

9-3-2008

## The Beacon, September 3, 2008

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**WEST STAYS**  
Dean pulls double duty

**PRINTED PROBLEMS**  
Romance novel causes a stir

**DANCING KINGS**  
Salsa lessons take over GC

**UPSET SPIKE**  
Volleyball defeats No. 19 Clemson

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# ROUGH START



CHARLIE RIEDEL/AP PHOTO

**RUNNING WILD:** Kansas running back Jake Sharp gets past linebacker Michael Dominguez as he runs the ball during the first quarter.

## Kansas tames FIU in season opener

**ANDREW JULIAN**  
Sports Director

Paul McCall, making just his second career start, was intercepted twice as the No. 14 ranked Kansas Jayhawks handled the FIU Golden Panthers easily, 40-10, on opening day for both schools, in Lawrence, Kan.

It was the second meeting in as many seasons for the schools, and the Jayhawks (1-0) have outscored FIU (0-1) by a score of 95-13 in the two games.

Wayne Younger, who started last year's contest between the two for FIU, and who was embroiled in a quarterback battle with McCall this summer for the starting job saw limited action, but could not effectively get the offense rolling in his season debut either, as FIU managed just 139 yards of total offense on Aug. 30.

"Kansas is a great football team," FIU head coach Mario Cristobal said. "They were one of the best teams in the country last year and

BOX SCORE		
	FIU	Kansas
<b>First Downs</b>	9	25
<b>Rusing-yards</b>	26-66	36-128
<b>Passing</b>	73	256
<b>Comp-Att-Int</b>	10-29-2	37-52-1
<b>Return Yards</b>	109	169
<b>Punts Avg.</b>	6-43.8	3-46.0
<b>Penalties-Yards</b>	6-30	6-53
<b>Time of Possession</b>	22:11	37:49
<b>RUSHING</b> — FIU: Ned 12-42, McCall 8-13, W.Younger 2-10, Reams 4-1. Kansas: Quigley 6-47, Crawford 11-32, Sharp 9-29, Reesing 9-15, Briscoe 1-5.		
<b>PASSING</b> — FIU: McCall 10-28-2-73, W.Younger 0-1-0-0. Kansas: Reesing 37-52-1-256.		
<b>RECEIVING</b> — FIU: Dickens 2-21, Kirchenberg 2-21, Mertile 2-14, Ned 2-5, Rolle 1-7, Ellingson 1-5. Kansas: Meier 9-62, Briscoe 9-55, J.Wilson 5-60, Quigley 3-24, Patterson 3-22, Sharp 2-17, Dedeaux 2-9, Crawford 2-5, R.Brown 1-5, Fields 1-(minus 3).		

I think they will be this year, too. When you get out here and the speed is turned up about two or three notches, it's not as quite as slow of a game as it was on the practice field."

After a sluggish start to the game, the Kansas offense moved up and down the field with the steadiness of a metronome, as junior Jayhawks quarterback Todd

Reesing found his rhythm in the second quarter and put together a very solid effort, going 37-of-52 for 256 yards and three touchdown passes, all of which were to Dezmon Briscoe, who hauled in nine passes for 55 yards.

It was unbelievable," said Todd Reesing, who threw three touchdown passes to Dezmon Briscoe. "To play the first game of the sea-

son and have the place fill up and have the crowd loud and behind you is something special. I don't think there's been a first game here at Kansas in a while that sold out."

Jeremiah Weatherspoon, intercepted Reesing once, in the fourth quarter, and it was returned for 20 yards.

This was not the only bright spot for the Golden Panther defense, which allowed just 3.6 yards per rush to the Jayhawks, and forced two turnovers, the other coming on Kansas' opening drive.

Linebacker Scott Bryant forced a fumble on a Daymond Patterson reception that was recovered by linebacker Mike Dominguez, but FIU's first possession, following the takeaway was a quick three and out.

After forcing a Kansas punt on the next possession, FIU advanced the ball into Kansas territory, but came up empty on a fourth-and-10

**FOOTBALL, page 11**

## Officials debate drinking age limit

**CHRISTOPHER LAZAGA**  
Staff Writer

Binge drinking can kill, and so can an alcohol policy with a high drinking age limit, say 129 university presidents and chancellors.

In a debate with Mothers Against Drunk Driving member Barbara Harrington at the University of Vermont in 2007, John McCardell stressed this point again and again.

"We need to acknowledge that more lives are being lost each year to alcohol among 18 to 24 year olds than have been saved, allegedly, by [making the] legal age 21 in the 23 years that it has been on the books," McCardell told the crowd.

McCardell, president emeritus of Middlebury College, is the founder of Choose Responsibility, a nonprofit organization created to inspire young adults from 18 to 20 to make responsible decisions concerning alcohol.

McCardell's latest move to reopen the debate over the effectiveness of the 21 drinking age is his Amethyst Initiative, a movement aiming to rekindle the debate on the national stage.

Fueling the initiative is the National Minimum Drinking Age Act, passed by Congress in 1984, which imposes a penalty of 10 percent of any state's federal highway appropriation that sets its minimum drinking age below 21.

According to the Amethyst Initiative's Web site, some of the 129 signatories include presidents and chancellors from Ohio State, Syracuse, Dartmouth and Duke.

The current minimum age of consumption is not only ineffective, but over time has created a dangerous subculture of binge drinking among college students, the Web site said.

The Office of Media Relations did not respond to multiple contact attempts; however, University President Modesto A. Maidique's name is not on the list of signatories.

By supporting the Amethyst Initiative, the presidents and chancellors agree that the current drinking age only leads younger college students to disregard the law and invest in fake IDs, which in turn erodes their respect for authority.

At FIU, there have only been eight

**DRINKING, page 2**

# Controversies continue over age limit proposal

DRINKING, page 1

liquor law violations reported between 2004 and 2006, as published in the FIU Police Department's crime statistics.

"While those of us who work with college students continue to be concerned about the impact of alcohol abuse, I personally have not seen compelling data to lead me to have an opinion supporting the recommendation to lower the drinking age as a solution to the problems on college campuses," said Cathy Akens, assistant vice president of Student Affairs.

A recent analysis of federal records by Associated Press published in *The New York Times* revealed that between 1999 and 2005, 157 college students aged 18-23 drank themselves to death.

Such grim statistics motivate the movement's opposition. According to Don Murray, executive director of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) in Miami-Dade County, any attempt to lower the legal age of consumption would put more people at risk.

"We will kill thousands of kids with this," Murray said.

Those who have signed on to the Amethyst Initiative puzzled Murray.

"These are highly regarded academics with the science before them, yet they see the need for further exploration," Murray said.

Murray stated that when New Zealand lowered its drinking age to 18 in 1999, not only did accidents increase in the 18-20 age group, but in the 15-18 age group as well.

Murray went on to say that the statistics available indicate that further experimentation is unnecessary.

"We don't have to risk our children to

## What Is Amethyst Initiative?

**What?** Academic movement to lower the current drinking age limit to 18 years old

**Who?** 129 university presidents and chancellors have signed the initiative as of publication

**Why?** Lowering the drinking age might reduce college binge drinking and help students make responsible alcohol decisions

**How?** An ongoing debate concerning the 21 year-old drinking age and its effects

\* For more visit: [www.amethystinitiative.org](http://www.amethystinitiative.org)

find out," Murray said.

FIU's student population shares mixed emotions concerning the possibility of a lower drinking age.

"Lowering the drinking age could lead to an increase in accidents and violence," said James Casteline, a junior biology major.

"[The drinking age] should be lowered, but how U.S. society is, it may not work at first," said Yvy Ruano, an art history major in her senior year. Ruano believes it may take a generation or two before the desired effects of a lower drinking age manifest.

But Annette Hernandez, a junior majoring in special education, agrees with the initiative.

"If you are old enough to get married, go to war, pay taxes and buy a house, why shouldn't you be allowed to drink?"



KARINA RODRIGUEZ/THE BEACON

**FINGER PAINTING:** Karina Rodriguez, an education major, and the Yaguas tribe's children finish painting a mural in the tribe's elementary school.

# Students travel to Peru, modernize community

**DANIELLA BACIGALUPO  
IGNACIO ALBISTU**  
Beacon Staff

Deep in the Peruvian Amazon, a group of machete-wielding school children welcomed FIU students this summer.

The class of 11 students conducted research for an Honors College seminar course by spending Summer B with the secluded Yaguas tribe in Peru without any modern comforts.

"We were basically out of civilization as we knew it for three weeks but came back with an immense sense of tranquility," said Karina Rodriguez, a senior majoring in social science education.

Open to the whole University, the Honors class had over seven majors represented.

Working with the secluded tribe, they researched engineering, environmental, educational, social and musical elements of the tribe.

"I was surprised how well everything came together, and how great everyone got along and helped one another," Jim Riach, the class's Honors College professor, said.

David Bush, an engineering major, and Tiara Thanawastien, an environmental studies major, conducted water filtration research. The students helped the tribe construct their own water filtration system that covered over 35 homes and showed the

residents the importance of clean water.

"Words can't describe how great the trip was," said Thanawastien. "My project was to reach out and educate local people on hygiene, sanitation and the importance of clean water."

Bush hopes to build a hospital boat to serve the Yaguas' tribe area in the future, Rodriguez stated.

Rodriguez and Catalina Medina worked in the tribe's schools with students, parents, and community leaders. They painted a mural in a school and introduced laptops to children who had never seen computers before.

Other students surveyed the surrounding jungle for medicinal plants, dangerous animals, and issues the animals are facing.

Their work culminated with the financial support of several tribal children and plans to work on publishing a children's book series about their research findings. All revenues will be donated back to the tribal community.

The students arrived on Jun. 29 in Iquitos, Peru, in the northeast of the country. After an eight-hour ride, they arrived in the field station of Project Amazonas, an FIU organization that works in conjunction with the Honors course.

Devon Graham heads Project Amazonas, which is dedicated to humanitarian

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## THE BEACON

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The Beacon is published on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays during the Fall and Spring semesters and once a week during Summer B. One copy per person. Additional copies are 25 cents. The Beacon is not responsible for the content of ads. Ad content is the sole responsibility of the company or vendor. The Beacon is an editorially independent newspaper partially funded by student and services fees that are appropriated by Student Government.

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## HEY, MR. DJ



ALIZA PERTON/THE BEACON

**BOOGIE DOWN:** Anthony Sabers, an FIU marketing major, DJ's the Camboulay event held Wednesday Aug. 27.

# Bill will combat lending abuses, provide more aid

**JUAN PRADO**  
Staff Writer

A new bill that aims to protect college students from lending abuses, as well as expand scholarship aid, was approved by the U.S. House of Representatives on July 31.

The bill is directed toward overhauling the student loan industry by banning lenders and colleges from offering or accepting payments and gifts in exchange for making loans.

"All federal and private student lenders will be required to provide full and fair disclosures about the terms and conditions of the loans they offer," said Rep. George Miller, who is also the chair of the House Education and Labor Committee, during the debate on the bill, reported *The Chronicle*.

Some of the major student lenders include JPMorgan Chase, Sallie Mae, Bank of America Corp and Citigroup, Inc.

If passed, the bill would increase Pell grants given to low-income students from \$4,800 to \$6,000 for 2009. It would also include new scholarship programs and support centers for veterans and an increase in funding for graduate study at institutions that favor minorities.

"We got rid of cronyism, kick backs and sweetheart deals," said Sen. Barbara Mikulski, in an interview with Reuters.

Not only would the bill be directed to colleges and lenders, but also to the Department of Education. The department would be required to publish a list of colleges with the largest student percentage increase over three years; colleges that have increased their tuition

the fastest; and require lenders and colleges to adopt new codes of conduct that would be more strict.

Current FIU student and Duke alumna Marianne Suarez has taken out student loans, and she feels students need more help when choosing a loan.

"Lenders and colleges should be more student-friendly and help them decide which loans to use," Suarez said.

Before students opt to take out loans, they should be aware of their options and learn to avoid taking private loans, said Robert Shireman, executive director of the Project of Student Debt.

"Notification about private-loan borrowing would wave a red flag and help colleges better counsel students in danger of taking unnecessary financial risks," Shireman said.

However, Sandy Baum, economics professor at Skidmore College and College Board's senior policy analyst, said that Congress' recent action does little to make college more affordable.

"Many provisions of the bill are likely to add to institutions' operating costs. The numerous new regulations and reporting requirements can only increase the bureaucracy and the concomitant expenses not associated with instruction," Baum said.

The bill was passed in the House 380-49, and in the Senate 83-8. President George W. Bush has to approve the bill for it to become a law. Although several attempts have been made, it is the first time in a decade that a bill has passed in Congress to reauthorize the federal law overseeing higher education.

## Trip leads to new ventures

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and biodiversity work in the Amazon. He is also the second professor heading the Honors course.

Besides working on their research projects, the stu-

dents learned the Yaguas' traditional way of life. They drank the tribe's signature beverage, Masato, made from a chewed yucca (a native plant) that is left to ferment before converted into the drink.

The students left Peru on July 26 with goals to start a new student organization on campus called Pathfinders, in which they plan to maintain ongoing projects and work on new initiatives for the Yaguas.

# Think this CD is worth \$30,000?

## The RIAA (Recording Industry Association of America) and other organizations do!

The RIAA and other production companies are suing individuals including Students and settling violations at \$200-\$3000 per violation, meaning that a single full CD of illegal downloads could result in a lawsuit with the minimum settlement amount for 10 illegal downloads for the total of \$30,000. There have been many cases that result in higher totals. To date, FIU has received subpoenas demanding information on 32 FIU students for possible RIAA lawsuits.

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[security.fiu.edu/misuse](http://security.fiu.edu/misuse)

## West stays as dean, interim vice provost

**DAINELYS MARTINEZ**  
Contributing Writer

Joseph West, dean of the School of Hospitality and Management, has agreed to stay through August 2009 and will also serve as the interim vice provost of Biscayne Bay Campus through mid-September.

West had intended to retire, but Ronald Berkman, executive vice president and provost, asked him to serve as interim vice provost. West will not step down until a replacement has been found.

"An interim is only there to keep the ship headed in the right direction until the new person comes," said West, who has been dean since July 1, 1999. "As senior dean of this campus, it will only make sense that I'm the interim vice provost because I'm the senior academic person in this campus."

There have been three candidates so far, according to West. Though they were

successful in their respective positions, one had no leadership experience, another had just become a department chair and the last one was a director of a very small program.

"For what we are doing - with the South Beach Wine and Food Festival, China, and now we're taking over the Kovens Center - the provost wasn't comfortable turning the school over to them," West said.

A search for a new dean is also underway.

"The new dean has to be different than most deans," West said. "They can't be just an academic person but must be a business person as well."

The new dean must have an appreciation of the Chinese culture, according to West.

"One of the reasons the provost asked West to stay was because of [his] relationship with the partnership in China and one of the Chinese partners felt

## CLASSROOM DEPOT



OLIVER MACDONALD/THE BEACON

**PILE UP:** Old chairs were removed from classrooms and stacked in the pit in front of the cashier's office in Academic 1 before being transported to University Park's Surplus Department on Aug. 28. The chairs will be sold, given away or auctioned by FIU.

uncomfortable about him leaving," said Mohammad Qureshi, assistant dean of the School of Hospitality and Management.

In the 1970s, West lived for six years in Asia while he was in the navy.

The new dean will oversee the South Beach Wine and Food Festival, the larg-

est such festival in the country. Through the 2008 festival, students and faculty raised \$1.8 million, out of which \$300,000 to \$600,000 was given in scholarships to students in the School of Hospitality and Management.

A construction project is planned for a dining room

and exhibition laboratory at the school. In addition, 38 wine courses will be offered this fall "so the general population can learn about wine and enjoy life a little more," West said.

West will stay at FIU as a professor and teach strategy and leadership, a course he introduced in 2005 as dean,

and will lecture around the world after stepping down as dean.

He will be 65 at the end of his tenth year as a dean at FIU. The third edition of his book, in print since 1992, *Strategy and Leadership*, was released this year. It has been translated to Korean and Japanese.

## Club explores spirituality

**DAVON JOHNSON**  
Contributing Writer

Aside from the varied clubs that the Biscayne Bay Campus hosts, there is a different kind of organization that helps people with their relationship with God.

InterVarsity is a global organization that draws students and faculty alike to "develop a living student ministry that is growing in love for God, God's Word, God's people of every ethnicity and culture, and God's purposes in the world," according to its Web site, [www.intervarsity.org](http://www.intervarsity.org).

It serves more than 35,000 members, on more than 560 college and university campuses nationwide with branches in Europe and Canada.

"The organization is acceptable, down to earth, and hospitable," said Omar Tolbert, a two-year member and an accounting sophomore. "The members treat you as a person and are genuine."

Incorporated in 1941, InterVarsity has a tradition of campus student witnesses, discipleship and world missions, according to their Web site.

"It is not about religion," said Angelica Gacayan, vice president of InterVarsity and a junior majoring in nursing. "It's about having a relationship with God."

Activities include campus outreach and evangelism, community service to the poor, Bible studies, daily prayer gatherings and community meals. The club has traveled to Tampa, Orlando and Georgia.

"InterVarsity will clarify how God

works in your life and help students find out more about their beliefs," said Mary Beth Doozan, an official staff member and sports management major. "[It] welcomes international students and assists them in transitioning to our culture."

The organization also provides camps and conferences all year long for spiritual formation and training, as well as global mission trips and urban projects during the summer.

Urban projects are run each summer and spring, and range from one to eight weeks. Each project gives service opportunities, worship, and scripture study, but are different in arrangement.

"InterVarsity is inter-denominational, which makes it a great way to be exposed to the whole Christian experience," said alumnus Juan Pablo, a technical engineer major who was a member of InterVarsity at University Park and became president during his senior year.

The majority of the members share a common commitment to teaching certain values and exploring issues such as justice, poverty, racism, racial reconciliation, violence, lifestyle, biblical community and the ministry of the urban church, according to the club's Web site.

Membership is free and open to the public. The organization also provides leadership opportunities.

"The club is for anyone with an open heart and a willingness to learn," Doozan said.

For more information, contact Mary Beth Doozan at [mbdoozan@gmail.com](mailto:mbdoozan@gmail.com).

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## THE BEACON | Editorial

### Updated GI Bill provides enhanced benefits to college-bound military vets

The Montgomery GI Bill is a necessary provision set for student veterans who need financial assistance in order to pursue a college degree.

It was fortunately updated to include coverage of all U.S. public schools and most private schools after President George W. Bush signed it into law on June 30, 2008.

The changes for the former GI Bill clearly reflect the demands of the current economy and necessities required of student veterans. This updated provision gives recipients greater flexibility in using and receiving funds.

Students can now receive up to \$1,321 per month for education expenses with help from the GI Bill.

Along with this, a stipend of up to \$1,000 per year is given to recipients for textbooks and other supplies.

Every penny counts during a time when textbook costs and tuition prices are skyrocketing, making it difficult for students to afford them both.

Also increased is the time recipients have to use their benefits, from 10 years to 15 years. This allows much more flexibility when using their funds for themselves and possible dependents, such as spouses and children.

An enrollment fee of \$1,200 was removed completely. Withdrawing this charge would alleviate many financial worries student veterans may have.

In the midst of a financial crisis revolving around attending college, this updated law could not have come at a better time, considering the bill was last updated in 1984. Times have certainly changed after

nearly 25 years, including rising college tuition costs.

Compared to the older version of the bill, which was last revised in 1984, the new bill will also allocate more financial aid for student veterans.

The 1984 document allowed only \$100 per month for student veterans. Even then, recipients had to wait two years after active duty before receiving funds. Now, members only need to serve for at least 90 days after Sept. 11, 2001.

Were it not for the efforts of President Franklin Roosevelt and others in 1944, the first GI Bill – which allocated \$500 a year to recipients – would never have existed.

With the cost of a college education increasing at alarming rates, students now need financial aid more than ever.

Students from all walks of life currently face financial hardships; many struggle to decide whether or not to take out a loan in order to cover educational expenses. Others feel torn as they consider taking on a second job in order to pay for tuition. Add children to the mix and money is even tighter.

Many individuals who require financial aid for school are soldiers, pilots and doctors – veterans who have served our country here and overseas. They too, whether currently serving or not, feel the same pressures regular students do when paying for classes.

The GI Bill needs continuous support from Congress, the Oval Office and voters across the U.S. Only then can students be able to pursue their studies at the university level while at the same time serving their country.

# NOVEL NIXED

## Fears of violence hinder manuscript

**MATTHEW RUCKMAN**  
Contributing Writer

A romance novel by Sherry Jones called *The Jewel of Medina* has incited controversy since publisher Random House canceled its run. The publisher decided the novel was possibly “offensive to the Muslim community,” and could create threats of “violence by a small, radical segment.”

The book details the life of Muhammad’s wife Aisha, and depicts the prophet as a man with the accompanying spectrum of human emotions such as wrath, doubt and lust.

The novel even includes a sexual account of their wedding night: “The pain of consummation soon melted away,” reads an excerpt. “Muhammad was so gentle. I hardly felt the scorpion’s sting. To be in his arms, skin to skin, was the bliss I had longed for all my life.”

How can leisure reading be targeted as tasteless and inappropriate? Such accusations are usually reserved for racist hate speeches and inflammatory statements made by political pundits.

The idea that “you can’t play with sacred history and turn it into soft core pornography,” as critic Denise Spellberg put it as she described the novel, is ludicrous.

Of course you can.

One person’s inviolable theological line can be another’s hoppedscotch court.

The only real control an individual has over someone else’s

voice is the ability to roll their eyes and walk away.

Creative license is not an offense, it is a right – at least here in the United States.

The argument to keep this book off the shelves because it might be, or even is, offensive is a moot one because of freedom of speech.

No one group can trample on the rights of another to speak freely, even if what was said was extremely offensive.

The publishing world, not new to controversy and violence within the Muslim world, experienced a similar furor in 1988 when *The Satanic Verses* by Salman Rushdie was published.

The book, which recounted a part of Muhammad’s life, was seen as blasphemy, and a death sentence was imposed on the author by an

community can’t seem to get past these Danish cartoons, fictional-histories or any works of comedy that seem demonic in nature, the other parts of fundamentalist Islam which we question see these transgressions as unforgivable and thus warrant “acts of violence.”

There seems to be only two solutions for the modern world to a person who interprets their faith as belligerent and who believes it is against their religion to not chop your head off: either acquiesce to the fanatic’s way, making it illegal to write about or print pictures of Muhammad, even if you’re not Muslim – or become a better decapitator.

Random House, by giving in to the first option, is thus to blame in this treason against freedom of speech, whether or not it was technically an act of “censorship.”

Random House established a dangerous precedent for the rest of us by giving in to force and losing a portion of not only our freedom of speech but of religion as well.

Something smaller, but maybe more significant, was lost here though.

Books like these should be endorsed to no end by Muslims. Personalizing Muhammad, with all of his humanity, should be considered missionary work.

Hopefully, the Islamic community will see this and acknowledge *The Jewel of Medina* not as something that separates us, but as a bridge to bring us together.



# Phrase causes a ‘Tropic Thunder’ among advocates

**CHARLIE GRAU**  
Editor in Chief

“If we stand up here and we laugh and joke, everybody says, ‘You shouldn’t say this, you should say that.’ You see, fun is fun, jokes is jokes. This is just expression.” – Bernie Mac, actor and stand-up comedian.

Whether they’re watching a movie or comedy show, people enjoy the excitement of laughter. The stresses of life make anyone yearn for some comedy.

It seems like sometimes people need to look over their shoulders to see if it’s OK to laugh; they need to think before they laugh.

Moviegoers may have experienced this while watching “Tropic Thunder,” a summer comedy by Ben Stiller about a group of Hollywood

actors making a war film in Southeast Asia.

But everybody wasn’t laughing.

In one scene, Oscar-winning actor Kirk Lazarus (Robert Downey Jr.) explains to fellow actor Tugg Speedman (Ben Stiller) what it takes to win awards when playing a mentally disabled character.

“Everybody knows you never do a full retard. Check it out: Dustin Hoffman, ‘Rain Man,’ look retarded, act retarded, not retarded. Count toothpicks to your cards. Autistic, sure. Not retarded. You know Tom Hanks, ‘Forrest Gump.’ Slow, yes. Retarded, maybe. Braces on his legs. But he charmed the pants off Nixon and won a ping-pong competition. That ain’t retarded. You went full retard, man. Never go full retard.”

Speedman “went full retard” through a role he portrayed – Simple

Jack, a mentally disabled farmhand. – before joining the war film project.

Advocates for the mentally disabled were up in arms and boycotted “Tropic Thunder,” saying it was demeaning, hurtful and discriminatory.

The words “retard” or “retarded” were used nine times in that one scene alone and used 17 times throughout the film.

If you find something offensive, tune it out. The more noise and publicity a film gets, the more tickets it sells.

Most protesters don’t understand the film isn’t making fun of the mentally handicapped; it is making fun of the fact that many actors take on roles of disabled people to win Oscars.

“The same thing happened to me when I played Neil Armstrong in

“Moonshot,” Lazarus said. “They found me in an alley in Burbank trying to re-enter the earth’s atmosphere in an old refrigerator box.”

Film critics have noted the controversy when reviewing the film.

Stephanie Zacharek of *Salon.com* said, “A coalition of disability-advocate groups is organizing a boycott of ‘Tropic Thunder’ based on what they see as the offensiveness of the ‘Simple Jack’ gags ... but comedy needs the right to be offensive, and Stiller at least has the courage of his convictions: When he uses the word ‘retard,’ it’s deliberate, not casual.”

“If actors like Kirk Lazarus or Tugg Speedman ever had to confront a mentally challenged person or a true wartime enemy, ‘Tropic Thunder’ would be a riskier and more resonant comedy,” said Michael Sragow of *The Baltimore Sun*. Furthermore,

if we’re talking dollars and cents, it looks like “Tropic Thunder”’s production company DreamWorks and distributor Paramount are getting the last laugh.

In its opening week, the war spoof earned \$26 million and was dubbed the comedy of the summer, according to *Newsday* and other media outlets (although I thought “Pineapple Express” was much funnier).

Unfortunately, we live in a time where political correctness rules and people have to think twice before they say something or else it will be taken out of context.

If we constantly wonder if it’s OK to laugh at a certain joke, then life just may get a little duller.

So the next time you don’t like something, just change the channel, or just call it retarded and go on your merry way.

## DANCING ROYALTY

### 'Anyone who can walk and count to three can learn salsa'

**LUCIA SASTRE**  
Staff Writer

You are standing in the middle of a crowd in a nightclub, surrounded by your friends and having the time of your life.

You hear the beat of drums and Celia Cruz shouting "Azucar." If only you knew how to dance salsa.

This is a common situation encountered in the Miami party scene, and since dancing is a popular stress reliever for some, learning how to dance it is a plus. Sitting down when the salsa blasts from the speakers is no longer their first instinct.

"I have two left feet, can you teach me?" I get this question at least three times a day by people calling in asking for more information about the lessons. 'Anyone who can walk and count to three can learn how

to dance salsa,' I always reply," said President of the Salsa Kings Andres Fernandez.

The Salsa Kings meet Monday through Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. in the Graham Center atrium. Along with the beat of the drums, they bring great dancing techniques that students adore and enjoy after a long day of classes.

"Many of the salseros of Miami that learned with us will tell you first-hand that the atrium is their second home," Fernandez said. "Students and instructors from years back will stop by and dance a couple of songs. We officially decided to be the first and only salsa school in Miami to offer Cuban-style salsa lessons as a couple, as opposed to the traditional casino *rueda*."

Nevertheless, if one is interested in learning the casino *rueda*, it is offered at

p.m., while one-on-one lessons with a partner are offered at 8 p.m.

During the day, the GC atrium is like any typical cafeteria, but in the late afternoon it shifts from a seating area to a dance studio. From outside the high glass windows, students and teachers learning and instructing salsa is a common sight.

"I always thought salsa was hard to learn and perhaps not my thing. The only place you'll see me dancing [is] in a nightclub and [only] when it [is] dark and crowded., said freshman Mary Weber, who plans on joining Salsa Kings soon. "But watching these people dance makes me want to join. They seem like they are having so much fun."

Joining the Salsa Kings not only teaches you how to dance salsa, but it also focuses on fitness and meeting people who share similar interests.

Plus, it gives students confidence to

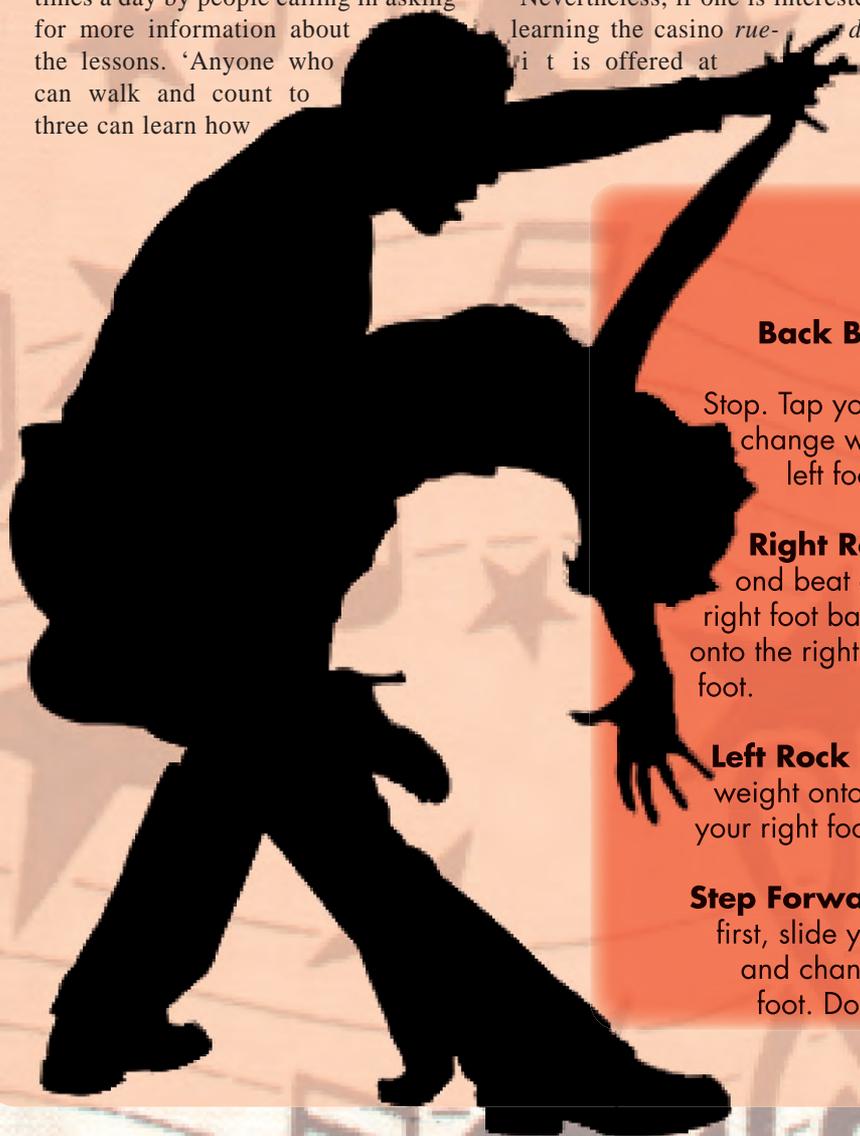
actually get up and show off their dance moves when confronted by salsa.

"At the beginning I remember watching the higher level [*salseros*] dance. That motivated me to become a better dancer. Now that I graduated from Salsa Kings I still keep in touch with the people and every so often, we all go as a group to clubs and practice our skills," said Gina Cohen, junior.

For those interested in learning some new dance moves, relieving some stress or just meeting new people, spending an evening with Salsa Kings may be the route to take.

"[Since there are] different levels, no one feels out of place. Anyone can join and there are people of all ages. [It] makes you feel right at home," Cohen said.

For more information on Salsa Kings, visit their Web site at [www.salsakings.com](http://www.salsakings.com).



## Salsa Steps

### Back Basic Movement

Stop. Tap your right foot. Don't change weight. Don't move your left foot.

**Right Rock Back:** On the second beat of the music slide your right foot back and change weight onto the right leg. Don't move your left foot.

**Left Rock Forward:** Change weight onto the left leg. Don't move your right foot.

**Step Forward and Close:** Toe first, slide your right foot forward and change weight onto the right foot. Don't move your left foot.

### Forward Basic Movement

Stop. Tap your left foot. Don't change weight. Don't move your right foot.

**Left Rock Forward:** On the second beat of the music slide your left foot forward, toe first, and change weight onto the left leg. Don't move your right foot.

**Right Rock Back:** Change weight onto the right leg. Don't move your left foot.

**Step Back and Close:** Slide your left foot back and change weight onto the left leg. Don't move your right foot.

## Fall movie season shows promise, opens with all-star casts

**STEVE MESA**  
Staff Writer

School is in session once again, and there are many things in September we can look forward to besides the start of the Panthers' football season. Here are a few movies from this month that will give you a taste of fall movies to come.

**BURN AFTER READING**  
(SEPT. 12)

Academy Award-winning directors Joel and Ethan Coen follow the success of *No*

*Country for Old Men* with a dark comedy featuring an ensemble cast that includes Oscar winners George Clooney, Frances McDormand, Tilda Swinton, along with Brad Pitt and John Malkovich.

A dim-witted gym employee (Pitt) finds a CD that contains information on a retired CIA analyst (Malkovich). He plans to blackmail the CIA analyst with a fellow employee (McDormand). Meanwhile, a CIA agent (Clooney) is hired to retrieve the CD by sleeping with the analyst's wife (Swinton).

This is not the first time Clooney has worked with the Coen Brothers, they

worked together on *O Brother, Where Art Thou* and *Intolerable Cruelty*.

**RIGHTEOUS KILL**  
(SEPT. 12)

Robert DeNiro and Al Pacino play two veteran New York detectives searching for a vigilante serial killer who targets criminals not sent to jail. The last time DeNiro and Pacino were seen on screen together was 13 years ago in Michael Mann's crime-thriller *Heat*.

**CHOKO**

(SEPT. 26)

From the mind of Chuck Palahnuik, the man who wrote "Fight Club" comes this black comedy which won a Special Jury Prize for its cast ensemble at this year's Sundance Film Festival. In *Choke*, a sex-addicted medical school dropout (Sam Rockwell) works hard at a colonial theme park in order to take care of his hospitalized mother (Anjelica Huston). When that money is not enough, he pretends to choke at upscale restaurants so he can con the people who save him.

**MOVIES, page 7**

# Autumn films aim to please

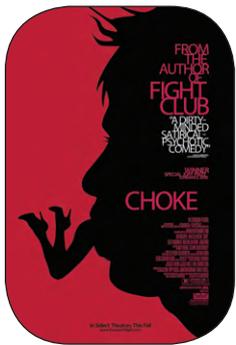
MOVIES, page 6

## EAGLE EYE (SEPT.26)

Shia LaBeouf reunites with *Disturbia* director D.J. Caruso with a larger than life thriller *Eagle Eye*. LaBeouf plays a slacker who is framed as a terrorist and told via cell phone what to do by a mysterious woman. He is not alone, however. Michelle Monaghan plays a young mother framed by the same woman. In order for them to live, they must become pawns of a mysterious diabolical plan.

## MIRACLE AT ST. ANNA (SEPT 26)

Two years ago, Spike Lee had his biggest hit in years with the release of *Inside Man*. *Miracle at St. Anna*, based on a novel by James McBride is set during World War II and inspired by true events. Four African-American soldiers fight for their lives as German forces take over a small Tuscany town where they are stationed. One soldier risks his life to save an Italian boy.



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Victoria Lynch/The Beacon

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# Rock out with your cross out at Universal Orlando

**ERIC FELDMAN**  
Opinion Editor

Many consider discovering faith to be a roller coaster, but Universal Orlando will be taking visitors on a more literally religious ride at Rock the Universe 2008.

In the 11th year of Universal's ever more popular Christian rock extravaganza, attendees of the two day event taking place on Sept. 5 and 6 will be able to see a diverse range of bands and artists headlined by Switchfoot and Reliant K, as well as twelve other performers.

More than just a concert, though, Rock the Universe entitles ticket-bearers to attend inspirational speeches by a Total Nonstop Action Wrestling superstar and a former Korn guitarist.

"When we created Rock the Universe, we wanted to host a Christian music event that was bigger, better and different from the rest," Universal Orlando spokesperson Alyson Lundell said in an e-mail interview. "We selected bands that helped us create an event with its own personality." "Edgy and diverse" is what defines the event's personality, according to Lundell.

"Unlike any other Christian music event, our musical and entertainment lineup guarantees that there will be something for everyone," Lundell said. Some of the other performers include Third Day and Jars of Clay, a band which has snagged Grammy awards for several of their albums in the past decade.

The event even concludes with a Saturday night candle lighting and Sunday morning worship service which is nondenominational, led by pastor Gary Morgan. Concertgoers looking to attend the service will want to place a reservation in order to snag one of the limited seats.

Besides being tickets to a rock concert and inspirational session, Rock the Universe admission allows bearers to "enjoy immersive theme park rides and attractions at Universal Studios, including the all-new 'Simpsons Ride' [and] the psychological thrill ride 'Revenge of the

**When we created Rock the Universe, we wanted to host a Christian music event that was bigger, better and different from the rest.**

Universal Orlando spokesperson  
Alyson Lundell

Mummy'" according to a press release. The official event Web site indicates that Rock the Universe tickets are valid for admission to Universal Studios after 4 p.m.

The guest speakers at the event will be AJ Styles, a pro wrestler with TNA, and Brian Welsh, former lead guitarist for the band Korn. According to Lundell, both guests will "share their moving life stories and testimonies with park guests." The event Web site states that Styles will talk about "how he's stayed grounded in a business that is anything but normal," while Welsh, better known as Head, will discuss "how he found God, quit the band, kicked drugs, and lived to tell his story."

Rock the Universe allows visitors to choose which bands they want to see by dividing up the action between the "Yard Stage" and the "Hollywood Stage." All performances are listed as rain or shine, so no one has to fear missing their favorite band due to impending tropical doom.

Lundell thinks that Miami college students should check out Rock the Universe because it is unlike any other event they will find.

"It's definitely a must-see event you can enjoy with friends and family," Lundell said.

# Korn's founding member takes new spiritual direction

**MARIANA OCHOA**  
Asst. Life! Editor

At first glance, Brian "Head" Welch's story seems like any other VH1 "Behind the Music" special in the making: rock star rises to the top only to come crumbling down as the victim of substance abuse, which he either recovers from at an old age or dies from.

What makes this particular story different is that Welch, guitarist and founding member of Korn, one of the biggest rock bands of the '90s, abruptly left his band mates in 2005 because of his new found faith in God.

Welch had fame and major success, winning Grammys and topping the Billboard charts, but he also struggled with a Crystal Meth addiction while trying to be a good single parent to his young daughter.

Welch knew his career with Korn had to come to an end when he overheard his daughter singing lyrics to his controversial songs and realized what he was passing on to her. Not only did he leave the band, but he went cold turkey trying to recover from his drug addiction.

Recently, *The Beacon* interviewed Welch, who will soon be speaking at the Rock the Universe concert at Universal Studios on Sept. 6.

At this event, Welch will speak about his experiences, hoping to motivate the youth.

"I just want to be real about things in my life, overcoming what has beaten me before with a transformed life. I want to inspire," Welch said.

When Welch left Korn, he didn't stop making music; instead, he took his music to another direction by becoming a Christian artist. For the first time, he wrote his own lyrics, which he says were given to him by God. The recording process for his latest solo album *Save Me from Myself* was therefore radically different than what he was used to.

"When I was in Korn, we went to the studio bringing beer, bongos, pipes and pills and wrote music. This time I just prayed and said, 'Lord if you want me to write, give me the music.' So I made guitar melodies and drumbeats that I programmed in my head while lyrics came out of me within 40 days," Welch said.

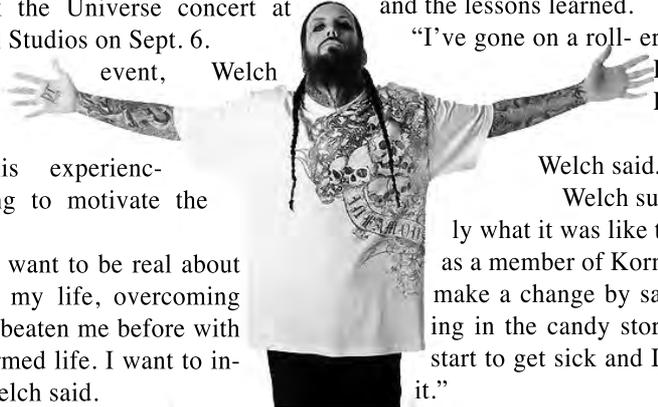
After Welch left Korn and made his solo debut, he was not welcomed by the Christian community.

"They could tell that I was a member of Korn, and it was not what they expected. I wanted to go back to older Korn [sounds] with my new music, but I was also inspired to talk about spiritual changes," Welch said.

Welch has not only been keeping busy with his new music, but he has also become a published writer with his *New York Times* best-selling book titled, *Save Me from Myself*, where he recounts his experiences and the lessons learned.

"I've gone on a roller coaster ride and I expressed what I felt inside of me on paper," Welch said.

Welch summed up exactly what it was like to live a fast life as a member of Korn and wanting to make a change by saying, "after being in the candy store too long, you start to get sick and I just got sick of it."



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# Team adapting without departed stars Taylor, Thomas

**DOLPHINS, page 12**

The Flywheel was on display all night at the Louisiana Superdome, with Miami allowing just 99 total yards to the Saints in a dominating defensive performance that featured many backups.

Next up: Brett Favre and the New York Jets in the regular-season opener Sept. 7.

Can Miami's defense do it when it counts?

"If we don't get complacent and stay driven, we can be really good this season," Dolphins defensive end Vonnie Holliday said. "I'm not going to lie, we have a lot of depth this season and I don't think guys are going to be able to roll over us like last year. When guys got nicked up last season, we didn't have much behind them. That's not the case this year."

The surprising Dolphins defense has led Miami to three straight exhibition wins for the first time since 2000, when the team was 11-5 and made the playoffs. The Dolphins, coming off an embarrassing 1-15 season, can only imagine such riches.

But that doesn't stop them from aiming high.

"We've been getting better and better,"

linebacker Akin Ayodele said. "We got a little swagger going. A guy makes a big play, you get hyped up. You want to go out and make a big play. I don't think anything is out of reach if we can keep getting better."

The Dolphins defense has been celebrating so much this preseason, coach Tony Sparano was even asked last week if the antics were becoming excessive. He shot that notion down quickly.

"They were 1-15 last season," Sparano said. "Let them celebrate."

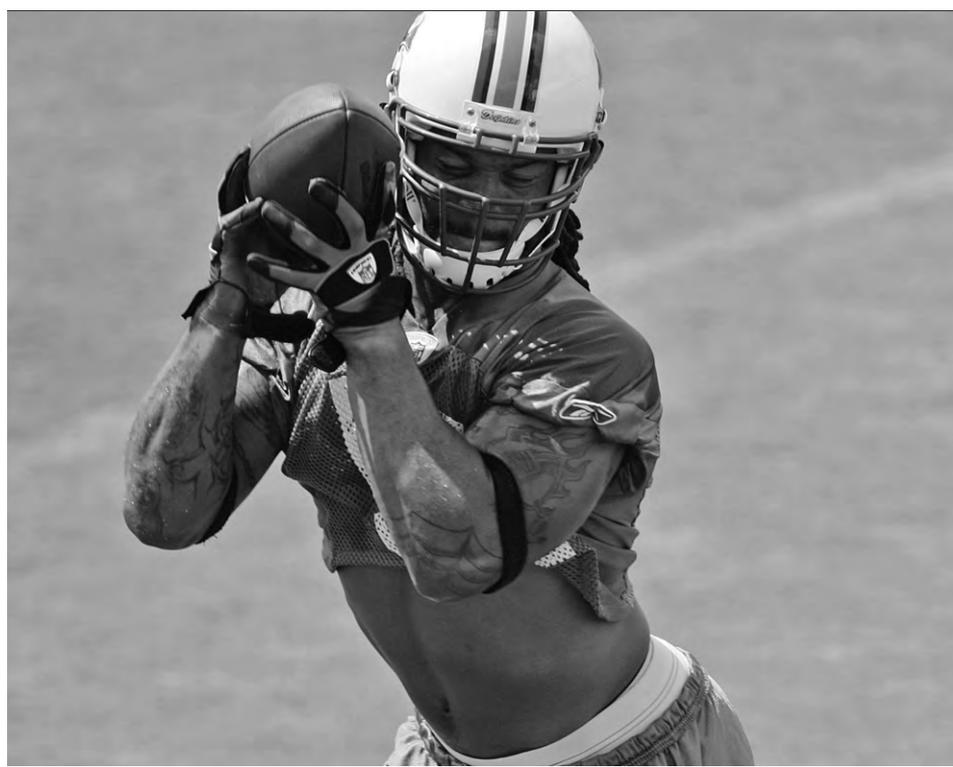
After trading away Taylor and Thomas in the offseason, the No-Name Dolphins began training camp searching for a superstar.

They still are a defense of mostly anonymous players, but the revamped roster is beginning to come into focus.

Unproven players like Charlie Anderson and Matt Roth have been impressive at Taylor's old spot.

At middle linebacker, Crowder and newcomer Ayodele have made the void left by Thomas seem smaller.

The new faces have tried to inject some attitude to revive Miami's winning ways, even if it means taunting their opponents



J. PAT CARTER/AP PHOTO

**PRACTICE PAYS OFF:** Linebacker Channing Crowder (above) completes a drill during the offseason. Crowder and the Dolphin defense have enjoyed a productive pre-season.

with some new moves.

The Flywheel, inspired by an analogy by defensive coordinator Paul Pasqualoni, has quickly become a staple of the Dolphins defense.

A flywheel, after all, is a rotating disc on an automobile that relies on momentum to pick up speed — something Miami has

plenty of coming out of training camp. The Dolphins hope they can keep it going.

"When you first start cranking the wheel, it's hard," Crowder said. "But when you get the momentum going, and you get oil moving, it starts going much smoother."

# Kansas is distant memory, time to focus on the future

**MESSINA, page 12**

ues to struggle adapting to the new offensive scheme, it will be another season of heavily relying on the defense, which was the team's downfall last season.

The defense did everything they could against a team that not only had a quarterback that could be contending for the Heisman Trophy but an offense that can attack from different angles.

Jayhawk quarterback Todd Reesing had no problems picking apart the Golden Panther defense as he was 37-for-52 for 256 yards and tossed three touchdowns.

His only mishap was the interception by junior Jeremiah Weatherspoon. The running game was also not an issue for Kansas as they accumulated 128 yards on the ground.

The end result of this game is what matters the most and that was a 30-point loss that put the Golden Panthers record at 0-1.

While skeptics are going to claim that the team is still a bottom feeder in the FBS, realists are going to have the understanding that this is a team that is heading in the right direction and this first game was an indicator.

Yes, the deficit was by

30 points and not 52 as it was last year, but the real encouraging signs were the guys that made the most of their opportunities.

Maybe the team was overwhelmed by the sell-out crowd of over 52,000; the largest ever for a game at Memorial Stadium or maybe and more likely, the team was simply playing a team that had more talent.

The Golden Panthers without a doubt need to improve if they plan on improving last year's 1-11 mark but these games against more talent rich teams are going to only benefit them.

With Kansas a now distant memory, the team needs



CHARLIE RIEDEL / AP PHOTO

**SIGNAL CALLER:** Junior quarterback Paul McCall has the keys to the offense, but will he drive the Golden Panthers to victory?

to focus on the next three non-conference games.

The effort was there in the opening game and has

been all off-season.

If the aforementioned areas are dramatically and I mean DRAMATICALLY,

expect to see more points on the board and games that will be much closer down the stretch.

# Volleyball upsets Clemson

**JONATHAN ALPERT**  
Staff Writer

The volleyball team captured the championship in the Orange Bash on Aug. 30 in Clemson, S.C.

To clinch the preseason tournament title, the Golden Panthers upset No. 19 Clemson 3 -1 (25-21, 25-22, 23-25, 26-24).

Yarimar Rosa was named MVP of the tournament. The junior dominated the title match with 27 kills, and 3 double-doubles overall in the tourney. Junior Isadora Rangel (13 kills, 11 digs) and sophomore Natalia Valentin were named to the All-Tournament Team. Rangel and Rosa have notched double-digit kills in every match this season.

"This was a total team win" head coach Danijela Tomic said. "We [the coaches] told the team that you have a mission and if you play

the same as in practice and if you compete and believe in yourself and in each other, than we are going to win."

FIU won the first two sets 25-21 and 25-22. Clemson held off the Golden Panthers to take the third set 25-23. Facing adversity, playing in their first fourth set of the season, the Golden Panthers got down 4-1, 10-5, and 21-16. FIU climbed back to tie the set at 22, took the lead at 24-23 and finally clinch the Big Orange Bash Tournament title with a 26-24 fourth set win.

"We were able to come back, which is a characteristic of a very good and mature team," said Tomic. "I am pleased that they can compete with any team on any level. I am very proud with each one of them."

This is just the second time ever that FIU has started 3-0 in the program's 21-year history.

The Golden Panthers continue their Labor Day road trip on Sept. 1, 2008 at Furman.

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KANSAS 40, FIU 10

# Parker injured in Kansas loss

FOOTBALL, page 1

at the 33-yard line, and from there, Kansas began to get in gear.

The scoring began with a 7-yard touchdown run by 2007 National Junior College Athletic Association offensive Player of the year Jocques Crawford, and Kansas took that 7-0 lead into the second quarter when Reesing connected with Briscoe for their first score on the first play of the second frame.

Alonso Rojas for Kansas made it a 17-0 lead with 9:30 remaining in the half, and from there, the special teams took over, for both teams.

Daymond Patterson fielded a Carlos Munera punt at his own 25-yard line and raced up the right sideline, even hurdling an FIU defender on his way to a 75-yard punt return for a touchdown, making the score 24-0 in favor of Kansas.

After trading punts, T.Y. Hilton, a true freshman, nearly mirrored Patterson's return, taking a punt back 74 yards for FIU's lone touchdown in his first collegiate touch.

Following the second Reesing-to-Briscoe touchdown connection, FIU put its two-minute offense on display and came out with positive results.

Paul McCall was 3-for-3 for 33 yards on the short drive that covered 38 yards in just 17 seconds and the junior quarterback made good use of the sidelines and his time outs.

FIU was aided by an offside penalty and Dustin Rivest connected on a 43-yard field goal with three seconds remaining in the first half to make the score 30-10.

In the second quarter, FIU strong safety Ashlyn Parker suffered a knee injury and did not play the remainder of the game. The x-rays were negative, and the team is still evaluating his status.



CHARLIE RIEDEL/AP PHOTO

**DOWN AND OUT:** Coach Mario Cristobal (dark necktie) and Kansas coach Mark Mangino, right, watch as defensive back Ashlyn Parker is attended to during the second quarter.

Kansas was able to continue to move the ball against FIU in the third quarter, as they finished the scoring with the third Reesing to Briscoe touchdown hook-up and a 37-yard Alonso Rojas field goal.

"I just threw it out there in the back of the end zone. I couldn't really see where he was headed," Reesing said. "I kind of threw it to a spot and he went up and made an amazing catch. That's the kind of things he can do for us."

After the contest, head coach Mario Cristobal echoed his feelings from training camp about his team.

"We played tough and obviously we're never going to

compromise. We're getting better, especially against a great football team," Cristobal said. "There's a lot of stuff that we can benefit from as a team and as players and as coaches ... we have some work to do"

The FIU head coach remains positive, as his team gets set to travel to Iowa this Saturday to take on the Hawkeyes, as the Golden Panthers Continue their early season non-conference slate. Kickoff is set for noon eastern from Iowa City.

*The Associated Press Contributed to this report.*

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## STARTING POINTS

### *Despite loss to Kansas, Golden Panthers see areas of improvement*

With the season just a game old, there certainly is hope for the Golden Panthers. Saturday's 40-10 loss to Kansas may look ugly from afar but when you examine things closely, you notice that FIU took a few steps in the right direction. Let's not declare the Golden Panthers front-runners to claim the Sun Belt Conference now but things could be looking up.

The biggest question that was made a little clearer on opening day was the quarterback situation. As expected, junior Paul McCall started at quarterback and took a majority of the snaps but head coach Mario Cristobal was not afraid to insert sophomore Wayne Younger into the action.

The fact that both quarterbacks were used, shows that rather than specifically name a starter, both will be used since either can be more proficient stronger in different areas.

All of the scoring from FIU on Saturday came from players that made statements. The 10 points that FIU put up against the Jayhawks came from special teams which was a comforting sign since last year's unit struggled at times.

Freshman T.Y. Hilton lived up to the hype and promise that has fol-

lowed him since he was recruited last January with a 74-yard touchdown return off of a punt.

The receiver showed his versatility and flashed great speed; something that Cristobal embraces.

Junior Dustin Rivest returned to duty from a back injury and notched a 43-yard field goal to wrap up the scoring in the first half.

With the kicking position determined, if Rivest can show consistency from the long range, it won't be such a bad thing if Cristobal sends the kicking unit out there on 4th and 1.

While special teams showed improvement in the first game, there were other areas that needed to improve and it starts with the offense.

Granted, Bill Legg's first game to showcase the new spread offense came against a team ranked No. 14 in the country, but the offense had difficulty moving the ball.

An area that needed improvement last year and will this year, the offense finished with just 139 total yards.

McCall finished 10-for-28 with 73 yards and two interceptions; he also ran the ball 8 times for 13 yards while Younger was 0-for-1 on passes and had 2 car-

#### COMMENTARY



LUCA MESSINA



CHARLIE RIEDEL/AP PHOTO

**SCORE:** Wide receiver Ty Hilton (4) and defensive end James Jones (67) celebrate after Hilton returned a punt for a touchdown in the second quarter.

ries for 10 yards.

The running game was held at bay by a stifling Jayhawk defense as senior A'mod Ned led FIU in rushing with 42 yards on 12 carries.

Fellow senior Julian Reams started his season off slow with just 4 carries for a yard.

The receiving game was nothing special as senior Eric Kirchenberg and junior Jeremy Dickens led the Golden Panthers

with 2 receptions for 21 yards.

Going into the game, it was understood that FIU would be facing a talented defensive unit but at the same time, the offense clearly had difficulty moving the ball.

The opponents in the two upcoming games are also strong, maybe not as talented as Kansas was, but can get the job done defensively. If the offense contin-

**MESSINA, page 10**

## Fins defense shows promise

**ANTONIO GONZALEZ**  
AP Writer

The task: Sack the quarterback or make a big play.

Then, crouch low to the ground, put your hands together and put them in a circular motion to mimic cranking an old car.

The move, named "The Flywheel," is becoming an increasing celebration by the Miami Dolphins defense.

They've had plenty of time to practice it of late, giving up just 24 points during their three-game winning streak to end the preseason.

"We haven't celebrated in like two years so it's just all coming out now," linebacker Channing Crowder said. "We only won one game last year, and we kind of forgot about having fun. We're just playing like we should and doing it with some attitude this year."

And without Jason Taylor and Zach Thomas.

The departure of the two Pro Bowlers has been no problem for the Dolphins, who had five sacks in a 14-10 exhibition win against New Orleans on Thursday night after five sacks against Kansas City a game earlier.

**DOLPHINS, page 10**

## Rosa, Vergun represent squad on SBC pre-season first team

**ANDREW JULIAN**  
Sports Director

For the second consecutive year, Yarimar Rosa has been named preseason Sun Belt Conference player of the year in women's volleyball.

Rosa, who has collected a bevy of accolades since coming to FIU from Santurce, Puerto Rico, adds a familiar distinction to her mantle to before the 2008 campaign.

"I think that's an honor for me. I didn't expect it. I'm very proud of it because that means the coaches from other teams think I have the ability to be that player. I have to be grateful to my teammates for helping me become that player that I am"

She adds her second Preseason player of the year distinction, to being named Sun Belt Freshman of the year, and being named First-

Team All-Sun Belt after each of her first two seasons.

FIU Volleyball finished strong last year, winning seven of its final eight regular season contests, and making its way to the tournament championship game where they fell to Middle Tennessee, who eventually had their season in the Penn State Regionals of the NCAA tournament.

Rosa looks at this season as an opportunity to build on last year's successes, "I think that we really learned last year and my freshman year from being very close ... We can take that serious step to get there. This year we have some new people who bring new things to the team, I think We are more confident, to make that small steps to go there. I think we've been practicing really hard everyday, paying attention to the small details we have to

get better at to get to that level."

The confidence FIU gained down the stretch last season, coincides with a favorably located conference tournament (FIU Arena, Nov 20 - Nov 22), which the 5-foot-10, well decorated Junior outside hitter believes will culminate with FIU winning the Sun Belt Conference championship, and she said, on that tournament,

"Oh sure, the conference tournament is here, so that helps because you have your fans, its your home court, and that really helps a lot. You know your court, and you've been here for years practicing, and thats a really good thing in favor of us"

FIU is represented twice on this years preseason all conference team, as Rosa is joined by Seignor Olga Vergun as a first team performer, her first time being so honored.

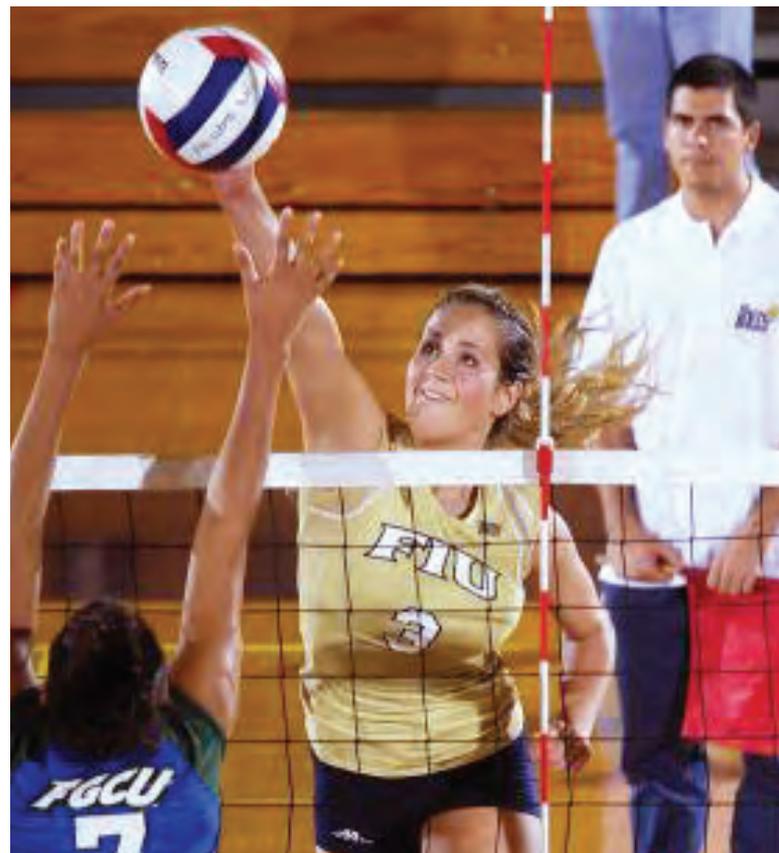


PHOTO CREDIT/THE BEACON

**JUNIOR JAMMER:** Third year outside hitter Yarimar Rosa won Preseason Sun Belt Conference player of the year for the second straight year.