Football adds non-conference teams to future schedule

Speaker discusses candidates’ possible strategies, policies

MIDDLE EASTERN POLICY

Speaker discusses candidates’ possible strategies, policies

Andrew Cauleses 
Staff Writer

Norris gave an unbiased view on how Sen. John McCain and Sen. Barack Obama would deal with the current issues in Iraq, Afghanistan and Iran. These issues, according to the Gallup polls, are second to the economy in the minds of voters. When speaking about the candidates’ experience in regard to foreign policy, Norris described them as “empty vessels” stating that traditionally many presidents have no foreign policy experience and rely heavily on their advisors. “The advisers that Obama can refer to are basically Clinton’s former team,” Norris said.

He went on to speculate that the Illinois Senator is more pensive and would be more likely to take advice if an issue of national security would arise. When explaining Norris gave an unbiased view on how Sen. John McCain and Sen. Barack Obama would deal with the current issues in Iraq, Afghanistan and Iran. These issues, according to the Gallup polls, are second to the economy in the minds of voters. When speaking about the candidates’ experience in regard to foreign policy, Norris described them as “empty vessels” stating that traditionally many presidents have no foreign policy experience and rely heavily on their advisors. “The advisers that Obama can refer to are basically Clinton’s former team,” Norris said.

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Latin American and Caribbean Center

Candidates’ foreign policy aides meet to persuade late voters

Elizabeth Nickerson 
Staff Writer

Both presidential candidates’ Latin American policy advisers gathered to convince last minute voters on Oct. 22 at the Latin American and Caribbean Center.

Sen. John McCain’s Latin American Chairperson Fabio Arias and Sen. Barack Obama’s Western Hemisphere Senior Policy Adviser Dan Restrepo attempted to sell their respective candidates positions on Latin American policies.

Cristina Eguizabal, director of the LACC, was the moderator, who welcomed both by reading the first question, “What are both candidate standpoints on immigration?”

Obama’s vision was clear, according to Restrepo, when he pushed for immigration reform alongside Sen. Mel Martinez in 2006 and 2007. In addition, Restrepo said, Obama is a strong supporter of amnesty and the construction of a wall border in the U.S-Mexico border. “Protecting our security within our borders and going after those employers who are exploiting immigrant labor in the U.S is crucial to Obama’s commitment during first year in office,” Restrepo said.

Arias has worked closely with McCain for eight years to ensure security within borders. “There are three pillars for immigration reform in a McCain-Palin administration: security, undocumented immigrant’s alteration and illegality,” Arias said.

MIDTERMS

FIU football midseason grades

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The airy-clad student, according to Arias, was de- lirious and stated she felt like fainting. She advised to police of seizures in the library.

The victim was unresponsive but breathing normally when arrived at the scene though the victim denied treatment and walked out of the library. Fire Rescue was called to the scene - Compiled by Sergio Bonilla.

POLICE NOTES

Oct. 18: Police were called at 12:50 a.m., in reference to the theft of a bicycle. The victim, an FIU student, said that at 11:30 p.m. he placed his bicycle on a bike rack on the south side of the Engineering Computer Science building and secured it with a lock. Upon returning, the bike was gone. The lock had been cut.

Oct. 19: A FIU visitor had a seizure while in the library. The victim was unresponsive but breathing normally when police responded to the scene. Soon after, he was sitting upright in a chair and conscious. Fire Rescue was called to the scene though the victim denied treatment and walked out of the library and campus on foot. The victim has had two past seizures in the library.

Oct. 22: An FIU student complained of light headed- ness and stated she felt like fainting. She advised to police that she had given blood two hours earlier and had not eaten since. M.I.A. Fire Rescue responded to the scene treat- ing and releasing the student.

-Compiled by David A. Barrios.

LATIN AMERICA, page 1

not sit down with the Castro brothers, according to Arias, until political prisoners are granted to the Cuban people.

Earlier in his campaign, Obama received criticism for stating that he would like to “pursue direct diplomacy, with friend and foe alike, without preconditions.” The debate moved for- ward, with representa- tives speaking about Haiti’s food crisis reformation and both Cuban American Speakers agreeing in the de- velopment of assistance on Haiti’s Food crisis.

Corruption was indeed the highlight of the evening. Arias said, “fighting to end corrup- tion in both parties” is key to ensure independent leadership by cutting America ahead of politics and self-interest. Obama’s adviser men- tioned the importance of corruption, by stating that in an Obama administr- ation will “shine the light on corruption.”

During the questions and answer section, an au- dience member wanted a thorough explanation on the Obama campaign’s commit- ment to “shining the light on corruption.”

Latin America pulses the debate insightful, senior Daniella Pinero said the pub- lic discussion did not influ- ents regarding Latin American policies.

The public forum was a continuation of a debate at the America’s Conference held two weeks ago, where both representative spoke on top- ics regarding Latin American policies.

While students found the debate insightful, senior Daniella Pinero said the pub- lic discussion did not influ- ence her opinion on the can- didate she was going to elect.

“I enjoyed some aspects of both candidates on their stan- dards in Cuba,” Pinero said.

Overall, from the stan- dards reiterated by M.C.C’s representative she was “sold” by M.C.C’s policies.

MIDDLE EAST, page 1

on how Sen. Obama would deal with an extreme issue of national security he said:

“The problem with any democratic president and par- ticularly Obama, is there will be so much skepticism about his alleged liberal tread- ing and releasing the student.

“..."I think this [event] will have an impact on how I vote because the War on Terror is a huge deal in this election," Khashar said.

etti’s new idea everyday.”

However, De'arona felt that Norris was biased toward Obama.

"But at the end of the day you have to look beyond not only the words that they say but look at who they are. It is obvious to me he’s voting for Obama," he said.

Senior Afroza Khashar summed up what she felt stu- dents should have taken from the presentation.

"I think this [event] will have an impact on how I vote because the War on Terror is a huge deal in this election," Khashar said.

NonViolence In Business

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Dr. Dipak C. Jain

Samani Charitra Prajna

(Dean of the Kellogg School of Management)

(Dean of the Kellogg School of Management)

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Graham Center (GC) Ballrooms • FIU University Park

RSVP by Oct. 21 to prajnap108@gmail.com Contact number 305-220-5339. Jain Vegetarian Dinner will be served

Sponsors: Jain Center of South Florida, FIU Religious Studies Department, Center for the Study of Spirituality, Preksha Meditation Club, The Eugenio Pino & Family Global Entrepreneurship Center

Battling corruption is paramount

Speech impacts voters in attendance

GATHER ‘ROUND

THINKING GAPS: Freshmen from a First year Experience course (SLS 1501) work on a group assignment for developing a budget

The Beacon offices are located in the Graham Center, room 210, at the University Park campus. Questions regarding display advertising and billing should be directed to the Advertising Manager at 305-348-6994. Mailing address: Graham Center, room 210, Miami, FL 33199. Fax number is 305-348-2712. Biscayne Bay Campus is at 305-919-4722. Office hours are 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. E- mail: Beacon@fi u.edu. Visit us online at www.beacon.com

CORRECTIONS

In the issue dated Oct. 22, 2008, the News arti- cle titled “Greek’s new payment policy affects credit” identified Beta Theta Pi fraternity as Beta Omicron Pi. The same article stated Beta Theta Pi members pay $450 a month. M embers pay $450 a semester.

The Beacon will gladly change any errors. Call our US office at 305-348-2709 or BBC office is located in the Graham Center, room 210, at the University Park campus. Questions regarding display advertising and billing should be directed to the Advertising Manager at 305-348-6994. Mailing address: Graham Center, room 210, Miami, FL 33199. Fax number is 305-348-2712. Biscayne Bay Campus is at 305-919-4722. Office hours are 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. E-mail: Beacon@fi u.edu. Visit us online at www.beacon.com

Dr. Dipak C. Jain

Jain (Dean of the Kellogg School of Management)

Samani Charitra (Jain Nun)
Students enjoy homemade beer at Oktoberfest

BRITON ALONSO
Contributing Writer

The Friends of Wine club took a break from its usual drink of choice as they hosted “Oktoberfest: Beers of the World,” a fall fundraiser that was held in the Hospitality Management Building dining room at the Biscayne Bay Campus to celebrate Oktoberfest, and was open to anyone over the age of 21.

While this was the club’s third tasting of the semester, it was the first to showcase beer.

Samantha Newton, a senior hospitality management major and Friends of Wine president, said the variation was due to requests from club members.

“We asked people what they wanted, and they wanted a beer tasting,” Newton said. “So we gave it to them.”

Participants were offered a variety of beers and foods to taste.

There were 17 beers representing six countries, with four from Germany, nine from Belgium, and nine home-brewed variations.

Dennis Gebken, a senior finance and international business major, presented three beers he brewed. He used a home brewing kit called “Mr. Beer,” which can be purchased online at MrBeer.com. “[The kits] make it so easy. All the ingredients and tools are there. Anyone can do it,” Gebken said.

This time around, he brewed a lager, a pilsner and a stout.

Lagers are one of the most common beers in America and have a light flavor. Pilsners have a bitter taste, while stouts, such as Guinness, are thick and nutty. Gebken said that Weihestephaner, a German brew, comes in 1040 and is the oldest functioning brewery in the world.

A thrum “A.J.,” Mindermann, a senior hospitality management major, also donated his home-brewed beer. One was a Kaffir lime pilsner, which is flavored with Kaffir lime leaves, a common ingredient in Southeast Asian cuisine.

“Kaffir lime is usually an ingredient in curry dishes,” Mindermann said. “It’s a very experimental flavor for beer.”

Mindermann is the Friends of Wine secretary, but his main priority is the food.

“Yes,” the secretary, but what I really do is make sure the food is great. I’m the chef,” Mindermann said.

In full celebration of Oktoberfest, Mindermann prepared sauerkraut and bratwurst, staples of German cuisine.

Cellar, Wine and Spirits in Aventura and Republic National Distributing also donated some of the beers.

All sat at one long table with the beers placed in the middle. With Allman Brothers classics playing in the background, the tasters learned more about each other and the beers they were sampling.

“Exactly what I want the club to be: people getting together, sitting around a table and having fun,” Newton said. “This is the best turnout we’ve had this semester.”

The 22 tasters spanned a wide range of ages, Jake Campbell, 26, does not attend FIU, but heard about the tasting through his stepbrother, who is a club member. He really appreciates that FIU offers these things to the public,” Campbell said.

He also made it a family affair by bringing his father, John Campbell, 58, to the tasting.

“I can see me and my dad buying a case of ‘Mr. Beer,’” Campbell said. “I think we just found our new weekend hobby.”

The club will host two more tastings in October. For the first tasting, Friends of Wine team up with Club A forica on Oct. 27 at 5 p.m. for a South African wine and spirits tasting. South African regional food will be served, and the cost will be $5.

The second tasting, on Oct. 29, will be free, and co-hosted by the South Beach Wine and Food Festival Club at 5 p.m.

Beef lovers will have to wait until next semester for another beer tasting.

“We are already thinking about what to do for the next beer tasting, but the rest of the semester is already booked up with wines, so it will have to wait,” Newton said.

Both tastings will take place in the Hospitality Management Building dining room at 8BC.

For more information, contact fiufriendsofwine@gmail.com or fiufriends@fi usm.com.

Paper bags a more eco-friendly option than plastic

On a recent trip to Savannah, Georgia I noticed something unexpected: a green-driven innovation.

An everyday grocery bag in Savannah is lined with one or two heavy-duty plastic bags, with numerous plastic bags being used to carry groceries.

In Savannah were lined with one heavy-duty plastic bag on the outside, and a large brown paper bag on the inside. If you’re collecting garbage outdoors in Florida, paper liners might not be an option due to the humidity and rainfall, but indoors it is acceptable.

“We found that we were going through plastic bags so often that we decided disposable plastic bags were more cost effective,” said Jesse Watkins, sanitation supervisor for the Savannah-Chatham County’s sanitation department.

The paper bag in the garbage can serves as the receptacle for the garbage, while the disposable plastic bags are fixed inside the bin, as a barrier, only to be removed if the paper bag breaks.

This inspired me to make changes in my shopping habits and how I dispose of trash.

Paper grocery bags are as easy to obtain as plastic ones, the difference is you have to request them when checking out at a grocery store.

Whole Foods Market banned plastic bags at checkout earlier this year, so the only bag offered is made from paper.

“Paper bags are made from trees, which are a renewable resource. Most plastic bags are made from polyethylene, which is made from crude oil and natural gas—nonrenewable resources,” according to the Environmental Protection Agency’s Web site.

In ideal conditions, “plastic bags can take 1000 years to decompose,” whereas paper bags take about a month, according to the site.

Kate Bennett, a junior television production major, said she uses her leftover plastic grocery bags for her lunch bags, cat litter box liners and garage bags.

Switching to paper bags for trash liners and lunch bags would benefit decomposition in landfills because fibrous brown paper breaks down easily.

On the other hand, “2,000 plastic bags weigh 30 pounds, while 2000” paper bags weigh 280 pounds. The latter takes up a lot more landfill space, according to the EPA’s Web site.

Weighing the benefits between the two poses a dilemma. If you want to help out but can’t make up your mind, there are other alternatives that can benefit the community as well.

Consider shopping with a reusable bag in your purse or purse and when checking out, ask the bagger to use this bag for groceries instead of standard plastic bags.

Some stores, such as Publix, Target and Whole Foods sell reusable bags ranging from 99 cents to $3.50, and Whole Foods will even take a “nickel-per-bag” off your purchase, according to their Web site.

This incentive is a good tactic to reward those with reusable bags, but some may find it cumbersome carrying around several empty bags in addition to other personal belongings.

“I wouldn’t be opposed to using it for smaller purchases, but for bigger grocery outings, it’s impractical,” Bennett said.

Keeping a few of the reusable bags in my car, I find them convenient because each one holds around three plastic bags worth of groceries. This lessens the load my hands carry, compared to the thinner plastic bags that cut off blood circulation to my fingers.

If you forget your reusable bag or are too shy to ask for paper, take the plastic bags and use them to carry your groceries home. When finished, bring them back next time to be recycled in a designated plastic bag recycling bin. Publix, for example, has these bins in many of their stores.

When I backpacked Europe, I noticed that if you didn’t bring your own bag for groceries, you were charged around 3 cents for each plastic bag you took. The USA could be headed this way, so it would be beneficial to both you and the environment to start making these small life-style changes.

Next time you visit the grocery store, use your reusable bag and promote greener practices.

According to the EPA’s Web site, “In New York City alone, one less grocery bag per person per year would reduce waste by five million pounds, and save $250,000 in disposal costs.”

I make a change.

Go Green is a monthly column about green initiatives. If you have any suggestions, please e-mail us at atethebay@fi usm.com

Contact Us
John Cardenuto
BRC Managing Editor
onbeacon@fi usm.com

GOING CLUBBING

CLUB FAIR: Hall Neal, a junior public relations major (right speaks to Maurice Doucet, a freshman journalism/creative writing major, and Maria Pacheco, freshman journalism major, about the Keep the Music Rolling Jam, which promotes local bands and donates proceeds to organizations such as the Humane Society.

NO LEDERHOSSEN: Arthur Mindermann pours beer for the samples at the beer tasting on Oct. 22.

Check out the music of local and national artists at the Keep the Music Rolling Jam on Oct. 30.

The Keep the Music Rolling Jam, which promotes local bands and donates proceeds to organizations such as the Humane Society, will be held at the Bay Club on Oct. 30.

For more information, contact fiufriends@fi usm.com or Go Green is a monthly column about green initiatives. If you have any suggestions, please e-mail us at atethebay@fi usm.com.
Vote ‘yes’ on Amendment 8 to help fund community colleges – but be wary

The Beacon believes in focusing on issues that directly affect higher education. As such, of all the amendments on Florida’s ballot this general election, the one that we found most relevant to college students and the state of higher education is Amendment 8 to the state constitution.

Amendment 8 would authorize counties to levy temporary sales tax increase for the purpose of giving supplemental funding to community colleges in that county. The approval of this amendment itself does not create a tax, but it does have the potential for greatly affecting Miami-Dade County’s fiscal relationship with Miami-Dade College.

The Beacon recommends a vote of “Yes” on Amendment 8.

First and foremost, we, as benefactors of publicly funded education, strongly believe in its importance in the primary, secondary and postsecondary levels.

A “yes” vote on Amendment 8 is an affirmation of the important roles that community colleges play in our state. There are a number of reasons that community colleges, and specifically Miami-Dade College and Broward College, are the two institutions most closely related with our own university – could use an extra couple of bucks.

The recent cuts to degree programs deemed less profitable to the University – such as the College of Education have FIU seeing a decline in new students for the first time since 1992. We have nothing to lose by a complementary institution being a mechanism of producing teachers for the community, among other qualified professionals.

This is a perfect time to increase the roles of community colleges in our county government system, since both Miami-Dade College and Broward College both now offer some four-year degrees.

To clarify: yes, both of these institutions are still considered part of Florida’s community college system despite the dropping of the designation from their name.

Now that we have covered why community colleges could benefit from this, it is imperative to consider some of the consequences, and worse, ulcerative motives, behind this amendment.

Most ominously, if the amendment becomes law, we believe that the legislature might feel that it can get away with reducing funding for community colleges, now that counties are providing some of their own dough.

We’ve seen this before in our state with the Florida Lotto, which promised additional money for public schools, but the state ended up using money that was originally for education for other purposes.

If the state saw that monies raised by county sales taxes went to Miami-Dade College it might be compelled to cut its own funding to the College, citing the need to pay for other expenditures.

The success of this Amendment is contingent upon our trust in our county governments.

Since every county would be responsible for writing the wording of the referendum that would actually put the sales tax into place, they should ward it in a way that stipulates without a doubt that all of the money collected would go to community colleges – and produce results.

Then they have to actually do it.

Miami-Dade residents are rightfully weary of increased taxes after approving a 2002 penny tax to fund bus in rail project, only to have the county later admitted in 2005 that it could not live up to the promises of the People’s Transportation Plan that the tax was supposed to support.

And in November there will be a float day, a cheese-cake lover’s bar, and of course, a Thanksgiving feast. There are three other events in December as well.

Support FIU’s main dining establishment by attending the themed events; thus not only eating better quality food but also saving money; as the other dining options are not as carfree with their pricing.

So go eat at Fresh Food, or you’ll regret it.

In order to draw more students to the cafeteria, including those who do not have meal plans, Fresh Food would need a very active marketing team.

KEVIN CASTRO
Staff Writer

Many of you are lifeless zombies, shuffling about in starvation – that is, until you enter Fresh Food Company in the Graham Center. As many of you know, Fresh Food Co. is FIU’s most affordable food option for the highest quantity of food.

All restaurants, regardless of location, have their pros and cons; Fresh Food Co. is no exception. For the price of a Subway combo, which is not infinite, you are given access to a limitless amount of healthy food choices, all of which are prepared and cooked in front of you. That is the pro.

The con would be that the Fresh Food Co. menu can sometimes feel monotonous and boring to regular customers, especially students with meal plans.

“Probably about 85 percent, the majority of students that we feed are on a meal plan,” said Henry Ward, director of Residential Dining.

Luckily for us, Fresh Food Co. has found an ingenious way to “give students a break from the cycle itself,” according to Ward. The answer is themed meals.

“They are a monotony breaker that is not on our regular menu,” Ward said.

Between Sept. 24 and Oct. 15, Fresh Food Co hosted weekly themed events.

I attended these theme events and I can tell you that the quality of the food was both superior and more enjoyable than that of a regular day.

A mazingly, there is no extra cost, according to Ward, in hosting the themed events.

We need theme events to occur much more frequently than they have in the past and they have planned.

Bringing multiple themes per week would not cost the students more.

“If we did multiple specials it would not be a situation that it would raise prices,” Ward said.

If there is no extra cost and the menu is greatly improved, then why don’t we have at least two themes per week?

Most likely, Fresh Food Co. is awaiting the results from the themed events that have been planned for the remainder of the semester. So far, “the counts are the same every week,” Ward said when asked if the themed events brought in additional students.

Why hasn’t Fresh Food Co. received more customers? Simple: their marketing is lethargic. Placing a couple of signs in front of Fresh Food Co. is not promotion.

In order to draw more students to the cafeteria, including those who are not on meal plans – which would bring more revenue and then would enable more investment in events – Fresh Food Co. would need a very active marketing team, which seems to be lacking.

Fresh Food Co. will be hosting seven more themed events during this semester. Any student who dines at FIU should attend for two reasons.

First, the overall quality and variety of food is superior to that of an ordinary Fresh Food Co. day and it outshines our establishment’s menu.

Secondly, if a higher number of students attend, then Fresh Food Co. might have sufficient incentive to further increase the amount of themed meal events.

If there would be an increase in the number of themed meals, then both the enjoyment of the meal would increase and the monotonous sensa tion we feel would lessen or end.

“Next week, [on the 31st], we have a Halloween themed meal,” Ward said.

And in November there will be a float day, a cheese-cake lover’s bar, and of course, a Thanksgiving feast. There are three other events in December as well.

Support FIU’s main dining establishment by attending the themed events; thus not only eating better quality food but also saving money; as the other dining options are not as carfree with their pricing.

So go eat at Fresh Food, or you’ll regret it.
Strolling through the halls of the University Graham Center, you may have seen posters or easels inviting you to visit the Porter Davis Game Room.

Located directly before the entrance to Gracie’s Grill in GC 155, the game room is a quaint place where individuals of all kinds can gather to escape the daily grind of life. Within, you’ll find people playing the popular card game “Magic: the Gathering” or contemporary video games like “Super Smash Bros. Brawl.”

One may even find some students enjoying a game of table tennis or chess.

“I enjoy the wide variety of available games,” said sophomore and chemistry major Khalid Dubey. At reasonably inexpensive prices, students with a Panther ID or a driver’s license, whether they attend the university or not, can partake in any game of their choice. Seven billiard tables are available to rent for a student hourly rate of $5 and a $7 rate for non-FIU students.

Table Tennis is also available for a student hourly rate of $3 an hour and a $4 rate for non-FIU students. Special deals are also available to recurring customers. By signing up for a loyal customer card, after the seventh game of pool you are granted a free eighth game.

Every Friday from noon to 2 p.m., a free game of billiards is available to anyone that comes in. For fans of online gaming, a Panther ID will allow you to create an account to play a variety of online games such as “Halo,” “Counter Strike,” “Day of Defeat,” and “World of Warcraft,” for $2.50 an hour. Board games such as Backgammon and Chess are available for free. Arcade games range from 50 to 75 cents a pop.

Employing a chess club, billiard club and table tennis club, the Game Room sponsors campus tournaments where winners can then represent the University at the Association of College Unions International, which has produced first place winners in these games.

Monday night is known as football night, and anyone is free to join the crowd and celebrate the beloved sport while watching Monday Night Football.

The Game Room also offers opportunities for students to receive hands-on training in customer service and budget management through one of their numerous clubs.

“I’ve learned lots about accounting and customer service by interacting with people of all ages and races,” said junior and interior design major Adriana Ares, who is in charge of marketing for the Game Room.

For more information on the Porter Davis Game Room, visit the Room in GC 155, or call the front desk at (305) 348-2189.

RACK ‘EM UP: Mike Diaz, a junior philosophy, plays pool at the Porter Davis Game Room.
some to be here in Ft. Lauderdale. It was time to talk to us today. The crowd was really Culture Room in Ft. Lauderdale on Oct. 19. There was a Q & A session after the band’s show at the old and new, as I was able to see tonight. Something that I wanted to do before I die was to get Taking Back Sunday fans responded? I called and I’ll personally mail you a copy. I heard and put it on the album and I’m happy with the result.

TB: It was the first time. How was it for you?

FM: It was the first time, and it was the most tiring, longest summer I’ve ever had. [Laughs]. But obviously it was amazing. I mean, I got to know so many new bands, and I got to see many awesome bands and the crowds were just like none other. I loved it, but honestly, it took me about six weeks to get over it.

The days were very long. We would get up at 8 a.m. to set up our [merchandise], then go up the gear. The next was the performance. At the end of the day, you can do it. It kills your soul. It’s a magical tour, but it’s definitely hard.

TB: What was the recording process like?

FM: Well, that was probably the most different part about it because I’m normally in the studio with a band and everyone is chipping in their ten cents, and basically getting in the way.

No, I’m kidding. But this was my chance to do it exactly how I wanted it. The flip side, of course, is that if it didn’t go well, then it’s my fault. But luckily, I’m happy with what we’ve made. Originally, my intention was to make this record and stay with [Taking Back Sunday]. This way I can do it exactly how I wanted it. The flip side, of course, is that if it didn’t go well, then it’s my fault. But luckily, I’m happy with what we’ve made.

The first time I got to be on the Warped Tour main stage in a long time. It was so much fun, I jumped into the crowd.

TB: Our University just finished midterm elections this past week. People were just as much on edge with stress. How do you deal with stress on tour?

FM: Well, I was in college myself a while back. I dealt with the college stress. Now, whenever I’m stressed on tour, all I have to do is just think how hard that was and everything compared is just not stressful at all. I’d like to say that the quality of my complaints and problems have been getting a bit better. Instead of complaining about pulling an all-nighter to write a paper, I complain about Taco Bell not being open in the morning.
FIU FOOTBALL: DEFENSE
Excellent special teams likley to be key for team down the stretch

DEFENSE, page 8

Three of FIU’s five remaining games are at home. One of the road games is at Louisiana-Lafayette, who ranks second from the bottom in the Sun Belt in passing defense. Comeback Anthony Gaitor and safety Marshel McClurff are tied for third in the conference with three interceptions each.

SPECIAL TEAMS KICKING: B+

Dustin Rivest has yet to miss an extra point, but has made just two of four field goal attempts this season, which you consider that FIU has done a good job scoring touchdowns in the red zone, so Rivest’s services have only been needed sparingly, and the sample size is very small, thus the asterisk.

PUNTING: A

If the season ended today, Carlos Munera might be a first-team all-conference selection. 69% of Munera’s punts, 34-of-49, have starterd FIU’s opponent at or inside the 20 – or have been unreturnable.

RETURNS: A+

There really is no discussion about who would be named to the first team all Sun Belt as a return man. T.Y. Hilton leads the conference in kick off and return yardage and average.

COACHING: A

This has been one of the most unheralded great coaching jobs in college football this season, when you consider that FIU had serious opportunities in the fourth quarter to beat both South Florida and Troy. Mario Cristobal will get the bulk of the credit, and deservedly so, but a god portion of the accolades deserve going the strength and conditioning coach Roderick Moore, who has really pushed the team and gotten good results – to the point where FIU is just holding up better down the stretch.

OVERALL GRADE: B+

Better than expected, with an opportunity to make a fairly serious run at a bowl game. If this is a bowl team though, we will have to win a tough road game (@Louisiana-Lafayette), be able to beat up-tier conference opponents at home (Arkansas State), and survive the emotion of a rivalry game (FAU). 3-2 therest of the way will make FIU bowl eligible, but it might be too early to get the kind of necessary consideration, not to mention jump ULL and AUS, for the extra bid if it becomes available. With four more wins, FIU may still be able to find it’s way to the top of the league with a little help.

FIU FOOTBALL: OFFENSE
Health along offensive line has been big issue

OFFENSE, page 8

tors nightmares for the next three off-seasons, but for now, he’s already in the heads of the conference defenders where he leads the nation with 28.4 yards per catch average.

Greg Ellingson had a slow start, but has really worked himself into the offense over the past couple of weeks.

Senior Mertile has displayed a veteran savvy – as a freshman he leads the nation with 28.4 yards per catch average.

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SPORTS

QUARTERBACK: B-

This is a wait and see grade. Coming into the year, FIU was projected to be among the nation’s worst under center, but a funny thing happened on the way to Toledo: Paul McCall found it. The junior quarterback, who spent the summer embroiled in a competition with Wayne Younger, pushed himself to the head of the FIU offense all alone. And with his play over the past four games, 53% completions, 821 yards, eight touchdowns, he has led FIU to three wins and put them in the best possible position he could for another.

Younger has seen limited duty, but has been efficient. The progression of the quarterbacking has been good, but it needs to be seen over a full season. It is a sign of improved quarterback play that FIU has improved on third down, converting at a rate of 32%, compared to 24% a year ago.

RUNNING BACKS: B-

The biggest issue concerning the FIU running backs is that the offensive line has continued to have injury issues. A’mod Ned, Julian Reams, and suddenly Daunte Owens have, between the three of them, speed and some breakaway ability. But they aren’t home run hitters. What they are, however, is a competent stable, and that means depth. Each of the three backs has had a solid game or two this season, and on the day that more than one of the Golden Panther backs can find some space, FIU will have an opportunity to control the offensive tempo on the ground.

While depth has been a boon for FIU in its backfield, it’s had trouble finding consistency, and that’ll have to change if FIU wants to make a run at finishing at or above 6-6.

WIDE RECEIVERS: B-

It has been said that consistency is victory, and this unit has been one of the more consistent all season. That has plenty to do with the fact that there are no first year players in the top six receivers in the FIU rotation. There have been some issues controlling spread option-type offenses, but for the most part, the receiver corps has been even all year, and pretty solid at that.

DEFENSE

Stellar play from the back seven creating scoring opportunities

LINE: C-

At times, there has been pressure from the front four, but not enough to control games when necessary. The biggest issue is one that can’t be totally fixed this season: size. FIU, because of the lack of beef that can be rotated in up front, will have some issues consistently stopping the run. The Golden Panther’s lack of size, however, translates to good quickness, and that’s where all the tackles for a loss come from.

It’ll be an battle that gets a little easier as the year continues, as FIU has faced the best offensive lines that it will see all season, so the potential for more consistent impact from the defensive front is there.

UNLINEBACKERS: B-

It has been said that consistency is victory, and this unit has been one of the more consistent all season. That has plenty to do with the fact that there are no first year players in the top six linebackers in the FIU rotation. There have been some issues controlling spread option-type offenses, but for the most part, the linebacker corps has been even all year, and pretty solid at that.

DEFENSIVE BACKS: A-

FIU has a +3 turnover differential for the season, and +8 ratio in its three wins. Simply put, if FIU is going to be successful, it needs takeaways, and it’s gotten them from its secondary. The pass defense held Todd Reesing off of Kansas to his lowest output of the season (and I was there, he played the whole game), and has been almost impossible to throw on at home.