Students protest Nature Preserve remodel

TO SAVE OR TO PAVE?

SGA talks Nature Preserve remodel

The Nature Preserve is a small piece of the Everglades right here on campus, we are so fortunate to have it,” Rojas said.

Rojas also said, “It is home to many birds, foxes and other animals since 1978 and that’s what makes it so special.”

Rojas shared her disappointment toward the situation after all the efforts her team made to restore this part of the Nature Preserve. She pointed out that there are a lot of different species that depend on the wetland area, and to diminish that specific area could potentially cut off resources for organisms who reside there.

As students who volunteer for the restoration effort, we should have been informed,” Rojas said.

“The process was not at all transparent since not even the Office of University of Suitability was informed,” she said.

Rojas invited all interested students to join their campaign “Save the Nature Preserve.”

Their hashtag #SaveItDontPaveIt is specifically for the new movement to stop construction over the Nature Preserve.

“The area that we have been restoring has improved so much that we received a grant of $4,000 from the FWC, which is the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission,” Rojas said.

She said, “The state agency’s grant was going to allow us to remove the invasive and put native plants in this area. We were just about to make those changes, but now we cannot proceed with it.”

“We have a Facebook page for the campaign and a drive where we save all of the important documents on the matter. We also have a survey available to figure out how this is affecting students. It can be taken anonymously if preferred.”

“We understand the area of intramural sports,” said Collazo. “What that means is that we can guarantee that we will stand by the floor to express their concerns to the Government do not support the building of these intramural field for intramural sports on the nature preserve. However, SGA does not support building it somewhere else.

“We want to make it clear that in this resolution, we at Student Government do not support the building of these intramural field on the preserves. Or any building of anything on the preserves,” he said at Monday’s SGA meeting.

“We have to be unbiased and we have to understand that although we stand with the preservation of the nature preserve, we also understand that helps our students, but at the same time doesn’t go against the preserves.”

Collazo clarified that SGC does not have the power to make a concrete change in the plans to diminish the preserves in favor of intramural sports.

“Does that mean we can you guarantee you change? No,” he said.

“What that means is that we can guarantee that we will stand by the voice of students,” said Collazo.

SGC will be hosting a Town Hall meeting next week to give students the floor to express their concerns for saving the nature preserve.

“We are going to have a Town Hall meeting in these chambers. We’re going to have the Vice President of Student Affairs along with Dr. Kenneth Jessel, chief financial officer of the University, come and have a conversation with students,” he said.
Assistant professor charged with research fraud

An assistant professor at Washington State University has been charged with engaging in a scheme to defraud the federal government of $8 million in federal research funds. Haifang Wen, an assistant professor of civil and environmental engineering at WSU, has been arrested and charged by the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Western District of New York. He has worked at WSU’s Pullman campus since August 2008, WSU officials said. “We’re aware of the general nature of the charges and cooperating with the federal investigation,” said Robert Strege, a spokesman for the university. According to the U.S. Attorney’s Office, Wen, 41, of Pullman; his brother Bin Wen; 44; and Bin Wen’s wife, Pang Wen, 43, of Bothell, Va., were arrested. They were accused of fabricating letters of support and investment, providing false information in research grant proposals and reports, and providing falsified reports and emails regarding how federal research funds were spent, according to a statement released earlier this week.

Jewish inmate’s petition rejected by Supreme Court

North Carolina prison inmate Israel Ben-Levi wanted an opportunity to worship with other Jewish inmates, and when he didn’t get it, he wrote a plea to the Supreme Court. The 68-year-old convicted rapist failed Monday, when the court denied his petition. But in an illuminating twist, Ben-Levi’s painstakingly scrawled petition won over one of the court’s staunchest law-and-order conservatives has become a notable supporter of devout inmates.

Mark Ruffalo, ‘Spotlight’ creators join Catholic sex abuse victims’ rally in downtown LA

About 20 protesters who rallied against sexual abuse in the Roman Catholic Church in downtown Los Angeles were joined by “Spotlight” actor Mark Ruffalo; the film’s director, Tom McCarthy; and its writer, Josh Singer, on Sunday. Protesters, many of whom identify as victims of abuse by Catholic priests, marched and branded banners outside the Cathedral of Our Lady of Angels Sunday morning.

Students prone to mental health issues

Students prone to mental health issues

with a common, treatable mental health issue. “It was nice using CAPS because it’s right on campus and free since you already pay for it in the tuition,” said Tania Cohen, a freshman psychology major. “So if you can’t really afford to go outside of campus, which is like $150 per session, you could always just go there.”

Cohen did experience an issue with scheduling, however. She said, “Personally, my psychologist, the one I used to see, would be jammed packed with appointments most of the time. So I really couldn’t see him when I wanted to. It was based on his time, which kinda sucked.”

CAPS also provides online workshops and resources that can help assess the individual’s skills and offer solutions for common stressors such as finding out if you’re good at time management and then providing for ways to improve your time management. Furthermore, it provides various programs including the Body Acceptance Program, consultations & referrals, Group counseling, and Individual and Couples counseling. There are also programs dedicated for parents should they have any concerns about their first-year college student, as well as psychiatric services and victim services through the Victim Empowerment Program. Freeman and psychology major Kimberly Lopez said, “As someone who used to go to CAPS, it sure was nice having someone to talk to without worrying about what they’re thinking of me. It was liberating, in a way because whatever you want to say, you can just say it.”

After operation hours, a 24-hour hotline is also available at 305-348-3000 should you experience any emergencies. 4 out of 5 people have experienced stress that either comprise or attempt suicide show clear warning signs, according to Healthline.com. The website also reports that a lack of sleep, poor eating habits, and not enough exercise are driving factors for depression among college students.

The stress that comes with obtaining the highest marks includes the pressure to get good grades, financial worries, failed relationships and conflicts with roommates all of which are enough to force some students to leave college or worse.

Students organize campaign to protect Nature Preserve

Rojas said, “We believe that if we can get a third party as an unbiased outside source, perhaps things will be different.”

She mentioned that “if they are not, so be it, but at least we will know the truth of the worth of the wetland area.”

Joshua Muñoz-Jimenez is the Organic Garden manager. As a senior, he will be the first student to graduate FIU with a Bachelor’s degree in Agricultural sciences.

According to Muñoz-Jimenez, many species such as native box turtles, fish, native frogs, foxes and snakes depend on the lake in the wetland. He also says every mammal, every bird that lives in the Nature Preserve also depends on this lake as it’s their only water source.

“The issue with the lake removal is that it takes about 30 to 40 years to make it environmentally stable for native species to use it. So replacing it and putting it on another side of the Nature Preserve may be a cheaper term benefits to students.”

This issue also alerted past students and not only FIU students but citizens in their 50s and 60s outside of the university. According to the U.S. Attorney’s Office, Wen, 41, of Pullman; his brother Bin Wen; 44; and Bin Wen’s wife, Pang Wen, 43, of Bothell, Va., were arrested. They were accused of fabricating letters of support and investment, providing false information in research grant proposals and reports, and providing falsified reports and emails regarding how federal research funds were spent, according to a statement released earlier this week.

“The issue with the lake removal is that it takes about 30 to 40 years to make it environmentally stable for native species to use it. So replacing it and putting it on another side of the Nature Preserve may be a cheaper term benefits to students.”

Another alumini, Adonis Alvarez graduated FIU in the spring of 2014 with a Bachelor’s degree in Environmental studies and a minor in Agroecology. He was also the President of the organic garden when he was a student.

As a response to what he termed as an “abuse of power,” Alvarez encouraged students to take a stand and join the campaign and take a stand against the project to build on the Nature Preserve.

“I would tell students to think of their kids; do we want to leave a world where most of the environment is concrete walls and most of the plants have been paved over?” Alvarez said. “It’s time for students to have the chance to stand up for what is right and protect nature for future generations.”
Caffeine: the drug ruining our bodies

As busy students, it’s only natural to seek additional energy sources to keep us going through the day. Without it, we struggle to meet our deadlines in class, and work and life become a drain. As soon as we wake up in the morning, most of us reach for a cup of coffee or an energy drink. As we know, coffee contains caffeine, which many believe boosts our energy levels and helps contain caffeine and loads of sugar. However, what many people don’t know is the cost of consuming energy stimulants and how our bodies react to them.

Drinks high in sugar can do a lot to our bodies, with coffee trucks too. Researchers from the University of New South Wales found that consumption of sugary drinks on the brain observed extensive changes to the part of the brain that controls behaviors and emotions called the hippocampus. For fifteen weeks, female rats were exposed to adverse conditions while being fed a high-sugar solution. Brain scans showed that the rats exposed to stress without sugar intake and stress-free rats added pollution to the changes in the memory center of the hippocampus. In addition, the stress group took in more calories. Overall, the study showed that the effect of sugary drinks on the brain was similar to those caused by extreme early life stress, which can impact mental health and function.

More regular stress, the adrenal glands make extra cortisol, a hormone used to manage stress. Cortisol also manages blood sugars and fat metabolism to produce energy. In the consumption of sugary drinks in high quantities, blood sugar spikes, causing the adrenal glands to produce excess cortisol in order to metabolize the increased glucose in the body. In other words, the more uneven our blood sugar levels, the more uneven our moods. This soon gives way to a crash; especially when paired with sugar-sweetened drinks. Even more fresh smoothie places.

In addition to the university’s concern about taking stimulants, students should also find ways in keeping their health at an optimal level. Rather than guzzling down another Starbucks coffee or ROCKSTAR, Panthers should make it a goal to improve the function of the mitochondria, which is the energy powerhouse of our cells. The mitochondria creates ATP, a chemical energy found within all cells. To ensure that your cells need healthy fats, proteins and complex carbs, drinking lots of healthy liquids, as well as sleep and exercise are important.

Panther Health is a commentary on college health in nutrition. Maytinee Kramer is a staff writer for FIU Student Media. For more commentary, please contact Maytinee at opinion@fiusm.com.

FIU to build bridge over Eighth Street

Plans are underway to build a $9.3 million, 320 foot long pedestrian bridge across Southwest 8th Street, making it easier for students and faculty to get to Sweetwater from the MMC campus. Munilla Construction Management and FIGG Bridge Engineers are teaming up to make the plans a reality and the bridge is expected to be complete by the fall of 2018. The “enough width to allow for the comfortable and safe flow of construction, whether it’s through landscaping, will offer a safer transportation for those who wish to walk or bike through the bridge rather than drive to their classes, since many students are commuters. The construction also includes a concrete canopy that is 30 feet wide and over 300 feet long. This soon gives way to a crash; especially when paired with sugar-sweetened drinks. Even more fresh smoothie places.

Some tasty alternatives could be sparkling water flavored with fresh fruits or juices, and even more fresh smoothie places.

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The bridge will be a great addition to the area of Miami and to FIU. Miami needs another pedestrian-friendly pets and this might spark a movement in that direction. The bridge will be safer, more visually appealing and could cut down on the amount of traffic to the City of Sweetwater," Jessell said.

The woes of Wi-Fi

Access to the Internet is an integral part of being a student at FIU. With many courses connecting students and professors over Blackboard and email, a strong Wi-Fi connection is often needed simply to complete the day’s assignments. Other programs like Pearson require Internet connectivity to access textbooks and assignments. Many professors require students to submit homework through a website which runs documents through anti-plagiarism software.

As many students, you must be able to connect with one another through Skype, WhatsApp and Google Drive. Wallace Cure, a junior mathematics major, has had difficulties in the past with the school’s Wi-Fi. "The dorms and GC have pretty bad Wi-Fi, but it gets to be the absolute worst around midnight," he said. "I guess because everybody has assignments due at 11:59." Care’s experience with poor connectivity in the evening has limited his ability to complete assignments on time.

The biggest issues I have are speediness - to the point that pages loaded with broken images on them - and being kicked off the Wi-Fi and having to reconnect," he said. For on-campus students who have jobs and classes during the day, these late hours might be the only time available to do class work.

"10:30 is an important time of the night," Care said. "Even if I’ve been working since 7, as soon as it gets late, everything stops working. I can’t load assignments and reading, and I can’t submit stuff to Turnitin. All places seem to have a weak signal, particularly outdoors.

FIU’s Campus Network found that connecting to the Wi-Fi in the gondola suite outside GC was difficult, despite its being a common study-spot for students. Inability to connect to the Wi-Fi is also a common complaint among students living in Lakeview Hall.

Students living on campus do not have the option of a hard connection to the internet in their dorms. Connection points have either run out or been disabled or removed in each bedroom. Andrew Naylor, the Associate Director of Housing at FIU said these connection points were installed before he began working there a year and a half ago. "Many campuses across the country have taken out the hard-line connections in favor of Wi-Fi because students were demanding it," he said.

Connecting to BBC can also be difficult, especially in the Wolfe University Center - there are many dead zones at BBC, using cellular service often isn’t an option. It is the opinion of this editorial board that FIU should invest in increasing their Wi-Fi capability, perhaps increasing their bandwidth at high traffic hours to accommodate students. Panthers should not have to be paying extra costs to gain access to assignments based on a lack of infrastructure.

In the meantime, we at FIUSM suggest avoiding subscription costs between 11:30 p.m. and 11:59 p.m. to prevent any difficulties. We understand that sometimes that is the only option. In these times, save your work regularly and have a working connection at one of the school’s computer labs.
CULTURALLY COOL

Left: Jose Ferrand and Andre Fiallos demonstrate their karate skills at the Cool@ Japan event, Feb. 28.
Right: Ferrand and Fiallos perform self-defense techniques.
Bottom: Fushu Daiko, a Taiko drum group, performs for the GC Pit audience.

With over a dozen awards, six songs featured in movies and video games and a passionate fandom that has lasted for over 15 years, Fall Out Boy has multiple accolades under their belt.

This spring they add another: Wintour. Consisting of 20 shows, the good old Chicago boys hit the road with AWOLNATION and PVRIS Feb. 26, at Hollywood, Florida’s very own Hard Rock Live.

PVRIS started off the night well, building up excitement for the following acts. After a quick six song set, PVRIS departed from the stage, allowing AWOLNATION to take over.

With a mix of eccentric vocals, incredible, fast-paced drum beats and sporadic lights, AWOLNATION came and delivered.

Their set was slightly longer than PVRIS, reaching a grand total of nine tracks, including the band’s extremely well-known song, “Sail.”

However, once they departed the true excitement settled in. The air shared by thousands of fans in the arena was charged with eager eyes set on the stage.

After the light blue curtain rose after AWOLNATION finished their set, the screen spanning the entire stage lit up: it displayed a video of a skier soaring through a blizzard. Suddenly, snow began to fall in South Florida. Wintour had started.

And with it, an unforgettable performance. Fall Out Boy’s newest single, “Irresistible” was the opening track, the fake snow in the air gave the illusion that the band was performing in a blizzard.

The single was followed by an oldie that caused fans to rejoice and belt out the classic emo lyrics to “Sugar, We’re Goin’ Down.”

Each track had its own memorable aspect.

The screen panned the stage displaying different graphics for each performance.

One of the most memorable of the night was “Save Rock and Roll,” the last track on the band’s comeback album of the same name.

This song particularly memorable because Fall Out Boy used it as a tribute to the late David Bowie.

His lightning bolt appeared on what seemed to be Mars’ landscape and then slowly transitioned to a black and white portrait of the rocker.

The tribute was extremely moving, with lead vocalist Patrick Stump playing the piano as the lyrics: “I will defend the faith/Going down swinging/I will save the songs/That we can’t stop singing.”

Yet, Wintour’s first date was not perfect. As for the venue, the Hard Rock’s handling of the line of fans waiting to enter the show was extremely poor, resulting in a general admission pit before entering the concert.

Overall, the Wintour tour is definitely a must-see. Talented, passionate bands combined with incredible light designs resulted in an unforgettable night.

Ungodly Reviews is a weekly column covering albums and concerts. For suggestions and comments contact Nadine at nadine.rodriguez@fiusm.com
FIU music students exhibit their talent at International Miami GuitART festival

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The FIU School of Music and CARTA jointly presented the Miami International GuitART festival at the Herbert and Nicole Wertheim Performing Arts Center, Feb. 24-28. The festival covered concerts, lectures and master classes from internationally renowned artists like John Schneider, Corey Henry and Zuleida Suarez and Benjamin Verdery, just to name a few. The festival also incorporated a composition competition, where aspiring musicians were provided with an opportunity to be recognized for their talents.

The tickets for various events were available at the FIU students at a discounted price of $5 and many students took this opportunity to expand their knowledge and came to witness this spectacular event.

"Although I have zero knowledge about guitars, I am here to experience something new," said Bhumi Patel, a first-year biological science major. "You never know, if I like this event, I might start learning the guitar."

A remarkable and innovative Luthiers Expo was also a part of the festival where a variety of hand-made guitars were put on display. The featured luthiers were renowned guitar masters Kenny Hill who received the Industry Leadership award by the Guitar Foundation of America and Amalia Ramirez, the fourth generation of the legendary Spanish guitar maker Jose Ramirez.

The festival participants had the chance to meet the luthiers, try their guitars and even buy one. The Expo was held in the Patricia and Philip Frost Art Museum Cafe area from Feb. 24-28, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The festival saw eminent guitarists from around the world come together and provide a fantastic and euphoric spectacle which surpassed the audience expectations. On Feb. 27, the FIU guitar students were given an opportunity to showcase their skills and to sway the audience with their outstanding concert. The concert was conducted by Mesut Ozturk, the Artistic Director and founder of the festival.

"It is honor and privilege to serve as the Artistic Director of the MIGF inaugural edition, which has been a dream of mine for a long time," Ozturk said.

The student showcase concert was also aided by Benjamin Verdery, professor of guitar at Yale University School of Music. "The students were absolutely flawless in their performance and it was a great honor for me that I was invited to be a part of this mind-blowing festival," said Verdery.

The students performed modern guitar masterpieces like "Tiantra," "Mountain Mission," "Aquarela do Brasil" and "Scenes from Ellis Island."

Composers Carlos Rafael Rivera and Benjamin Verdery, who wrote "Tiantra" and "Scenes from Ellis Island," respectively, were present. Rivera was invited by Ozturk for an impromptu conduct of the masterpiece.

According to Ozturk, "Even though the students did not rehearse with Carlos, they did a fantastic job, given the fact that [Rivera] has a really spontaneous style of conducting performance.

Apart from the orchestra, there were several solo performances by FIU guitar students Carlos Serrano, Roberto Caprara and Felipe Carvajal, who brought a fresh perspective to the concert. Moreover, the audience remained glued to their seats during a duet performance with Thomas Caprara and Felipe Carvajal accompanying him with the guitar.

The star of the show, however, was the final performance of "Scenes from the Ellis Island."

That was the only orchestral piece of the concert that made use of the organ, played by Dan Hardin. The performance took a slow tempo in the beginning but it was not long that the players picked up their pace, which gave rise to a spectacular euphoria amongst the audience.

Towards the end, the music stopped dramatically and that is when Benjamin Verdery took stage alone and threw himself on stage with his electric guitar and started playing the notes he composed. This unexpected twist left the audience mesmerized from his high energy and effortless style.

"To be honest, that surprise was a planned one and I had practiced with the students a couple of times prior to the performance," said Verdery. "However, the students did way better than the practice sessions and all the credit goes to the enthusiastic and encouraging audience."

Blown away by the final performance, the audience requested the orchestra to treat them to one more fusion performance. Verdery, Ozturk and the students readily agreed and the show ended on a high note.

Such events help the FIU community to be recognized at international levels. The MIGF is yet another feather in the cap of FIU, after the South Beach Wine and Food Festival.

British artist releases debut album ‘Phases’

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At just 24-years-old, the British artist Jack Garratt is taking the industry by storm. Having won the BRIT Critics’ Choice Award in November and the BBC Sound of 2016 in January, Garratt seems to be exploiting his promising potential. Just last week he released his debut album “Phase” after a short series of EPs and singles.

After signing with Island records, a division of Universal Music Group, back in October 2014 they made sure that his road to success was not an absurdly swift one. This created an effect of authenticity for Garratt, which British listeners truly appreciate. “Phase” makes quite an introduction with its first track, Coalesce (Synesthesia Pt. I), where Garratt lures us in with a deliberate verse that quickly heightens into the essence of the album that keeps a consistent vibe with the lyrics delve into deeper melancholic vocals that contrast the rough textures of the backdrop. With an effortlessly flowing chorus and Garratt’s soulful voice, ‘Breathe Life’ is one of the catchiest tracks.

Following that is “Far Cry.” The production is filled with highly, boosted bass and shrieking synthesizers that will get you pumped enough to consider getting a gym membership. The mood is reestablished into a more nostalgic direction where the lyrics delve into deeper and more generic themes such as coming of age in “Weathered.”

Although it is not unpalatable, it touches on a social topic that has become overdue. Garratt is a pop artist and the genre is known for many things but ingenuity of themes is not one of them. People like to listen to things that sound like what they have heard before with slight modifications.

Not to take away from Garratt’s artistry but it is not difficult to notice how mainstream the songwriting is throughout the majority of the album. On tracks such as “Fire,” “I Know All What I Do” and “The Love You’re Given” there is no lack of overly exaggerated sentimentality and in an attempt to portray a man in despair he flirts with the boundary of sounding cynical.

To give him some credit though, in “Worry” Garratt’s genuine sound pulsates as his vocals and instruments complement each other gracefully.

Unfortunately, this track was placed smack in the middle of the album where it may easily go unnoticed.

Synesthesia Pt.III is somewhat refreshing in the sense that it differentiates significantly from “Synesthesia Pt.II,” which is very similar to the first. The rawness of the sound as heard in “My House Is Your Home” the final track on his debut album, demonstrates his ability as a vocalist. With a profound bluesy feel and a soulful, gospel influence, Garratt exhibits a different, much more structured facet of his artistry.

The lack of production and the sound of his speaking tone give the listener a feeling of transparency and a better understanding of his desire for intimacy, over the multiple influences of various genres in his music.

His talent and potential for commercial success are undeniable but from the Ed Sheeren performance style to a seemingly parallel sound with Sam Smith, folk influences of Mumford & Sons, and rays of EDM vibes, perhaps the final track of “Phase” is an indication of what is to come from Garratt’s future projects.
FIU’s big three deliver in win over FAU

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It wasn’t quite a rivalry renewed, but the University’s men’s basketball team (13-16, 7-9 in Conference USA) cut the Panthers’ 19-point lead down to six with less than a minute left, but FIU was able to stay ahead thanks to big games from senior forward Davion Draper (21 points), junior guard Donte McGill (19 points) and senior Adrian Diaz (17 points).

In FIU and FAU’s previous meeting this season, Diaz scored a game-high 23 points while his Panthers crushed the Owls 76-59 in the C-USA opener.

This weekend’s game was a far cry from that hopeful beginning of the conference stretch.

Instead, with a chance at a first-round bye being distant, the men’s basketball team fought to avoid their football program’s mistakes by defeating another bottom-dwelling FAU team hungry for an upset.

Both teams had a poor first half of offense — FIU went 13-34 from the field while FAU shot 7-26. Diaz scored FIU’s first basket 1:01 into the game, but the Panthers wouldn’t score again for another 6:18. McGill broke that scoring drought with a layup with 12:43 left in the half to put FIU up 5-4.

This sparked a run by McGill, who scored FIU’s next five points. FAU kept the game close as both teams failed to convert shots.

Draper ignited a small FIU run with 6:24 left in the first half at the plate with a home-run. FIU followed up the triumphant win with falling behind early to another Southeastern Conference opponent in the Tigers from the University of Missouri.

Right-hander Cody Crouse (0-1) was given the opportunity to start this game, but the Tigers proved to be too much for the junior as they scored five of their runs in the first three innings against him.

While the Panthers managed to answer with 16 hits of their own it wouldn’t be enough and they’d come up short Wednesday, Feb. 24, 7-6.

FIU is 0-4 record against SEC opponents so far this season. They should be aware from FIU that was hitting .391 at home and the deal would only get sweeter from there.

The home team managed to record double-digit hits for the fifth time this season and scored five runs on those 10 hits.

After giving up one run in the first inning, right-hander Chris Moulere (1-1) buckled down, didn’t allow much more offense from the Seton Hall and struck out five batters.

Kenny Meimerstorf and Austin Rodriguez each had two hits, adding 6 as a trio to the 15 hit total.

Right-hander Garrett Cave (0-1) struck out 7 batters, the highest strikeout total posted by any FIU pitcher in a single outing yet this season, but was pulled early in the fifth inning letting off two Pirates on base.

Right-hander Nate Pearson (1-0) came in to relieve Cave and recorded his sixth strikeout of the season.

It’s only weekend 2, out of 14, we’ve still got a long way to go

FIU already had 63 hits in their last five games before taking on another 10 runs and 15 hits to their start-line on Sunday. Kenny Meimerstorf, J.C. Escarra, and Irving Lopez each had two hits, adding 6 as a trio to the 15 hit total.

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Right-hander Nate Pearson (1-0) came in to relieve Cave and recorded his sixth strikeout of the season.

As a chance to complete the sweep.

This series is not "normal", in that sense, and would merely be a chance to even their record.

There was no need for extra motivation this particular afternoon as the wave of momentum the Panthers were carrying could be more accurately likened to a tsunami.

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As far as if this rotation that redeemed themselves as a whole since last weekend, whether or not Meimerstorf, Moulere and Cave will be the Panther’s go-to 1-2-3, Thomas said to student media. “It’s only weekend 2, out of 14, we’ve still got a long way to go” and then said that for now they seem to be “normal”, in that sense, as a chance to complete the sweep.
**SOFTBALL**

**Kugelmann shines with no hitter against CCSU**

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Freshman Megan Kugelmann stole the spotlight of the weekend by tossing her first collegiate career no-hitter in the midst of a six game weekend.

After a lone game on Thursday, Feb. 25, FIU softball went on an 16 game home stand with the Felsberg Invitational this past weekend.

The Panthers went 3-2 in the tournament, which will mean an 11-5 record for FIU as they prepare to hit the road for the first time all season.

The weekend started early for the Panthers, with an exhibition game on Thursday against Central Connecticut State University. FIU found themselves in an early hole, being down 4-0 in the fourth inning. However, FIU made their way to the scoreboard in the next three innings and had a 5-4 lead heading into the final inning of play.

CCSU were then able to bring in two runs, taking the lead and maintaining it the rest of the game. The final score was 6-5 as FIU went into the weekend suffering their first loss of the season.

Abby Summers (3-1) gave up her first loss of the season as a relief pitcher.

Stephanie Texeira batted in her 13th and 14th runs of the season in the loss.

The tournament officially got underway on Friday, Feb. 26, with Siena visiting the Panther for the first game of the day. FIU found themselves in an early deficit yet again. Siena held a 5-1 lead in the fifth inning, but not before the Panthers made a late game rally.

With two outs in the bottom of the fifth, FIU managed four hits, highlighted by a Texeira two-run double. This surge gave the Panthers three more runs, but the final score would end at 5-4 with a Siena win.

This led to FIU’s biggest losing streak of the season at two. The Panthers left runners in scoring position stranded in the final two innings of play.

Rachel Dywer (2-1) was penalized with the loss. Dywer allowed eight hits and gave up two walks in her 4-1 innings of play. She also struck out three batters.

With no time to dwell, the Panthers had the second game of a doubleheader against the Mavericks, 4-1, on Sunday, Feb. 28.

Freshman pitcher, Rachel Dywer goes against Siena in which FIU lost the game 5-4. Overall, FIU went 3-2 in the 2016 Felsberg Invitational including a no-hitter against CCSU.

**TENNIS**

**Tennis sweeps third consecutive weekend**

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The No. 62 ranked women’s tennis team was all smiles after they swept their third consecutive weekend at the FIU Tennis Courts from Feb. 26 - 28.

The Panthers (7-1) swept the Eastern Michigan Eagles, 7-0, on Friday, Feb. 26, and defeated the University of Texas at Arlington Mavericks, 4-1, on Sunday, Feb. 28.

“We came out aggressive and with high energy in our matches this weekend,” said Head Coach Katarina Petrovic after the teams 4-1 win over the Mavericks. “We’ve been more focused on doubles over the past few weeks and it’s paying off. I’m very pleased with how we’re playing right now.”

Caluk won in her match against Garbary, 6-0, 6-1, with no problem with Siena, as they matched the Panthers with a 7-1 victory in Felsberg field.

The final game of the tournament for FIU was against the Siena Saints. This would be the final game of the 16 home game stand for FIU.

Summers (5-1) had no problem with Siena, just allowing four hits all game. She started off strong, retiring the first nine batters she faced and throwing her third complete game of the season, leading to a 6-1 FIU win.

Ashley Leon and Deven Kozicki led the Panther bats with two hits apiece with Aleima Lopez and Sofia Veksler, 6-4, 6-2, in the opening inning.

FIU finished their home stretch with an overall record of 11-5. They then travel to Gainesville for the UF invitational, opening up against Illinois State on Friday, March 4.

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Women’s tennis headed into the weekend improved the Panthers’ home record to 2-1 and extended their winning streak to six games. The Panthers are undefeated this season when they clinch the doubles point.

Friday’s 7-0 victory over the Eagles was the fifth time this season that the Panthers have swept their opponents. The Eagles are off to their best start since 2001, when they ended the year ranked at No. 24 in the nation.

However, Petrovic is not too concerned about her team being underfated when they win the doubles point.

“It’s all about maintaining a high level of energy and sticking to our game plan,” said Petrovic. “Our players aren’t used to playing doubles. I just want them to have the same ritual heading into every match.”

In the match against the Eagles, the Panthers clinched the doubles point when senior Carlotta Orlando and redshirt freshman Andres Lazaro defeated Ani Gogvadze and Kenu Sharma, 6-2, and sophomore Nerma Caluk and senior Kaitlin Brunzovic beat Anna Veleva and Alexandra Barcelo, 6-0.

The Panthers continued their dominance against the Eagles heading into singles play, when the team won five out of six of its matches in straight sets.

Junior Nina Nagoda got the first singles point for FIU when she defeated Gogvadze, 6-2, 6-0. Freshman Maryna Veksler clinched FIU’s second point when she defeated Garbary, 6-0, 6-1.

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The Panthers get to hoist up the Conference USA trophy another year. The swimming and diving team won their second C-USA championship in a row Saturday Feb. 27. They were able to make conference history by scoring the second-most points in C-USA Championship history.

The Panthers put their name in the school record books by winning 28 medals, including 15 gold, while setting seven school records. Out of the 21 total titles, FIU won 15 of them during the four-day championships which led to a 954-point result. No other school came even close to put up a fight as FIU beat second-place Rice by 318 points. That margin of points was another record as the most-decisive victory in C-USA Championship history. The other schools that competed were Marshall (618.5), North Texas (467), Florida Atlantic (380.5) and Old Dominion (360).

Back to back, FIU did win the championship, but the Panthers’ dominance of the 2016 C-USA Championships resulted in sweeping the specialty awards. Head Coach Randy Horner was named C-USA Coach of the Year. Diving Coach Rio Ramirez was named the C-USA Diving Coach of the Year, sophomore Naomie Ruel was named the C-USA Swimming of the Year and sophomore Rebecca Queensel was named the C-USA Diver of the Year.

This was the third time Coach Horner’s career that he won The Coach of the Year award, while Ramirez earned his second-straight Diving Coach of the Year. Ruel, who claimed seven gold medals during the championships, kept the FIU streak going by becoming FIU’s third-straight C-USA Swimmer of the Year. Queensel, a seven-time C-USA Diver of the Week and the CUSA Champion in the 1-meter and platform programs, becomes the Panthers’ second Diver of the Year award winner.

Every day of the championships, FIU was able to increase its lead with each event. Going into the final day, the Panthers had a 233-point lead and were seven events away from winning it all. All eyes were on FIU entering the final day poised to run away with the championship. The Panthers set the tone from the start as sophomore Kyna Pereira set the school record in the 1650 Free with a time of 16.24.36 to win her fourth title of the championships. Ruel earned the Panthers’ second first-place finish of the day with a 49.30 in the 100 Free.

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The Panthers finally shut the door to the championship as they earned a clean sweep of the relays, winning the 400 Free Relay as the team of Bertelli, Marie Lauridsen, Pereira and Ruel finished with a time of 3:20.10 and the team’s final 40 points of the championships.

Up next are the NCAA Zones, which takes place March 7-9 in Atlanta, Georgia, and the NCAA championships March 17-19.