 11 hits and striking out five.

In the series finale, both teams scored twice in the first five innings of play. Then, in the top of the sixth, the Engineers broke open the game. Desmond singled to right center with one out in the inning. Sophomore first baseman Jason Ramos then doubled to left center to drive in Desmond and give the Engineers a 3-2 advantage. Sophomore designated hitter Matt Lawrence singled past RIT relief pitcher Tom Dillon to put runners on the corners.

Later, Matthews walked in Ramos and Listing grounded to second to bring in M. Lawrence and give the Engineers a 5-2 lead.

RPI senior starting pitcher Sean Conroy struck out nine in seven and two-thirds innings and gave up two runs on 10 hits. Later, junior closer Stephen Schiavone earned his second save of the season, allowing just one hit and no runs in the bottom of the ninth.

With three wins in four games against RIT, the Engineers finished with an overall record of 22-14 and a conference-best record of 18-6. This Thursday, May 7, RPI will once again host the Tigers for the first game of the Liberty League tournament. The tournament will feature a double-elimination format with Clarkson University and the University of Rochester also competing as the second and third seeds, respectively.

# Franks: Former kicker to train with Dolphins



Joseph Shen/The Polytechnic

**FRANKS ATTEMPTS an extra point from the 10-yard line in the September 13, 2014 match against the Alfred University Saxons. The attempt was good.**

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also the longest in Division III this season. Over the past two seasons, Franks also knocked in three-pointers from 50, 51, and 52 yards. His 37 field goals are the most any kicker has ever made at Rensselaer.

On kickoffs, Franks averaged 61.2 yards per kick and broke the school record for touchbacks his senior season with 33. As a punter, Franks punted a total of 102 times and landed 31 inside the 20-yard line.

In both his junior and senior seasons, Franks earned D3football.com All-America First team honors as well as the award for Liberty League Special Teams Player of the Year. In addition, Franks also earned Liberty-League All-Academic honors as a Biomedical Engineering major in his final three years as an Engineer.

As a newly-signed member of the Miami Dolphins, Franks will report to rookie camp this week and then will take part in training camp next month. In order to make the team, Franks will most likely need to beat out Dolphins starting kicker Caleb Sturgis. This is because most NFL teams only keep one kicker; some teams, however, keep one kicker for field goals and another for long distance kicks and kickoffs. For this reason, kicker is one of the, if not the, most difficult positions to be successful at.

Franks is one of just eight undrafted free agent kickers to be signed following the NFL Draft. During his training workouts with the Dolphins, he will be fighting for not only a position on the team, but also striving to gain recognition from the other teams, as well.