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Students question Coke's ethics

**CHRISTOPHER NEWLAND
AND MARIA CHERCOLES**
Beacon Staff

The Student Government Association has decided to support a student campaign asking that the University think twice before renewing its contract with Coca-Cola this April.

The campaign – which has been named “Killer Coke” – is spearheaded by the United Students Against Sweatshops. Representatives from the organization say that Coke hasn’t been able to answer certain questions related to its labor practices abroad.

The Coca-Cola Company currently has a 10-year exclusivity contract with FIU under the terms that the contract will open for revision and bidding after its fifth year, which will occur at the end of this semester.

According to USAS, if the contract is terminated in April, FIU will not have to pay any compensation to the company. This is why the campaign is racing against time.

The club alleges that the company has been using more than its fair share of water in India, violating the country’s restrictions on how much can be used. They also say that the company has unfair labor practices in Turkey and the organization even alleges that Coke has hired paramilitary troops in Colombia to murder and scare union leaders.

USAS first presented its case to SGA two weeks ago, and Alfonso “Alfie” Leon, president of the Student Government Council at University Park, agreed to support the club.

USAS member Laura Garcia then gave a presentation at the council’s weekly meeting Feb. 21 and asked council members to volunteer and help conduct an extensive investigation on the company’s practices that will later be presented to University officials.

“The reason we ask SGA for support is because you are elected representatives and the University hears your concerns. It is easier for you to reach high officials [than for the average student],” Garcia said at the meeting.

At the end of the presentation, four SGA members agreed to volunteer in the newly formed committee. However, they preferred to remain anonymous.

According to Pablo Avendano, USAS president, the completed report will be presented to the Faculty Senate.

“FIU does not have the time or the money to conduct this report. Other universities even send people to India to investigate coke’s operations. Since FIU can’t do this, we are asking students to help us conduct the investigation,” Garcia said.

As part of the new committee’s efforts, Leon and Camilo Silva, president of the Student Government Council at the Biscayne Bay Campus, signed and sent a letter to the company’s headquarters, located in Atlanta, Ga, Feb. 21.

The letter invites Coke to send a representative to a public forum at FIU and answer questions on the student’s allegations before the contract opens for revision. The letter also asks that the forum take place sometime in March, preferably March 13 or 14. Leon

HIGH SPIRITS



CHRIS CUTRO/THE BEACON

THE GOOD BUBBLY: A presenter dressed as a Greek nymph serves champagne at the Publix Grand Tasting Village, one of the main attractions at this year’s Food Network Wine & Food Festival. The annual event is partially produced by FIU. More than \$1 million were raised for the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management. **SEE PAGE 2 FOR STORY, PAGE 6 FOR PHOTOS.**

Election date change unconstitutional

MARIA CHERCOLES
Asst. News Director

The Student Government Council at University Park recently moved the date of its annual election without properly notifying students, a decision that, though logistically convenient, violates the student government’s constitution.

The constitution, effective January 2007, dictates under article VII that the annual elections “will be held for two (2) days of the second week following Spring Break,” usually the third week of March.

This means the elections should be taking place April 4 and 5, the second week after Spring Break.

However, there has been a change in the date: this year’s elections will be held April 10 and 11, the third week after Spring Break.

Charlie Andrews, director of Campus Life, said that he specifically requested the postponement because the Campus Life staff will be attending a conference in Orlando during the original election dates. This staff supervises the election polls every year.

“We just didn’t see [moving the elections] as being such a major thing,” Andrews said. “We thought that most of the student body wouldn’t notice the change.”

Kathryn Cubbon, a member of SGC-UP’s judicial board, agreed with Andrews.

“Students don’t really care about when the elections are held,” Cubbon said.

However, according to professor of law Elizabeth Price Foley, who specializes in constitutional law, that is not the main issue.

“The two main things to look at are due process and opportunity to be heard,” she said.

Whether or not they think students really care, changing the election date without a proper notice, election, or public hearing

approved to move the elections.

When asked about not informing students about the change, Andrews acknowledged that there hasn’t been any public hearing, but added that he did talk to the students “most likely to run on the elections or to vote,” and that they did not have a problem with the change.

Leon said that in fact, there was a University-wide council meeting in which the issue was brought up and no one raised concerns, yet he couldn’t specify the date of the meeting.

Judene Tulloch, a member of the elections board, did not mention the University council meeting, but said that the decision was in fact announced during an SGA general meeting, and that this sufficed the requirement to make a public announcement.

“General meetings are considered public announcements. They are open to the public,” Tulloch said.

Despite the fact that the last meeting minutes posted on the SGA website date June 21, 2006, Tulloch referred to them as a communication channel between SGA and the students.

“We have minutes from every meeting. Anyone with questions is free to ask for them, but we can’t announce to our students every time we change a [letter from] lower case [to] upper case,” Tulloch said.

“Judene Tulloch, Student Government Council - UP Elections Board chair
We have minutes from every meeting. Anyone with questions is free to ask for them, but we can’t announce to our students every time we change a [letter from] lower case [to] upper

skips some formal steps, depriving some students of their right to be heard and to vote, Foley said.

According to the student government constitution, any decisions infringing with the law require a general election. SGC-UP not only changed the date without consulting its constituents, but it did not inform them of the decision.

Andrews took responsibility for the issue, saying that the students did show concerns about the constitution infringement.

“I understand you are trying to make us follow the process, but we also have to be flexible,” Andrews said.

According to SGC-UP President Alfonso “Alfie” Leon, after Andrews requested the change, the council voted on the issue and

NEWSFLASH

FIU

FIU to receive \$1 million for ethanol research

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection will award FIU's Applied Research Center and Florida Crystals Corporation a \$1 million grant to develop cellulosic ethanol technology under the Florida Renewable Energy Technologies Grant Program.

The announcement was made Feb. 22.

The grant money will be used to investigate a pretreatment process that can cost-effectively convert sugarcane byproducts (known as bagasse) to ethanol.

The study will determine the feasibility of using Florida bagasse as a feedstock for a future large-scale bioenergy plant in Florida.

The grant will be matched by FCC, the largest sugar producer in the United States.

According to the release, the project's aim is to commercialize ethanol production from biomass and will mark the first time a major company and a university jointly pilot development to take cellulosic ethanol to full commercial scale.

FIU's hurricane center partners up with WeatherPredict

FIU's International Hurricane Research Center and WeatherPredict Consulting Inc., a company that provides customized weather forecasting technology, announced Feb. 22 that they will jointly develop The RenaissanceRe Wall of Wind.

The weather wall is being officially named after RenaissanceRe Holdings Ltd., a global provider of reinsurance and insurance and a United States affiliate of WeatherPredict but has been dubbed the "WOW".

The "WOW" will replicate Category 4 hurricane conditions with 130-140 mph winds and rain in a laboratory environment. Powered by a racecar engine with 502 horsepower, the RenaissanceRe Wall of Wind consists of six rotating propellers inside 7 ft round aluminum ducts. Wall-mounted and freestanding wind-driven rain gauges will measure vertical and horizontal rainfall intensities.

The WOW was tested on a home in Sweetwater several months ago and the testing facility is slated to be completed late this summer.

LOCAL

Gov. Crist tackles first "To do" list

Gov. Charlie Crist goes into his first regular legislative session with a long "To do" list and complexities his predecessor, Gov. Jeb Bush, didn't face during his time in office.

Crist has promised to lower property tax rates, while homeowners insurance is still on his mind. Additionally, he has to pay for constitutionally required class size limits at a time when the budget has reached a plateau.

At the top of the list of the bills he wants passed is the anti-murder bill, which strives to keep violent felons who violate probation behind bars.

Crist also wants to give the state's best teachers a 10 percent raise, make sure that there's a paper trail for every vote and create permanent legislation for sales tax holidays for school and hurricane supplies.

— Compiled by Betsy Martinez and Yesenia Forte from Beacon staff and wire reports

Patrons party at annual food fest

C. JOEL MARINO
Editor in Chief

Christina Santiago rubbed her head and gave exasperated smiles as she helped herd the mostly drunk crowd out of the Food Network South Beach Wine & Food Festival's main tent Feb. 24.

Though the FIU student — a senior studying in the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management — had spent most of the day in a kitchen preparing pecan sandwiches, she decided to finish off that day's volunteer hours by making sure her patrons got home safely.

"I've got a headache and I'm beyond tired, but all this was worth the experience," Santiago said. "I'd definitely help again next year."

Many FIU students like Santiago volunteered at this year's festival, an annual celebration of all things culinary produced by the University and Southern Wine & Spirits of Florida and sponsored by the Food Network, *Food and Wine Magazine* and a dozen others.

Several events made up the four-day long bacchanal, including a burger exhibition hosted by celebrity chef Rachel Ray and a barbecue party held at the Delano Hotel in South Beach.

However, the main attraction was the Publix Grand Tasting Village, a row of tents set up near the ocean where 95

restaurants and 61 exhibitors displayed their wares.

"I came here expecting the best food and I wasn't disappointed," said John Garcia, an FIU alumnus and a current business consultant for the University.

Garcia wore a wine glass suspended by a red cord around his neck, a souvenir provided to guests by the festival. He was quick to point out that the glass wasn't there just for decoration.

"The wine has been incredible, probably one of the reasons why I come here year after year," he said with a laugh.

Cooks, marketers and volunteers had from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. to hawk their goods. Guests were able to sample meals ranging from the common — such as macaroni and cheese or shish kebabs — to more unusual fare such as strawberry gazpacho or ice cream soaked in vinegar.

Student chefs also had a chance to represent FIU at their own tent, serving venison and lemon meringue cookies.

"We've served a lot of people today, so we're exhausted," said junior Alisa Marduriet. Although the hospitality student was happy that the volunteer work would count as credit in her advanced cooking class, the tent's manager, professor Roger Probst, sharply disagreed with that attitude.

"This experience is to help them get

jobs. Credits don't do a damn thing. Their parents care that they get top paying work after they graduate, not credits," Probst sternly said. The professor is one of the school's head chefs and has been working with the festival since its inception.

An excess of \$1 million were raised for the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, according to Patrick Jong, a festival spokesman.

This year, a tour of the Grand Tasting Village cost \$137.50 per ticket, according to the festival's website. Prices for other events ranged from \$77.50 for the Food Network Awards held Feb. 23 to \$300 for the BubbleQ barbecue party held that same night.

Susan Johnson, a wedding planner visiting from Kentucky, was happy she came to the event despite the prices.

"The planners have really made this event accessible, and it's so nice to see the Food Network stars," Johnson said as she milled around a cheese-tasting table.

Like other guests, though, she admitted that her biggest incentive for coming was the food.

"There's such a diversity of food, I can't decide what I like the best. But I can't deny that I'm a shrimp girl," she said as she nibbled a piece of provolone and smiled.

TRAVELING ART



GAUDRY PUECHAY/THE BEACON

MUSEUM ON WHEELS: Juniors Britney McCoy and Judith Acosta, both majoring in sociology, observe some pictures belonging to the exhibit "Sankofa", showing in University Park's Graham Center Feb. 26 as part of Diversity Week. The exhibition, consisting of various African-American objects, has travelled the nation.

Memorization no longer a big part of new GRE

CHRISTINA VEIGA
Contributing Writer

February has passed and graduation is now only two months away for many. However, recent changes to the Graduate Record Examinations, a requirement for all students considering post-graduate degrees, may make their academic lives somewhat more difficult.

The Educational Testing Services, which makes the GRE, announced Feb. 8 that the exam would change its format, a decision that might drive students to take the exam before planned, while they can take the old version.

"The level of difficulty probably will not change but the emphasis will. Memorization will play a much smaller role in the new test," said Stephan Mintz, interim dean for the University Graduate School.

So what are these changes?

The new Verbal Reasoning Section will place more importance on verbal reasoning and reading comprehension. A possible question may look something like this: "Cynics believe that people who _____ compliments do so in order to be praised twice." Students will select the answer from six possible choices.

Another change to the test is that word

analogies and antonyms will disappear, Mintz said. Students can also expect new question formats in addition to multiple choices, such as highlighting an important sentence in a passage.

The new Quantitative Reasoning section will focus less on geometry and more on real life applications.

New question formats will also be applied to the Quantitative Reasoning section, such as fill-in the blank questions.

The new Quantitative Reasoning section will look something like this: "The total amount of Judy's water bill for the last quarter

of the year was \$40.50. The bill consisted of a fixed charge of \$13.50 plus a charge of \$0.0075 per gallon for the water used in the quarter. For how many gallons of water was Judy charged for the quarter?" The student will be asked to type in the answer on the test screen.

The Analytical Writing section has been renamed Critical Thinking and Analytical Writing. This section will test student's ability to express themselves clearly and effectively while eliminating the possible use of memorized skills to respond to prompts.

GRE makeover to affect grad students

GRE, page 2

The essays will now ask students to take positions on given statements, then defend them while considering the ways in which the statement might or might not be true.

"The new test will measure skills more directly related to graduate study", Mintz said.

But there is still some good news about the changes: an on-screen calculator will now be made available.

ETS hopes that the revised GRE will have clearer scores, which will lead to improved prediction of future success in graduate school. The new test will be safer and more "test-taker friendly," according to the ETS's website.

ETS also announced important changes to dates the exam will be administered.

The last day to take the current version of the test is July 31, with only limited registration. Perhaps more problematic is the fact that the exam will no longer be offered in August.

According to the ETS's website, registration has been limited to ensure ample time for the transition from the old to the new version of the test, and to guarantee that the population taking the new test will be representative to

calculate the new score scales.

To study for the new test, ETS offers free preparation materials on their website.

However, Mintz advises that practicing won't guarantee a perfect score.

"Some practice is always useful but success will reflect what a student has learned over a lifetime," Mintz said.

Instead of year-round continuous testing, the new test will be given approximately 35 times a year worldwide. The number of testing dates in each region will depend on each region's test volume.

For those planning to attend FIU's graduate school, FIU will be hosting a Graduate Open House March 3 in the Graham Center Ballrooms at 10 a.m.

The event will begin with a general information session highlighting what to expect from FIU's Graduate School, according to Nanett Rojas, Graduate School coordinator.

After the information session, students will have the chance to meet with representatives from various departments.

For more information on the GRE, go to www.ets.org/gre. For more information on FIU's Graduate Open House visit <http://grad-school.fiu.edu/>.

SGA ignores process

ELECTIONS, page 1

Foley believes that notifying the student body of changes like this one, which could lead to dishonest practices, is still necessary.

According to Foley, it's not a matter of whether the issue is that important or not, but rather of how serious student government takes its constitution.

When compared to the U.S. constitution, the SGA constitution might not seem as formal or as important, yet it is the document by which the University's student government abides, she said.

"If you are going to take politics seriously, abide by the plain text," Foley said. "If our president violated the U.S. constitution under the same terms, it would obviously raise con-

cerns. That's just not a good signal."

Another, more serious question is whether disregarding the constitution for this issue could lead to other, more serious infringements.

"Leaders who disregard regulations are leaders you have to keep in mind, because they'll do it again ... It applies to any president," Foley said.

The election date has never been moved before, said Andrews, who mentioned that the issue opened conversations about the strictness of the constitution, and whether there should be a clause allowing date changes in case of emergencies.

Leon agreed, saying that a new SGA constitution with a clause about the election dates will be approved soon.

Coke's ethics questioned

COKE, page 1

explained during the SGA meeting that the report should be completed before the bidding begins because only financial questions and advantages will be discussed during the meeting, so it is up to the students to question the company's practices. FIU is not the first university to question Coke's operations abroad. The University of Michigan has suspended all Coke sales on its campus until a third party confirms that Coke has had no involvement in questionable practices.

According to a fact sheet sent to The Beacon by Kirsten Witt, a Coca-Cola representative, the company has conducted business with Colombia for 70 years.

"For as long as we've been in Colombia, Coca-Cola has supported programs that aid children, promote education, and bring relief to victims of the country's ongoing conflict," the document said. "Earlier this year, we provided \$10 million to start the Colombian Foundation for Education and Opportunity, an organization that addresses the needs of victims of violence."

The document also says that judicial inquiries performed in a Colombian court and

another by the Colombian Attorney General found a lack of evidence to support allegations that bottler managements intimidated trade unionists.

"Over the past several decades, Colombia has experience much internal conflict, which affects trade union leaders in many industries and other people from all walks of life. Despite the volatile environment, the Coca-Cola Company and its bottlers have maintained operations and have worked to provide safe, stable economic opportunities for the people of Colombia," one of the document's bullet points said.

It also made clear that products manufactured in Colombia are meant for consumption in that country and are not exported to the U.S.

To read the complete letter sent to the Coca-Cola Company, go to www.beacon-newspaper.com.

For more information on the committee, contact SGA at the Graham Center, room 211.

For information on the Coca-Cola's foreign policy, visit cokefacts.com

-Additional reporting by C. Joel Marino, *Beacon staff*

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NEWS NEEDS YOU!

Stop by GC 210 or WUC 124 and fill out an application

Sharpton promises students he'll visit shantytown

JOSEPHINE BRILLANTE
Contributing Writer

Civil Rights leader Reverend Al Sharpton – the self-proclaimed “racial activist against injustice” and former Democratic presidential candidate – was a guest speaker at this year’s Black Student Union Conference. His lecture featured points about avoiding youth apathy and increasing student activism.

The Conference took place Feb. 23 in the Kovens Conference Center located in the Biscayne Bay Campus.

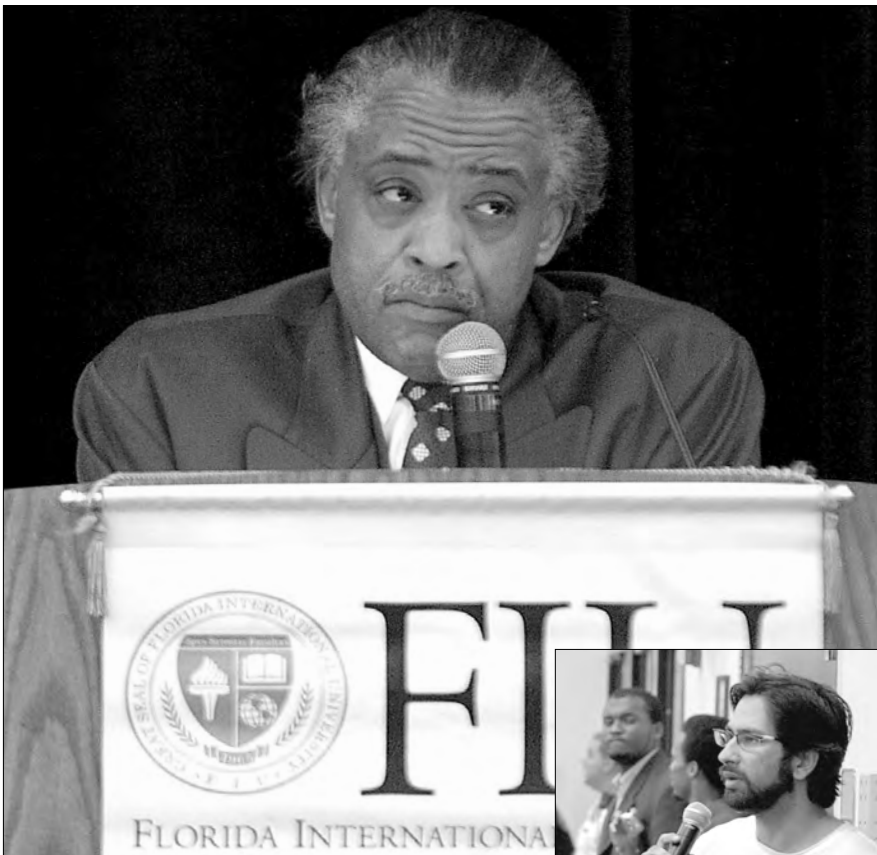
As Sharpton put it, his purpose for being there was to empower his audience and ignite passion to them to fight for their beliefs.

Despite Sharpton’s often controversial past, students and faculty in attendance were excited to have the opportunity to hear Sharpton as he urged them to take action against any kind of injustice they might experience.

“In the last several years, I have found [Sharpton] to become more mature, thoughtful, conscientious and deliberate,” professor Ronn Silverstein of the English department said.

During the last few minutes of Sharpton’s speech, FIU student activists with Take Back the Land confronted the speaker.

The group has been protesting the government’s denial to provide low-income housing to homeless



PHOTOS BY CHRIS CUTRO/THE BEACON

residents in Liberty City. Many of these residents have been forced to live in a shantytown known as Umoja Village.

The students said Sharpton spoke with them over his radio station, promising to come to Umoja Village himself, and support them in their cause.

“When there are fights like these, we would hope black leaders would help,” Muhammed Malik, president of Act Now to Stop

War and End Racism, said.

Sharpton apologized for being pre-occupied and agreed to eventually stop by the village.

He finally made it Feb. 27, when he promised to sleep at the village if nothing is done to fix the problems and vowed to donate \$1,000 to the community.

According to Sharpton, count-

ACTIVISTS: Reverend Al Sharpton (left) discusses the role of individuals in changing the world during a conference held Feb. 23 at the Kovens Conference Center. Student activists Muhammed Malik (bottom left) and Chris Daley (bottom right) ask questions during the event.



less individuals see themselves powerless to implement change in the world. He spoke about combating apathy, emphasizing that progress can only be made when people stand up for what they believe.

“Rather than just observe black history, you need to stand up and

make black history,” he said. Sharpton communicated that simply accepting how society portrays African-Americans in the United States stunts the advancement of equality.

“Acting like blacks is synonymous to hoodlums and thugs. This is counter-productive to black history,” Sharpton said.

“It’s bad to be down. It’s worse to glorify being down. A lot of what we see is people glorifying this through their culture.”

He offered statistics to validate the disparity between African-Americans and other races. While African-Americans make up 13 percent of the country’s population, they make up 50 percent of the prison population today.

He insisted that the power of a few is strong enough to create change.

“Even if you’re not responsible for being down, you’re responsible for getting up,” Sharpton said. “The legacy of our people is that no matter how far down we are, we always find a way up.”

Sophomore John Wilson was proud that Sharpton had been asked to visit FIU.

“Despite [Sharpton’s] controversial history, in the end, he walked with Martin Luther King Jr. As much as you could criticize him, he has made his mark on the world.”

-Additional reporting by Charlie Grau

Event sheds new light on hip-hop

SILVIA LORENZO
Contributing Writer

Students and the North Miami community crowded together for the beginning of a weekend-long event Feb. 23 in order to reclaim hip hop’s identity and celebrate its African roots.

The Fourth Annual Organic Hip-Hop Symposium, which brought an estimated 250 people to the Biscayne Bay Campus, featured local lyricists, spoken-word and graffiti artists, break-dancers and a keynote speaker.

The highlighted theme for this year’s symposium was a more natural approach to living and the arts. The African New World Studies and the Urban American Newspaper, which promotes mostly independent hip hop artists and businesses, sponsored the symposium.

The event provided “organic music and discussions that do not receive popular media attention,” according to Tony Muhammed, the owner of UAN and a FIU alumnus, who organizes the event each year.

“This event is for the community. We bridge gaps between students, professionals and generations,” he said.

Muhammed said the event was supposed to present “an international perspective of hip hop and create a place where like-minded people can network and strengthen the community.”

According to rapper KRS-One, who

“The diet of an average FIU student is horrible. There needs to be a balance. Regular hip hop isn’t promoting anything wonderful.”

had been a speaker at a previous hip hop conference held at BBC, the symposium was important because the genre is more than just a “collection of music and dance products.”

“[It’s] the collective consciousness of a real community,” the rapper said.

The origins of hip hop were also explored. This included graffiti art and break dancing as part of its culture.

According to the book, *The Vibe History of Hip Hop*, early hip hop artists used music to voice socially conscious issues and promote social progress and political action instead of the violence and misogyny that the commercialized form of hip hop music is now seen to promote.

The symposium began with the serving of a vegetarian meal, which stressed this year’s theme of an organic approach to living.

“We live in a junk food culture. My goal is to present an alternative to the junk food we are fed in popular culture,” Muhammed said.

Llaila Afrika, the keynote speaker, spoke about how important artistic expression and an organic diet are to physical health and social progress.

“Anything you put in your body that is denatured will denature you,” Afrika said. She also emphasized the need to “take any step necessary to clean your body, mind and spirit of pollutants.”

Cassandra Roache, the Health and Wellness Center’s senior health educator, agreed with Afrika. Roache, who confronts students’ health concerns every day, was pleased that the symposium promoted a healthier diet and socially conscious issues.

“The diet of an average FIU student is horrible. There needs to be a balance. Regular hip hop isn’t promoting anything wonderful,” Roache said.

The night ended with local lyricists Lox, INF7, Ephnik, Orion and Name Brand, who all rhymed over beats provided by DJ Esoteric and DJ Frantik.

Local music group Fusik played a fusion of hip hop, funk, jazz and Latin musical elements.

Felix, the drummer of Fusik, is an FIU student majoring in music. He said he enjoyed performing at BBC because “independent artists get a chance to meet with people that we normally wouldn’t get a chance to meet in a club or typical venue.”

NEWSFLASH

Health expo offers free health screenings

The Wellness Center will help the Biscayne Bay Campus community “Journey Through Wellness” during the two days of the Wellness Expo 2007.

The event will be held March 13 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. in Academic I. The second day of the expo will take place from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. March 14 at the Wolfe University Center. Free health screenings and prizes will be available, among other things.

For more information, call 305-919-5620, ext. 4.

Play at BBC explores church issues

The Limited Edition Steppers and the Black Student Union present the play *Devil’s in God’s House* which will feature an all-star cast. The play discusses controversial events that occur in churches.

The play will take place March 1 at 8 p.m. at the Mary Ann Wolfe Theater. Tickets for students and the general public are \$5 in advance or \$7 at the door.

To purchase tickets or meet the cast, call 786-443-2540.

Chance to address BBC events at forum

On Mar. 1, a BBC Student Forum will be held for all students to give their input on what they feel about BBC and the events happening around the campus. Commuter students will be able to give their input from 12:45 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the BBC cafeteria. The forum for residential students will take place from 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. in the Housing Community Room.

-Compiled by Ana Davis and Nicole Acosta

OPINION

C. Joel Marino Editor in Chief • Christopher Necuze Production Manager • Chris Cabral Opinion Editor

MAIDIQUE DOES THE TIME WARP

President's ploy to age FIU good for University

FIU is an institution with the potential to be among the top universities in the state, perhaps one of the top public institutions in the whole country.

The only thing that will expedite the process of academic recognition and widespread prestige is time.

That is exactly what University President Modesto

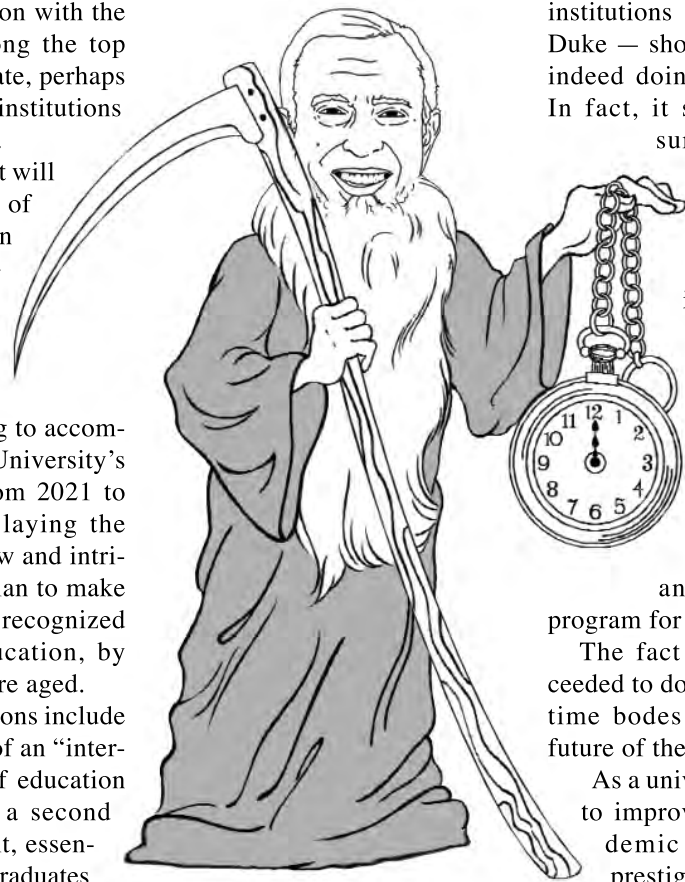
A. Maidique is trying to accomplish by moving the University's 50th anniversary from 2021 to 2015. Maidique is laying the groundwork for a new and intricately coordinated plan to make FIU a more widely recognized name in public education, by making it appear more aged.

Maidique's ambitions include the implementation of an "international" program of education that would include a second language requirement, essentially preparing FIU graduates for the increasingly diverse society that will surely emerge with time.

This unique brand of curriculum would mesh well with the diverse settings of the University Park campus, and the city of Miami, collectively.

While it would appear that Maidique is making the university's upcoming milestones — such as the completion of the FIU College of Medicine and College of Law — seem more delayed, FIU is still on par with some of the top universities in the country in terms of the amount of time it took for such graduate programs to emerge.

Take for instance Duke Uni-



JON ROBERTS/THE BEACON

institutions — such as FIU and Duke — shows that Maidique is indeed doing something right. In fact, it shows that FIU is surely on its way to national recognition.

The University of Florida, which is the most recognized university in the state, public or private, and one of the most reputable public schools in the nation, did not have a school of law for 57 years, and had no medical program for a whole century.

The fact that FIU has succeeded to do so much in so little time bodes very well for the future of the University.

As a university ages, it tends to improve in terms of academic achievement and prestige.

Maidique is clearly trying to hasten this natural process, and transform FIU into a more selective institution than it has been in the past, one that can be recognized for a diverse, yet academically talented student body.

This will attract a new crop of highly motivated students and enable other cutting edge graduate programs to be constructed in the coming years.

Maidique's vision for a curriculum that embraces the linguistic diversity of contemporary American society adequately prepares future FIU graduates for professional careers in an increasingly competitive world.

versity: this institution attained considerable prestige in a remarkably short period of time. It was founded in 1892, and little over a century later, it is recognized as the "Harvard of the South."

It took Duke University 32 years to establish its school of law, and 38 years to establish its graduate program in medicine.

Compare this to FIU, which had a graduate program in law within the first 37 years of its existence, and a medical program within 41 years.

The fact that one can even render some sort of comparison between two entirely disparate

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Athletes criticized for being hurtful, not opinionated

This is in response to Xavier Villarmarzo's article titled "Athletes afraid to speak up on tough issues." There's a difference between being opinionated and being a bigot or a fool. It is not the opinions that we condemn, it is the stupidity behind them.

Tim Hardaway's comments were ignorant. He wasn't speaking up on a tough issue; he was being hateful. What tough issues have Terrell Owens and Randy Moss spoken up on? Jeff Garcia's sexuality? Touchdown celebrations?

These players' antics are disrespectful and offensive, that's why the players are seen as troublemakers.

On the other hand, Chad Johnson is just as candid as

Owens and Moss, and he isn't vilified. Why? Because he expresses his opinions without being spiteful.

Same goes for Charles Barkley. The Hall of Famer has made a second career out of being opinionated during TNT's NBA coverage.

Not only is he not disliked for it, he is more popular now than ever.

Athletes are not condemned for being opinionated; ignorant and hateful athletes are criticized for embarrassing their sports.

Michael Jordan is the most marketable athlete ever, and likely the greatest one. If he opened his mouth and voiced his opinions in a civilized manner, it wouldn't tarnish his image.

Moreover, saying Ali is cheered

these days because he keeps his mouth shut is nothing short of an insult. He is adored for being the living legend that he is. Granted, this man received a lot of criticism for his anti-war behavior in the 1960s, but times have changed.

If Ali came out today and spoke up against the war in Iraq, no one would condemn him.

America recognizes what Ali did for boxing, the sporting world and society itself.

We want athletes to be honest, not hurtful.

Ivan R. Irizarry
Journalism
Senior

THE BEACON | Editorial

Big or small, constitutional violations should be monitored

The recent decision made by the Student Government Association to change the date of elections is an inherently controversial one.

The Campus Life staff is attending a conference in Orlando during the second week after spring break when elections are normally held. As a result, SGA moved the date of the elections to a week later. Though an understandable decision, this action was in direct conflict with the SGA constitution, which mandates that elections be held in the second week after Spring break every year. According to SGA, the decision was announced at one of the organization's meetings, which are open to the public but are rarely attended by students. Yet SGA felt this was all that was needed to inform the university community.

That this decision is unconstitutional is a certainty; however, those who defend the decision claim that it is only a minor infraction.

It is not the role of this publication to decide the gravity of such a violation. Any decision made by SGA cannot be left unnoticed, especially when the choices made involve ignoring the rules under which they are supposed to govern.

If one rule is allowed to be broken without so much as a sign of protest, it may not be long before the next rule is broken.

What's most troubling about these developments is the lack of effort put forth by those in charge of SGA to inform and explain the changes made to the schedule.

SGC-UP President Alfonso "Alfie" Leon has stressed the importance of procedural flexibility, and indeed there is nothing inherently wrong with a small change being made.

However, when it concerns an important date, SGA should do its best to make sure everyone learns of the change. Mentioning it briefly at a sparsely attended meeting is not enough.

Students must be informed of the decisions made by their leaders, and when those leaders fail to adequately adhere to the rules meant to maintain order, we must work even harder to inform those they represent.

When they attempt to make controversial decisions quietly, we must work to call attention to them all the more. The attempt to cloak these actions in silence is cause for alarm in and of itself. Sound decisions made by government officials are seldom made quietly and announced with a whisper. Generally, such procedures are reserved only for the truly questionable ones.

We will continue to do our best to report the facts, reveal the truth, and uncover the secrets of those who govern, no matter how big or small the case may be.

Beacon employees must be held responsible by our readers when we violate the tenets of accurate reporting; yet the burdens of integrity and accountability should not only be the concern of journalists.

SGA should expect us to withstand intense public scrutiny, and they should be held to the same standard as well.

HAVE AN OPINION? WE NEED YOU!

Come to GC 210, WVC 124 and fill out an application... NOW!

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Letters to the Editor must be dropped off at GC 210 at University Park, WVC 124 at the Biscayne Bay Campus or sent to beaconopinion@yahoo.com. Letters must adhere to a maximum of 300 words. Letters must include the writer's full name, year in school, major/department and a valid phone number for verification purposes. *The Beacon* reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and/or spacing constraints.



WINE & DINE

FOODIES, VENDORS MEET AND GREET AT SOUTH BEACH FOOD AND WINE FESTIVAL



BAKING IN THE SUN: The Food Network South Beach Wine and Food Festival attracted more than 90 vendors and 10,000 guests over the weekend of Feb. 23-25. (Top left) Local vendors, such as Eric Lopez of Evaton Inc., pour visitors a taste of their products. (Bottom center) Live food demonstrations by chefs, such as Ian's Tropical Grill's Eric Gruka, heated things up on the sands along Ocean Drive. (Bottom left) FIU students, such as Pamela Sinclair, were on site to guide patrons through the events.

Dance Marathon helps raise funds for children's hospital

GEOFFREY ANDERSON JR.
Asst. Life! Editor

For a third consecutive year, sophomore Daniel Estevez is doing it for the kids.

Estevez will once again take part in Dance Marathon 2007, a two-day event where students and non-students stay on their feet and dance for 25 consecutive hours to raise funds for the Miami Children's Hospital Foundation and the Children's Miracle Network.

"It's an opportunity to raise money for kids and families who need medical care but are otherwise unable to pay for it," said Charlene Collazo, the event's assistant director of communica-

tions.

Dance Marathon 2007, which is celebrating its 10-year anniversary, will take place in the Pharmed Arena, beginning at noon on Saturday, March 3, and finishing at 1 p.m. on Sunday, March 4. The theme is DM-TV, a reflection of the importance that music has played in the event's history.

"Since Dance Marathon is all about music, we felt that an MTV-inspired theme would be perfect for our special tenth anniversary," said Leah Dunleavy, executive director of DM 2007, in a press release.

Although participants will spend the majority of their time dancing, there is an array of other activities intended to keep them awake

and standing. Performances by the Miami Heat Dancers and the Marlins Mermaids as well as a silent auction are scheduled for the big weekend. Marathoners won't starve, either - Natural Chicken Grill, Pasta Factory and Einstein Bros. are providing food.

The marathon first started in 1973 at Penn State University, where the event raised more than \$2,000 for the Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children. FIU's Dance Marathon was established in 1997 and has since raised more than \$278,000 for the Miami Children's Hospital Foundation.

According to Collazo, last year's marathon raised more than \$80,000. This year, the goal is \$100,000. To

“It's an opportunity to raise money for kids and families who need medical care but are otherwise unable to pay for it.”

— Charlene Collazo

help reach that goal, participants are required to raise a certain amount of money prior to the event; the amount is dependent on the role they want to play.

A Dancer, someone who stays on his or her feet the entire 25 hours, needs to raise \$150.

A Morale Assistant, someone who attends for 13 hours and helps keep the dancers motivated, has to

raise \$200. A Dancer Team, composed of a minimum of five dancers, needs a minimum of \$700.

Junior Alejandra Maruri, who has to raise a minimum of \$425 as a Morale Captain this year, used a series of methods to earn enough funds for her goal.

DANCE MARATHON, page 8

Celebrity woes cause personal destruction and media frenzy



TRIVIAL PURSUIT

a pop culture column

Reuben Pereira

As I stood in line at a local Publix deli last weekend, my gaze strayed from my ever-increasing bill to the rack of magazines neatly organized on the shelves next to the conveyer belt. It seemed to me that despite more important things like the state of the world and, to me, the Oscars, America's mind was on two celebrities - Britney Spears and the late Anna Nicole Smith. Poor Anna Nicole - they say 'till

death do us part,' but not even death can separate Smith and the press.

Moving on to Spears - at the rate she's going, she might end up somewhere along the lines of Smith herself, unless she decides to wake up. How low do you have to stoop to when even Kevin Federline starts to give you advice on how to live your life?

Just in case you spent the last two weeks in a jungle in Cambodia with Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie, here's the story so far: After a string of strange and bizarre behavior culminating in a head shaving incident, Spears checked herself into rehab ... and then out ... and then back in, much to the pleasure of the media and to the dismay of her family and publicist.

For me, this wasn't much of a surprise considering her behavior has gone from bad to worse in the past few months and, not to mention, we've seen this story a million times before.

When you ask yourself why so many celebrities tend to get into the problems they go through, the answer is easy - the pressure of living up to their own image. You can call me out on that and say that they create their problems for the sake of publicity. After all, there's no such thing as bad publicity, right? Maybe so, but even celebrities are not dumb enough to call what Spears, Mel Gibson or even Tom Cruise did: publicity stunts.

So who's to blame? It's everyone: the media, the public and the celebrity. It

sucks, but that's how the ball rolls. We feed the media's garbage by buying the tabloids and related magazines. It's our obsession. Since we can't be like the celebrities we crave, we want to know everything there is about them - what they wear, where they go, what soap they use or how many times a day they take a shower. They're like toys: in the beginning we can't get enough of them, but once we're bored with them, we get sick of them and wait for that opportune moment to get rid of them, all in favor of the new starlet in town.

Some celebrities recover from their

TRIVIAL PURSUIT, page 8

Exercising our Respect for the Environment

Storm Water MATTERS

Why it Matters...

Stormwater picks up debris, chemicals, soil and various surface pollutants as it flows. Stormwater eventually flows directly to lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, or coastal areas. The economic impact of polluted Stormwater extends to the fishing, tourism, and recreational industries.

- ◆ Stormwater is not treated before it empties into our rivers and lakes and can add harmful bacteria, parasites and viruses to our water.
- ◆ Vehicles drip fluids (oil, grease, gasoline, antifreeze, brake fluids, etc.) onto paved areas, only to be carried away by Stormwater runoff into storm drains and into our water.
- ◆ Chemicals used to support growth and maintain beautiful lawns and gardens, if not used properly, will run off into the storm drains when it rains or when we water our lawns and gardens.
- ◆ Waste from chemicals and materials used in construction can wash into the storm sewer system when it rains.

What can you do...

- ◆ Properly dispose of hazardous substances such as oil, cleaning supplies and paint.
- ◆ Never pour hazardous chemicals down the sink. Report anyone who does to your PI or supervisor.
- ◆ Use pesticides, fertilizers, and herbicides properly, responsibly and efficiently to prevent excess runoff.
- ◆ Look for signs of pollution such as debris and chemicals being washed from construction sites.
- ◆ Report poorly managed construction sites where there is evidence of practices that could cause Stormwater pollution.
- ◆ Pick up after your pets and dispose of their waste properly.
- ◆ Store materials that could pollute Stormwater indoors. Use outdoor storage containers that do not rust and which are unlikely to leak.

Risk Management & Environmental Health & Safety
Florida International University
Phone: (305) 348-2621
Fax: (305) 348-3574
Email: ehs@fiu.edu

Fundraiser celebrates 10-year anniversary

DANCE MARATHON, page 7

"I went out canning on the streets to ask drivers for donations and wrote letters to different companies," she said.

Maruri also has the duty of Morale Captain, which entails boosting participants' morale throughout the event. Maruri, who was a dancer last year, remembers how she felt during her experience at DM 2006.

"You start feeling the worst around 4 a.m. and 5 a.m. - you're so tired," she said.

Nevertheless, Maruri said that the marathon's line dance kept her motivated.

The line dance, which has become a staple, is a dance that is learned in parts throughout the 25

hours. Last year's dance included snippets from the "Saved by the Bell" theme song, the Black Eyed Peas, and Guns N' Roses.

Estevez, who is part of the DM 2007 Steering Committee and was both a Dancer and a Morale Captain in previous years, is particularly touched by the ending ceremonies.

"It's an amazing feeling that you get in the end when it's over - the feeling that you were a part of something bigger than yourself and helped so many people."

Students can pick up Dancer and Morale Assistant applications in GC 2210 at the Center for Leadership and Service and are able to register until the day of the event.

Tabloid sales reflect star obsession

TRIVIAL PURSUIT, page 7

meltdowns. Drew Barrymore and Robert Downey Jr. are prime examples of actors who have made impressive comebacks. Some don't (Anne Heche, anyone?). Some of them even pay for their fame with their very lives - Elvis, Kurt Cobain, Marilyn Monroe and even Anna Nicole Smith.

For Tom Cruise and Mel Gibson, two of the biggest stars of the '80s and '90s, the verdict is still out. Despite their insane mannerisms and actions in the past three years, Cruise continues to be a Hollywood power with his films continuously being accepted by critics and audiences despite his persona. Gibson came out on top after *The Passion of the Christ* became one of the

“ Since we can't be like the celebrities we crave, we want to know everything there is about them... ”

highest grossing films of all time and *Apocalypto* opened to critical praise.

Anna Nicole Smith leaves behind a baby, four prospective fathers and the continuous battle over her late husband's estate. As for Spears, every passing day is a worry for her family and an obsession for the public; only time can tell what direction her future will take. Every star fades, but in the case of celebrities, overexposure leads to self-destruction.

WEEKEND

THURSDAY • MARCH 1

WHAT: Dance Marathon Lip Sync Competition
WHEN: 8 p.m.
WHERE: GC Ballrooms (UP)
HOW MUCH: Free

WHAT: On-Point Poetry - Poetry Night
WHEN: 5 p.m.
WHERE: WUC Ballrooms (BBC)
HOW MUCH: Free

FRIDAY • MARCH 2

WHAT: SPC Film - *The Last King of Scotland*
WHEN: 7 p.m. and 10 p.m.
WHERE: GC 140 (UP)
HOW MUCH: Free

WHAT: Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*
WHEN: 8 p.m.
WHERE: Wertheim Performing Arts Center Concert Hall (UP)
HOW MUCH: Call 305-348-1998 for Information

SATURDAY • MARCH 3

WHAT: Dance Marathon
WHEN: 24-hour event begins 12 p.m.
WHERE: Pharmed Arena (UP)
HOW MUCH: Free

WHAT: Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*
WHEN: 8 p.m.
WHERE: Wertheim Performing Arts Center Concert Hall (UP)
HOW MUCH: Call 305-348-1998 for Information

SUNDAY • MARCH 4

WHAT: Dance Marathon
WHEN: 24-hour event ends 12 p.m.
WHERE: Pharmed Arena (UP)
HOW MUCH: Free

WHAT: Fourth Annual College of Law Dominos Tournament
WHEN: 3 p.m.
WHERE: College of Law (UP)
HOW MUCH: TBA

- Compiled by Reuben Pereira

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Softball captain united by friendship off the field

SERGIO BONILLA
Asst. Sports Editor

Centerfielder Deomni Murray, catcher Tabitha Embry and outfielder Ashley Falk, the captains of the women's softball team, come from diverse backgrounds, but their characters bind the three together.

Throwing rocks at tractors in Philtop, Ky., is not an exercise to develop arm strength, but a means of entertainment. Miami's demographics are different than Kentucky, but Embry's softball talent has translated her to FIU where she has developed leadership skills.

The senior's responsibilities extend to the entire team, but she is graduating this semester. Therefore, she has been teaching freshman catcher Suzy Ellquist the basics of managing pitchers. Embry admits she is a kid at heart, which allows her to level with the younger players such as Ellquist.

"She's showed me how to handle pitchers," Ellquist said. "She's a great role model on and off the field and she's helped me develop a work ethic."

Coach Kim Gwydir recalls recruiting her future team captain catcher during the Rising Stars Tournament in Ft. Lauderdale.

"She was a sleeper during recruitment; she didn't play on a

good team," Gwydir said. "I was impressed at the way she swung the bat."

Gwydir said she was also impressed by Embry's selflessness as a player. She told Gwydir she would do whatever it takes for the team. As a result, Embry played several uncomfortable positions throughout her career at FIU, yet she never complained.

Embry has been a team captain for two years along with Murray, who is also a senior.

Murray, a.k.a D-money, decided to attend FIU because it is located in her home state, where her family could still attend games to support her. Although her teammates refer to her as the fastest player on the team, she is reluctant to admit it.

"She's fast like a rabbit. No, more like a deer," Embry said. Her roommate, junior shortstop Monique White, recognizes Murray's modest nature.

"She is very humble on the field," Monique said. "I can't say the same when she's off it."

Despite her affable person-

ality, singing and cheering for teammates during games, she is very intense about winning.

"She is pretty bloodthirsty when she's out there on the field," Embry said.

Her athleticism stretches beyond the diamond as she drew interest from basketball programs coming out of high school.

Coach Gwydir recognized



Susy Ellquist, freshman catcher

[Tabitha Embry] showed me how to handle pitchers. She's a great role model on and off the field and she's helped me develop a work ethic.

her athletic ability when she recruited her at Plant City, Fla., but Murray's hustle, wit and easy-going nature interested Gwydir as well.

"My assistant saw Deomni run off the field hard," Gwydir said. "I knew I had to talk to her."

According to coach Gwydir, she asked Murray what she wanted to be when she was older. Murray responded: "I want to be retired." Murray was in uniform the next Fall.

This 2007 season, new team captain Ashley Falk will join Embry and Murray. Her hometown of Snowflake, Canada, is

attests that Falk's athletic ability did not factor in her being recruited, but her willingness to help others did.

"I never saw Ashley play," coach Gwydir said. Falk visited FIU as a recruit during her senior year in high school. Although recruits are usually pampered and treated well during visits, Falk separated herself from the rest of the recruits when the Golden Panthers' games were rained out.

The team was putting the tarp on the field, and Falk decided to help her future teammates. They let her know she did not need to

help, but she said she wanted to provide assistance.

"The fact she would help us out when she wasn't part of the team was enough for me," coach Gwydir said.

Falk is a first year captain, but she does not believe that her approach to the game will change much. The friendship with Embry and Murray allow her to be a leader, but still be relaxed.

"I have more responsibilities, but I'm not really doing anything different," she said. "The three of us are such good friends that we look to each other for help regardless if we're captains or not."

Although the three team captains are from diverse places, their similar characters and friendship mesh them together as team captains. Their relationship began as friends and is transferred on the field as players.

"We go out all the time to the movies and hang out," Falk said. "Tabitha is my farm sister and Deomni is my sister from another mister."

Their friendship creates a bond between them, but their ability to solve problems originates from their parallel morals.

"We have similar values," said Embry. "Whenever we have a problem we see eye to eye. So, it's the three of us versus the problem as one huge force."



PHOTOS BY JESSICA MARSHALL/THE BEACON

LEADERS:

Sophomore pitcher Penny Eastman gave up one hit in three innings of relief in the Diamond Fun & Sun Classic. The Golden Panthers were eliminated in the tournament after a 1-0 loss to Louisville.

FIU SPORTS REPLAY

Men's and women's basketball win their final game of the season

FIU (MEN) 64, WKU 82

FIU (12-16, 7-11) finished their 2006-07 season by falling to Sun Belt Conference foe, Western Kentucky (21-10, 12-6), 82-64 at the E.A. Diddle arena at Bowling Green, Ky., Feb. 24.

The Golden Panthers lost without their leading scorer, Alex Galindo.

Despite junior guard Chris Fuller's career-high 21 points, the Golden Panthers were overwhelmed by the Hilltop-

pers' offense, which shot 70 percent from beyond the arc (7-10) and 61 percent from the field altogether.

The Hilltoppers had control throughout the whole game as they received their biggest scare of the second half, when the Golden Panthers cut the lead to 14 with 9:21 left in the game.

The win elevated Western Kentucky to the No. 1 seed in the Sun Belt Conference Tournament. FIU finished their season as the No. 11 seed in the Sun Belt Conference Tournament.

FIU (WOMEN) 66, WKU 79

FIU (15-13, 9-9) lost their last regular season game to Western Kentucky (20-7, 14-4) 79-66 at the E.A. Diddle arena at Bowling Green, Ky., Feb. 24.

Although four players scored in double figures for the Golden Panthers, they were not able to stop junior forward Crystal Kelly, who recorded a game-high 31 points and grabbed 15 rebounds.

The Hilltoppers shot 38 percent from the field compared to

the Golden Panthers' 42 percent, but out-rebounded the Golden Panthers 45-36.

The victory earned the Hilltoppers the No. 3 seed in the Sun Belt Conference Tournament.

The Golden Panthers concluded their season as the No. 7 seed.

FIU 8 SYRACUSE 2

The Golden Panthers defeated Syracuse 8-2 behind junior shortstop Monique White's home-run and three RBI's and junior Kerri Houck's seven-inning two earned

run performance.

TENNIS

The Golden Panthers defeated No. 39 University of Nevada Sunday afternoon at the Fertitta Tennis Complex 5-2 in Las Vegas, Nev.

The No. 31-ranked Golden Panthers will face No. 9-ranked University of Miami team next Sunday, Mar. 4, in Coral Gables.

-Compiled by Sergio Bonilla

SUN BELT BASEBALL STANDING

TEAM	OVERALL	CONF	PCT	STREAK
Louisiana-Lafayette	8-0	0-0	1.000	W8
Florida Atlantic	10-2	0-0	.833	L1
Western Kentucky	5-1	0-0	.833	W4
Louisiana-Monroe	6-2	0-0	.750	W1
Troy	8-3	0-0	.727	W3
UALR	6-3	0-0	.667	L1
Florida International	7-4	0-0	.636	W6
New Orleans	5-4	0-0	.556	W3
South Alabama	4-4	0-0	.500	L2
Middle Tennessee	3-5	0-0	.375	L2
Arkansas State	2-5	0-0	.286	L1

*All records up to date as of Feb. 27

SUN BELT LEADERS

INDIVIDUAL BATTING

Min 2.0 AB	G	Avg	AB	R	H	RBI	2B	3B	HR	BB
Cook FAU	9	.556	36	16	20	10	2	1	2	1
McOwen FIU	8	.556	36	10	20	7	3	1	0	1
Eller ASU	4	.533	15	3	8	1	1	0	0	0
Morrison, J ULM	6	.520	25	4	13	10	6	0	0	1
BOMBACK FAU	9	.500	40	18	20	12	2	0	4	8
Lozano FIU	7	.500	24	5	12	8	0	1	1	3
Gisclair ULL	4	.500	14	4	7	8	1	0	1	0
Ervin MT	3	.500	12	3	6	1	0	0	0	0
Widlansky FAU	9	.462	39	8	18	17	5	1	1	1

INDIVIDUAL PITCHING

Min 1.0 IP	App	ERA	W-L	Sv	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
Klumpp UALR	2	0.00	1-0	0	12.1	12	4	0	2	17
Tolliver UALR	3	0.00	1-0	0	7.2	5	0	0	3	9
Solich ULL	1	0.00	1-0	0	6.2	6	0	0	2	7
Ridings WKU	1	0.00	1-0	0	5.0	5	0	0	1	2
Reilly MT	1	0.00	0-0	0	4.0	1	1	0	3	2
Snipes, C. TROY	2	0.71	1-0	0	12.2	6	1	1	2	11

THIS WEEKEND IN FIU SPORTS

MARCH 2	MARCH 3	MARCH 4
Baseball vs. Wagner (7 p.m.) University Park	Baseball vs. Wagner (1 p.m.) University Park	Baseball vs. Wagner (1 p.m.) University Park
Men's Basketball Sun Belt Conference Championships Lafayette, LA		Tennis vs. Florida State (12 p.m.) University Park
Home games in bold		* Conference game

Polizzano moving up the record books

BASEBALL, page 12

last three games. However, a lack of timely hitting and good pitching by the Rams, attributed to the offensive fizzle.

Sophomore pitcher Jorge Ramos struck out a career-high six batters in six innings of work and gave up four earned runs.

"Ramos did a good job on the mound, but the defense let him down," Price said.

The other two runs given up by FIU were unearned and ended up being the difference in the game.

The Golden Panthers had a mini-rally going on in the ninth inning when Price decided to bring in freshman Enrique Cepero to pinch hit for senior outfielder Cody Jacobs, who had already struck out three times in the game. The move did not pay off as Cepero ended up striking out with the bases

loaded to end the game.

FIU 12, URI 11

The Golden Panthers were cruising through seven innings behind a solid performance by junior pitcher Chris Allen before the Rams' offense exploded, scoring nine runs in the top of the eighth against the FIU bullpen.

After the Rams managed three runs off junior reliever Eric Horstman, Price called upon senior closer Walker Whitley in the top of the eighth with two outs to finish the inning. But Whitley gave up six runs on six hits and could not get anyone out.

Freshman pitcher Brian Santana was brought in for Whitley and finally stopped the onslaught, closing out the eighth and ninth innings without surrendering a run.

The Golden Panthers pulled within a run after scoring three in the bottom of the eighth. Second baseman Corey Lozano and first baseman John Petika each reached base on two consecutive Ram errors in the ninth to bring up junior outfielder Raimy Fuentes, who singled in the game-tying run.

Freshman catcher Kevin Mirabel bunted in the game winner.

After sitting out to start the first game of the double header, junior James McOwen went 5-for-5

with four RBI'S in second game.

FIU 15, URI 13

Freshman pitcher Ralph Rodriguez came in and gave the Golden Panthers a solid start, giving up five runs in five innings - with only one of the runs being earned.

The Golden Panther offense put up double digit runs again, led by freshman designated hitter Tyler Townsend, who went 3-for-3 with two homeruns and six RBI'S.

"I'm seeing the ball a lot better and I'm starting to feel more comfortable at the plate," Townsend said.

McOwen added three hits of his own and tied a school record with eight consecutive hits when he doubled in the third.

McOwen didn't know he broke the record until after the game and said it is a great honor to be in the FIU athletics record book.

The Panthers didn't make things easy for themselves, allowing the Rams to pull within two runs after scoring six in the top of the eighth.

Price said Brian Santana did another solid job closing out the final two innings of the game.

"Anytime you win three out of four, it's a good thing, but I still believe this team can improve, specifically with giving up the big inning," Price said.



JESSICA MARSHALL/THE BEACON

THROWING HEAT: Junior right-handed pitcher Chris Allen delivers a pitch against Rhode Island. He pitched seven innings, allowing two earned runs.

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IN THEATRES MARCH 2

New coach able to motivate players and instill winning attitude

GRAU, page 12

frustrated because certain players weren't pulling their necessary weight.

Who's to blame for that? Look no further to your leader.

EXHIBIT B: CRISTOBAL

Cristobal has immediately changed the culture of the program. His team has yet to take the field and he already seems more energetic and passionate about his monumental task.

The 36-year-old Cuban-American is from Miami and understands the football landscape here in South Florida.

Both he and athletic director Pete Garcia understand that they are blessed with a goldmine of local high school football talent.

During his five years as head coach, Strock didn't focus enough on South Florida recruiting, opting to look in other parts of the state to mold his roster.

Besides focusing on keeping South Florida high school football players home, Cristobal also recruited out of the state for the first time in the program's history.

What he found was quar-

terback-of-the-future Colt Anderson (Omaha, Neb.) and offensive linemen Chris Cawthon (Loganville, Ga.) and Shanquan Hicks (Sanderville, Ga.).

With the extended aim at talent, this will allow the Golden Panthers to bring in the necessary athletes needed to build up the talent necessary to com-

pete competitively.

Along with Cristobal's energetic approach to the game, Garcia has also ignited a spark in the athletic department.

On the flight back after 38-3 loss to Alabama, Garcia heard players joking around as if no whooping had taken place.

Surprised at what he

was hearing, he went to the back of the plane and reminded the team that they had just lost 38-3 and that they should act like it.

With a new leader and sense of direction, the team should be acting like their coach for this season and the rest to come - a winner.



SERGIO BONILLA/THE BEACON FILE

NEW ERA: Recruiting style and personality separate current head coach Mario Cristobal from his predecessor.



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OUT OF THERE!

DEFENSE: Senior catcher Tabitha Embry tags out a Syracuse baserunner as the Golden Panthers defeated the Orange 8-2 at home on the final day of the Adidas Golden Panthers Invitational. Senior outfielder Deomni Murray and junior pitcher Kerri Houck were named to the All-Tournament Team for their play. **SEE PAGE 9 FOR A FEATURE ON THE SOFTBALL CAPTAINS.**



JESSICA MARSHALL/THE BEACON

Men's baseball displays an offensive show on Rhode

ROBERTO CARTAGENA
Contributing Writer

The Golden Panthers (7-5) swung their way to victory and took three out of four games to win the series against the University of Rhode Island (1-3) at University Park Stadium Feb. 23-25. The Golden Panthers put up a total of 46 runs against last year's Atlantic 10 first place finishers.

Not making things easy for themselves, the Golden Panthers committed a number of untimely errors. However, the Rams' defense was even worse and the Golden Panthers' offense was just plain better.

FIU has won six of its last seven games heading into its next series against Wagner March 2-4 at home.

FIU 15, URI 10

With the game tied heading into the bottom of the third inning, the Golden Panthers' offense scored 10 runs on five hits. The Rams did their best in assisting the Golden Panther's output by committing five errors in the inning.

Coach Danny Price said "The Posse," a group of rowdy students sitting over the visitor's dugout in particular, did a great job of distracting Rhode Island throughout the game.

The Golden Panthers never trailed after the offensive outburst in the third, but Price was not pleased when the Rams scored six runs of their own in the following inning. Freshman starting pitcher



JESSICA MARSHALL/THE BEACON

SAFE: Junior infielder Corey Lozano slides home safely under Rams senior catcher Dan Tucker as the Golden Panthers won the series 3-1. The Golden Panthers will face Wagner College this weekend at home.

Corey Polizzano went three and two-thirds innings while giving up seven runs, five which were earned, but managed to strikeout five. Senior outfielder Bryan Pullin hit his second homer of the season and also moved past Brad Eldred into third place on FIU's all-time total bases list.

"It's an honor anytime you're on an all-time list, especially with a school like FIU that's had so

many good players throughout the years," Pullin said.

URI 6, FIU 4

FIU never got the bats going and left a total of 13 men on base for the first game of a Feb. 24 double header. Prior to the game, the Golden Panthers had scored double digit runs in their

BASEBALL, page 10

Cristobal has vision former head coach Don Strock never had



Commentary

Charlie Grau
Sports Editor

It's been over two months since Mario Cristobal took over as head coach of FIU's football program.

In that short time, he has overhauled the coaching staff, signed his inaugural recruiting class and began the slow process of turning the Golden Panthers into a respectable and winning football program.

Even though he has yet to win his first game, Cristobal has already managed to create a sense of hope for the future.

Even though former head football coach, Don Strock, began the football program and got it into Division I-A status, he never had the vision or gift to get his team to the next level.

He merely seemed content at where he and the team stood. Most teams take the shape and form of their head coach.

EXHIBIT A: STROCK

Granted, he was dealt a season from hell that even Lucifer couldn't overcome.

Some of his players had even given up at season's end.

Halfway through the season, it seemed as though everything had taken a toll on Strock and the embattled coach didn't know how to fix the problem.

He had one of the top rated defenses in the country, but it was his offense that couldn't get the job done.

For 17 years, Strock played in the NFL as a quarterback — as a backup most of the time.

Being around the league that long, one would guess that you would soak in a whole bunch of offensive schemes from different coaches.

I guess all that NFL experience doesn't translate into a successful coaching career.

Loss after loss, in all of his post-game press conferences, no matter how or why his team lost, Strock would always say, "We just got to go back to work."

After every game, every sound bite would sound the same.

Often times, his players seemed more upset than him.

In a 31-0 loss to FAU, several players admitted they felt

GRAU, page 11