Pour yourself a pint at the Ale House, Miami-Dade County commissions have expressed concern (EPA). "remedial investigation" by the wetlands, according to a 1988 does have the potential to harm organisms in the surrounding wetlands, according to a 1988 “remedial investigation” by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

However, three environmental groups have expressed concern about the land surveyed. The Miami-Dade County Commission.

See LANDFILL, page 2

Landfill receives clean-up money
By GIOVANI BENITEZ Contributing Writer

Against a backdrop of tropical landscapes and exotic wildlife, FIU’s Biscayne Bay Campus sits along the coast of what many consider to be one of Miami’s most photogenic areas.

The campus sits shoulder to shoulder with a 193-acre former landfill. Government documents show it was used as a garbage dump over two decades ago.

The inactive Munisport landfill, which lies west of the campus along Biscayne Boulevard, poses no threat to human health, but does have the potential to harm organisms in the surrounding wetlands, according to a 1988 “remedial investigation” by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

However, three environmental groups have expressed concern about the land surveyed. The Miami-Dade County Commission.

FIU unites to raise money for tsunami victims
By Monica Zacarias Contributing Writer

The United Way and FIU have worked together for over 22 years to improve the community and to provide for those in need. Each year, the United Way and the university collaborate to set a monetary goal that is raised through different charitable events.

Last year alone, the United Way of Miami-Dade County has raised over $370,000 for the community. In 2003, FIU and the United Way helped to raise over $250,000 for human service programs in Miami-Dade County. In March 2003, FIU and the United Way helped to raise over $250,000 for the Community Foundation of Miami-Dade County.

Recently, the United Way has turned its attention toward aiding the tsunami victims in South Asia.

Money for the victims will be raised through United Way pledge cards allocated toward the Tsunami Relief Fund.

The aid will include shelter, food, water, clothing and anything else that may be needed by the tsunami victims. Donations taken from employee payrolls will also help make this relief possible. Payroll deduction is an option available to all FIU employees. Employees can sign up for a one percent deduction by filling out the pledge card that is provided by their department’s ambassador.

In order to make the United Way and FIU collaboration possible, United Way ambassadors are appointed from each department at the university to provide information to the department’s employees regarding the United Way campaign. The ambassadors are also responsible for handing out and collecting all the pledge cards from their department.

According to the Marcos Perez, vice president for administration and co-chair of the United Way 2005 Campaign, ambassadors are key members of the United Way.

“The ambassadors’ role throughout the campaign is essential for its success,” said Perez.

Even though the tsunami put the traditional campaign on hold, the organization has already met many of its goals, one of which, according to the United Way’s website, is to raise $300,000 with FIU’s support. A tennis tournament at FIU raised over $4,000 and an auction of decorated baskets raised more than $10,000.

During the month of February, University President Modesto A. Maidique will host a leadership reception, where he will honor over 150 staff members who have donated one percent or more of their salaries to the United Way.

“Hopefully we’ve met our goal. We want our community to be the safest and best place to live. If the faculty and staff choose to donate, it will be a lot easier through their pay- roll,” said Ann Goodrich, the United Way Coordinator who is in charge of organizing United Way events and training the ambassadors who recruit donators for the campaign.

According to Goodrich, the United Way’s monetary goal is set between April and May of each year. The next step for the organization is to ask for donations from every major company, school and organization in Miami. The United Way contributions help underprivileged children receive an education and stay off the streets and offer care to the elderly, the homeless and those combating illnesses.

The United Way reported that for every dollar donated, there will be a 76 percent return. This means that for every dollar, $1.76 will be donated. Furthermore, for every dollar donated to childcare programs, taxpayers will save $3 in costs that will later be spent on corrective education, crime and community aid.

“FIU’s support really is needed and that, out of our goodness, we really care and want to give,” Goodrich said.

FIU unites to raise money for tsunami victims
By GIOVANI BENITEZ Contributing Writer

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“FIU’s support really is needed and that, out of our goodness, we really care and want to give,” Goodrich said.
Landfill neighboring BBC declared safe

**MONDAY • FEBRUARY 28**

Campus Bible Fellowship: “Where do ‘races’ come from?” 11 a.m., GC 405

Panther Rage meeting: 4 p.m., GC 140

Men’s Basketball vs. Middle Tennessee: 7:30 p.m., Pharmed Arena

**TUESDAY • MARCH 1**

Campus Bible Fellowship: “Where do ‘races’ come from?” 7:30 p.m., GC 305

Dance Marathon Lip Sync: FIU organizations will showcase their talent at 7:30 p.m., GC Ballrooms

Latin Jazz Quartet: 8 p.m., Wertheim Performing Arts Center Concert Hall. Free and open to the public.

**WEDNESDAY • MARCH 2**

SPC Films presents “Chasing Amy”: 7 and 10 p.m., Pharmed Arena

**FRIDAY • MARCH 4**

Tennis hosts Eastern Michigan: 12 p.m., University Park tennis courts.

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**WEATHER**

**MONDAY**

Ht/Low: 77°F/57°F

Few showers

**TUESDAY**

Ht/Low: 73°F/51°F

Partly cloudy

**WEDNESDAY**

Ht/Low: 68°F/50°F

Partly cloudy

**THURSDAY**

Ht/Low: 71°F/57°F

Partly cloudy

**FRIDAY**

Ht/Low: 76°F/58°F

Scattered showers

**SATURDAY**

Ht/Low: 77°F/59°F

Scattered showers

**SUNDAY**

Ht/Low: 76°F/57°F

Partly cloudy

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The Beacon – February 28, 2005

**POLICEBEAT**

**TUESDAY • FEBRUARY 3**

A student reported that he left his wallet inside a practice room at the Wertheim Center for the Performing Arts at the Biscayne Bay Campus. After returning to the location at 10:30 p.m., the student noticed that his wallet had been stolen. At this moment, there are no suspects.

**MONDAY • FEBRUARY 14**

A student reported that his wallet was stolen at the W10 building located at the University Park campus. There is no information on the suspects.

A student reported that prior to parking his car on the third level of the Blue Parking Garage near the northeast stairs, a driver in a dark colored, 4-door, 1990’s model vehicle honked his car horn in anger. Upon returning to his car, after class, the student reported that his 2000 black Honda Accord had been vandaled and that an unknown suspect had written derogatory terms on it.

**WEDNESDAY • FEBRUARY 16**

A student reported that she put her purse in a storage bin in the hallway of the Pharmed Arena Fitness Center at the University Park campus. After working out, the student discovered that an unknown individual(s) removed the purse, which is valued at $230. Inside the purse the student claims she had a Puerto Rican Driver’s license, dorm room keys, a Motorola cell phone, credit cards and identification cards. No suspects have been identified.

While working out at the Pharmed Arena Fitness Center at UP, a student reported that an unknown individual stole his wallet. The wallet contained $140. After the incident, the student reported that a person attempted to use his Exxon credit card at a gas station on 117th St. Suspects have not been identified.

- Compiled by Rodolfo Roman
Multiple workshops prepare students for Mega Career Week

By DAVID SMILEY

"Experience needed." It’s almost a party line for anyone seeking employment in a specialized field. Thanks to Career Services, FIU students can get a jump on the competition during “Mega Career Week,” which begins March 2.

As a prelude to the Career and Intern Fair, held at the Biscayne Bay Campus on March 9, participating employers will hold informational workshops for students. These workshops will be tailored to explain different expectations employers have of applicants. In addition, they will offer an opportunity for participants to make a good first impression at the Career Fair.

D. Claudia Reich, newly appointed associate director for Career Services, stresses the importance of appearing professional during an interview. "From an employer’s point of view, if [students] are not prepared, they will not be hired," Reich said. "Employers have let us know they have been discouraged in the past with some of the students’ dress.

With major companies scheduled to appear at March’s career fair, it’s no surprise that FIU is making a major push to prepare students. Among the list of 150 participating employers are Washington Mutual, Walt Disney World, the FBI and Prudential Financial.

Because recruiters will hold students to certain expectations, several informative workshops will be conducted starting with “Bring Your Resume to School Day” on Wednesday, March 2. From 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., students can bring a sample of their resume to the Oasis in Academic 1 for a free critique from Career Services staff and employers. This is the only workshop where no registration is required.

Also on Wednesday, at the Wolfe University Center in room 255, a workshop called “Interviewing Skills: How to Put Some Bling in Your Step” will be held from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. This workshop will feature guest presenter Claudia Vasquez, regional recruiting supervisor for Enterprise Rent-A-Car.

On Thursday March 3, “Under Cover: The Secret to Making a Good First Impression (Resume Writing)” will take place in WUC 255 from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. Erika Camuth of Kent Security will provide tips on how to develop professional quality resumes. Also on Thursday in WUC 235, the “How to Prepare for a Career Fair” workshop will be held from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Aaron Moshe, a senior in the School of Business Management, plans to attend the Career and Intern Fair. Moshe has previously participated in Career Services workshops, including the “How to Prepare for a Career Fair” workshop.

“It’s very beneficial. You get to learn how to approach employers, impress and write a resume,” Moshe said. “Career Services, especially at BBC, really do try and help you gain advancement [in your field].”
I feel out of place when everyone is living it up and doing dance steps that take more hip movement than one should be able to handle.

I feel out of place when everyone is living it up and doing dance steps that take more hip movement than one should be able to handle. So of course, in my family I’m Danny, the Cuban boy who listens to classic rock and can quote almost any Mel Brooks movie ever made.

Race is something that only defines us when we let it. Sure, I can go out of my way and hang a Cuban flag on my car and start actually caring about Pitbull, but I choose not to, because, when it comes down to it, you are your own person.

Culture makes people very uptight; it can mean the world to some people. Saying that you are outspoken because you are Cuban is just a stereotype.

The only thing that I, a boy without a race, can say to comfort myself, is that if you don’t know where you are or where you’re headed, then where you came from is meaningless.
Gospel music too secular to profit

By E.R. SHIPP
New York Daily News

Kanye West is the hot new thing in music, having won last week three Grammy awards, including for a song called “Jesus Walks” on an album called “Col-
lege Dropout.”

Now gospel music, which came out of the blues and honky-
tonk, is trying to figure out whether folks like West are too secular to be gospel. Hello!!!

These churches of ours find too many ways to chase away the truly faithful _ based on race or class or gender or sexual orienta-
tion or youthfulness.

While gospel music is popu-
lar, even with new recognition of hip hop gospel music by the Stellas and the GMAs, gospel music as such was originally branded as too secular when the likes of Thomas Dorsey, the now-revered father of the genre,

The point is to keep striving to be better. While jumping around and doing calisthenics (as I call all that action encour-
aged by deejays and preachers) doesn’t work for me as a form of worship, if it does for young folks or even not-so-young folks, then so be it.

But we’ve got to work on that grammar!

WINNER & LOSER

WINNER

Peewee Pooh: Pako, a three-year-old dog in France died by electrocution when he peed on a lamppost with loose wires. The dog’s owner believed he should have used a mat of porty training a long time ago.

LOSER

April Florio, actress, denying accusations that she has any kind of a love connection with Brad Pitt.

“I did ‘Bill @ Ted’s Excellent Adventure.’ They made a cereal out of it, so once you’ve had a cereal, it doesn’t get much more inus-
tial than that,” Surried Cereal.”

– Keenan Reeves, actor, on how his acting career first began.

“Everything is wonderful. It was a beautiful night.”

– Kid Rock, musician, on his arrest for allegedly assault-
ing a DJ at a strip club.

“I think my own genre is dead. I don’t really think that there is anyone in the modern pop business who I feel I want to spar with.”

– George Michael, musician, on his decision to quit the music business once and for all.

“You can say, ‘I don’t feel so great about this part of my body today. When you roll over, can you make sure your hand is covering that cellulite?’ And you can have a perfect thing: I’ve had scenes where I went, ‘Can you just lift it up, so I look a little bit more ripened?’ And you can have her augment things:

– Jennifer Beals, on the pros of doing love scenes with women instead of men.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?
What do you think about the sup-
poused tuition increase for the Fall 2005 semester?

• I am entirely against the increase. Things should stay the way they are.
• I am for the increase. The money will be put to good use.
• I don’t care about the increase. I will continue to study at FIU no matter how much money I pay.
• I would rather transfer out of FIU than pay more for my classes.
• Tuition increased! I love tuition increases!

Cast your vote at www.beaconnewspaper.com

QUOTEABLES

“There’s no reason for me to try and draw attention to myself. I want to make it on my own merit.”

– April Florio, actress, denying accusations that she has any kind of a love connection with Brad Pitt.

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Letters to the Editor must be dropped off or sent to beacon@biscayne.edu. Letters must include the writer’s full name, year in school, major/department and a valid phone number for verification purposes. If brought in to an office, a legitimate ID may be accepted instead of a phone number. The Beacon reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and/or spacing constraints. Letters must adhere to a maximum of 400 words.
CHEERS MATE!

NORTH MIAMI ALE HOUSE IS A FAVORITE FOR BBC STUDENTS

By HOLLY CASTILLO
Contributing Writer

Ever feel like grabbing a bite to eat and going out for drinks without making a hole in your pocket? Well, search no more. The North Miami Beach Ale House is a place where FIU students can go for wings and drinks, to watch sports games and to hang out with friends.

The North Miami Beach Ale House has been around for quite some time, and students from Biscayne Bay Campus flock there because of its inexpensive menu and broad selection of beers.

The Ale House has over 30 televisions, four of which are plasma TVs that can be seen from any seat in the restaurant. Want to watch a specific game on the screen near you? Just ask, and the server will change the channel to the game of your choice.

When college football season starts, the Ale House is packed and the atmosphere is louder than usual. Cheers for the football teams resound throughout the Ale House.

“I love watching the big college football games at the Ale House,” said junior Marina Rossell. “Everyone is rooting for their team, and everyone explodes when the team scores. It’s so much fun.”

Because the tables and booths are for big parties, it’s easy to get a group of friends to sit together. The neutral colors of the restaurant are calming, and the seats are comfortable enough to watch an entire football game. The hang out is roomy but small enough to see the entire setup from the door.

The drink specials are for everyone, but women drink free from the well all night. FIU students grab a quick bite there during lunch and between classes. Thursday night is when the younger crowd, ages 18-25, hangs out, because it’s both College Night and Ladies Night.

“I highly recommend the Cajun Chicken Pasta. It’s delicious and not at all expensive,” said sophomore David Slapak.

The NMB Ale House’s hours of operation are Monday-Saturday 11 a.m.-2 a.m., Sunday 11 a.m.-12 a.m. and its Early Bird is everyday from 2 p.m.-6 p.m. It is located at 3227 N.E. 163rd St., next to Denny’s.
Mozart opera rings magnificent

By C. JOEL MARINO
Senior Staff Writer

With its occult and Masonic references, cryptic plot and assortment of strange characters, Mozart's final operatic work, “The Magic Flute,” has been considered by some critics to be one of the strangest operas ever written. It is a Germanic opera in the sense that it is composed in the musical style of the German opera. However, despite the many secrets hidden behind the piece, the work proved to be a well-chosen choice, up to the Florida Grand Opera’s season line-up of the dramatic (Giacomo Puccini’s “Madama Butterfly”) and the comedy (Benjamin Britten’s “Paul Bunyan”) in January.

Set in what appears to be ancient Egypt, the opera follows the adventures of innocent Prince Tamino and his comical sidekick, Papageno the Bird Catcher, after they are commissioned by the cunning Queen of the Night to find her kidnapped daughter, Pamina. The heroes run into villains and strange creatures during their quest. At the end, they find the lost princess and an ancient, secret society that reveals the true purposes behind the evil queen’s mission.

Although the extensive symbols within the plot might make the opera a hard one to stage, director Bruno Berger-Gorski managed to bring a grandness to the choreography of opera. The only faulty performance was that of soprano Amanda Palyan in the demanding role of the Queen of the Night. While performing the famous “Der Hölle Rache” aria in which the queen’s voice is supposed to imitate the sound of a flute, Palyan instead belted out notes during the pivotal crescendo that made many in the audience squirm in their seats. Besides the acting, the opera would not have made as great a success if it hadn’t included the magnificent scenery and special effects designed by children’s book author and illustrator Maurice Sendak.

Sendak perfectly captured the esoteric atmosphere of the work by painting scenes on canvases that when lit from behind, turned into metaphorical veils that shielded the story’s true purposes. Despite the oddness of the supposedly Egyptian characters dressed in colloquial American costumes, Sendak’s otherwise fitting production designs managed to bring a grandness to the performance that is rarely seen in many FGO shows.

“The Magic Flute,” which premiered at the Miami-Dade Auditorium on Feb. 12, will be showcased next at Ft. Lauderdale’s Broward Center for the Performing Arts, March 2nd and 5th.

Though the opera is in German, English subtitles are projected on a screen above the stage during every performance.
With tuition skyrocketing, low-income students face steep odds

By LYNN FRANEY
Knight Ridder Newspapers

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Jason Pratt was no math whiz in high school, but he can understand how bad the odds are for low-income students like him to graduate from college.

Just six out of 100 kids from families making less than $35,000 a year earn a bachelor’s degree by the time they are 24.

In families making more than $90,000 a year, 51 out of 100 kids graduate.

As college tuition skyrocketers and financial aid for low-income students stagnates, it’s no surprise the gap has grown in the past 30 years.

That gap is prompting an increasing number of colleges to take action.

Some, including Pratt’s school, Northwest Missouri State University, give low-income students more money for college.

Harvard University now pledges that students from families making less than $40,000 will pay nothing.

More schools have joined College Goal Sunday program, which makes college financial aid counselors available for free to students and their families to help fill out the complicated federal financial aid form.

Some are working to give disadvantaged children a vision of themselves as college material by bringing them to campus at earlier ages for summer programs.

“Colleges and universities are very heavily invested in this and very anxious to do the right thing for the nation by boosting achievement,” said Terry Hartle, senior vice president at the American Council on Education in Washington, D.C.

Nationally, colleges make more grants to low-income students than the federal and state governments combined.

The problem is that poorly performing wealthy children are as likely to go to college as the most academically talented poor children, Hartle said.

Colleges know something has to be done.

Northwest Missouri State introduced the American Dream Grant program this school year. In the first two years it pays tuition, room and board for qualified students whose families earn less than $30,000. The students must pitch in $1,500 a year and apply for other aid.

Not being from a well-off family presents many educational challenges, experts say.

Many attend inferior high schools that don’t have the academic resources and strengths as better-off public or private schools.

Often, they are from families without much experience with higher education. That means they need extra help with college and financial aid applications and extra support once they get to college, through tutoring or help navigating the bureaucracy.

Angela Lindsey-Nunn, a 36-year-old University of Kansas student, knows the struggles of the poor to earn a bachelor’s degree.

She grew up in Salina, one of four children of a single mother who emigrated from Asia. After high school she went to Marymount College, a now-closed private school in Salina.

But after a year she couldn’t afford it. She left with debt that took her years to pay off.

After a divorce, Lindsey-Nunn, who has a seizure disorder, and her two children for a time lived on $400 a month.

Now, after quitting work under her doctor’s orders, she has enrolled at KU. She gets disability benefits and is studying wildlife conservation.

While appealing efforts to make college more affordable and accessible, one critic of higher education says the changes aren’t enough to close the gap.

President Bush wants to increase the amount of Pell Grants, the main federal aid program for poor students. But the amount of the proposed increase would do little to make the program catch up with tuition, which continues to rise much faster than inflation.

The lack of commitment by state and federal government disturbs Tom Mortenson, a higher education policy analyst in Iowa.

He crunched the numbers that show just 6 percent of kids from families earning less than $35,000 earn a bachelor’s degree before turning 24, compared with 51 percent for kids from wealthier families.

“What are we doing here? If we limit this (higher education) to people who come from the most privileged backgrounds, are we saying to the poor, like the immigrants moving to Iowa, ‘Sorry. You can clean out our homes. You can weed our gardens. But you don’t have a shot at what we have created here for ourselves.’ So, you can clean out our homes. You can weed our gardens. You can weed our homes. You can weed our homes. But you don’t have a shot at what we have created here for ourselves?” Mortenson said. “It’s just un-American. We ought to hang our heads in disgrace.”
Chocolate used as health prescription

By RICK ASA
Chicago Tribune

As guilty pleasures go, chocolate has to be at the top of the list. But would it still be as pleasing if the guilt went away?

Food scientists are compiling strong evidence that chocolate, or more accurately its cocoa foundation, contains plant chemicals called flavanols that offer cardiovascular protection in several ways.

But before you gleefully start planning dinners around big chocolate Easter eggs, keep in mind that the studies on chocolate and humans, like those involving other phytochemical-laden foods, remain an inexact science.

Research has yet to determine, for example, whether the observed benefits will translate to the population at large and how much is enough. Another obstacle is taste: generally speaking, the less processed chocolate is, the higher the flavanol levels and the higher the bitterness and astringency.

Even before chocolate studies picked up steam in the past five years, scientists suspected that connection, having observed that indigenous populations that consume a high level of cocoa have a reduced risk of heart disease, said Carl Keen, chairman of the nutrition department at the University of California, Davis.

The Kuna Indians of the San Blas Islands off Panama, for example, historically have had extremely low blood pressure. They also drink a lot of locally grown, minimally processed cocoa high in flavanols.

Most chocolate we eat today is made from cocoa beans that have been stripped of the flavanols during a heating and chemical process that removes bitterness and prepares them for the mass market. The relatively bitter Kuna drink, on the other hand, would be an acquired taste that has little in common with our hot cocoa.

According to a study at the University of Glasgow in Scotland, we would have to eat twice as much milk chocolate to obtain the same amount of flavanols as in bittersweet dark chocolate.

Keen was among the first researchers to show that gently processed, high-flavanol cocoa has a distinct health benefit. He and other researchers have since shown that flavanols can:

• Help the blood protect against oxidation damage
• Reduce the risk of blood clots, an aspirmilike effect
• "Turn on" the production of nitric oxide, the central paradigm and "healthy." The science supports the claims that certain types of cocoa or certain types of chocolate can make a contribution to cardiovascular health.

Most cardiologists would agree that nitric oxide is the central paradigm and we can quantify that. So we at least have a starting point to do dose-response studies (in humans). The world of science will be hearing from Mars and our research collaborators on studies directly addressing this over the next two years," Liebman said.

GO AHEAD, ENJOY

From her clinical perspective, dietitian Lynn Danford, a nutrition specialist and research coordinator at the Northwestern Memorial Hospital Lynn Sage Cancer Center, noted that cocoa has been in the food supply for hundreds of years and was used medicinally by ancient civilizations in South and Central America.

"Oddly enough, Mars Inc., one of the biggest chocolate producers in the world, has agreed. Its head of research, Harold Schmitz, insisted that Mars has invested millions of dollars into conducting studies and improving the quality of chocolate to help fight cardiovascular disease. And the partner companies agree. It's not about the 'healthy.' The science supports the claims that certain types of cocoa or certain types of chocolate are good for heart health."

"Most people who use chocolate in their diet are doing so because they enjoy it. The bottom line is, chocolate is not a necessity, but it is certainly an enjoyable part of our diet. The universal advice, everything in moderation, applies quite well to this delicious food."
O’Neal dominates NBA

SHAQ, from page 12

The offensive approach has done an about-face since the acquisition of Shaq. The Big Aristotle has averaged 22.7 points-per-game and ranks fifth in the NBA with 10.4 rebounds-per-game as Miami’s go-to guy. He also leads the NBA with 59.9 field-goal percentage.

As of Feb. 25, the Heat is ranked third in the Eastern Conference and has a five-game lead over the second-ranked Detroit Pistons. They have a 27-6 record against Eastern Conference opponents, making them the only team in the East with single-digit losses against other Eastern teams.

You can give me the old, tired argument about how the East is so much weaker than the West, and how the Heat doesn’t have a good record against Western Conference teams,” but Shaq has already said that he and the team have an “extra gear” they haven’t even used yet. The team gave us a preview of that “extra gear” in their Feb. 13 victory over the San Antonio Spurs – arguably the best all-around team in the NBA.

Without Shaq, the Spurs’ Tim Duncan would have stepped all over any Heat player that had to cover him under the basket.

Before coming to the Heat last season Shaq said, in an interview with ESPN, that any team with a dominant big man should play the game “inside-to-outside,” meaning that the offense should begin by giving him the ball and attracting attention from defenders near the basket.

Then, if he gets double or triple-teamed, he will pass the ball to an open shooter on the outside. Shaq makes his teammates better and gives them open shots.

That is what the Heat has done this season. Granted, their offense is a heck of a lot more boring than it was last year. Nevertheless, it gets the job done.

Shaq is the centerpiece of the Heat offense this year. The team would be in disarray if he was removed from the offensive system that was made especially for him.

NBA basketball in Miami has become relevant again.

The Heat practically sells out every game. And, most importantly, they are actually winning–All because of Shaq.

If that isn’t valuable to you, I don’t know what is.

NASH, from page 12

about the so-called writer on the opposite side.

Steve Nash! No question about it. Yes, he is the smallest of all the candidates and no, Nash doesn’t possess those ridiculous selfish statistics like 30 points per game, and he doesn’t average five sky-scrapping ESPN top-ten dunks per game, either.

What Nash does have is the distinct team leadership and incredible will to share the ball with teammates. Share the ball!

Does that still exist in today’s NBA? Nash actually takes great pride in his passing game and is always looking to make his teammates better.

Some players say they try to make their teammates better, but Nash actually does it.

OK. Enough of that. I’m getting tired of dominating this debate with such inarguable statements. Let me mention some valuable numbers and statistics:

First, 16.4 points-per-game is quite a handsome average for a point guard. His 11.5 assists per game is three more than the next player on the leader board, further proving my argument that Nash is unsellable.

But, the most significant statistic is that he is the quarterback of the Phoenix Suns – the second best team in the NBA with a 42-13 record.

There is no doubt Nash is responsible for this feat. One can argue that Stoudamire deserves much credit as well, and he does.

But, Stoudamire was on the team last year. In fact everyone else was too, minus Steve Nash and the inconsistent Quinton Richardson. Yet, Nash brings a vast improvement in the overall standings from a year ago.

Also, in addition to leading his run-and-gun offense to one of the league’s elite, the team is just not the same without Nash in the lineup.

In the four games that Nash has missed this season, the Suns are 1-3. They lost to Detroit, Washington and Memphis by an average of nine points per loss, while only beating the woeful Clippers.

Now, if that wasn’t enough, how about the fact that the Suns average 10 less assists, 11 less points and a far lower shooting percentage from the field without Nash running the offense.

Nash is like the quarterback of the Suns offense. When he’s on the floor, he always knows where his teammates are and he always finds a way to get them the ball.

As a result, despite his lack of flashy dunks and juiced up scoring numbers – that the rest of the candidates possess – Nash is the epitome of what MVP really stands for.

O’Neal dominates NBA

The Beacon – February 28, 2005

www.beaconnewspaper.com

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Tennis coach recruits internationally

By MICHELLE FLEMING
Contributing Writer

Today’s college recruiter can’t afford to fly around the world looking for the perfect player, but living in a diverse community like Miami, is a great opportunity for Ronni Bernstein, Head coach of FIU’s women’s tennis team.

“All the international players know Miami,” said Bernstein. “This gives me some help in the initial contact.”

Although Bernstein works with a limited budget, she has closed deals with players from all around the globe. This season, she is coaching players from Croatia, Yugoslavia, Australia, Lithuania, Venezuela, the Bahamas and two locals with Cuban and Colombian roots, who add spice to FIU’s team.

Bernstein, who became the head tennis coach eight years ago, said she relies on good recommendations, player’s video-tapes, e-mails and talent scouting with the help of assistant coach Carlos Cardy at the Orange Bowl International Tournament in Key Biscayne.

“A lot of the players contact me by e-mail and we start the process,” Bernstein said. “It can be tricky because you want to recruit a person, not just a good tennis player.” Bernstein, a four-time All-American at the University of Miami in the 1980’s, said that most of the athletes are far away from home for the first time and making them feel comfortable is a challenge.

“They are all in search of a full scholarship, so you try to offer a package that will be beneficial for them and make the journey from their homes easy and affordable,” she said. “FIU has given them this opportunity, and that is what it is all about.”

But it’s no walk on the court for the Golden Panther tennis players, who study and train hard during the week, often spending their weekends traveling.

Often, players have classes at the University Park and Biscayne Bay campuses. Some study English at Miami-Dade College, which makes it difficult to organize their time and keep up with their schedules.

Junior Courtney Jonson commutes to and from both campuses daily because she majors in journalism.

“Juggling school and tennis is like a full-time job for me. I am always on the go. As soon as training is finished, I shower, grab a quick bite to eat and journey back over to [BBC] for my night classes,” said Jonson.

The Golden Panthers are currently ranked 10th in the Southern region of the Sun Belt Conference with a 3-2 record.

Bernstein makes all the team’s travel arrangements approximately a year ahead of time in order to schedule tournaments in diverse places. Next year, the Golden Panthers head to California.
By ANDONI GONZALEZ-RAU
Staff Writer

Maybe this wasn’t the season Head coach Sergio Rouco imagined when he took the job last year at FIU.

The Golden Panthers close out their season Feb. 28 at Pharmed Arena with a 7-10 overall record and 3-9 in Sun Belt Conference play.

After a positive start to the season, the men’s basketball team has experienced some ups and downs along the way, most notably a seven-game conference losing streak.

With that behind them, led by junior Ivan Almonte, FIU looks to head into the Sun Belt playoffs riding a high. The Dominican forward leads the conference in rebounds and is averaging a double-double a game for the season.

His output, as well as Ismael N’Diaye’s and Junior Matias’ big night in front of the home fans as he closes out his colorful career at FIU against a team he scored 30 points against the first time around.

All eyes will be on the production of freshman Kenny Simms, who as he is the player to take the place of Burnett next season. Look for him to get increased minutes in the playoffs as he tries to fulfill the shoes Rouco has put him in.

Despite a losing record, the season is a must improvement over last year’s group coached by Donnie Marsh. Marsh’s team finished a horrible 5-22. Moreover, the team struggled all year in the Sun Belt, where it finished 1-13.

Only three players from last year’s team–Burnett, Gale and Matias–are on this year’s roster.

By NIKOLAY OREKHOV
Staff Writer

It’s that time of the NBA season when the trading deadline is in the rear view and the teams rosters are set for the playoff run.

The question now, is, which player will emerge as the season’s Most Valuable Player.

First of all, let me define the term “MVP.” It means the most valuable player on a given team; the player who makes the team go.

The one player who improves the team’s performance and outcome so much that if he was removed from the team, it would lose its identity and crumble.

So, you should have noticed that there is the MVP defined as the league’s best player, the player with the most physical talent and ability, or even the player with the most glamorous season stats.

Now, let’s announce the candidates: Lebron James, Amar’e Stoudamire and Shaquille O’Neal – right?

These are All-Star, players from quality teams with great stats, but they’re the player with the most glamorous season stats.

Next year’s team–Burnett, Gale and Matias–are on this year’s roster.

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All three look to finish their home careers with a win.

There’s a saying in sports that teams that struggle all season but get hot at the end make a run in the playoffs, let’s see if the Golden Panthers are up to the challenge.

Who’s the NBA’s Most Valuable Player?

By XAVIER VILLARMARZO
Staff Writer

There really shouldn’t be an argument over it. When you think of the Most Valuable Player, you should think of no one other than the Miami Heat’s Shaquille O’Neal.

First of all, he is the most valuable player in the literal sense, because he is the highest paid player in NBA. That should count for something.

The Miami Heat would be nowhere without him.

That’s right. I said it. Without Shaq, the Heat would be running around the court like a group of bewildered teenagers with their shorts around their ankles.

OK, maybe the Heat wouldn’t be that hopeless without Shaq, but they would be substantially worse. Without a dominant force in the middle of last year, the Heat was able to keep teams off balance by running a fast-break offense.

This was possible because they had talented athletes at their disposal – the versatile Lamar Odom and Carson Butler.

Once the Heat made it to the playoffs last season, however, that fast-break offense was nowhere near as effective.

Teams must play a slow-paced, half-court offense in order to win in the NBA.

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