DEPLOYMENT DIVIDE

Increase in Iraq troops causes mixed feelings

As President George W. Bush announced Jan. 9 that he planned to deploy an additional 21,500 troops to Iraq, FIU students and faculty found themselves divided in their opinions on the President’s proposed plan.

Senior Brian Swenson greeted the plan with approval, saying that the decision was a positive one that needed to be undertaken to solve the problems in Iraq.

“I think the decision to increase the number of troops was a good one because we really need to get sectors of Iraq under control,” Swenson said. “I think the deployment of additional troops will help protect Baghdad from the insurgents and make it stable. However, I do think the troops should be sent towards the Iraqi borders to stop the influx of terrorists from other countries.”

Swenson, a Republican, realized that the majority of Americans could see the decision as a bad idea because according to him, most Americans think that the war should be held accountable.

“I think President Bush’s plan to increase the number of troops is terrible,” Lavender said. “We’re just digging ourselves in deeper at the potential loss of many lives and no potential benefits because of the civil war status in Iraq.”

Junior Jephren Perez, an independent, voted for Bush in the 2004 elections and supported Bush’s decision to invade Iraq. However, he conceded that the deployment of more than 20,000 additional troops was excessive.

“I don’t think we need to have an influx of over 20,000 troops. That’s a bit too much,” Perez said. “However, on the other hand, I don’t think we should withdraw from Iraq either. Withdrawing right now would leave Iraq in ruins with the civil war that’s taking place. The nation will crumble if America left it the way it currently is.”

Senior Muhammed Malik, president and co-founder of Act Now to Stop War and End Racism FIU, strongly opposed the addition of the troops. A.N.S.W.E.R. FIU is a local chapter of a national organization that has campaigned against the United State’s intervention in the Middle East, Asia and Latin America ever since its foundation in 2001.

“The troops must be brought home now. As in Vietnam, that is the only solution. Those who initiated the war and who funded the war should be held accountable for one of the great crimes of the modern era,” Malik said.

When asked about whether the Senate would approve or disapprove of the plan, Lavender said that Congress, including a good number of prominent Republicans and most Democrats, will oppose Bush and this will eventually end up hurting him.

“The opinions of the Democrats and the Republicans will matter in the long run because if the Republican Party doesn’t stop Bush, they will pay an even greater price in the next Presidential election,” Lavender said.

HELLO, GOODBYE: (Clockwise from above) Sgt. Thomas Ketchum, 23, says goodbye to his fiancee Nikki Desarro, 22, before being deployed to Iraq for the third time on Jan. 10; members of the Virginia National Guard return after a year-long deployment; soldiers take position during a fire fight with insurgents on Jan. 14.
New Iraq plan received with skepticism

Author, page 1

Swenson disagreed. “I don’t think anything is going to happen. The Democrats are going to politicize it. If the Republicans push the Democrats to vote on the plan, no one is going to do anything against it. No one is going to vote against the troops,” Swenson said. “I think the war is getting so much publicity because of the Democrats. They’re adding fuel to the fire. Defeatism is the solution of the Democrats. They prefer defeat. There are a very few leaders who have the guts that Bush did.”

Swenson went on to point out that the media had blamed in portraying the war as another Vietnam when it hardly resembled that war. “They publicize it as another Vietnam and they want to compare it to Desert Storm,” Swenson said. “When you’re fighting these terrorists with no nation behind them, you’re fighting idealism, not a nation. That’s completely different from Vietnam and the Gulf War.”

In their statement responding to Bush’s War speech, Malik stated that the Democrats are not much different than the Republicans. “They want to posture as opponents of Bush’s surge with out taking responsibility for ending the war at a close,” said Malik. “They’re merely preparing for the 2008 elections hoping to take advantage of the public disaffection.”

Writer concerned with rising anti-Semitism

Author, page 1

Jews today is reminiscent of Europe in 1938 but not everyone might agree. What makes you think so?

There is a lot of anti-Semitism around the world. The only thing is that people call it anti-Israelism, but it’s one and the same ... Today The Protocols of the Elders of Zion [a book with forged evidence of a Jewish plot for world domination] has become one of the most popular books in Muslim countries, and in Europe anti-Semitism has escalated to proportions unprecedented ... Even here [in the United States], you see men like ex-President [Jimmy] Carter bashing Israel. And in the United Nations, nothing has been done. Iran has threatened to wipe Israel off the map, and nothing has been done about it.

Q: Last year you were appointed by President Bush, to the Holocaust Memorial Council. And in that capacity you were invited to deliver the benediction at the Republican National Convention. What makes you different from the majority of Jewish voters who are Democrats?

I identify with issues. When I see a platform that reflects that which I believe from the point of view of my Biblical origins, then that is what I will support. As far as most Jews voting Democratic, the Democratic Party in the past has been the party of the minorities, and Jews are always a minority, so they identify with it. But there is no question that Jews identify more with the Republican Party? It’s not a question of identifying with one party or another.

I don’t vote on party lines, I vote on issues. And I find very often that the issues the Republican Party represents are closer to my Biblical values than the issues the Democratic Party represents.

Q: What would you like students attending your lecture to know about your latest book, Life is a Test?

The book is a trilogy. The first section is a test of self-discovery, because we all go through that ... the second section speaks of tests of relationships ... and the third section is about tests, like the Holocaust and 9/11. It’s a book for every person no matter what their individual persuasion may be.

Jungreis will present her lecture Jan. 22 at 7 p.m. in the Graham Center, room 243.
Celebration promises to entertain

By Begone Cazaus
Staff Writer

Panther Square will be filled with diversity as it celebrates the unity of cultures during the One World Celebration from Jan. 16 to Jan. 18.

Cecilia Moran, a senior majoring in television production and chairperson for the One World Celebration Week, said the event will be different from other events at BBC that focus on different nationalities. This is because students don't get to get close to other cultures, Moran said. “Attending FIU opens the door to students from different backgrounds. However, most students don’t get to get close to all of the students from the different cultures. This is an opportunity to get to know other cultures,” Moran said.

Anoush McNamee, the president of International Students and Scholar Services coordinator, said the One World Celebration will be different from other events at BBC that have celebrated diversity in the past.

“The One World Celebration will be a lot more entertaining with the performances,” McNamee said.

The events scheduled for the Jan. 16, which are being held and sponsored by the Student Programming Council, will consist of a Brazilian carnival from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m., surprise giveaways, and professional Samba dancers who will be performing in Panther Square.

According to McNamee, the major events for diversity awareness was developed by the National Association of Foreign Students Advisors. Universities are then given a survey to decide on what kind of events they want to perform.

“At FIU we decided to create our own One World Celebration, the Internatonal Week, the Internatonal Week, and maybe those events will come [along] the way,” McNamee said.

Food from both of these very different countries will be brought to students. During lunch, performers hired from the William Penthouse Performing Company will be playing internationally inspired music with traditional music from both countries until 2 p.m.

However, the events won’t end there.

A Panamanian lunch, organized by SPC, will be hosted right outside of the Wolfe University Center near the flagpole from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Jan. 18. India’s culture will be celebrated, which is also being organized by SPC. Indian performers will do traditional dances while authentic North Indian food will be served for students in Panther Square from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m.

According to McNamee, the main reason the One World Celebration is very special,” Jakes said. “It will be right after Martin Luther King Jr.’s day whose legacy is peace and unity. We are expanding his message to the cultural diversity.”

SGC, SOC look to fill council positions

By Anna Davis
Staff Writer

While the Student Organizations Council is holding special elections to fill empty positions for their executive board, the Student Government Council at BBC will not be holding elections for their executive board.

SOC will be holding special elections on Jan. 25 from 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. to fill empty positions in their executive board. The Students who will be eligible to vote during the special elections are representatives chosen by their respective club or organization. Each student club is given one vote.

SGC President Jon Doozan said he is looking for responsible and motivated students to fill the empty executive board positions available.

“Look for people I can count on. The duties are not heavy, my goal is to make them manageable,” Doozan said.

In order to run for an executive position, the applicant must have at least a 2.0 grade point average, and be “in good standing with the University,” according to Siegel. All SGC officers are expected to attend a meeting one day of each week that has been set up. Traditionally, all elections are held the second to last meeting of each spring semester.

According to Doozan, all new members will work for approximately 10 hours a week, but hours are flexible. Students will be able to schedule their own hours.

Advisor Ivy Siegel has established the important of filling the other executive positions in order to “get more help with running the SGC,” Siegel said.

It is important to fill these positions to better help the student body, Siegel said. “You will need to be a part of the board,” Siegel said.

Doozan, who was the SGC vice president in the fall, took over the presidency of SGC this spring after his predecessor, Yashica Heath, graduated from FIU at the end of the semester. Aside from Doozan, Heath managed SGC at BBC without an executive board.

SGC is the governing body of student organizations on campus.

They are responsible for allocating funds to student clubs and coordinating activities to promote student interests. According to Doozan, SGC is “the one organization that all students can go to in order to register a club.”

Students interested in running for an open position must submit their applications by Jan. 23. Applications are available in the Campus Life office. All SGC members must apply by picking up an application at the Campus Life office. There is no deadline to submit an application. All of the empty positions, which are flexible, will be filled as SGC finds eligible applicants.

In order to qualify for an SGC position, students must have 50 percent of their classes at BBC. They must also be available to attend all weekly SGC meetings and be in good standing with the University.

SGC-BBC Vice President Pamela St. Fleur said during the SGA weekly meeting Jan. 10 that all former SGC members who left after the Fall semester left on good terms, but left for different reasons.

“One transferred, some don’t have more than 50 percent [of their] classes in BBC which makes them ineligible to serve here,” St. Fleur said.

St. Fleur also advised fellow SGA members during the Jan. 10 meeting, to work hard and to recruit new members.

“Get the word out, tell people to apply, to get involved and not be afraid,” St. Fleur said.
More of the same

"Surge" merely a minor change to flawed strategy

DAVID A. FOIL
Contributing Writer

In the course of our chaotic misadventure in Iraq, we have been consistently bombarded with distorted, naïve and outright dangerous views on how exactly to handle a war that by all measures is not clearly defined and lacks tangible conditions for victory.

Will these factors combined, it is no wonder that we are in a situation that none of the best minds in political discourse and military strategy are able to resolve, either intellectually or practically.

And yet the fear of an even more dire future for Iraq and the region, we press on, desperately clinging to the comforting illusion of control. But can our leaders, who are entrusted with deciding the fate of our service members and some 25 million Iraqis, afford to gamble with so many lives? Because that is exactly what President Bush is doing with his so-called "new strategy" for the war.

Among his proposals is to send an additional 20,000 combat troops to help secure Baghdad and the Anbar province.

The US Soldiers and Marines sent into these areas will supposedly augment the current troop levels and establish more checkpoints, more counterinsurgency operations, and attempt to overall suppression of the ethnic and religious violence that has plagued the country for so long.

What officials hope is that this will give the Iraq government the time to train more troops and eventually take control from the militias and insurgents who stand in the way of peaceful development and stability.

However, what is often lost in the media discussion of this proposal is that all of these so-called new ideas have already been tried and have for the most part failed.

The increase will allegedly raise levels to around 160,000—yet since the war began in 2003 troop levels have fluctuated around this level with an average of around 150,000.

According to the Brookings Institution, troop levels in Iraq reached 160,000 plateau in November 2005 before receding in 2006.

The administration is merely returning the scope of our deployment in Iraq to their previous levels, not launching an unprecedented new offensive to stabilize Iraq.

So where is the new strategy? There is none. This is simply a stalling tactic to see if the situation somehow can resolve itself.

Bush has opted to change course in terms of rhetoric, while recyling most of his old plan.

This is not a new plan, it is merely the old plan reframed to make it seem like he has acquiesced to popular demands for change.

The President is in effect bluffing with a hand that can’t win, except the stakes aren’t just billions of dollars—they are thousands of lives.

The insurgents fight us not because they oppose a better future for Iraq, but because they oppose our occupation of their lands.

The Sunni’s and Shiites fight each other not because of some irrational hatred, but because they have struggled for control of Iraq and brutalized one another for so long that it seems the only reasonable course available to them.

These are problems of society, problems of how men and women choose to resolve their disputes.

Iraqis are fighting an internal war to decide what shape they want their state to take.

Some want democracy, others hope for a secular democracy, and still others cling to ideas that died with a man at his hanging two weeks ago.

How are we then to make these fundamental choices for people so far away, with experiences and attitudes we barely comprehend?

This is the greatest problem with the war, and no increase in troops, or false promises of a new direction will change that.

Controversy injected into death penalty debate

ALEJANDRA RAMIREZ
Life! Page Designer

Angel Diaz, an inmate in a Florida jail was executed for a murder he committed in 1979 on December 13, 2006.

It took Mr. Diaz 34 minutes to die during his execution—22 minutes longer than it took his execution—22 December 13, 2006.

Florida jail was executed for a crime he committed in 1987.

So where is the new strategy? There is none...The President is in effect bluffing with a hand that cannot win.

The lethal injection to die.

Minutes longer than it took his execution—22

Executioners used the lethal injection method, but, according to The New York Times, a second dose of the lethal chemicals used to kill Mr. Diaz was used.

The first injection was found to have gone through the vein into soft tissue. It wasn’t until the second dose was administered, that Mr. Diaz was declared dead.

After his execution, various newspapers across the country were quick to report the botched execution of inmate Angel Diaz.

Within a couple of days, Governor Jeb Bush stopped all executions in Florida and made it a point to investigate the “humane

Controversy injected into death penalty debate

Letters to the Editor must be dropped off at GC 210 at University Park, WUC 124 at the Biscayne Bay Campus or sent to beaconopinion@yahoo.com. Letters must adhere to a maximum of 300 words. Letters must include the author’s full name, year in school, major/department and a valid phone number for verification purposes. The Beacon reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and/or spacing constraints.

The problem with the case is that it took so long for him to die. Like Elliot Rod Johnson on June 24, 1987?

Due to collapsed veins, it took executioners almost an hour to administer the injection and officially pronounce Mr. Johnson dead.

These are just a few examples of bungled lethal injections.

If you were to scroll through the reported cases of botched executions—including execution by electrocution, lethal gas, or hanging—you must surmise to see that the majority of these failures were attempted lethal injections.

The Human Rights Watch website www.hrw.org states that 19 of the 37 states with lethal injection statutes consider it the only legal method of execution.

If lethal injection is to be considered the least painful and barbaric method of execution, and it caused Mr. Diaz and others before him so much pain, something must be wrong.

The issue is not simply over

the morality of capital punishment as an abstract concept, rather, the problem with the case of Mr. Diaz is that it took so long to execute him.

Like Johnson and Landry before him, Angel Diaz was essentially tortured to death.

Women choose to resolve the issues that we live with, and still others cling to ideas that died with a man at his hanging two weeks ago.

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Like Johnson and Landry before him, Angel Diaz was essentially tortured to death.

Death penalty opponents have questioned why something was not done earlier, and why the steps taken in the aftermath of this tragedy have not been more dramatic. Even some who don’t necessarily oppose capital punishment can do little else but ask these questions and be appalled at the suffering.

Those concerned with human rights can at least take solace in the fact that some states have taken steps to prevent another such lethal injection related horror story from occurring.

But in the end, the death of Angel Diaz may only prove that all capital punishment is inherently inhumane.

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JOURNALIST SEEKS MEANING OUTSIDE OF BIRTH CANAL

Broad scope of graduate school exam causes SAT flashbacks

SARAH RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

Stellar grades and a flurry of campus involvement during your college tenure are much to be proud of, but they aren’t the only necessities for students eager to step into the world of graduate school. Whether or not students agree with the admissions office, points out that not every college campus under their purview is concerned with SAT scores. "It’s a very broad series of tests," Carvalho said. "There are many areas that aren’t as pertinent in high school."

Jerry Pecknold, student and teacher’s assistant at English, agreed that his academic niche naturally influenced his scores. "I’m in the English department," Pecknold said. "I’ve always relied on machines to take care of my math… In the English section I did well.”

In light of this specialization, which occurs both in undergraduate and in graduate schools, Pecknold said, "I really recommend the prep books." Eberly felt that such books are probably the most economical – and most economical – form of preparation.

SARAH RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

If you’re the kind of student who has by now become so immersed in the SAT study guide, you may well find yourself asking the same question somewhere. I know there has been a conclusion as to the meaning of life, but I can’t clearly give an answer as to why there is life or what purpose that life is supposed to fulfill."
The Shins' new album, **Wincing the Night Away**, is a dramatically different album from their first: it was tidier, cutting out some of their more atmospheric tracks, arguing that the confluence of strong, perfectly written songs. It was an indisputably strong sophomore effort for the Shins, well worth the two-year-plus wait.

Now, after another four years of waiting, finally, a new Shins album looms on the horizon. So given past experience, which suggests that album quality is commensurate with waiting time, one could expect that the Shins' new album, **Wincing the Night Away**, should be a doozy.

And it's not bad. It really isn't. It's actually pretty darn good. It's the Shins, for chrissakes.

However, compared to the Shins' previous work, **Wincing the Night Away** isn't really up to snuff, not by a long shot.

In some ways, **Wincing the Night Away** is a return to the band's first album. Some of the creepy atmosphere is back, in the opening track, "Sleeping Lessons," and later on in "Pan Berry" and "Red Rabbits."

The Shins have never been a band to experiment much. They came up with a tasty formula on their first album and those same tensions were still there, even in a more sophisticated manner. The same feelings were juxtaposed throughout the band's songwriting that had evolved and was gone.

In many ways, Ofelia (Ivana Baquero), the young girl, resembles timeless characters like J. M. Barrie's Wendy, who escaped to Neverland to avoid the horrible fate of growing up, or C.S. Lewis' Pevensie children who entered Narnia as the Germans bombarded London to the ground.

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In those worlds, though, the heavenly presence of growth-ups was forgotten as soon as the adventure began, their rules only a catalytic for the magical times that lay ahead. What makes this movie a great film is that the cruelties of the adult world are Ofelia's perils — as much as she tries to escape into her dreams, reality's shadow follows her and becomes as integral to the film's plot as the magical elements.

The embodiment of that brutal reality is Ofelia's new stepfather, General Vidal (Sergi Lopez), who is the leader of a small army trying to defeat rebels hiding in the Spanish countryside during Franco’s fascist regime.

Lopez portrays Vidal as a logical but cruel man who silently revels in the fear he inspires in others. His only cares in the world are the son Ofelia's mother will soon bare him and his fanatical wish to see the overthrow of the new order die a painful death.

Though Del Toro chronicles Vidal's barbarism and battle scenes with the grit of a superb war movie, his masterstroke comes in the introduction of a bizarre, ancient creature simply called the faun (played with a wonderful, slightly menacing pomp by Doug Jones) who comes to offer an escape from that twisty realm.

Ofelia meets the faun in a decaying labyrinth near the fort where she now lives. A gaunt half-man, half-goat monster whose mischievous smile hides a trace of the sinister, the faun tells the girl that she is actually the reincarnation of a long-dead fairy princess.

Because the girl wants so badly to believe this, she agrees to fulfill three dangerous tasks before the rising of the full moon to prove her royal worth. Where another fantasy movie would have shifted focus to chronicle only these quests, Pan's Labyrinth keeps us tuned to what the grown ups are doing when the child-recedes into the adventures.

There is fear and sadness in this movie, such as can be found in the original Grimm fairy tales or the latest Harry Potter books.

By focusing more on the tale than on the fairies, del Toro has crafted one of the most original, bittersweet stories in recent years, reminding us that though we can't escape reality through dreams, it is as equally impossible to escape our dreams through reality.
MEN’S SUN BELT BASKETBALL STANDING

WESTERN DIVISION

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*All records up to date as of Jan. 12*

MEN’S SUN BELT BASKETBALL STANDING

BASKETBALL, page 8

after bumping knees with another player while trying to defend a shot. Villegas managed to return but was playing with a noticeable discomfort for the remainder of the game.

Laquetta Ferguson, junior guard

“The Hilltoppers extended their lead easily as the short-handed Golden Panthers became fatigued as the game wore on.”

A “little fatigue [was] setting in. It’s kind of difficult. They’re the best team in the league right now. We’ve been coming off of cold shooting nights. We weren’t getting a lift off our shots,” junior guard Michael James said.

“It’s not familiar territory for us to play with seven or eight guys,” Fuller said.

Whenever the Golden Panthers managed to put together a good run, the Hilltoppers would answer back with a timely 3-pointer or scoring run of their own.

“[Dominque Duck] and Charlotte Marshall,” Jekabsone said. “We knew she was a shooter.”

The last five minutes of the game included both teams trading baskets with little defensive stops.

Free throws from the Lady Toppers and poor rebounding in the last minute of the game halted FIU’s comeback.

The Golden Panthers will attempt to snap their three game losing streak against conference rival North Texas on Jan. 18 and will take place at 7:30 p.m. at Pharmed Arena.

Golden Panthers’ second half surge comes too late

LOSS, page 8

that as WKU answered with a 6-0 run started by two consecutive lay-ups from junior forward Crystal Kelly, who finished with 13 points and 11 rebounds.

We as a team were not moving. There was a lot of standing in the first half.

FIU’s senior guard Tiffany Zaragora and junior forward Charlotte Marshall combined for 4-for-6 shooting from the three-point line.

“I think we could’ve done a better a job on [Dominque Duck] and Charlotte Marshall,” Jekabsone said. “We knew she was a shooter.”

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The Beacon – January 16, 2007

SPORTS
Short handed, men lose to Western Kentucky

CHARLIE GRAU
Sports Editor

With only three reserves on the bench — as a result of junior guard Dejon Prejean transferring to St. Thomas University, sophomore guard Elvis Lora’s suspension, and injuries to forwards Facundo Giorgi and Marlon Bright — a win against a Sun Belt Conference opponent, Western Kentucky, on Jan. 11 would have been just what the men’s basketball team needed.

Asst. Sports Editor

SERGIO BONILLA

The Golden Panthers’ second half offensive attack. Jekabsone scored 13 of her team-high 15 points as she finished with 10 rebounds. Ferguson dished out five of her team high six assists as she finished with nine points simultaneously switching from shooting guard to point guard in the second half.

“I’m comfortable playing any position on the court,” Ferguson said. “Coach wanted me to play the point so I did.”

Ferguson was moved to point guard after coach Rouco elected to bench sophomore starting guard after coach Russo elected to bench sophomore starting guard. Rouco lead all scorers at the half with 13 points, going 3-for-3 on 3-point attempts. He even managed to give his team some momentum heading into halftime as he buried a three as time expired.

But Fuller’s momentum couldn’t offset the Golden Panthers’ poor shooting from the free throw line as they went 1-for-6 in the first half and finished the night 12-for-26 at the line.

“When you shoot better from the field than you do from the free throw line, you’re not going to win that basketball game,” coach Sergio Rouco said. “They have to change their ways on the mentality of approaching a free throw line and putting in some more time. “All that stuff about bringing in a voodoo doctor and the shot doctor … the only doctors I know are medicine doctors.”

The Golden Panthers’ misfortunes continued as the Hilltoppers opened the second half on 11-4 run. Worst off, senior guard Jowen Villegas went down with 10:49 left in the game.

The women’s basketball team’s offense was stuck in quicksand during the first half against Western Kentucky (10-5, 4-1) and the Golden Panthers (9-7, 3-3) fell 71-61 at home despite a late second half surge Jan. 11 at the Pharmed Arena.

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The women’s basketball loses at home to Western Kentucky

The Beacon – 8

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The Golden Panthers scored just eight points six minutes into the second half until sophomore forward Marquita Adley sparked FIU’s comeback attempt with a steal and fast break lay-up. Adley finished the game with nine points and seven rebounds.

Senior guard Monika Bosilj also hit two consecutive three-point shots as she finished with 10 points. “The bench was very instrumental to our comeback,” coach Russo said. “They play well together and they’re always ready.”

The Golden Panthers’ bench outscored the Lady Toppers’ bench 14-3 in the second half as she finished with nine points and six assists.

CONTAINED: Junior guard Laquetta Ferguson was the facilitator in the second half as she finished with nine points and six assists.

HACKED: Despite scoring a career high 18 points, junior guard Chris Fuller could not help the Golden Panthers snap their five game losing streak. The Golden Panthers gave up a season high 86 points, in a loss to Western Kentucky.

Women’s basketball loses at home to Western Kentucky

SERGIO BONILLA
Asst. Sports Editor

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