Affordable flu shots to be available at UP, BBC

DAIANA KUCAWCA  Staff Writer

Flu season is just around the corner, but concerned students need not worry about catching the bug. From October to January, the health centers at both the Biscayne Bay and University Park campuses will be offering flu vaccines at a reduced price for students, faculty and staff, who can take advantage of the offer by making an appointment with their campus’ Health Center.

Influenza, most commonly known as the flu, is an airborne virus that causes respiratory infections. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, people who get the flu may experience fever, chills, dry cough, muscle aches and headache, among other symptoms. Not to be confused with the common cold, the flu can be prevented through yearly vaccination, as the different strands of the virus that affect people may change from year to year, according to Donna Weidema, advanced registered nurse practitioner at the BBC Health Center.

The cost is $16 for students and $20 for faculty and staff. The campaign against flu contagion has been a staple at FIU’s health centers since their openings. “The flu is so prevalent that the offer for the vaccine stands every year,” Weidema said.

The campaign is meant to target anyone who wants to prevent the flu, but is primarily aimed at “people with weak immune systems, older men and women and people in confined spaces,” where it’s easier for the flu to get around, according to Weidema.

While other viruses spread year-round, the flu has a determined peak time. “After October, the risk [of contracting the flu] increases markedly,” said Elvis Velez, ARNP and health administration director at BBC.

Because the virus changes every year, disease surveillance is used in order to detect which strands of the virus are most prevalent. As a result, the vaccine changes every year. “We use herd immunity in order to prevent the virus from spreading out because different viruses become more popular each year,” said Velez.

The flu can be spread by coughing, sneezing or nasal secretions, according to the Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Center recommends avoiding close contact with infected people, according to Weidema.

The Student Financials Office and the Enrollment Services Office is recommending that all students hold on to their receipts in order to make sure that payments are properly credited to their account. According to an e-mail sent to all students from Vice President for Student Affairs & Undergraduate Education Rosa Jones, students will also not be able to order transcripts over the system. Amid all the restrictions, students can still send and receive e-mails on PantherMail, which will not be affected by the freeze.

Some faculty members have been able to get a small preview of the Campus Solutions 90. “I have tried it out and I’ve talked to several faculty members who have gotten the chance to try out the new PantherSoft, and they said it was alright,” said Carlos Suris, director of Student Services at BBC campus.

According to Suris, while the new server has added and taken out some features from the previous system, it is still very similar to the system the University has now. “The PantherSoft [software] that we currently have is perfectly fine. Why fix it, if it is not broken?” Suris said.

However, Jones believes this new version will be beneficial to both students and faculty. Currently, when a student visits an academic adviser, the adviser does not see the same page that the student sees on their own panthersoft system. “I have tried it out and I’ve talked to several faculty members who have gotten the chance to try out the new PantherSoft, and they said it was alright,” said Carlos Suris, director of Student Services at BBC campus.

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PantherSoft ‘freeze’ makes way for upgrade

MILVIONNE CHERY  Staff Writer

Starting Oct. 18, the PantherSoft system will undergo a system “freeze” in which students will only be able to view their profile, but not be able to change or upgrade it.

This system freeze is performed in preparation of an upgrading PeopleSoft Student Administration System version 8.0 to Campus Solutions 9.0. During the freeze period, which will take place between Oct. 18-27, students may not complete any transactions on PantherSoft or update any information.

The information or transactions students will be able to view on PantherSoft will only reflect those made or changed as of Friday, Oct. 17. If students need to make a payment, they will have to go to the Cashier’s Office at either campus. However, the current balance after the transaction cannot be seen on PantherSoft until the freeze period is over.

The Student Financials Office and the Enrollment Services Office is recommending that all students hold on to their receipts in order to make sure that payments are properly credited to their account. According to an e-mail sent to all students from Vice President for Student Affairs & Undergraduate Education Rosa Jones, students will also not be able to order transcripts over the system.

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Time for change

REFLECTIONS: Junior Christina Nielsen (front left), Freshman Jacqueline Lugo (right), Freshman Daniel Stones (middle left), and Senior Angie Castillo (middle far back) write down their hopes after walking through Lakeshore South GIBT Awareness Program.

Senator McCain to hold rally at FIU Arena

JULIO MENACHE  Asst. News Director

Republican presidential nominee John McCain will be holding a rally inside the FIU Arena on Oct. 17. The doors to the arena will open at 11 a.m. The event is free and open to the public, but there will be a free guest list.

The College Republicans and Students for McCain were giving out tickets throughout the week in the Graham Center. Tickets were also available at local Republican Victory Offices located throughout the Miami, Broward, and Monroe counties. Those in attendance are asked to wear ‘Republican red’. Guests were asked to arrive early, but some will be subjected to security screenings to make sure that guests do not have any prohibited items such as oversized bags, food and beverages of any kind, weapons, and signs.

Before arriving in Miami, Sen. McCain visited Chester County, Pennsylvania for his “Road to Victory” rally, in which both McCain and his running mate Sarah Palin are taking part in a city-by-city rally to gain voters. The tour has taken the candidates through key states such as Florida, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and New York.
People are beginning to understand education is important to advance in, with the way conditions are nowadays, and they’ve begun to realize that investing $5,000 in education outweighs those of a $50,000 education investment,” Berkman said to present the logic behind the increase. He explained that the increase would be beneficial because it would provide greater income to the University without creating more cuts to the budget.

Another topic raised at the meeting was the issue of the SACS Review. “We’re up for SACS Review in 2010, but we have to begin preparing for it now,” said Jaime Canaves, a professor for the School of Architecture.

SACS is a council that provides accreditation to schools and colleges around the South. With FIU’s current ranking as a fourth-tier university (the lowest for ranked schools), the faculty present at the meeting look to create programs and agendas that will hopefully help boost the University to a higher ranking. Also present at the meeting was Student Government Association President Arthur “AJ” Meyer. He spoke to faculty members about a new project plan he and his committee are working on called “Panther TV,” which he hopes to have finished by December or the first week of January.

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Ronald M. Berkman, Provost FIU

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Improved software adds new features to help students

PANTHERSOFT, page 1

PantherSoft.

Now with 90, advisors are able to see what students see,” Jones said.

Students have also expressed relief with some of the new changes.

“If I have a problem and want to go to an advisor, they would say that they could not see it on their page,” said Michelle Cordova, a student at FIU. “I hope this would make it easier.”

Another part of the upgrade is Grad Express, which according to Jones will make it easier for students to understand the requirements they will need for graduation.

“This program is much better than SASS [Student Academic Support System],” Jones said.

The new version will also allow professors to have a picture ID of each student on their class roster. Most professors would find this useful for attendance, testing and security purposes.

“One of my professors did that, and it helped him remember our names,” said sophomore Melissa Prieto. The switch to Campus Solutions 9.0 will take place on Oct. 27.
Health Services gives advice on what to do in case the flu strikes

FLU, page 1

If already sick, the Health Center recommends covering the mouth and nose, and if possible, staying home to avoid spreading the virus. The Health Center usually expects about 100 people each year for flu vaccines, but if everyone doesn’t get the vaccine, the virus may spread to more people. The virus is contagious, but the school has a preventive method to avoid it, and as Donna Weidema said, “Just do it.” To make an appointment at FIU’s BBC Health Center call 305-919-5620 or (305) 348-2401 at UP.

Visit our web site for more content, visit our Web site.

www.FIUSM.com

DANCING WITH THE MARIACHIS

The school often brings in mariachis to perform at events. A mariachi is a band of Mexican musicians who play various instruments. George Tandy, among others, expects about 100 people each year for flu vaccines, but if everyone doesn’t get the vaccine, the virus may spread to more people. The virus is contagious, but the school has a preventive method to avoid it, and as Donna Weidema said, “Just do it.” To make an appointment at FIU’s BBC Health Center call 305-919-5620 or (305) 348-2401 at UP.

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SEASIDE SPOTS: The Blue Marlin will soon offer kayaks rentals for general use as well as its regular menu options.

they are both run by people who welcome groups to lounge around, have a few drinks and enjoy the breeze. They are both pet friendly; the Blue Marlin even provides personalized water bowls for the dogs of regular customers. But there is more to do on the beach than just eat and take long walks.

From Oct. 17 to Oct. 19, the Sunny Isles Beach Jazz Fest will take place in various hotels in Sunny Isles. The three-day festival will feature David Sanborn, Sammy Figueroa and George Tandy, among others. Even with jazz playing in the background, the sounds of the ocean are like a song that can take you back to another place in time.

When my friend, Eric, and I went to Blue Marlin, we were completely blown away. As Marlin, we were completely blown away. As Pelicans and Blue Marlin have deep roots in the history of North Miami Beach and Sunny Isles Beach. Set in different locations, they are both run by people who welcome groups to lounge around, have a few drinks and enjoy the breeze. They are both pet friendly; the Blue Marlin even provides personalized water bowls for the dogs of regular customers. But there is more to do on the beach than just eat and take long walks.

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A presidential candidate’s stance on abortion is as important as the freshmen experience course at FIU, which is to say that it is not important at all. For some reason, every four years, one of the hottest topics is abortion. Republicans preach about anti-abortion laws and the Democrats advocate it should remain legal.

This discussion, however, creates a major misconception of power. If an issue, whether its social security, Iraq, the economy or even abortion laws, becomes debatable then it was safe to assume that the reason it is debatable is because those debating it can impact it significantly. No. Any and all discussions regarding abortion and the president’s preference toward it, whether pro-life or pro-choice needs to stop.

In the case of abortion, the president has as much of a fighting chance to change or affect abortion law as a pregnant woman versus Mike Tyson. The only branch of the government with any power to decide the legality of abortions is the Supreme Court. That one of the nine Supreme Court justices dies of a heart attack while Roe v. Wade is a constitutional right that the states could only abridge after the current climate that enough of the new appointees.

Regardless of what the politicians promise you in regard to abortion, they can’t do anything and neither can you. So when deciding on who to throw your vote behind, consider some of the more pressing issues that one of the nine Supreme Court justices are at average life expectancy of a U.S. citizen is 77.8 years, and 77 percent of the Supreme Court justices are at least 60 years old. Once a position for Supreme Court Justice becomes available, then the president must nominating someone to become the next Supreme Court Justice. The nominee must then be approved by the Senate. Even after their appointment, it is not guaranteed that the new Justice will abide by the president’s view on an issue. Even if the average life expectancy of a U.S. citizen is 77.8 years, and 77 percent of the Supreme Court justices are at least 60 years old.

Once a position for Supreme Court Justice becomes available, then the president must nominating someone to become the next Supreme Court Justice. The nominee must then be approved by the Senate. Even after their appointment, it is not guaranteed that the new Justice will abide by the president’s view on an issue. Even if the new Justice wished to overturn Roe v. Wade through the Supreme Court, she will, regardless of the laws in place in the U.S., – making a ban futile, if not downright dangerous.

The easiest way would be to fly to London and get an abortion there. Flights to London range from $333 to $1,080, plus the added bonus of some sightseeing! Regarding what the politicians promise you in regard to abortion, they can’t do anything and neither can you. So when deciding on who to throw your vote behind, consider some of the more pressing issues.

All talk and debate regarding a president’s ideology on abortion is as useful as a cell phone in a Sahara Desert.

KATY HUSTLEJON Contributing Writer

If I turn on the news and hear one more comment about “Issue Number One” or the “financial crisis,” I get my TV off of my balcony with full confidence that I am not alone in my frustration. All of us have been getting our daily dose of panic – and constantly reminded not to panic – while simultaneously receiving nothing more than the same campaign lines we’ve had since the primaries.

The tax policies of both presidential candidates, Barack Obama and John McCain, are becoming an increasingly vital issue as people’s budgets and the economy as a whole continues to dry up. Yes, we’ve heard Obama plans to cut taxes for “95 percent of working families,” and McCain thinks “it’s very important that we make the Bush tax cuts permanent,” but these lines don’t tell us very much.

We don’t need any more slogans, we need facts. Since 2001, with the introduction of Bush’s tax cuts, there has been a sense of comfort among the wealthiest individuals and the largest corporations. The top tax brackets during the Clinton administration of 39.6 percent and 36 percent were reduced to a flat 33 percent under Bush’s tax cuts.

In 2007, McCain said in a “Meet the Press” interview: “I voted against the tax cuts because of the disproportional amount that went to the wealthiest Americans.”

He was right about the fact that those tax cuts allowed for 0.2 percent of the countries’ wealthiest people to receive over 15 percent of the tax cuts in 2004, while the middle 20 percent of us received less than 9 percent.

But what is even better is the fact that McCain ardently insists upon making those very same tax cuts permanent now. He has also stated that he would reduce the corporate tax rate from 35 percent to 25 percent, a move intended to increase investment in U.S businesses.

Obama’s tax plan sets out to reduce the corporate tax rate to their pre-2001 levels, eliminate taxes for seniors making less than $50,000 per year, as well as reduce capital gains tax on stocks up and small businesses. By leaving all tax cuts in place except for those making over $200,000 a year (single filer) and lowering tax-cuts for those making under that amount, Obama plans to stimulate the economy from the bottom up.

This tactic has been attacked by Gov. Sarah Palin, McCain’s running mate, as “the backwards way,” even though on the subject of job creation, Obama’s plan to cut taxes includes 95 percent of small businesses which fall under the $250,000 partnership. It is those types of businesses that need tax cuts.

In a country where the top fifth of the population holds half all the wealth, our tax policies should not increase the already existent income gap. During the vice presidential debate, Palin accused the Obama tax plan of being a “redistributive of wealth.” Sen. Joe Biden countered her with, “We don’t call that redistribution, we call that fairness.”

Stop bringing up the topic as “controversial” or “debatable,” it is our economy sound and our nation as a whole. Regardless of what the politicians promise you in regard to abortion, they can’t do anything and neither can you. So when deciding on who to throw your vote behind, consider some of the more pressing issues that one of the nine Supreme Court justices are at average life expectancy of a U.S. citizen is 77.8 years, and 77 percent of the Supreme Court justices are at least 60 years old.

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Stop bringing up the topic as “controversial” or “debatable,” it is our economy sound and our nation as a whole.
around the corner, I decided to go check it out. "Go Greek" is what it said. With rush week
rences are near obsolete.
 happened in other professional and elite circles.
where don't they? Worse things have hap-
currences haven't happened, but then again,
lead to serious injuries or death.
acts that could potentially
them to partake in heinous
resemble cults and that
choose to believe that they
pretations and shallow mis-
of "frats," what comes to
given to fraternities and
such as "Greeks" and "Pledge This" have
given to fraternities and
are the stereotypes that movies and TV shows

FRIDAY • OCTOBER 10
WHAT: Presidential Candidate
John Moore at FIU
WHERE: FIU Arena
WHEN: 11 a.m
HOW MUCH: FREE with pre-
eamed Ticket.
WHAT: Art of Surviving Benefit Dinner
WHERE: FIU GC Ballrooms
WHEN: 8 p.m
HOW MUCH: $115
WHAT: DLP 3rd Annual Dine
WHERE: Eisenhower Highschool
900 NE 2nd Ave
WHEN: 7 p.m
HOW MUCH: $15
WHAT: New West Electronic Arts and Music Organization (NWEAMO) Festival
WHERE: FIU Wolfson Concert Hall
WHEN: 8 p.m
HOW MUCH: FREE
WHAT: Franca 7 at PS14
WHERE: 514 28th St
28th and 28th
WHEN: 8 p.m
HOW MUCH: $5
WHAT: SPK Karaoke
WHERE: Gracis Grill
WHEN: 8 p.m
HOW MUCH: FREE
WHAT: Career Fair featuring
Japanese Companies
WHERE: GC 445
WHEN: 6 p.m
HOW MUCH: FREE

SATURDAY • OCTOBER 11
WHAT: Race for the Cure-FIU
WHERE: Bayfront Park
301 Biscayne Dr.
WHEN: 8 a.m
HOW MUCH: $30
WHAT: Vicente Fernandez
WHERE: American Airlines Arena 401
Biscayne Blvd
WHEN: 8 p.m
HOW MUCH: $60
WHAT: Jock’s Morehouse
WHERE: City Limits, 19 N.E. 3rd Ave.
Miami, FL
WHEN: 9 p.m
HOW MUCH: $25
WHAT: Bow Wow
WHERE: The Fillmore Miami Beach at Jackie Gleason Theater
1700 Washington Ave
Miami Beach, FL
WHEN: 9 p.m
HOW MUCH: $50
WHAT: Lollapalooza
WHERE: Grant Park
1100 Chicago Street
Chicago, IL
WHEN: 8 p.m
HOW MUCH: $50
WHAT: Nightmares Ghost Stories
WHERE: Splits Studios
2134 NW 10th Ave
Miami, FL
WHEN: 7 p.m
HOW MUCH: $5 donation
WHAT: Cartoon Fair featuring
Japanese Companies
WHERE: FIU GC 445
WHEN: 6 p.m
HOW MUCH: FREE

FRESHMAN, page 6
Fraternity stereotypes untrue

Nelson Hernandez  Staff Writer

Last week’s horror film “Quarantine” continues in the rich tradition of previous horror films with the motto “Keep the camera on, we’re not dead yet!”

Like “The Blair Witch Project” and the most recent example of “Cloverfield,” a series of misfortunes befalls the cast of relative unknowns as a camera catches all of the acts of random violence and confusion.

The film takes place in Los Angeles as a news crew of two shadows the local fire department as firemen go out on a routine call to an apartment building.

The sensation that it won’t be an average call becomes less subtle once the apartment where the call originated from is inspected, revealing a single elderly woman covered in blood and shrieking hysterically. What ensues is the grandest example of personal chaos in recent film-making: people falling from the top floor of the building and into the lobby, excessive shots of jagged bleeding, ear-stopping, frustrated, language barriers, sledges, hammer government conspiracies.

The film fails weakly on its attempt to bring the struggle down to a personal level. There is a quick cycling of back stories for each of the characters, including everything from African immigrants (we assume since there is no clarification) to an opera student and her mentor. Yet for all of these nuggets of information, the lack of information is only meant to heighten confusion.

The predictable film struggles to provide any real frights or deep thought because it feels the only way to scare people is through a night vision lens and strategically placed monsters that the audience can see while a character fumbles around and the entire theatre is shrieking “Look! Look!”

“Quarantine” is caught between two styles of filmmaking. On the one hand, it strives to be among the latest wave of “torture porn” films like “Hostel” or “Saw.” This rift in ideas leaves “Quarantine” in a place still deciding what it wants to be for the audience without ever coming close to it.

MOVIE

Sex Drive

Steve Mesa  Staff Writer

Whether you prefer Ben Stiller’s sense of humor or the stylings of Judd Apatow, a new hat has been thrown into the preverbal comedy ring with “Sex Drive,” another R-rated comedy in the tradition of “Tropic Thunder” and “Forgetting Sarah Marshall.”

Shot in Florida, including a scene at Dolphin Mall, “Sex Drive” is reminiscent of many 80s teen sex comedies such as “Porky’s,” in which the protagonist’s sole mission is to get laid.

In this case, in order for that to happen, the protagonist has to travel 500 miles to reach that goal. Why 500 miles? Ian (Josh Zuckerman) is told by a woman with whom he has been chatting online that if he travels from Chicago to Knoxville, he will lose his virginity. Obviously, Ian tells her via computer that he will be there in two days.

In most sex comedies, the protagonist surrounds himself with testosterone-driven best friends. In “Sex Drive,” Ian’s companions are Lance (Clark Duke), Ian’s suave and debonair male friend and Felicia (Amanda Crew), Ian’s best female friend. The plot picks up when Ian, Lance and Felicia confidentially to an opera student and her mentor. Yet for all of these nuggets of information, the lack of information is only meant to heighten confusion.

The predictable film struggles to provide any real frights or deep thought because it feels the only way to scare people is through a night vision lens and strategically placed monsters that the audience can see while a character fumbles around and the entire theatre is shrieking “Look! Look!”

“Quarantine” is caught between two styles of filmmaking. On the one hand, it strives to be among the latest wave of “torture porn” films like “Hostel” or “Saw.” This rift in ideas leaves “Quarantine” in a place still deciding what it wants to be for the audience without ever coming close to it.

MOVIE

Quarantine

Hi again,

Isn’t the cartoon version of myself cute? This week, we have not one, not two, but three Sudokus for you to conquer and put up on your fridge. We’ll have more comics for you next week.

Cheers,

Jonathan Davilla
Life! Editor

diversions

For Sudoku answers, go to FIU.SIAM.com/sudoku. If you are interested in having a comic in our paper, send an e-mail to Life@fiu.com.

The Beacon – October 17, 2008
Hilton brings much needed speed and sparks to improving offense

Hilton, page 8

for 14 years, plays the position opposite to Hilton. In order to hope each other's skills, they often engage in one-on-one battles to see if Gaitor could stop the speedy freshman. "I'm a great defensive player and he's a good offensive player, we help each other out," Gaitor said. "Facing a player with his type of speed prepares me for my opponents."

Gaitor, being older than Hilton, has always felt a duty to look after the freshman. "That's my godbrother. I feel like I have to teach him (Gaitor) so I look out for him, make sure his skills are improving."

Listed at 5-foot-10 and 175 pounds, Hilton does not use his physical mass to get to the end zone — rather, he relies on the speed he says he has his whole life. "That's a God-given gift," Hilton said. His former coach Pacheco said no matter what position Hilton played, he would produce.

"I had him at wide receiver, punt returner, cornerback. I even had him at quarterback and he threw touchdowns," Pacheco said. Playing several positions in his high school gave him insight into how his opponents might try to defend him.

On offense, Hilton said he tried to let his teammates know when he wants to be the one to ball them out during key points of a game. "I'm in a situation where the team comes to me to make a big play that we need down the stretch. They look forward to me getting on the field," Hilton said. "Quarterback Paul Michael has benefited from having 366 receiving yards, which are more than any other receiver had in 2007. He's a special player and he keeps everyone loose in the locker room."

Hilton did not contribute much to the offense during the first three games, all of which were FLU losses: yet during his last three games, he has scored a total of four touchdowns as a wide receiver.

With six games left in the season, the Golden Panthers have gone from winning one game in two seasons, to becoming Sun-Belt Conference contenders. Hilton said the whole team is responsible for winning, not just one player. "The things I can do to help this team, I do to perfection and everybody else sees that," Hilton said.

Hilton's role as a wide receiver is the latest addition to the offense, but FLU fans sitting in the student section know exactly when he's about to return a punt. During home games, like a maestro conducting a symphony, he moves his hands and directs students to make more noise.

Hilton was silent because they knew if he touched the ball, the touchdown run might unfold. Gaitor believed in Hilton before he wore a college uniform. Following Hilton's promise, Gaitor told coach to have confidence in his long-time friend. "Coach, whatever the kid says, believe it," Gaitor said.

JONATHAN RAMOS
Ath. Sports Director

In his first season at FIU, center Russell Hicks scored 12.5 points per game and led the Sun Belt Conference with 2.1 blocks per contest.

After having one of the most statistical seasons for a big man in the history of the program, he was named to the presson men's all-Sun Belt team.

The senior, who played two seasons at Pepperdine University prior to his transfer to FIU, became the 52nd player in FIU history to score 300 or more points in a single season in 2007-08.

Hicks was also ranked in the top 60 nationally in field goal percentage with a .539 clip from the field.

The 7-foot Ontario native is joined by Carlos Monroe (Florida Atlantic), Desmond Yates (Middle Tennessee) and Brandon Davis (South Alabama) on the press team. Yates was named Presson Player of the Year for the conference.

There were no other players from the Golden Panthers on any of the men's preseason teams.

TOUGH ROAD

The Golden Panthers will play a slew of Southeastern Conference opponents on the road this season. Trips to Washington, Miami (Fla.), UCLA, and Georgetown are huge challenges away schedule.

Among those teams, UCLA and Miami are expected to be among the top 25 nationally, with Washington and Georgetown on the outside looking in.

The Golden Panthers were 1-10 on the road last season, with their lone road victory at FAU. Notable home games for the Golden Panthers include games against Toledo and Fordham.

DOUBLE DUTY

Freshman T.Y. Hilton, who is an FIU football player, will be playing basketball for the Golden Panthers as well.

The all-Dade basketball selection in high school will bring his athletic ability to the dance floor.

"That was part of the agreement," said head coach Sergio Ronco. "T.Y. came because he loves to play football and basketball. It was one of the reasons he came." Hilton averaged 16 points per game and 5 assists per game last year at Miami Springs High.

Keeping his role as a wide receiver, Hilton found a way to get on the field.

"With six games left in the season, the Golden Panthers have won one game in two seasons, to becoming Sun-Belt Conference contenders. Hilton said the whole team is responsible for winning, not just one player. "The things I can do to help this team, I do to perfection and everybody else sees that," Hilton said."
called coach and told him, ‘The first punt return that I get, I’m going to take it to the house. And I promise you that’.”

Paul McCall has led FIU to three consecutive wins, and has limited his turn-overs, throwing six touchdowns and one interception over the past three games, compared to zero scores and five picks over the first three contests. McCall has a 121.3 quarterback rating, with 342 yards and four touch-downs, but struggled against FAU after the Conference USA contest, and because FIU leads the conference in both kickoff and punt return average.

At national signing day, I called coach and told him, “The first punt return that I get, I’m going to take it to the house. And I promise you that”. Hilton for four years.

DEFENSIVE STANDOUTS: FIU’s Scott Bryant (left) and Troy’s Boris Lee (right) will both challenge for all-Sun Belt honors this season, and both should have a significant impact on the outcome of Saturday’s decision.

VICTORIA LYNCH/THE BEACON

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DEFENSIVE STANDOUTS: FIU’s Scott Bryant (left) and Troy’s Boris Lee (right) will both challenge for all-Sun Belt honors this season, and both should have a significant impact on the outcome of Saturday’s decision.

Both senior Golden Panther running backs have rushed for four touchdowns on the year, but they are averaging 3.2 (Ned), and 3.0 (Reams) yards per rush. The FIU offensive line has continued to improve, and if they can get some push up front, the FIU ground game may have an opportunity to be effective.

Hidden yardage may be a factor in this contest, and because FIU leads the conference in both kickoff and punt return average.

T.Y. Hilton is having an all-conference type of season on special teams, but it will be strength on strength as Troy leads the Sun Belt in kick off coverage.

FIU (3-3, 2-0 Sun Belt) will travel to Troy (3-2, 2-0) in what is the most im-portant conference contest the program has played in its seven-year history. Troy has the No. 1 defense in the Sun Belt, in terms of yards allowed per game, and is allowing an average of 324 yards per game.

The charge has been led by a Golden Panther defense, which has become one of the Sun Belt’s best. Troy is led by junior linebacker Boris Lee and senior linebacker Bear Woods, who have combined for 108 tackles in just seven games this season.

Troy has the best defense in the conference in both kickoff and punt return average.

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FIU’s defense will turnover Troy’s offense to be in top shape if it wants to take a firmer hold on the Sun Belt standings. Leading the charge will be a healthy mix of youngsters.

The linebacker rotation has been solid, and the secondary has forced turnovers, plus have an opportunity to be effective.

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In the backfield, it’ll be tough sledding for both teams. Troy, who runs the spread option for much of its offensive success may struggle, having lost a quarterback in Hampton that is averaging 4.6 yards per carry.

DuJuan Harris is the Trojan leading rusher, with 342 yards and four touch-downs, but struggled against FAU after the starting quarterback was injured.

Julian Reams and A’mod Ned have split carries, and have alternated productive games.

FIU to play biggest conference game in school history at Troy

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BEACON PREDICTION

The game is projected to be a defensive struggle. It will come down to who can make big plays at the right moments, and maintain their focus as far as not turning the ball over, avoiding penalties and with penalties being near even FIU holds the advantage in turnovers.

It’s the hidden yardage that’ll be the difference, but not by as much a margin as the Golden Panthers have over the past three games.

FIU’s defense will turnover Troy’s young quarterbacks, and its offense will take advantage of a short field.

Troy’s defense will limit long drives, but T.Y. Hilton will make a big play on special teams that will secure the game for FIU, who will take a step forward in the Sun Belt conference.

Final score: FIU 14, Troy 10.

True freshman has made a true veteran impact in ‘08

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