Beyond Brexit
British referendum sparks discussion at FIU

Panelists Gwyn Davis, Cem Karayalchin, David Progder, and Markus Thiel gather to discuss the UK referendum on FIU’s MMC campus on Wednesday, June 29.

MELISSA BURGESS
Staff Writer
mellissa.burgess@fiusm.com

A week after British voters decided to leave the European Union, the so-called “Brexit” referendum has left the world with more questions than clarity.

To help answer some of the questions swirling around “Brexit,” FIU’s Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs brought together a panel of experts on Wednesday, June 29 to explain their take on the possible geopolitical, economic, and financial implications for Britain and Europe.

The panel included special guest, Gwyn Davis, an associate professor in the Department of History at FIU.

With the pound plunging to its lowest level and prompting Prime Minister Cameron’s resignation, the Brexit results have already shocked global markets, roiled the stock market and thrown British politics into disarray.

In Thursday’s election, the referenced UK citizens if they wanted to remain or leave the EU. They voted to leave the EU with 52 percent to 48 percent.

“BEYOND BREXIT

I am appalled of the outcome of this referendum. I cannot pretend to be anything other than appalled by it. I think it’s a serious error and the consequences are going to be catastrophic both socially and economically. It was an unnecessary referendum, but that’s just my personal opinion,” said Davis.

Progder emphasized that at the moment, Britain is still a EU member. The clock won’t start ticking for Brexit until the UK submits Article 50 to the EU. Article 50 is a European treaty that must be submitted in order to leave the EU. Once the article is submitted, the divorce is expected to be a two-year process.

“What is very clear from this debate is that the UK will continue to have an incredibly strong relationship with their European partners,” said Progder.

The panelists pointed out that the UK will face both costs and benefits from

What is very clear from this debate is that the UK will continue to have an incredibly strong relationship with their European partners.

Panelists Gwyn Davis, Cem Karayalchin, David Progder, and Markus Thiel gather to discuss the UK referendum on FIU’s MMC campus on Wednesday, June 29.

Disabled student learns to swim through club

LEXA ROTH
Contributing Writer
sport@fiusm.com

Poseidon’s Panthers, a swim club founded in the fall of 2014, gives students an opportunity to swim with others and learn basic techniques, or perfect existing ones.

One student in Poseidon’s group, Daniela Salinas, lost her vision due to a condition called Leber Congenital Amaronosis, which is an inherited retinal degenerative disease characterized by severe loss of vision at birth. Salinas joined Poseidon’s Panthers about a month and a half ago to have some summer fun and stay in great shape.

Salinas says she loves the music that they play during the sessions and how much she has learned in the club.

She says, “I’m not as easy to teach as someone who is blind can swim just as well as someone who can see. Most people wouldn’t imagine someone with no vision to swim, however. Salinas has proven them wrong.

She has gained so much from this club and has made numerous strides since joining. She says she has mastered her dolphin kick and her freestyle, something she couldn’t do before joining the club.

“She does a lot more than the basics and can even do laps, she is doing very well,” said Sultan.

Sultan says he learned a lot about what it’s like teaching someone with a disability such as Salinas.

“Having her join made me less nervous to teach people with disabilities, which made me a better coach. People in the club know her and admire what she does, and it has definitely made us more diverse and has been a learning experience for all of us.”

This swim club runs through the summer and is free to all students.

“Begin to review, revise or create your personal hurricane plan, which apply to all potential hazards – and purchase the supplies necessary for your disaster kit,” wrote Rosenberg.

“For a storm, you should always follow any protective actions issued by emergency officials.”

Some recommended disaster supplies are water, non-perishable food, battery powered radios, flashlights, batteries, first aid kits, can openers and local maps. More recommended items recommended for hurricane preparedness can be found on ready.gov.

FIU housing students are responsible for acquiring their own supplies. They are also responsible for seeking out their own shelters if they do not wish to remain in a common area on campus.

In the event of an emergency, FIU has developed a list of recommendations known as FIU Alert, which will help advise the FIU community during the disaster. In addition to checking
The re-opening of diplomatic talks with Venezuela would not back off its pledge to back an opposition leader with the support of a recall referendum that could oust President Nicolas Maduro, a top U.S. diplomat said Friday.

Thomas Shannon, the U.S. undersecretary of state for political affairs, described Wednesday’s talks with Maduro as a first step toward finding common ground with the Venezuelan government. But Shannon emphasized that the administration would not back off its pledge to back an Organization of American States investigation into the erosion of democratic institutions in Venezuela.

There are signs hole in ozone layer has begun to heal

For the first time in 30 years, the gaping hole in the ozone layer above Antarctica is showing signs of healing.

Every year since it was discovered in 1985, scientists have watched the hole grow bigger as the erosion of democratic institutions in Venezuela.

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Letter to the Editor: FIU is reaching higher setting new standards

Last month, the FIU board of trustees held our last meeting of the academic year, where we approved the university’s $1.3 billion budget and work plan for the 2016-2017 year. As Miami’s only public research university, FIU has charted a course that honors the talent of our students, the service of our faculty, and the commitment of our alumni and staff. The work that our student-athlete will always be the most important thing to us,” FIU Executive Director of Student Affairs and Entertainment Pete Garcia said. “The work that our student-athletes have done in the classroom is commendable. We are proud of the academic success that Turner’s socio-cultural status has yielded a significant impact on the way in which the legal system handled the case—from the questions Turner’s defense attorney asked the victim to Turner’s sentence. Typically, those found guilty for rape face varying penalties, given that they are contingent on the circumstances and evidence presented during a trial. In comparison to the maximum sentence of 14 years in prison, Turner’s six-month sentence in a county jail not only drastically differs but also suggests to society that rape is to be taken lightly. As with other assault cases, many often determine alcohol and drugs to be the culprits while simultaneously depicting the severity of the danger and degradation of sexual assault. Turner’s socio-cultural status or any action enacted without the presence of consent is rape and is inexcusable. Gabrielle Garcia is a staff writer for FIU Student Media. Her column, On the Scene, is a commentary on the hottest pop culture topics. For suggestions or comments, please contact Gabrielle at gabrielle.garcia@fiusm.com.
**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

**Distorted sense of power** contributes to dislike of police officers

**The English defer to authority without asking why. Americans defer to authority only if we know why. Police are citizens, and we should police them as citizens.**

As a white male history professor at FIU, I am an unlikely target for police harassment, but a cop attempted to intimidate me one spring Monday at the entrance of Green Library before a class.

An officer barked: “Did you put out that cigarette? What cigarette?”

He persisted, insisting I had been smoking and threatened to cite me.

“For what?”

“For being disrespectful.”

What was offensive was not his assuredness, but his distorted sense of power. I respect men and women in blue, if they command authority without asking why. Other police officers could have foreseen or prevented these horrible or weird events, only that other things, perhaps more important than smokers and jaywalkers, need policing on campus.

FIU is a microcosm of society, and as we have seen a spate of police misdeeds across the country, we must cognizant of and vigilant against any police injustice in our FIU community.

I’m the unlikely target, a white male history professor at FIU. I’m probably not you. A more likely target at Florida International University is a young Latino, Black, or foreign international student, who may be far from home and afraid.

Don’t be scared and know your rights.

**Michael Brillman**

**Professor**

**FIU**

**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

**RIVERS OF TRUTH**

**Friday, June 16**

**LINDA RIOS**

The Miami Herald reported that FIU business professor, David Ralston was taken into custody last Thursday after a month-long pursuit. Ralston was found hiding in a motel 20 miles from his Weston home, in Fort Lauderdale.

According to CBS Miami, Ralston refused to turn himself in due to the lack of a warrant that required him to do so. According to the Lee County Sheriff’s Office, the 69-year-old professor had allegedly hired him this past April to clean his Ft. Meyers home through Craigslist.

CBS Miami reported that on the afternoon of April 29, Ralston offered his maid a drink, and after accepting it, she felt like she was not herself. Half an hour later, she concluded that she had been drugged.

The victim’s statement said that she felt Ralston taking her clothes off, something she was not comfortable with and then accused him.

The woman was able to get away from Ralston's house late at night, and sought help from a neighbor who was then able to contact her husband and the authorities.

After the assault took place, the sheriff's deputies performed a search and walked out with what had been thought to be at the time, the surveillance tape containing the evidence incriminating Ralston.

Ralston is pending to appear in front of the court in Ft. Lauderdale and then will be transferred to Lee County for prosecution.

It’s important to always be cautious of who meet our surroundings because we never know who they might turn out to be and if they will be a threat to our safety and peace of mind.

**Linda Rios** is a contributing writer for **FIU Student Media**. Her column, **Rivers of Truth**, is a commentary on police injustice. If you would like to submit a letter, please email it to opinion@fiusm.com.
June 20, 2016 marked the first day of summer and to FIU students, that means summer classes and SummerFest. SummerFest is an annual concert event organized and hosted by FIU's Campus Life at the Modesto Maidique Campus. It's “Campus Life's biggest event over the summer… that attracts about 3 to 4,000 students and guests,” according to Campus Life's creative director and SummerFest advisor, John Parmenter.

SummerFest is a “unique campus experience unlike any other concert here at FIU,” and it introduces students “to everything else that we have to offer here at Campus Life,” said Parmenter.

He explained that SummerFest “serves as a perfect engagement for all our new freshmen,” who make up the largest group of SummerFest attendees, as “it’s their first college experience, their first college event.” Whether it's freshmen going to their first SummerFest or seniors experiencing their last, students who attend this year’s SummerFest can enjoy the foam cannon theme, the concert stage decked out with LED lights, and an artist lineup “better than any of our previous lineups,” according to Parmenter. Two main headliners, Dzeko & Torres and G.T.A., will be performing, instead of one as in previous years.

FIU students attending SummerFest will be admitted for free but must bring a valid student I.D. that will be swiped at the gate. Any guest looking to go to SummerFest must purchase a ticket. They can do so online for $30, or at the gate for $35.

The event will begin at 8 p.m. and end at midnight. Doors will open at 7:15 p.m. but there will be a special early entrance at 6:45 p.m. for students who donate $1 to Campus Life’s Roar It Forward. Students who donate to the program will be helping raise funds meant to aid close to 100 homeless FIU students.

SummerFest will take place on Thursday, July 14 at MMC between the Blue and Gold parking garages.

The FIU Recreation Center is putting together a special event next month, on the lawns of the Graham Center. July 13 will see the debut of the first ever Ultimate Panther Challenge, where teams of up to five players compete and run five obstacle courses.

“I wanted to think of some ways that we could get students to be attracted to the Rec Center and learn more about our programs,” said Ratasha Iribarren, a graduate assistant in charge of public relations and marketing for the Rec Center. “I noticed that the obstacle course, the sparring races, the mud runs are all very popular right now.”

From noon to 2 p.m., the event will have many activities including a tire flip, speed drills, and a rock climbing wall. Food and drink will be provided by sponsor, Muscle Milk, who will also be giving out prizes yet to be announced.

The Ultimate Panther Challenge is accepting submissions for anyone who would like to participate in the obstacle course runs. If you’re feeling up to the challenge, you may register with the Rec Center on their website. For more information, contact Iribarren at: riribarr@fiu.edu.
LIFESTYLE POINTS

Hollywood’s search for the next big fantasy franchise for the big screen sounds simple enough, but somehow, finding it in a roleplaying game franchise, one that’s gone through several generations of gamers with little plot, seems like an odd place to land.

“Warcraft” started as a series of video game titles in the early ’90s, released by Blizzard Entertainment. It was set as a real-time strategy game where you could choose to be an army of humans defending their world from an invading race of creatures called Orcs, or play as the army of Orcs invading the human world.

Since then, it has spawned all kinds of media, from a popular massively multiplayer online roleplaying game, to books, and a tabletop RPG. The film, released early in June with massive numbers at the box office, became the highest grossing video game film at the box office, becoming the highest-grossing video game film adaptation of all time.

The movie plays with the basic plot of the first game, which was simply that Orcs are invading the world of Azeroth. The Orc homeworld is being torn apart by fel magic, and so the Orc Horde enters Azeroth to start over, kidnapping humans in order to fuel a portal to its homeworld.

In the story alone, it definitely drags - though only as much as any fantasy film of its scale would. It’s also slightly inconsistent in theme and pacing; often it places significance on certain plot points that become irrelevant later in the film, while other more important elements are left unexplored. In addition, not to spoil anything directly but there are several major deaths that fail to carry much weight, and end up being more anticlimactic than anything else.

All of this said, it’s still incredibly fun. The dialogue is on point, the visual effects are stunning and the actors play well in this film. Despite its shortcomings, when it comes to the story, many aspects redeem it: it’s purely an action fantasy flick and that’s what keeps you watching. “Warcraft” has been out for almost a month now, and promises a wild adventure. There’s no need to skip out on it for a prerequisite on nerdy RPG gaming, the movie works as its own, with only its setting supported by the mythos of the franchise.

Lifestyle Points is a column covering films and pop culture. To contact Joseph Cardenas for suggestions and comments email joseph.cardenas@fiusm.com.

STUDENT MEDIA

Get up to the minute news coverage, instant sports updates, what’s new in student life, music and talk shows, event photo galleries and more at fiusm.com.
Women in sports: rising, prevailing and enduring in the male-dominated industry

The world of sports has always been thought of as a male’s platform. The concepts of strength, performance and adrenaline put forth in sports are not often attributed to women.

Then, the year 1866 came around.

Students at the all-female Vassar College formed two baseball teams. Within a decade, in 1875, three men decided to create a women’s baseball club in Springfield, Illinois, where they divided the club into two teams called the “Blondes” and the “Brunettes.” It paved the way for women to continue to be physically involved in sports.

Women evolving in sports also came with criticism. Many had heard the phrases “you throw like a girl,” or “you run like a girl.” There has always been this idea that males represent strength, and girls represent weakness. However, you cannot be a woman and have the ability to run faster, throw farther and fight harder than a man.

FIU Bay News’ Malory Sanchez spoke with FIU swimmer Naomi Ruele on what it’s like being a woman playing in sports after being the first FIU student-athlete to qualify for the Olympics. “I’ve been told that I swim like a man because I’m fast, and I don’t think that a woman has to be a man in order to be fast or to train well,” Ruele said.

In addition to participating in sports, women also started reporting for sports. In the late 1930s, the wife of Harry Johnson provided color commentary during Johnson’s broadcast, and became the first woman sportscaster. The few women who started their sportscasting career after her were Jane Chastain, Donna De Varona and Jeanie Morris. During that era there was no communal space for people to voice their opinions. Now, people run straight to Twitter and Facebook to voice their opinions. Twitter, especially, has been a very ugly place for women in sports media.

“In this job, you have to be thick skinned. You need to be hit in the head with a hockey puck by one of the BlackHawks and killed.” It makes you wonder, is it really that serious? Male sports fanatics who often disagree with DiCaro’s opinions. One once told her, “You need to be hit in the head with a hockey puck by one of the BlackHawks and killed.”

The biggest challenge for women making it into the sports world is breaking down gender stereotypes, highlighting their professionalism and knowledge on the sports they’re playing in or want to cover as an anchor.

“Hitting the skins, thick skin if you want to work in sports,” FIU Student Media Sports Director Jamy Hall said. “People will always have their opinion about you and how you do your job, but as long as you are confident and know you do your job well, that’s all that matters.”

Jas Reports is a biweekly column about issues in sports. To contact Jasmine email her at jasmine.casimir@fiusm.com.

“"I’ve been told that I swim like a man because I’m fast, and I don’t think that a woman has to be a man in order to be fast or to train well," says FIU swimmer Naomi Ruele.

Women in sports: rising, prevailing and enduring in the male-dominated industry

JASMINE CASIMIR

Staff Writer
jas@fiusm.com

University names former Alabama State University coach as baseball coach

ALEJANDRO SOLANA

Staff Writer
alejandro.solana.com

A press conference was held to announce Mervyl Melendez as the new head coach of the baseball team. Melendez was welcomed into the Panther family on Tuesday, June 28.

"Today is an exciting day for all of us, especially FIU baseball," Executive Director of Sports and Entertainment Pete Garcia said. "FIU baseball has a rich and very successful tradition, and that’s one we think will continue today when we announce our new head coach."

Melendez resigned from the head coaching position at Alabama State University Tuesday morning, a school he spent five years at, hours before the FIU baseball team announced on twitter that he would be the new hire.

The 42-year-old Puerto Rican native takes over for Turtle Thomas, who resigned from the position just over two weeks ago after nine seasons with the Panthers. “Almost two weeks ago, we started on this journey, a national search for a head baseball coach,” Garcia said. “I promised our players that we were going to getthem the best possible coach out there.”

In the five seasons he coached at ASU, Melendez led the Hornets to 158 total wins, a 24-0 perfect conference regular season in 2016, four consecutive 30 plus win seasons and an NCAA Division I tournament appearance the past season.

“We’re not promising victories, and we’re not promising championships,” Melendez said. “What I will promise you is that I will dedicate my life to FIU baseball.”

Under Melendez, ASU held a record of 158-117 and a 138-80 mark in the five years he coached there. The 158 total wins Melendez recorded at the helm of the Hornets was the highest five-season total in school history. Prior to Melendez’s arrival in Alabama State, the program hadn’t logged a 20 win season in over ten years.

Despite winning the Conference-USA championship in 2015, the Panthers have only one winning season in their past four. “I believe in playing well on weekends,” Melendez said. “It’s awesome to win midweek, but when it is all said and done, you have to win your league if you want to get to the tournament.”

In the five seasons at ASU, the Hornets notched a 79 percent winning percentage in the Southwestern Athletic Conference tallying a 95-25 record.

“If you see what has happened the last three or four years, we have concentrated a lot on weekends and we have beaten some people that we supposedly should not have,” Melendez said. “We will always take it one game at a time, but the most important part of our season will be league play.”

Melendez told the media that University of South Alabama Head Coach Mark Calvi, an ex-FIU assistant baseball coach for 11 seasons, was one of the bigger factors that ultimately led him to taking the FIU job. ASU was sent home from the NCAA tournament after losing to Calvi’s team 6-3 in the Tallahassee Regional on June 4.

Melendez said: “I talked about this job with him knowing that he had been here. One thing he had said to me was, ‘Mervyl, I think that you would do a great job there if the opportunity presents itself.’”

Melendez thought so as well as he agreed to bring his 17 years of coaching experience down to South Florida. This new opportunity, however, isn’t all that Melendez is excited about.

“I can’t wait to be able to wear shorts everyday to practice,” Melendez said. “I made sure to leave my jacket up in Alabama.”

Mervyl Melendez, FIU’s new baseball coach, speaks about his plan for the team for the upcoming season.

"The biggest challenge for women making it into the sports world is breaking down gender stereotypes, highlighting their professionalism and knowledge on the sports they’re playing in or want to cover as an anchor," Jas Reports columnist Jennifer Gish wrote.
**Soccer player aims for a memorable season**

STAFF WRITER

Luís Betancur, forward for the FIU men’s soccer team, is looking to making his final season, a historic one. Following a strong season his junior year with 19 points — 9 goals, 1 assist — Betancur wants to leave with his name forever remembered in the books.

Nandi, as his teammates and close friends call him, strives to be the best, often working on drills after practice to improve his game and ensure a great season with the team.

The Panthers currently find themselves ranked No. 23 in the nation, ending the season with 12 wins, 7 losses and 1 tie. For this upcoming 2016 season, Betancur and his teammates want to go even further as they defend their Conference USA title.

“After last year, having a great year, it was a good turn around for my college career. I realized it’s my last year, who knows if we could do it again? We only had two of our seniors leaving ... We have a big returning group, so I felt like if we use what we did last year and do more, we can get further in the NCAA tournament and try to win conference again,” Betancur said.

With a widely diverse group of players, Betancur believes having players with different backgrounds and cultures only make their bond more special.

“We are from everywhere, we are from Colombia, Jamaica, France, Germany, etc. My recruiting class we were like 14 guys, and then we have been a family ever since, this [is] like a brotherhood. We are together as a team on and off the field,” said Betancur.

The Panthers will play against the University of Kentucky on Saturday, Sept. 17 at 7 p.m.

**Turnover sets Panthers up for second win**

STAFF WRITER

The men's soccer team received its second-straight win of the season after defeating the University of Wisconsin Badgers 1-0. Forward Santiago Patino scored the first goal of the game after the Badgers created a turnover in the fifth minute, setting the Panthers up for a victory.

The Panthers' next game will take place on Saturday, Sept. 17 at 7 p.m. against the University of Kentucky.
Student athletes earn highest average GPA on record

CAYLA BUSH
Editor in Chief
cayla.bush@fiusm.com

The “student-athlete” is the most important thing to the Athletic Department, according to Pete Garcia, executive director for Sports and Entertainment.

The emphasis on being a student first has earned a new record for the department -- the highest grade-point average on record.

The 3.1 average for the University’s student-athletes was earned during the 2015-2016 year.

During the spring semester, 273 student-athletes earned at least a 3.0 GPA, with 143 of those students earning a 3.5 or higher, earning them a spot on the Dean’s List. In all, the Athletic Department claimed 515 3.0 or better GPAs, and 270 Dean’s List members during the last academic year.

According to Paul Dodson, assistant director of Athletics Media Relations, the 15 percent increase is from a combination of factors, including improvement of the Student Athlete Academic Center.

“We’ve added more advisors to provide better attention to our student-athletes and their academic well-being,” Dodson said to Student Media. “There’s a reason that the word ‘student’ comes before athlete, and it’s pretty significant that the entire department averages over 3.0.”

During the last five terms (Fall 2014, Spring 2015, Summer 2015, Fall 2015, Spring 2016), FIU has had a total of 1,165 student-athletes earn a GPA of 3.0 or better, while 681 were named to the Dean’s List.

There were 362 student-athletes who earned a GPA of 3.75 or better and 195 earned a 4.0.

Dodson says academic success is a source of pride for the student-athletes, who sometimes have more pride for their academic success than their athletic success.

“You’ll see the student athletes wearing 3.0 club t-shirts, or 3.5 club t-shirts with pride, because they’ve worked hard for that,” Dodson said.

Both Dodson and Garcia attribute the support system of the entire department to helping student athletes reach higher in academic spaces.

“The work that our student-athletes have done in the classroom is outstanding,” Garcia said.

“Football is like a family,” Cyprien said. “We always look out for each other, especially when it’s a good cause for the kids.”

“Football is like a family,” Cyprien said. “We always look out for each other, especially when it’s a good cause for the kids.”

PETER HOLLAND
Sports Writer
peter.holland.com

FIU alumnus Johnathan Cyprien, who is currently a safety for the Jacksonville Jaguars, held his second annual celebrity softball game at the FIU Baseball Stadium for his Cyp Squad At Risk Youth Foundation.

Alumni from FIU reunited to face alumni from the University of Miami and other Miami-native NFL players in a friendly softball matchup.

Before the game began, Cyprien gathered all of the children who attended the game and explained to them why the event took place and how much he cared about them and their future.

“I would throw different events like the softball game for example, and raise a good amount of money to sponsor kids to do things throughout the summer, such as after school programs to keep them out of the streets and give them a choice of doing something better than getting into trouble,” Cyprien said.

Current and former NFL players were the main attractions from both teams. Players such as T.Y. Hilton, wide receiver for the Indianapolis Colts; Tourik Williams, linebacker for the San Diego Chargers; Isame Faciane, guard for the Minnesota Vikings, were some of the players who represented FIU. Recent graduate and current defensive back for the Dallas Cowboys Jeremiah McKinnon, who was a freshman when he played with Cyprien, made an appearance as well.

The players were energetic and it felt great to have the guys at the event,” Cyprien said. “We automatically have a brotherhood coming out of high school in Miami, and we just want to support each other.”

The final score was 20-10, with FIU coming out on top. For the players who participated, it didn’t matter who won. Their focus was to give back to their community and entertain the children who attended. After the game, fans came down to the field to take pictures with the NFL players and to get autographs. Not only was Cyprien excited about the turnout of his event, but he was also grateful that his former teammates and other NFL players came out and supported his foundation.

“Football is like a family,” Cyprien said. “We always look out for each other, especially when it’s a good cause for the kids.”

T.Y. Hilton, wide receiver for the Indianapolis Colts and University alumnus, bats for the CYP Squad during the charity softball game held by Johnathan Cyprien.

Photos by Peter Holland / The Beacon

SPORTS

FOOTBALL

WELCOME BACK

FIU alumnus hosts celebrity softball game for charity

“IT was a nice feeling coming out and giving back,” McKinnon said. “I was able to play with Cyprien my freshman year and it felt great to stay in touch and be a part of his event. Both teams made some exciting plays, including Hilton’s one-handed catches and double plays, and Teddy Bridgewater, a quarterback for the Minnesota Vikings, striking out Cyprien as a pitcher. The players were energetic and gave the crowd a show throughout the entire game. It was cool to have the guys at the event,” Cyprien said. “We automatically have a brotherhood coming out of high school in Miami, and we just want to support each other.”

The work that our student-athletes have done in the classroom is outstanding,” Garcia said.

“Football is like a family,” Cyprien said. “We always look out for each other, especially when it’s a good cause for the kids.”

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Photos by Peter Holland / The Beacon
PLANK IT OUT
Budokon club brings ‘warrior spirit’ out of students

KRISTEN KONG
Contributing Writer

Budokon, a fairly new workout craze, combines two essential exercise regimens into one: yoga and mixed martial arts. Its purpose is to work out the body and mind, but also to evoke the “way of the warrior spirit” from each one of its students.

Here at FIU, Budokon began as a club about four years ago and has since amassed a large amount of student participants who enjoy exercising their mind and bodies. Taught by instructors Natasha Nakreja, Joana Ranasinghe and Joana Antunes, each class begins with mild meditation to prepare students for a rigorous workout from the inside out. Ranasinghe finishes the meditation and starts the workout, a combination of yoga poses and mixed martial arts movements.

“Budokon seeks to understand the relationship between different aspects of daily life by integrating the six-pillar system consisting of movement, thought, emotions, relationships, environment and nutrition,” Ranasinghe said. She has been practicing the art form for three years.

The class moves through positions that mirror the way a warrior would indeed move like “Reaching Warrior” and “Warrior’s Bridge.” These positions release an abundance of energy while realigning specific areas of the body, namely the spine.

During the class, Ranasinghe made a mention on the basis of the workout. She said that when the students are doing this workout, control is used, not momentum. Meaning that as long as your body is in control of itself, students can guide themselves into some of the most intricate positions without necessarily straining themselves.

“At first, you feel like ‘I can’t do this,’” Ranasinghe said. “Then you take the class and realize that it’s very demanding in more ways than one.”

Once the students finish their yoga poses, the mixed martial arts element comes into play and Ranasinghe leads the class in a quick burst of punches and kicks that could be helpful in to everyday situations.

“I think the benefit of Budokon is the possibility to incorporate lessons we learn while practicing yoga or martial arts to the daily life and therefore practice Budokon everywhere,” Ranasinghe said.

As the class comes to a close, students are again encouraged to meditate and revitalize their bodies after the hour-long workout. Ranasinghe cleans up the studio with a smile on her face.

“We have to stay together of adversity because it’s going to strike. Jonnu Smith

FOOTBALL
Jonnu Smith confident in football team this season

PETER HOLLAND
Staff Writer

We have to stay together more during the course of adversity because it’s going to strike.

After months of rehab and recovery, Smith believes that his left knee is stronger than ever and he is confident that he can stay healthy throughout the 2016 season. Smith said: “Just like I told everybody, my knee is better than it was once before. I feel faster, stronger and more powerful off that left knee. It feels like I’ve never been injured. I’m just appreciative of the trainer and strength staff for getting me past the point I was before.”

For a second season in a row, Smith has been named to the John Mackey Award Presentation Watch List; this recognition is given annually to the most outstanding collegiate tight end in the nation. He was also named to the Pre-Season Frost Trophy Conference-USA by Athlon Sports Magazine.

Smith is confident that this season FIU is going to witness his best year yet. The senior Panther is also sure that the team will get over the hump, and he’s hopeful that the Panthers will get at least six wins for the first time under Ron Turner and win C-USA.

“You’re going to see the best Jonnu Smith you have ever seen since my freshman year,” Smith said. “I’m more experienced, older, wiser, better, faster, stronger, more confident, you know all the above. I’m excited for this year, and I’ll be going out with a bang.”

The Panthers’ first game will take place on Sept. 1 against Indiana University at the FIU Football Stadium at 7:30 p.m.
The Wellness and Recreation Center at FIU’s Biscayne Bay Campus is offering free tennis instruction to students from beginner to advanced levels. Instructor Tom Fowkes, who has won four national championships, and has coached other tournament players, too, Fowkes decided to teach at FIU because “It gives him a chance to expand his program, and work with college students.” He says he has formed many relationships with the students that attend the program and the faculty and staff at FIU. Fowkes accommodates those on different levels and says “keeping everyone interested is the main idea, and I keep the instruction informative and light so that way everyone can get something out of it.”

“As a student, it’s great that it’s offered to us for free, and what I enjoy the most is Tom’s personality,” William Sturrup, a participant in Fowkes’ program, said. “He is a nurturing, attentive, and motivates students to come out and do their best.”

Sturrup also stated that his technique has improved significantly as well as his endurance. FIU student Remy Miller said: “I really plays attention to detail. For example, he noticed my stance on my serve had to be corrected, which improved a lot through practice with Tom.”

Fowkes is grateful to have formed such a strong relationship with the faculty and staff at the FIU Wellness and Recreation center, particularly with Director Elias Bardawill and Assistant Director Warren Shaw.

The tennis program will take place every Thursday from 6-7 p.m. at the Biscayne Bay Campus and will last until July 28. Fowkes’ passion for tennis is shown through his successful tennis program here at FIU.

Whether you are just starting to play tennis or in need of extra practice time, this program helps students improve their techniques and gives students an opportunity to meet new people who want to learn the game of tennis, too.

New tv deal can put Panthers on the map

New FIU baseball coach Mervyl Melendez said at his press conference that FIU has always been on his radar since he began coaching at the collegiate level. The ex-Alabama State University head coach made it clear that his intention was to “find a new home.”

Melendez said: “This journey started for me many years ago. 20 years ago I became a baseball coach, thinking that one day I would be here. This is one of the few jobs that I looked at if one day could be mine. One day I could be there. One day I can call FIU Home. And the day has arrived.”

The day has indeed arrived, but the journey was no quick one. The 42-year-old was born in Carolina, Puerto Rico, the same birthplace of baseball legend and hall of famer, Roberto Clemente. At the age of 13, Melendez moved to Orlando, Florida, where he attended Lake Howell High School in Winter Park.

The Puerto Rican native spent his playing days at Bethune Cookman, prior to becoming the assistant coach and ultimately the head coach of that program. Melendez spent 12 years as the head coach of the Wildcats and posted a 379-319 record.

After his time at Bethune, it was his tenure at Alabama State that really showed Melendez was one of the most respected young coaches in the nation. With a 158-116 record in his five seasons, Melendez became the third-youngest head coach in Division 1 history to earn his 500th career win.

From the moment Melendez accepted the position as the Panthers’ leading man, he says he understood the responsibility that came with the job. Melendez said: “For me, I take great honor and I take great pride leading this program. I have a responsibility. I have a responsibility to the administration. I have a responsibility to the alumni. I have a responsibility to our players.”

The players currently on the roster at FIU may have enticed Melendez, but there is no question that the hotbed of talent in the area is what truly lured Melendez to South Florida.

“The excitement comes from the players that are in Miami,” Melendez said. “The talent level here is unlimited.”

Melendez says he “has always recruited in this area.” So it comes to no surprise that he would take a job in the area where he has already established a strong recruiting repertoire.

“This is the area we are going to target first,” Melendez said.

He also mentioned at the press conference that he wants to keep talent close to FIU instead of the University of Miami.

“We have to stay home,” Melendez said. “We have players in this area that need to stay in this area, not on the other side of Miami.”

As confident as FIU fans may be in their new signing, there is no denying that competing with the University of Miami and the established Jim Morris for recruits in South Florida will be no easy task.

“You start with the idea that you not only want to be successful, but you want to get to a place that you can call home,” Melendez said.

Hopefully for FIU, Melendez and his family will be calling South Florida home for a while.
Head coach ‘makes it easier for team to balance school and soccer’

ALEJANDRO SOLANA
Staff Writer
alejandro.solana@fiusm.com

Entering his third season as the head coach of the men’s soccer team, Scott Calabrese has brought success to this program in little time, but has also been a mentor off the field for his players.

In only two seasons, Calabrese transformed the Panthers from a middle-of-the-pack conference team to Conference-USA champions and a team now ranked No. 22 in the nation.

Calabrese’s ability to bring the best out of his players on the field isn’t the only thing that stands out to the team.

“One of the most important things that he does that a lot of coaches don’t pay attention to, is more of the off-the-field stuff,” says redshirt freshman midfielder Andrew Booth.

Calabrese, according to Booth, makes it easier for the team to balance training, matches and school - a quality that is “really unique.”

“I’ve never had a coach who is this committed,” Booth said. “Always making sure we sleep the right amount, eat the right things, and keep us hydrated before games, our training regiment is great, so we’re not worried about injury.”

From his days as assistant coach for Clemson and North Carolina, to his days as the head coach at East Tennessee State and FIU, winning seems to follow Calabrese. The Bryant College graduate has had success at every level of the game, and his players take notice of his commitment to the game.

“He’s different than any coach I’ve had. Tactically and as a person,” said defender Juan Benedetty.

The 5-foot-5 senior leftback owes a lot of his success at the collegiate level to Calabrese. Considered undersized by many, Benedetty significantly improved his game over the course of his four years with FIU, and Calabrese was a big part of that, even helping him reach, what he called, his “new prime.”

“I think it’s been great for everyone with Scott being here,” Benedetty said. “On a personal level, last year up until I got injured, he had me playing the best I had ever played. It was like a new prime and obviously Scott has a lot to do with that. He gives me confidence and allows me to play with aggressiveness.”

A goalkeeper in his playing days, Calabrese remembers what it was like being a student-athlete and how difficult it can be balancing sports, school and a job.

“I don’t think it changes, it gets even harder when you get older and have kids and a job,” Calabrese said.

It’s why he focuses so much on being a mentor in all areas of his players’ college life.

Calabrese has watched players, namely Daniel Gonzalez, graduate from FIU and continue their career at the next level. He’s also given us the opportunity to witness Cinderella-like moments with walk-on defensemen Patrick Lopez, a player Calabrese brought in, who scored championship-winning goals.

The first two seasons under Calabrese were successful turnarounds for FIU, and as his third season is underway, there is no reason to believe it won’t continue to be this way for this program.

FIU’s next home game will be played Sept. 17, as the University of Kentucky comes down to Miami for a C-USA battle. Kick-off against the Wildcats will be at 7 p.m.