FIU student athletic fee among highest in nation

By HARRY COLEMAN
News Editor

Student athletic fees at FIU are 68 percent higher than the national average for Division I-A schools, according to the NCAA annual report Revenues and Expenses of Intercollegiate Athletics.

Under the budget, revealed on March 29, FIU students next year would pay $10.1 million of the school’s $13.8 million athletic budget, or 73 percent.

“That is unusually high, and the magnitude concerns me,” said Daniel Fulks, who compiles the NCAA annual report, in an interview with the South Florida Sun-Sentinel. “The national average is about 65 percent,” he said.

Florida Atlantic University is facing the same issue. At FAU, student fees provide $7.9 million of this year’s $10.8 million athletic budget, also 73 percent.

Last year, after a student vote, FIU raised the athletic fee by $1.38, the maximum amount allowed following a student vote.

“We had to go to the students and they answered yes. As we continue to mature, it is my hope that our budget is dependent on an outside income,” said Athletic Director Rick Mello. “If the students would not have agreed [on the raise], we would not be where we are today.”

Students at FIU were providing the majority of athletic funds before football was added in 2002; the sport that forced the raise in athletic fees in the last year.

The football program averages a yearly cost of $3.3 million, but revenues have fallen short every year.

Ticket sales provide an average of 27 percent of revenue at I-A schools, yet FIU expects to get less than 5 percent of it’s athletic revenue from ticket sales next year.

According to Mello, FIU generates 15 to 20 percent of its funding from ticket sales and outside funding, which include private donations.

The football program is the main reason the athletic fee went up last year according to Mello. Attendance at football games is still very low and years away from providing an income for the athletic department.

The program, which is entering its second transition season of I-A football, failed to meet the mandatory 15,000 average last season. FIU averaged 10,095 in home attendance last season, falling short of the 15,000 mark.

“Since we are a new program, we don’t have tradition to count on,” Mello said. “I never told people that it was a quick fix. You can throw all the money you want, but tradition is not one of them.”

Mello believes it will take a range between 20 and 25 years to create a football tradition at FIU.

“What we do today is for 25 years down the road. People have to understand that,” Mello said. “Our students down the road, when they are alumni – 20 to 25 years from now, they will be amazed.”
**MUN team wins awards at United Nations Conference in New York**

FIU’s Model United Nations team returned to the National Model United Nations Conference in New York with awards for the 13th year in a row.

An “Outstanding Delegation” first place award for excellence in position papers and a “Distinguished Delegation” second place award for performance were awarded to the team. This marks the fifth consecutive year the team has received an “Outstanding Delegation” award.

FIU’s delegation represented Estonia at the conference.

The UN competition is one of the oldest and most prestigious for college students, having been created by the UN in the late 1940s. More than 3,500 college students from 150 universities from the United States, Europe, Africa, South America and Asia participated, according to Jeanne Kates, political science instructor and director for FIU’s MUN program.

“I am particularly proud of the position papers award because, to me, that represents a high degree of academic achievement,” said Kates.

Model United Nations (INR 4926) is a three-credit course offered each Spring semester by the Department of Political Science in conjunction with FIU’s Jack D. Gordon Institute for Public Policy and Citizenship Studies.

The program is also supported by the FIU Student Government Association and the College of Arts and Sciences dean’s office.

**Summer housing sign up for students**

Summer housing sign-up for both University Park and the Biscayne Bay Campus took place from April 5 through April 7 at the UP Housing Office.

Students interested in staying on-campus for the summer could choose between Panther Hall and Everglades Hall at UP and Bay Vista Housing at BBC. Both the UP Apartments and the UP Towers will be closed during the summer session.

In FIU, students will be able to stay on the first, second and fourth floors. According to Prakash Karmani, the residence life coordinator, the third floor will be closed for renovations.

Students who did not sign up on time are urged to call the residential offices at (305) 348-4190.

**FIU Broward-Pines Center cruise**

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Fares do not include airport-assessed passenger facility charges (PFC) of up to $9 and a federal September 11th Security Fee of up to $5 one-way. Tickets are nonrefundable but may be applied toward future travel on Southwest Airlines. Fares are subject to change until ticketed. Any change in itinerary may result in an increase in fare. Service to and from Orange County airport not included. Fares are combinable with other Southwest Airlines fares. If combining with other fares, all ticketing restrictions apply. ©2002, 2005 Southwest Airlines Co.

Albuquerque
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Austin

Baltimore/Washington (BWI)
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Chicago (Midway)

Ft. Lauderdale
(22 miles to downtown Miami)

Harlingen/South Padre Island

Las Vegas

Los Angeles (LAX)

New Orleans

Oakland
(18 miles to downtown San Francisco)

Philadelphia

Phoenix

Providence
(A better way to Boston)

Reno/Tahoe

Salt Lake City

San Diego

Seattle/Tacoma

Tampa Bay

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By C. JOEL MARINO  
Senior Staff Writer

Though I've loved to read since I was a kid, comic books in particular have always held a special place in my heart. Some of my best childhood memories feature me sitting beside my father on Buenos Aires buses on our way to piano class, with copies of "The Flash," "Uncanny X-Men" or the latest "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" cradled hungrily between my hands. Growing up, I was the butt of jokes by other kids and adults who would label comics as "baby stuff," "books for the immature" and "Humor for immature adults." While thinking about this question for the last few weeks, I've been amazed to notice that unlike the reactions I received years ago, comic books are now being seen in a new light. For the 2004 Miami-Dade College Book Festival, the annual print Mecca held at the school's downtown Wolfson Campus, the event's coordinating council chose none other than graphic novels as last year's theme. Not only did they bring such acclaimed comic authors as Art Spiegelman and Marjane Satrapi to give lectures to packed audiences, but they also displayed the works of some of the most celebrated cartoonists in modern comic book history at the campus's art museum. So why the sudden interest in comic books? People are discovering a sense of storytelling, emotions and even poetry that have been evident to me since I began reading comic books. Modern comic book and graphic novel writers introduce themes into their work that could easily be compared to Greek dramas and Victorian prose. Satrapi and Spiegelman have introduced autobiographical sincerity to their pieces. The first was through "Persepolis," a chronicle of Satrapi's childhood in chaotic Iran during the revolutions of the 1980s. The second was through "Maus," a poignant account of Spiegelman's father's ordeals in German concentration camps, which became the only comic book to ever win a Pulitzer Prize.

In the '80s and early '90s, the three most popular writers of comic book fiction (Alan Moore, Frank Miller and Neil Gaiman) brought a true-life style to the form that shook the concepts of what a comic should be: Moore's most famous contribution, "Watchmen," portrayed an alternate universe where superheroes seemed to cause more harm than good and were banned from saving the day (a theme borrowed in last year's hit movie "The Incredibles") against the backdrop of an imminent nuclear showdown between Russia and the United States. Miller's, "The Dark Knight Returns," reinvented the image of one of America's most famous heroes, Batman. Miller portrayed the caped crusader as an aging and violent vigilante in a world overrun with crime and insanity. However, the series I cherish the most and consider to have elevated modern comic books to the status of literature is Neil Gaiman's, "The Sandman." Throughout its seven-year run, Gaiman packed his masterpiece about the King of Dreams and his dysfunctional family with enough literary, mythical, historical and religious references to fill a library of commentaries. I found poetry encased in word bubbles, an epic story of love and death and sacrifice wrapped around an inker's pen. A comic book is art about life the same way that books and movies are. I'm happy the form is making a comeback and reaching a new, wider audience. Maybe now people will see the beauty I saw many years ago while I sat on those torn Buenos Aires bus seats on my way to piano class.

FRANK MILLER'S SIN CITY

Gangsters, crooked cops, mobsters and hookers all come center stage in this ultra-violent comic book. Author and illustrator Frank Miller, employs a very unique style – pure black and white with no shades of grey. His unique art brings the grizzled underbelly of the crime-ridden Basin City to life with unbelievable style. Recently adapted to a major motion picture, "Sin City" is achieving an unbelievable level of popularity.

NEIL GAIMAN'S SANDMAN

Morpheus, the Lord of Dreams, is more that just a god, he is one of the Endless. The Endless are a family of supernatural beings who embody the fundamental aspects of the universe. Neil Gaiman's Sandman is a collection of stories about Morpheus and his realm, the Dreaming. With allusions to literature, mythology and history, Gaiman's Sandman reaches a level of sophistication that leaves other comics in the dust.
The death penalty necessary justice for found guilty

By DARA BRAMSON Staff Writer

It may be the most ominous walk in the world. A mere 20 yards from a stark death row cell to the death chamber – arguably the loneliest and most despairing juncture in a life – arguably the loneliest and most despairing of stages on life’s journey.

Now, the moments preceding this annihilation of a life is bizarre, at best.

The accused is offered a last meal of their choice: lobster, steak, pheasant and truffles! He is kindly given some solace while talking to a spiritual advisor or religious leader of their faith.

Finally, he is offered an opportunity to unite with friends and loved ones.

Now, the convict solemnly takes his final walk down the bare hallway leading to the place where he knows, with an almost inexplicable degree of certainty, he will take his last breath.

This is the place he will die.

How can a supposedly civilized society extract its justice from a system of vengeance like this? It’s simple. These people, convicted beyond a reasonable doubt, will die in a way that neither you nor I ever are likely to be so lucky, or entitled to experience.

Assorted methods are used across the country to carry out executions.

At Raiford, Florida’s execution site, convicts enter the room and are strapped to a gurney. After being asked if they have any last words they are injected with a painkiller and anesthesia, to ensure they feel absolutely nothing. After the final order from an official is given, they are injected with a lethal drug mixture then begins its journey into their veins to stop the heart and force the cessation of life.

It is quiet, peaceful, serene and absolutely painless. The offender’s exodus from the world is a luxury.

In other words, those criminals who have been proven guilty beyond any doubt have never had to feel the pain of certain death.

The death penalty necessary justice for found guilty.

Statistics tell me that not a single executed convict has ever committed another crime. That is proof enough for me.

The lawmakers believe this will minimize the risk of putting the wrong person to death because it will eliminate any chance of error, only sentencing those who have been proven guilty beyond any doubt to death.

If anything, the new pope will definitely have a tough act to follow.

As the public face of Catholicism to “the city and the world,” as the Catholic catechism puts it, John Paul II’s successor will have to be able to handle the role of being the most powerful man on earth and having the spiritual humility such a position requires.

– Joel Marino, Senior Staff Writer

OPINION

EDITORIAL

Upcoming election of Pope John Paul II’s successor should be a difficult decision

As cardinals (members of the Roman Catholic Church’s governing body) gather this week in Rome to elect a new pope following John Paul II’s death on April 2, they will have to keep in mind that their successor’s role in international affairs will be monitored not only by the world’s one billion plus Catholics, but also by people of differing creeds and religious affiliations.

This is the result of Pope John Paul II’s 26-year dedication to involvement in world politics, and the special attention he gave the plight of third-world countries and authoritarian nations.

Rumors have spread that the cardinals may elect an African or South American pope to reflect Catholicism’s rise in those parts of the globe, though many have been clamoring for a return to an Italian-born pontiff.

Whatever the ethnicity or nationality of the new pope, it is certain that the cardinals should be on the lookout for a man well-versed in current affairs and able to understand the major role he will play in his church, as well as outside.

Whereas John Paul II was criticized for his conservative leanings, often censoring or prohibiting the works of theologians who disagreed with him, the new pope should be aware of the massive availability of information, and be able to defend his own religion’s views, while introducing a forum for communication that could be beneficial to the church’s ideological growth.

If anything, the new pope will definitely have a tough act to follow.

As the public face of Catholicism to “the city and the world,” as the Catholic catechism puts it, John Paul II’s successor will have to be able to handle the role of being the most powerful man on earth and having the spiritual humility such a position requires.

– Joel Marino, Senior Staff Writer

WINNER & LOSER

WINNER

Lottery winners: 110 lucky lottery players won Iowa’s $26 million Powerball on Thursday. The winners revealed that they got the winning numbers from a fortune cookie. Uncle Chang’s Winning Lotto Numbers Restaurant refused to comment.

LOSSER

Stabbed man: A Tokyo man was waiting for a cab April 2, when Juichi Ohara says that the man waiting for the cab gave him a dirty look. Afraid the man was going to attack him, he stabbed him in the chest with a knife. Conveniently, the haled cab made a great getaway car.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Do you think the Miami-Dade County Youth Fair and Exposition should be allowed to use FIU parking?

Total participants: 113

Total participants: 113

Cast your vote at www.beaconnewspaper.com
EXEMPLARY EXHIBIT: Graduate students Yomarie Silva and Isabel Moros-Rigau displayed their artwork in the 2005 MFA Art Exhibit. Original art pieces included simple family photography and different sculptures. Themes of the works ranged from nature to underwater imagery painted on pillars.

BY ANA SANCHEZ
BBC Editor

With her sculpture, Yomarie Silva exhibits what she found on her search for perfect beauty. And what did she find? Nature.

In her photography, Isabel Moros-Rigau uses natural light to display the relationship that is most important to her – family.

These artists are among the 2005 graduates who received a Master of Fine Arts at FIU.

As part of the graduate program, the students must display a portfolio of their work in the Patricia and Phillip Frost Art Museum.

Silva and Moros-Rigau had the opportunity to do so on April 1 at the reception of the annual MFA Spring Exhibition.

Before the reception, the students discussed their work during the Wednesday After Hours, a program in which the museum stays open an extra three hours after closing.

The MFA graduates gave a brief description of their work and then answered questions from peers and professors.

Art History Professor, Manuel Torres reflected on the progress his two students have made.

“They both have demonstrated real persistence and have pursued their own direction without letting anything distract them,” said Torres.

Organic leaves are a central part of Silva’s aluminum sculptures, because she believes that perfection is already in nature.

One of her other pieces that followed the nature theme, displayed jellyfish tentacles painted on pillars with what looked like a copper fish.

During her demonstration, Silva was critical of her work and, explained that she lacked simplicity.

“We need to understand that the work is never finished. It does us no good to be complacent,” said Silva.

Moros-Rigau photographs under available natural light. Her subjects include her children – Kasper and Odyssea – and her nephew, Sebastian.

She said in her description of her work, that self is “reflected in a relationship with the object of her photo.”

One of the photos show her daughter’s scraped knee. Another shows the children in a car with Kasper in a baby seat grabbing his foot with Odyssea sitting next to him. The photos are presented in black-framed squares.

“This is not like traditional family photographs,” said Moros-Rigau.

Along with the photos, she had a video that showed the children being themselves – hitting keys on a piano.

Geoffrey Olsen, associate professor for Art and Art History, most admires Moros-Rigau’s work for its realism and lack of artifice.

“My agenda is to go against conventional family photographs. In that sense she is a realist. She shows [in her photographs] her kids are not on their best behavior.”

On opening night, Olsen congratulated the artists for their hard work.

Ana B. Galano, Silva’s personal friend came to the reception. She was part of the first group to graduate from the MFA program in 2001.

“Yomarie has gone through a sophisticated, mature filter and this is the end result; she’s focused,” said Galano.

To celebrate, family members and peers congratulated the artists, had some wine and took pictures with Silva and Moros-Rigau.

Silva reflects on her MFA degree and on her future by saying, “This is our terminal degree and it is very important. What matters is what happens from here on. School is a safe place. I have to think about how I’m going to push myself forward to achieve what I have in mind – ideally of course.”

Moros-Rigau is appreciative of her years of study and conscious of FIU’s influence on her art.

“You want to feel you’re beyond the academic world and that you can survive beyond it. The best thing about art is actually doing it, but you have to realize that there is a lot out of your control and that you won’t be living a luxurious life, but certainly a happy one expressing yourself,” said Moros-Rigau.
The Beacon – April 7, 2005

PRODUCERS!

1968 classic hits Jackie Gleason Theatre

By ANA RIBEIRO
Staff Writer

The Broadway version of Mel Brooks’s 1968 film “The Producers,” starring Nathan Lane and Matthew Broderick, hit Miami’s Jackie Gleason Theater March 29 through April 3 on its national tour.

The musical has been an enormous success on Broadway – with sold-out audiences and a record-breaking 12 Tony Awards. Brooks is known for treating serious issues and taboos with a mixture of wit and slapstick humor, which come together in “The Producers.” Subjects addressed include homosexuality, the Nazi party, sexual favors for money and the deception of the IRS.

Max Bialystock (Bob Amaral), is a once-successful Broadway producer who has developed a knack for making absolute flops. By serving as a part-time gigolo to lonely old ladies, Max is able to raise money for his productions. His clients include Hold-me Touch-me, Lick-me Bite-me and Kiss-me Feel-me.

Leo Bloom (Andy Taylor), a frustrated and insecure accountant, dreams of becoming a producer. He gets a shot by joining up with Max to produce “the worst musical ever” as part of a scam.

Max and Leo choose to produce “Springtime for Hitler,” a musical written by neo-Nazi Franz Liebkind as part of a scam.

As the plot unfolds, the insulting become pleasing. Nazi Germany meets Brazilian carnival. The Village People are resurrected and Hitler comes out of the closet.

The actors’ voices have been well-rehearsed to sound unrehearsed. The acting is impressive, because it’s hard to be good at pretending to be a bad actor, let alone act in the musical, “The Producers,” where there’s a musical within a musical.

Choreography and direction are meticulously executed by Susan Stroman, who has won multiple awards and also directed Broadway’s, “Oklahoma!” and “Showboat.”

The colorful sets provide a three-dimensional illusion with kaleidoscopic projections, bright patterns and mirrors, which create special effects and creatively smooth set changes that use song and dance to distract the audience.

The pre-production and actual presentation of what was intended to become “the worst musical ever,” ironically turns out to be a real-life super production.

Although the characters indulge in rather lengthy bouts of silliness and dancing during certain parts, “The Producers” is hysterically entertaining.

Brooks, a Jew who served the army during World War II, gets his hilarious revenge on Hitler.

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The first simultaneous telecast of image and sound takes place on this day in 1927. Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover read a speech in Washington, D.C., which was transmitted to Bell Telephone Laboratories in New York City, where an audience saw and heard a tiny televised image of Hoover, less than 3 inches square.

– Reuben Pereira beaconevents@yahoo.com

– historychannel.com
Art museum director retires after 25 years

By GIOVANI BENITEZ  Staff Writer

She embraces brush strokes and sculptures, and for 25 years, her love of artwork and students has revealed a passion to teach, listen and serve. Upon retirement, nothing will change. Dahlia Morgan’s quarter-century legacy as director for FIU’s Frost Art Museum ended when she retired in late March.

Under Morgan’s leadership, the museum was home to nearly 200 exhibitions and hosted countless lectures by artists and museum directors like Pierre Rosenberg of France’s Louvre Museum and Philippe de Montebello of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. But the passion to attract such speakers hasn’t always been there. In fact, Morgan remembers the days and nights she couldn’t even understand it.

“I realized as a young person that I really didn’t know what I was looking at,” said Morgan, as she remembered some of the first pieces of art she tried to analyze: “If I didn’t understand what I was seeing. At least I knew enough to know I was pretty ignorant.”

That self-proclaimed ignorance took Morgan around the world, traveling to places like Europe where art and history blend. “It just enhanced and enriched my education and my empathy and my understanding of the world. I’m very passionate about it,” she said.

The university is equally passionate about her. In a memorandum to the university community, Provost and Executive Vice President Mark Rosenberg shared his personal remarks.

“FIU’s robust art programs once much to Dahlia Morgan, who single-handedly transformed a modest student gallery into a world-class university art museum,” Rosenberg wrote. “Dahlia has set the highest standard for helping us to build FIU.”

Mercy Advocat, development and membership coordinator for the Frost Art Museum, agrees.

“My first impression was that she was such an entrepreneur. She created something out of nothing. She listened to our membership. By listening, she responded,” said Advocat, as he spoke to crowds, calling Morgan for the way she felt very directly to the art and the person. Sometimes you just need an intermediary, and that’s how I see myself. In order to understand the art, you must understand what the intention of the artist was, and that’s where I come in.”

Morgan’s largest accomplishment is currently under construction: a $45,000 square foot museum being built across from the Wertheim Performing Arts Center. Morgan’s fund raising techniques helped her raise over $12 million for its development, she said the new four-story museum will be a historic addition to the campus.

“One thing I realized as a young person is that the art is about to talk if we attempted a fund raising campaign for a major university museum, and the we would be successful, and I was correct,” Morgan said.

Her presence will always be felt in the new structure, as Morgan said the members lounge will be in her name. On display: a list of all the visionaries who were part of the original museum’s nationally acclaimed lecture series.

Even though Morgan has decided to retire, she looks back at her years as director of the museum and remembers exactly why she took the job in the first place. “Our student body is incredible. Kids from all over the world – so smart, so interesting, so wanting to learn that it made me a better professor and a better director and made it possible to fundraise, because the people could see that, and they wanted a great museum,” Morgan said.

While her official tenure has ended, Morgan said she plans to stay in South Florida and continue to help the university in the development of the new Frost Art Museum.

In the meantime, the university has appointed Assistant Director Stacey de la Grana as acting director of the museum.

By listening, she could just as easily be welcoming visitors into her living room to share a bowl of her favorite strawberry fruit salad.”

“I think it’s because I feel very directly to the art … and I may have a gift to be able to communicate what the art is about to the general public in a manner that they can easily understand,” Morgan said.

“There is a direct line between the object and the person. Sometimes you just need an intermediary, and that’s how I see myself. In order to understand the art, you must understand what the intention of the artist was, and that’s where I come in.”

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By DESONTA HOLDER
Knight Ridder Newspapers

Go ahead and get a little nutty. That’s what Dr. Leonard J. Ram of Stuart, Fla., wants you to do. As founder of The Ram Nut Diet, created over the past three years, he tried it out on himself and lost 30 pounds over a year. He has kept the weight off for two years and he’s still sticking with the program.

It’s not about counting calories, eating special meals or riding the StairMaster to exhaustion. It’s about nuts – almonds, cashews, pistachios, etc. Before you balk at the fat and calorie content, consider that most of the fat in nuts is unsaturated, meaning it can lower your LDL cholesterol.

Nuts are also high in fiber and protein, and they’re a good source of vitamins and minerals.

“Nuts were taboo 10 or 15 years ago,” Ram said. But they’re “not only healthy, but extremely satisfying.”

The Ram Nut Diet focuses on eating raw or roasted nuts to control hunger. For optimum benefits, Ram suggests you exercise and hire a nutritional consultant to help turn this diet into a lifestyle.

Just knowing you have to check in with a counselor will help keep you on track. Claudia Gonzalez, a dietitian at Ram Nutrition and Weight Loss in Miami, says snacking on an ounce of nuts between well-balanced meals will make you feel fuller, causing you to eat less. “You’ll have a nutritious, satisfying snack so you won’t need to eat extra,” Gonzalez said. If you were to snack on junk food instead, “the empty calories won’t satisfy you” and you could end up overeating.

With a weight-loss coach, dieters “learn not only how to eat well, but how to deal with food issues,” Gonzalez said. “They learn about the basics of nutrition. ... They become aware of how to maintain their weight.”

“We convince people this program can be continued indefinitely because they’re not hungry and nuts are tasty food. It’s a very satisfying program.”
FIU avoids sweep with help of freshman bat

The Golden Panthers scored 13 runs in the final three innings of the game to prevent the road sweep. Starting pitcher Elih Villanueva (5-2) pitched six and two-third innings, allowed seven runs, 12 hits, walked one and struck out two. Hernandez (1-2) earned his first win of the season as he pitched two and one-third innings, allowed one unearned run and two hits, struck out two and walked none. Jordan went 4-for-6 with six RBI, two doubles and a run scored. Junior Yahmed Yema, Pullin and Rivera each had three hits to pace an 18-hit attack for FIU.

FIU took an early lead in the second inning after Yema led off the inning with an infield single to the shortstop. He proceeded to steal second base and advanced to third on a throwing by the UNO catcher. Jordan then singled to right field to bring Yema home.

After UNO tied the game at one, FIU delivered two more runs in the fifth after Rivera scored on a fielding error and Diaz scored off a double to left field by Pullin. The Privateers replied with three runs in the bottom of the inning to take a 4-3 lead. FIU tied the game again in the very next inning off an infield single by Rivera scored Jordan. It wasn’t until the eighth when FIU broke the game open. The Golden Panthers entered the inning trailing 8-7, but after they scored six runs – all with two outs – they never looked back.

After Rivera led off the inning with a single and Pullin was hit by a pitch, Yema hit a two-out, three-run homerun to right field. Then redshirt junior Nick Cadena was also hit by a pitch and advanced to second on a balk. Yosney single up the middle, which allowed Cadena to score, and advanced to second on a fielding error. Back-to-back RBI doubles by Jordan and freshman Corey Lozano scored the final two runs of the inning.

The Golden Panthers added four more runs in the ninth.
Hard work and versatility define third baseman

By ALDEN GONZALEZ
Staff Writer

With the month of March concluded, the FIU baseball team is off to one of its best starts in recent years.

The baseball program holds a 22-11 record and is geared toward a successful second half, thanks in large part to the productive play of newcomer Nick Cadena. After playing for Arizona State University under current assistant coach Chris Hollick, Cadena has had to deal with many new obstacles during his move to Miami.

Growing up in Phoenix, Cadena has openly accepted the challenges of a new city, new teammates and most of all, new positions.

This season Cadena has made the switch to third base and recently, catcher (a position he claims he hasn’t played more than 20 innings his whole life). It has been Cadena’s flexibility and acceptance of new challenges that has made this season successful.

The Reason recently sat down with FIU’s third baseman to chat about baseball, life and everything surrounding them.

Q: What is something about your game that has always come naturally to you?

Definitely my competitiveness. I am a very hard worker, and I’ve always had that drive to want to succeed. It has really led to my success.

Q: What has been the toughest challenge for you thus far?

Basically running different positions. I was originally a shortstop, and then I got moved to right field and then third base. Now just recently with the injury to [Cody] Jacobs, I’ve had to play catcher.

Q: What was it about FIU that made you decide to attend?

I know that they struggled last year and I could see that they really wanted to win. [Chris] Hollick had some very good things to say about the program, and I was really intrigued.

Q: Of all the positions you’ve played, which is your favorite?

Right now I like third base. I’m getting much better at it. The thing about me is that I like challenges. Whenever something new comes up, I’m excited, and I want to do it. This whole [playing catcher] thing is new to me, but it was a challenge, and I was excited to take it on.

Q: Which teammate have you learned the most from since coming here?

[Probably junior first baseman] Mike Lopez. Like me, he’s a real hard worker, and he’s just a competitor. [He and I] would do anything to win.

Q: What is one thing Coach Danny Price has taught you?

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Baseball loses two out of three on road

By XAVIER VILLARMARZO
Sports Editor

The Golden Panthers lost two games in a three-game series at the University of New Orleans April 1-3. The series marks the first championship road series for FIU baseball since 1998 after finishing in fifth place in the Sun Belt Conference's regular season standings.

Despite two home runs— including a grand slam — by Junior Michael Lopez, the Golden Panthers blew a six-run lead late in the game to suffer the loss.

Senior closer Danny Hernandez was slated with the loss after he allowed the game-winning run in the one inning he pitched.

"Asher pitched well," Price said. "We just collapsed in the [bull pen]. There's not a whole lot to say about it. That took a lot of the guys." Lopez went 2-for-3 with six RBI. Juniors Randy Youtsey and Bryan Pullin and freshman Michael Jordan also had two hits each, as FIU collected 12 hits.

New Orleans jumped out to an early 3-0 lead until FIU scored two runs in the fourth inning. Youtsey scored off an RBI groundout by senior Luis Rivera, and then senior Dennis Diaz reached on an error which allowed freshman Corey Lozano to score. FIU took a 7-3 lead after it added five more runs in the sixth inning. Jordan singled up the middle which allowed Youtsey to score again.

Then, Lopez hit his aforementioned grand slam over the left field wall.

The Golden Panthers entered the bottom of the eighth inning with a 9-3 lead after Lopez hit a two-run homerun in the top of the inning.

UNO then scored seven runs off three FIU pitchers — two off Asher, four off junior Frank Gonzalez and a final run off Hernandez.

New Orleans held on to the 10-9 lead in the ninth after it retired the FIU batters in order, two by strikeout.

NEW ORLEANS 12 FIU 5

In a game where FIU always trailed, starting pitcher Ammer Cabrera (4-3) allowed nine of New Orleans’s 12 runs. The righty junior was given the loss after he pitched five and one-third innings, allowed 12 hits, walked four and struck out four.

"We just made some key mistakes in the ballgame," Price said.

Diaz and Pullin each went 3-for-5 with a run scored and had a combined three RBI.

See BASEBALL page 10

Championship game puts UNC back on top

By NIKOILAY OREKHOV
Assistant Sports Editor

It's official. They did it. Cut down the nets and crown the Heels! It's hard to imagine a better season for the Tar Heels. Despite the many changes that have occurred, the Heels proved to be the best team and have again been rewarded with the top seed in the NCAA tournament.

A couple of loses had the Tar Heels’ fans questioning whether the team had what it took to win the school’s first National Championship since 1993. That 1993 team was coached by another legend, and maybe the biggest legend of college basketball, Dean Smith.

Since Smith’s retirement in 1998, Carolina had been on the rebound and had not been able to regain its dominance nor its program prestige. It was not an easy task to accomplish.

When the season ended, there were uncertainties surrounding Rashad McCants, such as his dedication and willingness to sacrifice his individual skill and mentality for the sake of the team’s success. He later missed several games due to a stomach virus and learned that his mother was diagnosed with breast cancer.

Since [legendary Head coach Dean] Smith’s retirement in 1998, [UNC] had been on the rebound and had not been able to regain its dominance nor its program prestige.

As for the Tar Heels, it was a season to remember, as they finished 33-4 overall. After losing the season opener to the woeful Santa Clara College, UNC bounced back to win 14 consecutive games and eventually went on to win the regular season Atlantic Coast Conference title.

It was a long road to the promised land. First there was injury to Raymond Felton, the team’s star and only true point guard on the roster.

Then, there were uncertainties surrounding Rashad McCants, such as his dedication and willingness to sacrifice his individual skill and mentality for the sake of the team’s success. He later missed several games due to a stomach virus and learned that his mother was diagnosed with breast cancer.

Sean May was solid throughout the season and got even tougher as the season wore on.

It took a 7-3 lead after it added five more runs in the sixth inning. Jordan singled up the middle which allowed Youtsey to score again.

The Tar Heels persevered, just as they have on many other occasions during the season, placed in what was thought to be the toughest bracket.

The team was finally healthy and McCants finally bought into Coach Williams’s system – all in time for the tournament and the title game.

So, as the Tar Heels lose several key players to either the NBA draft or graduation, the rebuilding process may once again be underway.

Except this time the progression will be much more pleasant and may even be considered a reloading period rather than a rebuilding period.

North Carolina basketball is officially back!