Motorcycle accident claims student’s life

By C. JOEL MARINO
Senior Staff Writer

Joshua Bolivar Gomez, a sophomore who was majoring in criminal justice, passed away on the afternoon of December 11, 2004, after his motorcycle collided head-on with a car on West 20 Ave. He was 20 years old.

Gomez was traveling south bound on West 20 Ave. on his way back home to Sweetwater, after trying to acquire a license plate in Hialeah for his motorcycle. A car traveling west on the same road made an illegal turn onto West 62 St. just as Gomez was crossing the intersection.

The motorcycle hit the front of the car as the car made the turn, ejecting Gomez from his seat and sending him beneath the car and onto the sidewalk. Gomez died on impact.

“The police found the driver of the car to be at fault. Gomez’s parents did not allow him to buy the 2003 Suzuki motorcycle, but after he purchased the motorcycle with his credit card, there was no way the family could return it.

“He always wanted a bike and he really wanted to get that one,” said senior Vanessa Gomez, Gomez’s sister.

See GOMEZ, page 3

BASEBALL TEAM LOSES: The baseball team played against the University of MiamiHurricanes on Feb. 1 at the UM baseball field, and was shutout in a 7-0 loss. Junior starting pitcher Ammer Cabrera (above) gave up five hits, runs, and walked three batters, as he struck out only four Hurricanes. The Golden Panthers only had two hits for Tuesday night (right), compared to the opposing baseball team, which had nine hits in the game. The teams’ matchup record now stands at 8-7 wins for the UM baseball team to 27 wins for the Golden Panthers.

Gangster rapper sells out, Pg. 5

BBC students strut their stuff, Pg. 6

Super Bowl predictions, Pg. 12

Smooth rush for bookstore employees

The motorcycle hit the front of the car as

the line is continuously moving.

As the 12th person in line, Arlena estimates that she’ll make her way around the lane dividers in about five minutes.

“You’re always impatient when you’re in line, but it’s been moving fast,” she said.

To prepare for this semester’s spring rush the management for the UP and Biscayne Bay Campus bookstores hired temporary staff, which will work from early December until about the second week of the Spring semester.

“We tell them how long they work; right off the bat, just so we don’t waste anybody’s time,” said Chris Quainance, UP operations manager.

According to Quainance, the UP bookstore hired 150 temporary workers and had about 50 to 60 staff working at one time, including in the upstairs café. Even though both bookstores are highly staffed, they extended their regular hours during the first two weeks of class and the UP bookstore opened seven days a week.

Christian Rodriguez, a UP bookstore employee, usually works 20 hours per week, and according to his estimates, worked about 20 to 40 hours per week during rush. Even though Rodriguez said it was the smoothest rush he’s seen, he still sees room for improvement.

“The main issue is restocking the books,” said Rodriguez. “The shelves empty out and you constantly have to keep restocking.”

Another reason the FIU bookstores had a smooth rush season was because students were able to buy their books sooner because of faculty book orders.

“The earlier the faculty lets us know what books they’re using, the better it is for us,” said Scott Cohen, assistant manager of the BBC bookstore.

Cohen said that when the bookstore knows what books it needs, the books are available sooner.

Students can sell back books earlier too. Cohen also said that, when the cashiers at BBC were more efficient this season.

Manisha Suckoo has been able to buy their books sooner because of faculty book orders.

Another reason the BBC bookstore for more than four years. Suckoo and Cohen agree that there is one more factor in the smooth rush season.

“They think that people were buying their books elsewhere,” Cohen said.

“I was actually going to say that, but I didn’t want to,” Suckoo said. “Students are finding other options.”

Besides buying books online through the FIU bookstore, students have alternative textbook sources, such as other online purchasing sites, online trading sites and off-campus bookstores.

Amaro’s initial reaction after entering the bookstore was to stall and hand over her bag to employees.

“I almost left my backpack in the cubbyholes inside,” Amaro said.

This is the first time either bookstore does not have a bag check-in to prevent textbook theft.

Quainance said that the new system is on a trial basis. Barnes and Noble’s College Bookstore, the owner of the FIU bookstore, will decide whether bag check-in will become permanently obsolete. This being dependent on sales.
By LUIS NIN
Staff Writer

There’s something about getting books assigned in class that takes the joy out of reading. After several days of lectures and rampant over-analyses, even the most enjoyable book begins to lose its appeal. In their search to give books meaning, many professors completely lose sight of their entertainment value. The FIU Book Club believes in a different approach to reading: They read because it’s fun.

Founded by club president, Joel Marino, for the Fall 2003 semester, the FIU Book Club created a small community for students to enjoy and discuss books among themselves. The club is officially named Cellar Door.

“I wanted a catchy name for the club... it couldn’t be just ‘The FIU Book Club,’” said Marino. “I was lying in bed a week before last spring semester started thinking of a name. I was in that delicious mood between sleep and being awake, when I began to think of the movie ‘Donnie Darko.’ In the movie, Drew Barrymore plays a liberal high school English teacher who is fired.”

According to Marino, before Barrymore is fired in the movie, she writes on the chalk board “Cellar Door.” The main character, Darko, finds her and she tells him that a writer once said it was the most beautiful phrase in the English language. Marino looked up Barrymore’s accusation, and found that both J.R.R. Tolkien and H.L. Mencken shared that view. Marino says he doesn’t get that out of his head and decided to stick with the phrase as the name of the book club.

After a brief hiatus in 2004, the FIU Book Club is ready to start reading again. Marino believes that there is an overwhelming need for the club at FIU.

“We needed a book club run by students where we can discuss the books we want to discuss and where we can talk about them the way we want to. There are no papers or tests. Everything’s free to interpretation, so there’s no way the clear choice when the club was deciding on its reading material.”

Club Treasurer Kerri Rojas enjoyed discussing “The DaVinci Code” with the book club because it had a real sense of giving it our own direction. The discussions were a lot less constricted in terms of thought. We were free to go on different paths and develop different ideas,” Rojas said.

The club enjoyed the advantages of meeting together to discuss the book. Together, members analyzed the deeper meanings and allusions in the novel, something they wouldn’t have been able to do if they read the book by themselves.

“We talked about the Merovingians, the history of Arthur and his quest, symbols within the paintings, etc. I did all my research,” Marino said. “This semester, the book club is scheduled to read ‘Life of Pi’ by Yann Martel. In this novel the son of a zookeeper gets caught in a horrible shipwreck and becomes stranded in the middle of the Pacific Ocean on a 26-foot lifeboat in shark infested waters. Accompanying him is a 450 lb. Bengal tiger named Richard Parker.”

According to Marino, oddly enough, the story hinges on religion. The main character is simultaneously Hindu, Muslim, and Christian and must come to terms with his beliefs as he tries to survive the perilous 227-day journey across the Pacific Ocean.

“Life of Pi” won one of the most prestigious awards in literature in 2002, the Man Booker Prize. But despite its intriguing plot and critical acclaim, it seems like an odd selection for the club. Compared to “The DaVinci Code,” “Life of Pi” is an obscure novel. Most people haven’t heard of it.

When asked why he chose “Life of Pi” for the Book Club’s reading this semester, Marino explained, “I read the back of the book, and I was fascinated by the plot. I thought, ‘Well, I think between the stress of textbooks and assigned reading, people forget the value of real literature, and what it is to read for leisure and interest.’”

Kathleen Oliva
Freshman

I think between the stress of textbooks and assigned reading, people forget the value of real literature, and what it is to read for leisure and interest. “Life of Pi” tackles religion, and so does this book. Why not follow that trend a bit? It seems like what a lot of college kids are preoccupied with these days.”

Oliva eagerly anticipates reading “Life of Pi” with the FIU book club.

“I think between the stress of textbooks and assigned reading, people forget the value of real literature and what it is to read for leisure and interest. It is important for students to make time for a book they really have an innate interest in,” Oliva said.

The FIU Book Club’s first meeting will be next Thursday, Feb. 10, at 3:30 p.m. in the Bookstore Cafe in GC at University Park. For more information, e-mail bookclub@fiu.edu.
**Beloved student loses life in fatal accident**

**By TOM LASSETER**
Knights Rider

Iraq's first democratic elections in 50 years were marred by 10 suicide bomb- ers. Forty-four people were killed and 200 injured in the attacks that occurred on election day.

The family became aware of the accident the next day after finding a detective's note on the door of their house. “We couldn’t believe it at first. It’s just one of those things that no one expects and we all took it as an own ways,” Vanessa Gomez said.

Funeral services were held later that week at Bernardo Garcia’s home. The streets of Baghdad were not filled with blood as mentioned by the terrorist groups,” said Farid Ayar, an official with the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq.

Like many others in Iraq, Ayar seemed to be hedging his bets. The elections were a political win for the interim Iraqi government and the American administration that backs it, but few Iraqis or Americans were prepared to declare the insurgency defeated.

Thaer al Naqib, a spokesman for interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi, was less reserved. “Today the terrorists lost the war,” he said. “It is a historic victory for Iraq.”

While the insurgents failed to derail the elections, they succeeded in dictating how the voting was conducted. No civilian cars were allowed on the roads.

**Joe Marti Ceremony:**
Students and faculty attended the Joe Marti Cuban Club ceremony on Jan. 28 at the Biscayne Bay Campus to commemorate the late poet. Many admired the glass vases full of coffee beans that served as creative center pieces containing lit candles and a Jose Marti poem (left). Children of all ages also attended the event and participated in a fashion show which took place after the formal ceremony.

**HATZEL VELA**
Director of Student Media

Gomez is remembered by his family for his hard work, like helping his father construct a new deck for their house and handle this the best way he can, but you just can’t ever erase him from our lives. He was a good boy. He was a good brother.

He is survived by his mother, father and another sister, Yasmin.

**JOSE MARTI CEREMONY:**
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EDITORIAL

Change in fraternity recruitment efforts proves positive for all students and faculty

FIU students and faculty might have noted a change in front of Graham Center at University Park during the past two weeks. Recruitment for fraternities was held in the Betty Chapman Plaza instead of inside GC as it has been for the past several years. The change may not seem so important, but for those that have been at FIU for more than one semester, the change is very significant.

Having the fraternity tables outside is a win-win situation. Usually, Rush Week means an even more crowded GC – that means more noise, congestion and commotion. This is especially tiring for those who are in a hurry and aren’t interested in taking part in rush activities. With the tables outside, the GC hallways become less of an obstacle and the building is less noisy.

It was an improved rush experience. The fraternities enticed students with food, party invitations and this weather. Rush Week as an outdoor activity makes fraternities all the more interesting and approachable to potential rushees. This is especially tiring for those who are in a hurry and aren’t interested in taking part in rush activities. With the tables outside, the GC hallways become less of an obstacle and the building is less noisy.

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“Those were 11 fraternities out there. We had officially planned to hold recruitment inside Graham Center, but it was over-booked with other events and vendors, so we decided to set up our tables outside,” said Greek Affairs assistant, Roderigo Duarte.

On a low note, the fraternities made a pretty big mess outside. Most of the leftover food, bottles and papers were not cleaned up until early this week. So try and keep things a little more tidy next time, OK, guys?

Although Rush Week recruitment was outdoors only because GC was booked, we hope that the Greeks continue to keep their Rush Week tables outside for many years to come. It makes for a more enjoyable experience for everybody, even those not involved with Rush Week.

– John Lovell, Managing Editor

Leoncio Alvarez, Opinion Editor

A lesson for Facebook newbies

By DARA BRAMSON
Staff Writer

Were you a victim of the slab bracelet fad in elementary school? How about the pog phenomenon, or that Magic-card madness? Have you ever owned a CD by Chumbawumba?

If you answer yes to one or more of these questions, then www.facebook.com is for you. The Facebook is an online directory that connects people through social networks at colleges. Allison Shufield, a sophomore at Florida State University put it simply: “It’s like being in the first grade again. Can we be friends? Circle yes or no.”

Up until my discovery of The Facebook, that was my system for making friends. Getting started is a win-win situation: you can get to know people and enter all of your personal information. You can enter anything from your major and your screen name to your sexual orientation or whatever emo poetry makes you cry this week. Once you’re finished, congratulations! You’ve just established a quick and easy way for someone to effectively stalk you.

Unlike similar websites such as Friendster or Myspace, The Facebook only allows students of the same school to view each other’s pages. The process of acquiring friends is time consuming, yet necessary to becoming a committed member of this online ruche.

Trust me though, it’s worth it because this site will so get you laid. But you have to play your cards right. This is why I am going to briefly give you...

THE DO’S AND DON’T’S OF FACEBOOK

DO
• put “Fight Club” as one of your favorite movies. Everyone loves “Fight Club,” even if you have never seen the entire movie.

• list bands no one has ever heard of as your favorite music. It makes you cooler. People who do not know you will think you are unique. Well, at least people will think you are cool until they find out you only saw the name of the band because you accidentally typed in “Coldplan” instead of “Coldplay” on Kazaa.

• post a picture of yourself chugging liquor straight from the bottle. This shows you have a fun, wild side and that you don’t spend all your time on The Facebook. Also, if you have any photos of yourself drunk and riding a shopping cart, put those up too. Or, you can just rotate these pictures weekly (since you can only post one at a time) to demonstrate that you are definitely not obsessed with The Facebook.

DON’T
• put “Whatever I Can Get” when they ask you what kind of relationships you want. Being a member of this site is a sign that you’ll take whatever you can get.

• forget to look at your wall. (The wall is the part of your page where friends can post comments about you.) Once, it took me two weeks to realize someone had gone on my page and writ...
ICE GOES DOWN IN YEARS

By DANNY MUELA
Staff Writer

Needless to say, they were all hardcore. But what happened to Ice Cube? The Man, that’s what happened. The Man wasn’t selling enough of his crappy movies, so he had to take one of urban America’s legends to hook his product to get a new demographic.

“Are We There Yet?” was the number one movie in America last weekend, mostly because it’s February and all the good movies are on the back burner until after the Oscars. But think about it, America is embracing Ice Cube. Something that your infatuation is everlasting. I encourage you to sign on. Whether you choose to be an over-obsessed visitor, or offended by is available at my social life will plague my conscience for helping you get laid.

Don’t forget to thank me.

Old friends and classmates reunite as members of online community

FACE, from page 4

ten. “Dara, you left your diapers at my house. I’ll leave them in the mailbox.” Of course, everyone had seen my wall before I had.

I send out mail to entire groups. This is annoying (and will not get you laid). No matter how profound or remarkable you think your thoughts are, nobody cares. Plus, signing on The Facebook and getting excited over having a message, only to find it’s a mass e-mail someone sent to the world, makes that person a killjoy. And definitely do not send chain letters or “Thoughts of the Day.” That’s what middle school was for.

Another wonderful thing about Facebook is that anyone can create a group about anything they want. A group is simply a feature of the site that allows you to join a forum with other people who have similar interests.

There are tasteful ones, like “Class of 2007” or “The Harry Potter Fan Club,” but let’s face it, it is more fun to join a group with a name like “Addicted to Booty.”

Alethea Perez, a junior at FIU, enjoys the amusing variety of the different groups.

“I’m proud to be a Facebook member. Whether I want to be a member of the ‘I Am on Facebook to Get Laid’ group or even the ‘Bush Sux’ group, anything I could possibly be interested in or offended by is available at my disposal.”

For those of you who are already addicted to The Facebook, you have probably accepted that your infatuation is everlasting.

My sincere apologies to those of you who unearth The Facebook after reading this article. The decline in your grades and social life will plague my conscience and probably drive me to drink. Be sure to look for pictures of me shopping a cart. With that said, I have to admit I enjoy the simplicity of reconnecting with old friends on The Facebook.

It’s likely that I’ll never talk to the random high school peers I have declared friendships with on Facebook, but nonetheless, the site offers a strange sense of continuity – proof that life after high school did not end and then restart in a different realm.

The Facebook is what you make of it. Whether you choose to be an over-obsessed visitor, a sleazy group junkie or just a normal college student enjoying your ability to reconnect with your middle school sweethearts, I encourage you to sign on.

Who knows? We can even rendezvous online after you check out my page and spot me on your middle school campus. Don’t forget to thank me for helping you get laid.
A SERIES OF NEW CLASSES AT THE BISCAYNE BAY CAMPUS WILL HAVE STUDENTS’ FEET MOVING IN A VARIETY OF WORLDLY STYLES – FOR FREE!

By KATHERINE BEALE
Staff writer

There’s good news for dance lovers. The Student Programming Council is offering free dance classes at the Biscayne Bay Campus at the Wolfe University Center. Students can choose between belly dancing on Mondays, salsa on Tuesdays and ballroom dancing on Thursdays – or any combination of the three. All classes take place from 6-7 p.m. in WUC 155 (sometimes 157), and all classes are open, so while faithful attendance is encouraged, suddenly deciding to start attending in the middle of the semester isn’t a problem.

Can’t choose between the three, and don’t have time to take them all? The Beacon attended the first class for each dance to give you an inside report on what you can expect.

If you’re trying to beat your cousins to be the favorite grandchild, or you’re a guy looking for a way to impress women, or you just love classic dances, ballroom dancing is the class for you. Husband–wife team Richard and Karen Campbell demonstrate each technique slowly and clearly. They teach the man’s and the woman’s parts separately, then show how to combine them flawlessly.

Within the first 15 minutes, the Campbells will have you believing that you too can follow gracefully like Karen or lead naturally like Richard. The instructors hope to teach five or six dances over the course of the semester, which may include swing, foxtrot, waltz, mambo, cha-cha and merengue. The dances they teach depend on what students want to learn.

“We want something that will get them out on the dance floor,” said Karen. “The first year they had a group that wanted to learn tango, so they focused several classes on that...
It’s no surprise ‘Aviator’ holds so many Oscar nominations

By ELENA SANTALO Contributing Writer

Martin Scorsese’s “The Aviator” landed in box offices around the world, to tell the tale of the grand aviator himself – Howard Hughes (Leonardo DiCaprio). This film marks Scorsese’s sixth academy award nomination for best director. He is the front-runner in the category, because not only did he do an incredible job, but he gains sympathy for not having won any previous nominations.

The almost three-hour film skims across Hughes’ life from the late 1920’s until the 1940’s. As a child, Hughes had dreams of “making the biggest movies, the fastest planes and being the richest man in the world.” Although he grew up to be an obsessive compulsive, his eccentricity helped him realize these dreams. He made a few extravagant and expensive movies, but his true passion was for flight. He was constantly inventing new airplanes and testing them, regardless of the expense.

“...it is released on DVD, I will receive $500 each for the Xbox and the PlayStation2 championships. To register call (786) 201-4130...”

The film is very well made and also had some educational value. “I enjoyed the movie because I learned a lot of the cool things that Howard Hughes had done,” said freshman Andrea Arreaga. “I would definitely agree, because before the film, I saw Hughes as just another famous billionaire, but now I see his influence on the movie industry, especially with the evolution of the plane. All in all, the cast works extremely well together, and although the film took longer than I prefer, the cast and sets keep the entertainment alive. Whether you see it in the movie theater or rent it from Blockbuster when it is released on DVD, I highly recommend this movie as a must see.”
DANCE classes offer thorough instruction

According to Richard, ballroom dancing can make any man irresistible to women. “Guys,” he said with a smile, “I don’t care how ugly you are. If you can do this, they’ll line up for you!”

Now that ballroom dancing has made the list of recognized Olympic sports, those who start learning now may very well find themselves ahead of the next big social trend. But whether or not ballroom dancing becomes hip again, learning your way around a dance floor may help you to impress someone.

Senior Peter Hanner explained his interest in the class. “My girlfriend told me I can’t dance, and I said, ‘No I can’t,’” he said while shaking his head and laughing.

Luckily, turning the rhythmically challenged into presentable dancers is the Campbell’s specialty. “If [the students] don’t get it,” Richard said, “I blame the teacher.”

The Campbells believe that when students have the desire to learn, there are no bad students. By far the most physical of the dance classes is belly dancing. It is a unique way to trim your way around a dance floor. BBC dance classes offer thorough instruction although many believe never thought possible.

As students learn more steps he adds them to the basic step and repeats them until everyone feels they’ve mastered the concept. He adds humor to basic principles, and students laugh their way through class.

“I hate belly dancing to be a woman’s dance form, there are a lot of great male belly dancers as well. Over the course of the semester, she hopes to build on students progress to teach more advanced techniques, but of course, new students are always welcome.”

“I love helping people express themselves,” Rava said. “[Belly dancing] is great for expression, finding inner beauty and feeling more confident.”

Students who gave the class a try seemed pleased by what they found. “I saw the sign and noticed [the session] was on the same day of my class, so I came in,” said Malenue Rivera, “It was fun, something new.”

For those who’ve been missing out on the salsa craze and want to dance with their friends, the Tuesday class shouldn’t be missed. While the University Park campus offers salsa classes through The Salsa Kings at $5 a lesson, BBC students can learn for free from Jim Chang, whose group, Tropical Flavor, has performed at the last two Latinos Unidos celebrations. Chang teaches each step by first walking the students through it several times, then setting it to music.

As students learn more they can move on to the dance floor. Students laugh their way through class.

“The dance floor may help you to impress someone. For those searching for their next passion, or just looking for someone to be passionate about, the “Dancing with the Wolfie” series is a great opportunity. As a belly dance participant nicely put it, ‘It’s free, so why not try it out’”

BOOGEYMAN

You thought it was just a story.

In theaters February 4
Puerto Rican shortstop leads by example

By AIDEN GONZALEZ
Staff Writer

Luis Rivera, one of the leading men on the FIU baseball team, traces the roots that make him the talented shortstop he is today back to the Puerto Rican town of Carolina.

Whether it was waking up at eight in the morning everyday to take infield practice or going into a baseball military school at the young age of 14, something always fueled Rivera to play the sport he loves.

Coming into his third year with the Golden Panthers, Rivera has developed his love for the game.

“I am a leader on the playing field,” Rivera said. “I don’t lead in the exercises or the running. I just do that on my own, quietly. But when it’s time to get on the field, everybody listens to me and looks to me for answers.”

Head coach Danny Price knows that his skills behind the plate and on the infield are essential to the team’s success.

“He’s the middle of our defense and if we could get him going, that will jump start the other guys in our lineup,” Price said.

After being drafted in the 49th round by the Kansas City Royals right out of high school, Rivera smiled but declined the offer. Instead Rivera accepted a scholarship to come to FIU to prove to scouts and teams that the 49th round is too high for his liking.

By hitting an astounding .337 at the plate with 41 RBIs and 14 stolen bases in his first year, Rivera was named Sun Belt Conference Freshman of the Year and was selected for the Louisville Slugger Freshman All-American Team.

TOUGH TIMES

It wasn’t all glamorous for the 6-1 Carolina native. In fact, the road to paradise was probably bumpier than the rocky infields at which Rivera shagged groundballs in Puerto Rico.

It is here where baseball can be seen in its purest form.

There are no press boxes or air conditioned clubhouses. Lights don’t tower in the sky and background music is not played every time a new half inning starts, but players always came out to play with Rivera.

“The fielding here is easier because everything comes to you so smooth,” Rivera said of the grounds at University Park Stadium. “Over [in Puerto Rico] you can’t keep your eye off the ball because it can bounce anywhere.”

There are no state champions or all-state selections, but for Rivera and many others, baseball is an opportunity to get a better life. This is when his parents realized Rivera could find a better place to play baseball and develop in school. His parents sent him to Melbourne, Fla., to play in a military-like school.

Son of parents Lain and Naya, Rivera Jr. was always brought up with great moral standards which contribute to the person he is today.

“My parents always taught me to be humble, friendly and to be very respectful,” Rivera said. “It’s something I carry with me today.”

Rivera often sat on the long bus rides to games, looking through the window at the various places he hardly knew, and thinking about his new game and his life back in Puerto Rico.

“When I got [to the U.S.] I realized how tough life really is,” Rivera said. “Leaving my family and being here all alone was really hard.”

BETTER DAYS AHEAD

Despite the adversity and difficult times, Rivera found success at Carvin High School. During his final year, he was named defensive and overall best player of the year, guaranteeing him a scholarship on almost any college team.

Little-known Rivera came to Golden Panther Country and immediately caught the attention of head coach Danny Price.

“He’s a very good defensive shortstop,” Price said. “I think he’s one of the best shortstops we’ve had [at FIU].”

After a successful freshman year in blue and gold, Rivera came back as one of the top defensive shortstops in the Sun Belt Conference with 84 putouts and 175 assists, stats in which Rivera takes pride.

“I feel as if my fielding is the best aspect to my game,” Rivera said. “I have no weaknesses out there.”

Despite hitting safely in 19 of his last 22 games in the 2004 season, Rivera finished the year with a sub par .291 batting average. The team also had a down year, going 24-29 during the regular season.

“I really think our hitting was a big weakness last year as well as our defense,” Rivera said. “I think we had a lot of bad luck pitching too.”

With new recruits and a new mentality, Rivera hopes this year’s team surpasses last year’s stint.

“This team really has a chance of winning the conference this year,” Rivera said.
WIN, from page 12

“...it was on time,” said Almonte. “But I thought they would call a travel or something. It was just crazy. When I threw the ball up, I didn’t even think it was going to go in, but it did.”

Although that play stole much of the attention of the game, FIU was put in a situation a position only because of what happened during the second half.

The Golden Panthers, who trailed by eight, 37-29, at halftime, found themselves trailing by as much as 14 halfway through the second frame. Rouco’s men then changed the course of the game.

With eight minutes left to play, the Golden Panthers clawed their way back into the game with an 18-1 run led by Almonte and Matias and took their biggest lead of the game at 67-64.

N’Daire connected on two three pointers in the third overtime to give the Golden Panthers a one point lead, 96-95, with 1:23 to play. Following a lay up by Zack Wright, which gave the lead back to the University of Arkansas-Little Rock, Almonte went up for a shot and fell hard on his knee. Matias took the two free throws, connecting on just one to tie the game at 97.

Byron Burnett claimed the rebound with authority, but to the displeasure of the crowd, the Golden Panthers could not convert and turned the ball over on a shot clock violation with 5.2 seconds to play. UALR in-bounded the ball with seconds left in the third overtime following a timeout, but they missed a jumper, and thus forced the fourth extra session.

Warren Gale, taking two free throws for an injured Almonte, made one, giving the Golden Panthers a two-point lead with 21 seconds to play on fourth victory.

Trojan Brandon Freeman then converted on a long jumper with his foot on the line to tie the game as time expired in the fourth overtime. The deadlock continued at 103 heading into the seventh frame of the game.

The five overtimes were two short of the NCAA record of seven set between the University of Cincinnati and Bradley University on December 21, 1981.

“I liked that our guys were back smiling again, even when we were down in the second half,” Rouco said.

With the win in front of a season-low in attendance of 649, the Golden Panthers move to 8-12 on the season and 1-6 in the conference, while the Trojans move to 12-8 on the season and 4-4 in Sun Belt Conference play.

There are seven games left in the season but only three will be played at Pharmed Arena: Arkansas State on Feb. 14, Western Kentucky on Feb. 26 and Middle Tennessee on Feb. 28.

SHORT ON PLAYERS

FIU battled with only nine eligible players on the bench, junior guard Julius Epping quit the team following a lack of playing time and Rouco indefinitely suspended Sheldon Bailey earlier in the week for an undisclosed violation of team rules.
Baseball sweeps FAMU in season opener

By XAVIER VILLARMARZO
Staff Writer

After their night season-opener was postponed by rain, the baseball team began the season with a double-header on Jan. 29. Luckily for the Golden Panthers, the team was able to come out with a sweep of FAMU at University Stadium.

Senior David Asher led the pitching department in the first game with a complete game shutout. Sophomore Cody Jacobs led FIU offensively with two homeruns and five RBIs in a 6-0 victory.

Later in the afternoon, Elih Villanueva added a solid performance by allowing just two runs in six innings of work. Dennis Diaz went 3-for-3 with an RBI and a stolen base in the 5-3 victory.

In game one, redshirt junior Nick Cadena started the second inning with a single that Jacobs followed with a homerun to left field to give FIU a 2-0 lead. In the forth inning, Cadena scored again the score 3-0, off a single by junior Randy Youtsey to make it 3-0.

The score didn't change until the eighth inning when Jacobs connected on his second homerun, a three-run blast that hit the scoreboard in left field to give FIU the 6-0 lead.

"We've been working all year on getting our foot down early and reacting to the pitch," said Jacobs.

Asher was proud by the play of his teammate.

"I got a lot of run support, [especially from] my catcher Cody Jacobs with his two homeruns," said Asher.

In Asher's first career complete game shutout, he struck out seven, walked none and allowed seven hits.

"I wasn't expecting to pitch the whole game. It was the first game of the season and I was just hoping on getting in some work," Asher said.

In the second game, with FIU down 1-0 in the top of the first, the team answered back in the bottom of the inning with an RBI single by junior Michael Lopez and another by Diaz in the second to take a 2-1 lead.

In the forth inning, after stealing third base, Cadena scored on a throwing error by FAMU to make it 3-1.

FIU then added two more runs in the fifth inning to take a 5-2 lead. Senior Danny Hernandez took the mound in the ninth inning and closed out the game with two strikeouts.

Starting pitcher Villanueva, in his first collegiate start, tallied six strikeouts, allowed five hits and walked one batter.

New volleyball coach

NEW COACH: Athletic Director Rick Mafia announced on Jan. 26 that former Louisiana State and Arkansas-Little Rock assistant, Daniela Tomic, has accepted the head coaching position for the Golden Panther volleyball program.

“I am very excited about the opportunity to be the head coach at FIU,” said Tomic, who threw out the first pitch at the softball opener on Jan. 29. “This has long been a dream of mine, and I feel FIU has the potential to be one of the top programs in the Sun Belt.”
Which team will win Super Bowl XXXIX?

By ANDONI GONZALEZ-RAU
Staff Writer

Forty minutes of play couldn't decide the winner on Jan. 30 at Pharmed Arena. As a matter of fact, neither could 45, 50, 55 or 60. However, 65 did.

The Golden Panthers men's basketball team picked up their first Sun Belt Conference victory of the season. A season low of 640 fans attended the game.

The Eagles are a team with a winner on their side. A season low of 640 fans attended the game. Which team will win Super Bowl XXXIX?

By XAVIER VILLARMARZO
Staff Writer

Going into Super Bowl XXXIX, the first person that came to my mind was Willis Reed. I know it's a stretch, but it's a stretch that I believe.

Law got hurt and Búich- ëck inserted wide receiver Troy Brown at center. What's the end result you may ask? Brown finished with three interceptions on the season, more than Miami Dolphins star Sam Madison.

That approach by both Belichick and his players has led the Patriots to a 13-4 four record over the last 37 games. This season alone, he has used 40 different players as starters.

When the Patriots beat the Eagles next Sunday, they will begin only the second team to win three Super Bowls in four years. That qualifies as a dynasty.

Now with Owens on the field, Belichick has to worry about whether Philly is using him as a decoy or if they are actually going to throw him at Terrell Owens. Not even a genius head coach can help you there.

Another reason I'm picking against the Pats is the fact that the Eagles are in the middle of a six-game division rivalry. As the saying goes, "The enemy of my enemy is my friend."