Computer networks combat Internet threats

By C. JOEL MARINO
Senior Staff Writer

Shane Hawes, a freshman living in the University Park’s Panther Hall this semester, thought settling into his new room would be an easy move, especially when it came time to connect his computer to the general network.

“I thought everything was going to be easier here because I know they have DSL connection,” he said. “Just plug in the cables and wait [for the Internet] to start.”

Yet because the Department of Information Technology Security and the University Technology Services Office have taken many security measures in response to surfacing threats throughout the FIU network, getting access to the Internet took more than Hawes thought it would.

“There were registrations, problems with the system and downloads I had to make. But I don’t mind all of that, if it’s keeping the computer clean,” Hawes said.

By offering residential students firewalls and protected registration through UTS, the IT Security department believes it is providing an extra measure of protection to computers operating in a traditionally unsafe network zone.

“Viruses generated through e-mail are a big problem in universities,” said Cheryl Lyn Granto, IT Security officer. “Students don’t have anti-virus programs on their machines, or don’t keep operating systems up-to-date. All machines can be compromised by just one person.”

Though on-campus students usually comprise the largest computer-using population at FIU, students here are still not immune to the dangers of an Internet-connected world.

Determined to find new enlistees as the problem gets worse, the Army is adding nearly 1,000 recruiters in an effort to reach more young people, while the Guard intends to add about 700 recruiters.

The Army and the Guard also are increasing the financial rewards for enlisting. The Army is offering enlistees new $15,000 signing bonuses and the Guard $10,000 for recruits with no prior service.

The Army also has increased its maximum college scholarship to $70,000 from $50,000. Meanwhile, the Guard has doubled, to $20,000, the amount it will provide to repay a recruit’s student loans.

But the war in Iraq, and the continuing troop presence there, are the most sustained hostilities the U.S. military have seen since the Vietnam War. And that has fueled worries that the strains on the recruiting system could lead to a military midclown, with too few personnel to fight the nation’s engagements in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Few experts, however, believe the result will be a return to a draft. There just isn’t the political will for that.

The Army, which carries the greatest burden in the fight against the Iraqi insurgency as the United States’ largest provider of ground forces, has encountered significant head winds in recruiting enough new enlistees.

It slightly exceeded its goal of 77,000 for the 2004 fiscal year. But the Army entered the new fiscal year Oct. 1 with far fewer recruits in its delayed-entry pool of enlistees. Those are recruits who join the service but defer the date when they ship out to boot camp.

The Army, which tries to start each fiscal year with enough delayed-entry enlistees to add up to 35 percent of its annual recruitment goal, said it began fiscal 2005 with just more than half that percentage.

Meanwhile, the Army National Guard, which missed its fiscal 2004 recruiting target of 56,000 by more than 5,000 recruits, continues to struggle, falling short of its goal for the first two months of the new fiscal year by about 30 percent.

“Things are tougher,” said S. Douglas Smith, a spokesman for the Army Recruiting Command based at Ft. Knox, Ky., which recruits for the active Army and the reserves.

Reedefining feminism, Pg. 4
iRiver gives Apple a run for its money Pg. 6
Swimming Invitational results, Pg. 12

See BUGS, page 3
See RECRUITING page 2
Recruiters distressed over"

Experts believe the military’s recruiting problems would be far greater if the Army had not resorted to its stop-loss program, which keeps soldiers in the service past the end of their enlistment terms.

As it tries to cast a wider net, the Army said it would take in more recruits lacking high school diplomas this fiscal year than last, lowering its target from 92 percent with diplomas to 90 percent. The Guard, which traditionally has recruited members of the services as they departed active duty, is now recruiting some who never served as well.

But the military isn’t limiting its efforts at hand-holding. The Army and the Guard are offering the additional incentives and pressing on other initiatives. During the summer the Army launched a new “Blue to Green” campaign to get former Air Force and Navy service members to join the Army. The program has met with limited success so far, those familiar with it said. Others also have young soldiers who have served in Iraq or Afghanistan return to their hometown for two-week stints to talk with people about their combat experiences and, most important, generate leads for local recruiters.

The wastewater facility in Mexico will show what can be replaced with other methods that reduce the need for traditional energy wastewater plants. "Our goal is to transform the way we manage installations and to be smarter in terms of effective use of dollars," said Geoffrey G. Prosch, principal deputy assistant secretary of the Army for installations and environment on the FIU website. "This is why we have turned to research universities, to help us be smarter."

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar visits UP campus

Indian spiritual leader and founder of the Art of Living Foundation, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, spoke as part of FIU’s Year of Spirituality series in the Graham Center Ballroom on Jan. 10. The talk was sponsored by FIU’s new Center for the Study of Spirituality, which coordinated the Dalai Lama’s visit in Sept. 2004.

A world leader in values and spirituality, Shankar’s lecture was entitled “Inner Silence, Outer Service, and Realizing the Self.” He is renowned for his work with the human rehabilitation movement and has served many causes, including relief efforts in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kosovo.

National

Experts see ‘devastating’ attack on the Internet in next 10 years

Don’t say we didn’t warn you: At some point in the next decade, there will be a “devastating attack” on the Internet or power grid.

The scenario was deemed most plausible by 1,300 technology experts and scholars in a survey released Sunday by the Pew Internet & American Life Project.

Pew, along with Elon University in North Carolina, sought the opinions of people—both in the United States and abroad—who know the Internet intimately and think about it a lot. About half of them were Internet pioneers, having been online before 1993. One-third was from academia, another third were from tech companies or consulting firms and the rest worked for non-profit organizations, publications or the government.

Of the experts surveyed by Pew in the fall, 66 percent agreed that the Internet or power grid would be successfully attacked. Only 18 percent disagreed or challenged the prediction.

Former CIA Director Robert Gates, speaking at a terrorism conference last month, said cyber terrorism could be the most potent weapon of mass destruction and could cripple the U.S. economy.

“When a terrorist hacker in the Philippines can wreak $10 billion in damage to the U.S. economy by implanting a virus, imagine what a sophisticated, well-funded effort to attack the computer base of our economy could accomplish,” he said.

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Newsflash

U.S. awards FIU two-year contract

Researchers at the Hemispheric Center for Environmental Technology (HCET) at FIU have been awarded a two-year, $2.1 million contract to launch projects in Latin America that will aid the military in reducing energy pollution. These projects will include a wastewater facility in Mexico and an energy plant in El Salvador.

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ACCESS DENIED: Starting in Feb., users can educate themselves on protecting their computer systems. (Photo: Hammarus/The Beacon)

“Spam is also a problem,” Granto said. “The new Panthersoft, the FIU General Council formed a committee to eliminate the use of social security numbers outside designated places (such as forms needed to enroll in the university), so that the primary means of identification will now be the Panther ID.

As the year and a new semester begin, the IT Security offices will continue to carry out plans to create a safer computer network for both FIU campuses.

“Spam is also a problem passwords, and then people get into your account.”

According to Granto, a major cause for this increase in identity theft is the use of private numbers as passwords around the school.

“ID theft is rampant, not just at FIU but around the world,” Granto said. “A lot of that happens because people don’t use appropriate passwords, and then people get into your account.”

The Beacon office is located in the Graham Center, room 210 for an application.

From BUGS, page 1

North Campus Students!

Office assistant needed!

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We prefer Federal Work Study. Stop by our office in WUC 124 or GC 210 for an application.
for women as compared with their male counterparts. Big surprise. Yet, there’s a connection here.

Unless young women look past the stereotypes of feminism, re-define the term and take ownership of this political identity, the gender inequalities that loom in our future will continue. Women will continue to earn less than men and have fewer chances to climb the company ladder, for example.

We need to start calling ourselves the feminists that we already are. Unfortunately, this isn’t happening for many young women.

An informal survey I took of several local young women I know showed that they simply don’t see themselves as feminists, and don’t think it matters. When asked whether they call themselves feminists, almost all paused, thought for a minute, and finally concluded that they are not feminists.

Many said because feminism requires political activism and because they’re not out on the streets picketing for equal wages or other causes, they must not be a feminist.

Yet, most of these women actually fit into their own broad definitions of feminism. For example, a friend of mine said feminism is a desire for gender equality. She desires this. I would be surprised to hear her or any other young woman say that she wants to be paid only 75 percent of men’s wages or other causes, they must not be a feminist.

Yet, students like my friend continue to deny their feminist ideologies.

Perhaps the refusal to identify themselves as feminists is, in part, a way to avoid political activism. Or maybe many young women take for granted what our mothers and grandmothers have fought for.

Perhaps many think there is no need for feminism any more, that men and women have equal pay, recognition and opportunities today.

More than 70 percent of women who acknowledge that the country still needs a strong women’s movement admitted that they have never joined or acted their local politicians regarding issues that affect women.

Participation of young women in the sciences and engineering is still an aneurysm. In fact, women make up just 28 percent of computer science bachelor’s degrees awarded in the U.S., according to the American Association of University Women. This number has dropped since 1984.

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Keen senses keep animals from tsunami’s wrath

FLEEING FROM CHAOS: Studies suggest that before the tsunami struck, to run for cover before any danger occurred. (Couresty Photo)

By ANURADHA SAWHNEY
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals

In India, amid the constant talk of the disaster in the south, one theme has emerged: Few wild animals have been found dead. It seems that almost all of those who could fly, run, slither or crawl away quickly left their homes in advance of the killer waves and fled to higher ground.

Anyone who has lived in India has seen firsthand how animals act strangely before the first monsoon cloud bursts over the parched earth after many months of drought and how they become agitated

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expression, changing the current, the fire try to move to safer waters.

We also know that some species of tree frogs can send and receive not only mating messages but also warnings over great distances by drumming on logs with their feet.

And polar bears are so sensitive to shifts in the atmospheric pressure that they can “smell” the electrostatic disturbances that occur within thunderstorm systems.

The vomeronasal organ, also called Jacobson’s organ, helps such animals detect chemical changes in the atmosphere (sometimes these organs are hidden just under the animal’s lip so that when dogs or cats snarl, they are actually using their sensitivity to determine whether an approaching animal is friend or foe).

Snakes and other reptiles use their tongues to sense such things and to “taste” the air. Sadly, some animals in India cannot escape disaster, as hard as they may try and as well equipped as they are to do so.

A m o n g t h e m a r e t h e a n i m a l s caged and chained in zoos, the snakes and mongooses kept by fortune-tellers and “animal fighters” in rattan baskets and the miserable dancing bears and wing-clipped and caged birds one still sees beside the roads despite an Indian governmental ban on the capture of wildlife.

We know that here at home, many captive animals perished during the Florida hurricanes.

Add to what we already lament in the aftermath of this hideous tsunami the thought that in times of disaster, some animals must be desperate to flee but unable to do so.

To have a survival advantage but not to be able to use it — this, too, is a tragedy.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What is your new year’s resolution?

• To do better in school.
• To lose those extra holiday pounds.
• To quit a bad habit.
• To find a new lover.
• To take up basket weaving and/or knitting.

Cast your vote at www.beaconnewspaper.com

WINNER & LOSER

WINNER

Smart kitty: Trinity Southern University, an online school, offered an MBA of Business Administration to a 6-year-old cat. The school offered no classes and gave the degree for a one-time price of $299. Unfortunately, FIU was the cat’s back-up school.

LOSER

Prosthetic burglar: Bryan Bridges, a former substitute teacher in Northampton, New Hampshire pleaded guilty to stealing a student’s prosthetic arm. Bridges had been fired in 2004 and police found the arm when they searched his house. This time the one-armed man was the victim.

QUOTEABLES

“I know one thing. You can try not to like this album. You can try real hard. But it will at least be your guilty pleasure.”

– Gwen Stefani, singer and actress, on her first solo album, Love, Angel, Music, Baby.

“I can be bought. I’m thinking there’s four years at Florida State for one of my kids.”

– Doug Mientkiewicz, first baseman for the Boston Red Sox, who caught and kept the ball that won the 2004 World Series.

“If you obtain condoms from Planned Parenthood, avoid the low-rated scented honeysuckle and assorted colors varieties. Instead, choose the lollipop.”

– Consumer Reports Magazine, in an article rating condom performance.

“It’s better to be sworn in than sworn at.”

– Patrick J. Leahy, Senator of Vermont, after taking the oath of office from Vice President Dick Cheney, who addressed him with an expirative last year.

“I am writing a lot more love songs because I’m really happy in my life, and I’m in a really positive relationship, but there’s also so much stuff to write about in the world.”

– Sheryl Crow, singer and songwriter, in an interview with Billboard Magazine.
Pat Conroy, the author of “The Great Santini” once said, “Without music life is a journey through a desert.” A life without music would be dull. Imagine turning on your TV and watching silent Gap commercials or going to the movies and watching Jude Law and Natalie Portman in “Closer” without the hit theme song, “Blower’s Daughter.”

Recently, iRiver and Apple iPod MP3 players have filled our world with song. These portable devices fit in your pocket and fill your day with your favorite tunes.

Since the end of the holidays, you can hardly go anywhere without seeing the signature, white Apple earphones or an MP3 player secured on to someone’s belt.

“They are great. I like that I can have like, what would take up five CDs, in such a compact item,” said sophomore Daniel Convers, the proud owner of a new 20 GB iPod.

The Apple 20 GB iPod can hold up to 5,000 songs and supports AAC, MP3, MP3 VBR, Audible, AIFF, Apple Lossless and WAV files. Its battery life is around 12 hours when fully charged (each charge takes about 4 hours) – a long battery life for such a small device. The Apple iPods are compatible with Mac OS X or Windows 2000/XP. This nifty little device will cost you around $299.

Seem a bit pricey? You may like to try out the Apple 4 GB iPod mini. This is a more compact MP3 player and comes in a wide variety of colors. It can hold up to 1,000 songs for your daily use.

However, it is rather impressive. The new iRiver H320 model comes with a large, vivid color screen, supports transfers from Windows Media Player, JPEG and BMP images, and has a battery life of 16 hours.

Additionally, iRiver uses a drag and drop system instead of the Apple iTunes software to download music. It also has a built-in joystick instead of a click wheel.

All iRiver players come equipped with an integrated voice recorder and a built-in FM tuner. The total cost is $315, a mere $15 more than an Apple iPod.

The iRiver comes with earphones, a carrying case, USB 2.0 cables, audio line-in cables, AC adapters and a leather carrying case.

Whether you prefer the sleek-looking Apple iPods or the color iRiver, MP3 gadgets are the way of the future. More and more products are constantly coming out in the market place, and it’s only a matter of time before everyone has one.
Real Steve Zissou deeply attached to his name

THE TWO ZISSOUS: Bill Murray’s character in Wes Anderson’s new film “The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou” is nothing like the real life Steve Zissou, a New York criminal trial lawyer. Credit: Photo

By ROBERT K. ELDER
Chicago Tribune

In the end credits of Wes Anderson’s “The Life Aquatic With Steve Zissou,” there’s an acknowledgement that Steve Zissou (played by Bill Murray) is a real person.

No, it’s not a joke. Though writer/director Anderson (“The Royal Tenenbaums,” “Rushmore”) made the name up, the script clearance department at Buena Vista Pictures found a real Steve Zissou.

This Zissou is a federal criminal trial lawyer based in Bay Side, N.Y., not a burned-out underwater explorer.

“When I found out it was part of the title, I was a little annoyed. It’s a unique name, and I really didn’t want to share it,” says Zissou, 49, a Houston-based entertainment attorney, says obtaining permissions “really gets down to due diligence.”

“The question is, if it’s a private citizen, would the person whose name is being used be readily identifiable? It’s a subjective test applied to the movie,” Freeman says.

Case in point: Eleven years after Richard Linklater’s cult hit “Dazed and Confused” opened in theaters, a trio of Texans (Andy Slater, Bobby Wooderson, Richard “Pink” Floyd) is suing the filmmaker and Universal Studios Inc. for “defamation” and “negligent infliction of emotional distress.”

The suit claims that Linklater did not obtain permission to use the names of former high school acquaintances in his film.

Freeman, who is representing the plaintiffs in that litigation, says in the case of Steve Zissou, New York attorney, the studio’s legal department was probably playing it safe by crossing the t’s and dotting the i’s, he says. “Any diligent studio would make sure there wouldn’t be a problem.”

Zissou’s stepmother, Mary Zissou of Lakeside, Calif., was married to Stavros “Steve” Zissou for nearly 35 years before his death in 2000.

When she first saw the movie trailer and the title of the film, “I thought it was a private individual,” Freeman says. “I thought it was the most not-possible thing that would ever happen.”

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The concert will take place at 2 p.m. at the Bayfront Amphitheater located at 301 North Biscayne Boulevard. For more information contact (305) 358-7550.

SATURDAY • JANUARY 15

Celebrate Haitian Independence with performers Nu-Look, Djakout Mizik and Konpa Kreyol among others. The concert will take place at 2 p.m. at the Bayfront Amphitheater located at 301 North Biscayne Boulevard. For more information contact (305) 358-7550.

SUNDAY • JANUARY 16

The Greatest Show on Earth has returned with three rings of performing animals, acrobats, clowns and all things circus. The Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus will perform at the American Airlines Arena at 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. Tickets start at $12.

GRAMMAR

Do you like meticulously picking out grammatical errors in essays?

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Lee De Forest, the American inventor of the vacuum tube, broadcasts a live performance of Enrico Caruso from the Metropolitan Opera. The broadcast, over a telephone transmitter, could be heard only by the small number of electronics hobbyists who had radio receivers.

De Forest started regular nightly concerts in 1915, increasing interest in radio receivers, which at the time depended on the vacuum tubes manufactured by De Forest’s company.
British chef captures ‘culinary nostalgia’

By C. JOEL MARINO
Senior Staff Writer

While most people claim that there are certain songs, sounds, or smells that, when casually experienced, remind them of some important event in their lives, I always found it strange that I experience the same nostalgia whenever I think of … food. Apparently – and happily – I am not the only one to associate food and taste with past experiences.

Nigel Slater, a popular British chef and cookbook author, manages to brilliantly portray that feeling of culinary nostalgia in his childhood memoir “Doat: The Story of a Boy’s Hunger.” Written in simple, direct prose, the book begins with Slater’s earliest memories and ends in his late adolescence, after he graduates from a culinary academy.

Though there are no chapter divisions, each section of the book focuses on a memory and is headlined by the name of an edible product somehow associated with that memory. In the first section, “Toast,” Slater describes his happy recollections of his mother buttering burnt bread for his breakfast.

However, the whole book does not deal entirely with cuisine. Part of the hunger mentioned in the autobiography’s title is Slater’s struggle to gain the acceptance of his father. He is a middle-class factory owner, constantly disappointed with the young Slater’s “punny” attitude, as he attempts to turn his son into a man.

Though Slater’s mother provides him with a sort of comfort and silent friendship as a child by making sure he always has a good meal to eat even though she working in the kitchen, that security is broken in the middle of the book when she dies of lung disease.

Soon afterward, Slater’s father, a stern man unable to share his bereavement with his son, begins a scandalous relationship with the family’s cleaning woman which eventually results in their marriage.

“Nigel Slater is Slater’s struggle to gain the acceptance of his father, a race that ends in the kitchen.”

Throughout the rest of the book, the young Slater seems to be competing with this woman for the affection of his father, a race that ends in the kitchen.

Learning how to cook to please his father is the only thing the boy must worry about. As he enters his teenage years, Slater’s second hunger begins to manifest itself as he battles with sex and all the feelings of guilt it brings. From masturbation to voyeurism, from his first girlfriend to occasional homo-sexual experiences, Slater keeps himself busy as he explains that his sexuality was as much a part of his growing up as any other event in his life.

Though never somber or over dramatic, Slater manages to capture his experiences with depth, separation, love and anxiety with enough melancholy and nostalgia to make readers feel as though they lived through the moments his memory describes.

The book’s only drawback would be to American readers who are unfamiliar with many of the British foods to which Slater refers. But the American edition carries a glossary which explains delicacies such as treacle, sponge, and bourbon biscuits.

Ringtones perking up record industry’s bottom line

By DANIEL RUBIN
Knight Ridder Newspapers

PHILADELPHIA – When Itai Adi’s friend Maria is calling, his cell phone lets him know by playing the Black Eyed Peas’ “Let’s Get It Started.”

When his family is on the line? “It says something about me to yourself and to your peers.” For those who think ringtones are like, so last year, how about ringbacks? They’re more like next year.

Ringbacks are songs or noises other people will hear when they call you, while they’re waiting for you to answer your phone. Instead of rrrrrring, rrrrrring, they could be hearing barnyard noises, Beastie Boys tunes or Beethoven. The owner of the phone gets to decide what callers will hear.

Ringbacks are so popular these are digital samples or snippets of the song, vocals and instruments that come with a ringback service. Verizon Wireless is testing markteting them in some western U.S. markets for $1 a month, $1.99 for each ring- back song used. Sprint is expected to launch its service early next year. There is a rush to roll out better-sounding songs and crisper cell phone speakers – and for good reason. One industry analyst, Ovum, estimates that by 2008 cell phone ringtunes, ringbacks and songs could account for 28 percent of all music sales, including CDs and legitimate downloads. Companies see great opportunity in allowing people to shop for, buy, save and play songs on cell phones.

“We are seeing the development of a new channel for the delivery of digital music on wireless devices,” said Ward of IDC.

In the United States, most fans of ringtunes are under age 25. They pay between $1 and $3 for a sample of a favorite song – generally the better it sounds, the more it costs. In this country, most shop for ringtunes by phone, downloading them from their carriers. Elsewhere, phone customers are more likely to go to third party Web sites for their ringrings.

The fastest-growing part of the trend – and the one the music biz has put most hope in – are called Master Tones or Real Music ringtunes, which have mp3 clarity.

Unlike the cheaper ringtunes – think Mozart’s 40th played with one finger – these are digital samples of the song, vocals and all. The industry likes the master tracks because they can sell for $3, three times as much as an entire download-loaded song on music Web sites. And the artist gets royalties.

“ar in India – where big,”

“If you have that hip, Snoop Dogg audio clip when you pick up the phone, you’re going to be that much cooler – at least, that is the hope,” Ward said.
GOOD TIMES: Coach Don Strock stands with running back Rashod Smith (top and top right) as he was named Offensive Player of the Year and Most Valuable Player. Offensive lineman Ed Wenger (right) won the top award for Academic Excellence for the third year in a row.  

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FIU suffers two straight losses in Arkansas

By ANDONI GONZALEZ RUA
Staff Writer

Maybe a nine-day layoff was too long. Having won the FIU Holiday Classic on Dec. 28, the Golden Panthers felt good heading into its Arkansas road trip to open the Sun Belt Conference schedule.

On Jan. 6, the Golden Panthers lost to hosts Arkansas-Little Rock by 10, 67-57. Making shots hurt FIU as the team shot just 38 percent from the field and under 56 percent from the free throw line.

This game saw Israel N’Diaye lead the way for the Golden Panthers with 15 points, who returned from a back injury and the birth of his new daughter. N’Diaye sat for just one minute the entire game and shot 6-of-9 from the field to finish with 15 points.

Matias, who did not arrive in Arkansas until just before game time, added 11 points in his first action since two days before Christmas.

Despite holding UALR’s leading scorer Ivan Almonte, who had carried the club throughout Matias’ absence, was held in check by the Trojans, scoring just 10 points with three rebounds in 31 minutes of action.

FIU trailed from the start and never took the lead in front of an audience of 3,340 at Altel Arena in Little Rock.

Despite holding UALR’s leading scorer Brandon Freeman to just nine points, the Golden Panthers were unable to subdue Zack Wright and Zack Graber who both added 15 points for the Trojans.

Coach Sergio Rouco knew that the Trojans would be a tough team to beat. “Little Rock is one of the better pro-grams in our league, and we knew coming in that this was going to be a tough fight,” said Rouco.

In part, Rouco blamed a lack of experience for his team’s struggles. “[UALR] is a veteran team that is ready for Sun Belt Play. They know what conference play means. We’re a young team. My guys don’t have a clue,” Rouco said.

ARKANSAS STATE 60, FIU 55

The Golden Panthers ended its two-game swing through Arkansas on Jan. 8 with a five point loss to conference leaders Arkansas State.

In front of an audience of just under 3,500 in Jonesboro, Ark., Arkansas State, the top scoring team in the Sun Belt Conference, handed FIU a 0-2 start to conference play.

“Our guys are beginning to realize just how tough the Sun Belt Conference really is,” said Rouco in a post-game press release. “This league doesn’t get enough credit. It’s a very good basketball league.”

FIU shot just under 46 percent from the field while holding the hosts to just 35 percent, but Dewarrick Spencer’s three-point basket with just 10.5 seconds left to play in the game proved to make the difference.

Led by Matias’ 16 points, FIU lead by five, 55-50 with just under two minutes to play.

Spencer then hit two threes in the last minute-and-a-half, handing the Golden Panthers its third two-game losing streak of the season.

Almonte and Jayce Lewis also were double figures for the Golden Panthers, who moved to 7-7 on the season and 0-2 in conference play.

Arkansas State guard J.J. Montgomery led the way for the host who led 24-21 at the half. He converted on 8-of-17 shots from the field in just under 30 minutes with 57. He now finds himself just one behind Taurence Johnson and Jabari Brown who graduated in 2003 and 2000 respectively.

Arkansas State guard J.J. Montgomery led the way for the host who led 24-21 at the half. He converted on 8-of-17 shots from the field in just under 30 minutes for 22 points. The Indians now move to 9-4 in the season and 2-0 in conference play.

“We’ll learn from this as a group,” Rouco said following the defeat. “This is a very good Arkansas State basketball team, and if we can play with them, we’re going to win some games this season.”

ARKANSAS WOES: The Golden Panthers and lead player Ivan Almonte ended a two game trip in Arkansas with back-to-back losses.

JESSICA MARSHALL/THE BEACON

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Golden Panthers lose thriller in overtime

By HARRY COLEMAN
Sports Editor

The team looked tired and weak for all but six minutes of the game.

With Arkansas State leading by 15 with 7:47 left in the game, baskets by Asha Neal and LaQuetta Ferguson ignited a late FIU rally that sent the game into overtime before losing momentum and falling 85-74 to the Indians in the extra period.

“We didn’t come out focused and that really showed, but we were able to come back and take it into overtime,” said Ferguson. “Unfortunately, we didn’t get it done.”

FIU outscored the Indians 20-7 in the final six minutes of the game. Ferguson scored nine of those points and senior forward Milena Tomova added six.

FIU looked fatigued throughout the game because coach Cindy Russo’s team was playing its third game in six days. Arkansas State on the other hand, had a week to prepare for the Golden Panthers.

In overtime, FIU had nothing left in the tank as the team managed to score just four points in the final five minutes.

“We lost focus both physically and mentally,” Ferguson said. “We were tired.”

Coach Russo was proud of the team’s late effort.

“[We] were in a fog,” said Russo to The Miami Herald. “We’ve had a seven-day stretch with no time off. I was real proud of their late effort, but it was too little, too late.”

The Golden Panthers record falls to 11-5 on the season and 0-1 in the Sun Belt Conference.

The team was led by Tomova’s 38th career double-double and 13th of the season. The team all star finished with 20 points, 13 rebounds, and a season high five blocks.

Ferguson added 15 points and Eva Makela added 13.

The game was the second straight overtime match for the Golden Panthers.

For the Indians, guard Ali Carter led the team with 23 points, eight of which came in overtime.

Even with the loss, Russo’s team has won nine of the past 11 games.

FIU will begin a three-game stretch on the road at North Texas on Jan. 15.

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Swimming and Diving team places second at invitational

By HARRY COLEMAN
Sports Editor

With the Golden Panthers hosting a swimming invitational on Jan. 9, the team did not want to disappoint the home crowd. The Golden Panthers didn’t as FIU placed second in the Golden Panther Invitational.

FIU placed second with 296.5 points in the event. Only Brown, with 781 points, had a better score than FIU. Cleveland State (290.5), George Washington (240) and Emory (156), rounded out the event.

Former Olympic veteran and current FIU head coach Noemi Lung Zaharia was pleased with the team’s performance after an intense week of practice.

“The invitational came at the end of winter training which included very intense training practicing twice a day,” said Zaharia. “The girls were quite tired but actually had nice conclusion to all the training.”

The girls motivated each other in the second place effort.

“They did a great job,” Zaharia said. “All the cheering they did for each other really helped them get through after all the training.”

With wins in the 500 and 1,000-yard freestyle events, Claudia Barsi led FIU and almost broke her own Bay Vista Aquatics Center pool records.

In the 500, she touched the wall in 5:09.62, third-hundredths of a second shy and in the 1000, she finished in 10:28.07, 21-hundredths of a second shy of her own record.

Zaharia was proud of the way Barsi represented the team.

“She came back this second semester and stepped it up quite nicely with good times,” Zaharia said. “She helped the team out with big points. Barsi felt good to be back.

“I was happy because I was ineligible the first semester,” said Barsi. “In the end I was mad though because I wanted to break the pool record but I didn’t.”

Sophomore Megan Balkenbush represented FIU well with a win in the three-meter with 266.03 points, two points behind Brown’s winner Jessica Lazen. Both performances for Balkenbush are NCAA Zone-qualifying marks.

Other members also set career marks in the event.

Vanessa Segovia’s time of 5:40.56 in the 500-yard freestyle was a season best.

Carly Crandall set season best marks in the 50 and 100-yard freestyle, touching the wall in 27.29 and 58.46 respectively.

The Golden Panthers will return to action on Jan. 15 in Jacksonville against Georgia Southern.

NCAA waives standard, I-A status granted

By HARRY COLEMAN
Sports Editor

The Golden Panthers scored its first victory of the offseason with a game yet to take place.

On Jan. 10, FIU was granted a second transitional season of Division I-A football by the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

The NCAA has also postponed the mandated attendance vote until April of this year. In April, the NCAA will determine whether to continue the mandated rule of a 15,000 minimum average home attendance in the first two seasons while a university applies for permanent status in Division I-A football.

In FIU’s first transitional season that culminated in December, the program failed to meet the required attendance mark. FIU averaged 10,095 in home attendance, falling short of the 15,000 mark.

However with the cancellation of the games against Jacksonville and Western Kentucky due to Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne, FIU was granted a reprieve and waived off the mandatory attendance rule.

Athletic Director Rick Mello was pleased with the response from the NCAA. FIU’s strategic plan for football was so well prepared that the NCAA will use it as a blueprint for other schools wishing to apply for I-A status.

“It was big because not only did the NCAA accept our report, but it will also be used as a future model for all schools who wish to make the move,” said Mello. “It speaks of the preparedness of our program and how we have followed through.”

At the Third Annual FIU Football Banquet held the same day of the announcement, football head coach Don Strock compared the news to a light at the end of a tunnel.

Strock congratulated his team and welcomed the challenge of the top teams that FIU has already agreed to play, including Texas Tech, Wisconsin and next season’s opener Kansas State.

Whether the NCAA will continue to enforce the attendance requirement next season will be determined in less than three months, but Mello says he wants to accomplish the feat no matter what.

“We are trying to hit 15,000 no matter what. It’s our goal whether they have a criteria or not,” said Mello.

Many people have questioned the reason for FIU moving towards Division I-A so quickly, but the NCAA liked FIU’s plan despite having been the fastest university to reach I-A status.

“We liked our report, the way we planned and that we were very realistic in the report,” said Mello. “I always knew attendance will be the hardest to reach, but we spent $90,000 on Method Man and Redman, so we tried.”