FIU Arena undergoes name change

JONATHAN DAVILA
Staff Writer

After a near six-month search for a donor, FIU Arena – home to the Golden Panther basketball and volleyball teams – has officially been renamed the U.S. Century Bank Arena.

The name change was approved by the Board of Directors of the FIU Foundation and the Board of Trustees on Nov. 4 and Nov. 14 respectively. Both boards must approve any name changes that occur at the University.

The former donor and sponsor of the arena, Pharmed Group, filed for bankruptcy in October 2007. The arena was named Pharmed Arena in 2004 after the group donated $1 million to Athletics, but after the bankruptcy, Pharmed Group was unable to make the yearly payments necessary to keep the name.

The arena was subsequently named FIU Arena in June 2008 while a new donor was sought.

“U.S. Century Bank is a well-organized bank. They get creative and come up with new revenue streams, especially during the economic crisis, so we’re very happy we were able to partner up with U.S. Century Bank and students should as well,” said Athletics Director Pete Garcia.

Although the name change will be the most visible

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

WEATHER

MONDAY
Partly cloudy
LOW: 70  HIGH: 79
TUESDAY
Partly cloudy
LOW: 70  HIGH: 79
WEDNESDAY
Isolated thunderstorms
LOW: 70  HIGH: 79

SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Foreign policy school emphasizes the ‘T’ in FIU

PAULO O’SWATH
Asst. News Director

A new semester always brings new students and faculty, but this semester also brings an entire new school dedicated to the discipline of global affairs and foreign policy.

The School of International and Public Affairs is set to open its doors Jan. 5 and house many of the University’s “internationally oriented disciplines,” according to an FIU press release.

“This [SIPA] is the place on our campus where social scientists will come together to work on some of the greatest challenges of our time and honor the middle name of our institution,” said President Modesto A. Maidique in the press release.

SIPA will be the new home to both undergraduate and graduate programs in political science, public administration, international relations, among others, while still being a part of the College of Arts and Sciences.

John Stack, a political science and law professor with 32 years of experience, has been named interim director of the new department.

“Bringing international and public affairs and related disciplines together is in line with FIU’s international mission and its distinction as South Florida’s only public research university,” Stack said in an FIU press release.

As interim director, Stack will try to obtain the accreditation from the Association of Professional Schools of International Affairs in order to ensure the school’s success.

Deans sought for new year

CHARLIE GRAU
Staff Writer

The word “change” has been thrown around a lot recently and it’s no different at FIU. Entering the new year, many new faces can be expected.

The University will have a new leader after President Modesto Maidique announced Nov. 14 he was stepping down and there are four deans who announced within the past year they will be stepping down. Deans Lillian Lodge Kopenhaver of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Leonard P. Strickman of the College of Law, Juan Antonio Bosco of the College of Architecture and the Arts, Joyce Elam of the College of Business Administration and Luis Miron of the College of Education.

“It’s more than the typical number but there is a pretty active life cycle of deans. The average in the United States is six to eight years in the terms of the average service in a dean,” said Provost Ronald Berkman.

Although Florida public universities have been facing difficulty receiving funding from the Legislature, Berkman said that none of the deans have indicated that budget cuts were the reason for stepping down.

Berkman said that there are ongoing search committees working to replace three of the five deans.

“There are active searches going on for law, business and education. I’m still trying to determine whether or not we should do one or two more this semester, which would be for [the College of Architecture and the Arts] and Journalism or whether we’re in overload in searches,” Berkman said.

Charlie Grau can be reached at charlie.grau@fiu.edu.
The new College of Nursing & Health Sciences building at University Park will be ready for students in just a few months and will offer something unique among other schools and current campus buildings. The CNHS will be environmentally designed under Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design registration. LEED offers both environmental and financial benefits. According to its Web site, it will offer a healthier and safer environment for occupants, while qualifying for tax rebates and reducing waste sent to landfills, lowering operating costs.

In 2007, President Modesto A. Maidique signed the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment, which works toward achieving environmental sustainability.

"Last year I, on behalf of the entire FIU community, made a public commitment to continue on a path of environmental responsibility and sustainable development," said Maidique, according to a press release earlier this month. LEED functions under the U.S. Green Building Council which is a non-profit organization composed of more than 15,000 organizations working toward healthy, profitable and environmentally friendly developments.

According to FIU Magazine’s winter 2008 edition, President Maidique places great emphasis on his wife, Nancy Maidique, for contributing her own special touch to the campus.

"She has helped me to understand how small changes can make a difference," he said, explaining how he and his wife want to live healthier lives and bring a little green to the University.

Dean for the College of Nursing & Health Sciences Divina Grossman said, "Since the new building occupants are in nursing and the health professions, we definitely are committed to healthier work and study environments."

According to Cal, students can expect higher efficiency lighting, occupant sensor controls, variable air volume controls and energy recovery on the Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioningsystem. Some other "green" features to the CNHS building include "eco-highlights" such as a grass roof over the second floor.

"We stand to help save our environment and save on energy costs."
Bank partners with University

**ARENA, page 1**

aspect of the agreement between the University and U.S. Century Bank. Gonzalez-Levy said that the two will be working together on programs beneficial to students.

“We were willing to not only donate some dollars but also participate in a number of programs. This is sort of like a partnership. This is not only [about] the naming [of the arena] per se but actually a partnership between U.S. Century Bank and the University. We have participated in the College of Business as members of the advisory board and they are working with us to do other programs as we speak, in terms of some projects we’ve been speaking with them about also [offering internships],” she said.

The University’s football and baseball stadiums may be the next venues to attain new names; donors are being sought for these two stadiums as well.

“We’re looking at everything right now. For the football stadium, we’re actually awaiting word on a proposal recently to do a water quality analysis project for the state worth about $300,000.

The study was to look at Escambia Bay, an area where fish have been found to have high levels of toxic chemicals known as poly-chlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs.

But the funding was eliminated. "So the universities can't contribute to the local economy or the improvement of the local environment like they used to," Podemski said. "It's a downward spiral."

**This is not only [about] the naming [of the arena] ... but a partnership between U.S. Century Bank and the University.**

Sanding Gonzalez-Levy, vice president University and Community Relations

**Study: Hospitals fail to comply with Civil Rights Act**

**OLGA VELEZ** Staff Writer

As part of a graduate level course called Health Demography in the Stempel School of Public Health, a group of students conducted research that led them to discover that many hospitals around the United States were not following Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Title IV requires hospitals receiving federal funding to take the necessary steps to make sure those whose first language is not English have access to hospital services in their own language.

It was found that this disparity was prominent among Hispanics when it came to accessing information regarding hospital services on the Internet.

"The worst part here is that the target population [Spanish speakers] pay taxes and their money should provide hospital services to the population. These services are not being provided," said Jesus Medina, Stempel Public Health Association president and one of the researchers.

During research, the students looked at the Web sites of hospitals receiving federal funding located in counties that have a Hispanic population of 50 percent Hispanic. The hospitals that were looked at for this study were Critical Access Hospitals and Short-Term Acute Care Hospitals.

The research showed that of the 124 hospitals that met these criteria, only 25 (20.2 percent) offered Web sites in Spanish while 83 (66.9 percent) offered Web sites only in English and 16 (12.9 percent) did not have a Web site.

The research also stated that the hospitals that met the criteria in the states of Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, New York, and Washington did not offer a Spanish Web site.

In Texas and California, only 13 and 14 percent of the hospitals, respectively, offered an alternative Web site in Spanish. In Arizona, only one hospital offered a Spanish Web site.

Florida was the state with the highest percentage of hospitals that offered this alternative Web site at 40 percent of hospitals was 53.85, all of which were in Miami-Dade, the only county in Florida with more than 50 percent Hispanic population.

The students involved in the research during the fall of 2008 were Jesus Medina, Gretel Castro, Jaisly George, Louis Perez, Marina Obispo, Manuela Cruz, Katie McGovern, Jamie Shaw, Mildrey Perez, Ping Xu, Rimsky Denis, Wendy Barillas and Claudicio Mieli.

"It was an opportunity for the professor to give a final project instead of a final exam, so that the students can have the chance to publish research and add that research to their résumé," said Medina. "The professor showed different topics. I took leadership when it came to choosing the topic. I wanted to contribute something really important so I did research to compare three different topics. I chose this one and then I talked to the rest of my group. We chose it based on which topic we thought was most important to the community. Since Miami is really diverse, we felt that this issue would be of interest to the community."

The research did not provide reasons behind the lack of Spanish Web sites offered.

When asked if more research would be conducted, Medina said, "I was thinking about it. I want to create a committee. I am the president of SPHA. The association is always looking to do something for the community. Our main goal is to build a healthier community ... that is one of my plans. I will create a committee to show that this problem exists."

A couple of the exploratory study that was conducted will be published in the American Public Health Association.
Welcome Week events include iceless skating, barbecue

The media industry is changing, and the School of Journalism and Mass Communication is implementing new programs to help students adapt.

Beginning in January, SIMC will partner with The Miami Herald, The Sun-Sentinel and The Palm Beach Post to create The South Florida News Service, a print and digital news service in which each publication will share and publish articles written by SIMC students.

Earl Maucker, Sun-Sentinel senior vice president, John Barwick, Palm Beach Post editor and Anders Gyllenhaal, Miami Herald editor – all members of the SIMC Leadership Council – will work with Allan Richards, SIMC interim associate dean, and Teresa Ponte, interim chair of the department of journalism and broadcasting, to oversee the University's participation.

“We have known the school for a long time, and we know the program and its quality and doing this seemed good,” said Maucker. “We’ve had good luck with FIU interns at The Sun-Sentinel and we are very excited.”

Joan Chirrós of The Miami Herald, David Cazares, assistant editor at The Sun-Sentinel and Emily Rouch, assistant bureau chief at The Palm Beach Post, are the assigned editors to work with students for the new service.

Students enrolled in advanced writing classes such as Feature Writing and Online News Reporting will work with their professors on their reporting and writing for different news articles, which will then be posted in the South Florida News Service Web site, created by the SIMC. The assigned editors from each publication will then choose the articles they want to use and publish them.

Not only will students have the opportunity to work closely with the editors, according to Richards, but they will also have the chance to work in newsrooms where there will be desks designated specifically for them.

“Students will have the benefit of working with editors. They will be the students’ mentors,” Richards said. “They will work with students on fundamental things like writing a lede and a nut graph.”

Students whose articles are chosen and published on one or more of these three publications will get the bylines and the experience of working closely with the media industry.

“It’s like a deeper internship,” said Richards. “Students will register for classes and the newspapers will assign an editor to work in liaison with the class.”

The shared content will not be limited to written articles. Students will also work with multimedia files and articles both in English and Spanish, which gives room for graduate students in the Spanish master’s program to participate in the project.

“I think this is what we journalism majors need. It is hands-on experience from what we learn in the classrooms without the need to spend a lot of extra hours,” said senior Melissa Vargas, a journalism major. “With this opportunity we can get the most of our classroom time and get a great idea of what it is to do journalism.”

The initiative comes as a result of the changing media industry, according to Richards. The service will initially run for six months, but it could be extended if successful.

“We are taking baby steps. We’ve never done anything like this before. This involves a lot of people and a lot of coordination.”

Richards said SJMC is also hoping to raise money from grants “so that students can get paid for their articles as well.”

“I think that in the time we’re living in, in terms of the media as an opportunity to develop new ideas, we are not going to just sit on our hands while the industry is changing. It’s a time of great changes, but also a time of great opportunity to be entrepreneurial,” Richards said.

PARADISE AFSHAR
BBC Uatel Editor

As the school year begins, students are letting go the slow pace of winter break and trading it in once again for books and exams.

To bring in the excitement that comes with a new semester, Campus Life and Orientation is inviting students to participate in Welcome Week events, all free of charge.

"Every Fall and Spring, we put on Welcome Week for students to let them know what the campus has to offer and how to get involved," said Didier Georges, Student Organizations Council president and a junior management major.

Welcome Week begins the first day of the semester, Jan. 5, and ends Jan. 9, with each day having different activities for students to participate in.

This semester’s Welcome Week is going to include traditional events, such as the Blue and Gold breakfast, which takes place Jan. 6 and consists of a free breakfast of eggs, pancakes, fruit and juices. Old favorites such as the Late Date Latte and the SOC fair will also take place during the week, along with a few other non-traditional events.

"Students will be particularly surprised to find out that there will be ice skating in Panther Square," said SOC Vice President Jessica Señorén, senior public relations and marketing major.

On Jan. 8, Panther Square is going to be transformed into an ice rink, where students can rent ice skates to use on plastic ice sheets.

"It is going to be a big piece of artificial ice in the middle of Panther Square," said Georges. "I believe they are going to provide the skates, because most people from Miami don’t have ice skates."

The ice skating is going to take place the same day as the Late Date Latte event, where coffee, hot chocolate and other hot beverages and refreshments will be served to keep with the cold theme.

In addition to ice skating, students can participate in kayaking in Biscayne Bay on Jan. 9, and can get a burrito, chips and a soda at Moe’s for $5 on the same day.

This year’s peer advisers will be announced (during Welcome Week) so it is going to be exciting for those who signed up for that," said Georges. "And of course, we are going to have the SOC club fair with about 15-20 clubs."

Other Welcome Week activities include an artist drawing caricatures of students, a barbecue and other events that involve free food and provide information about the campus.

"Students should attend because there are many activities that they can enjoy," said Georges. "All students, especially transfer and first-year students, should come and see what the campus has to offer."
Removal of invasive trees paves way for restoration

Cost-conscious students find book bargains online

During her freshman year at Florida State University, graduate student Asal Rahbar spent $570 on books by buying at the bookstore. After she found out alternative textbook sources, she decided to buy from Amazon.com and collegebookstore.com, providing students an online forum to trade new and used books.

To avoid problems such as those, many students are looking to similar alternative textbook sources. "I will only buy from the bookstore if it's a new edition or if it's a lab manual and you cannot buy it online," said junior Vince Laernt, an English major. "I'm also worried about the growth rate, how long it'll take before the area starts looking like a forest again, and how protected it will be against future invasions by exotic species. I just don't think it's fair that they're taking down such a large area, especially considering how long it'll take for those trees to grow again."

The project is estimated to be completed by September 2009, and in effect on the campus will take time to be fully realized. According to Lee, the task will not be an easy one. "If it is not just a matter of killing the trees or cutting them down, because new shoots will quickly sprout and re-establish the roots," said Lee. "So, it takes a fair amount of labor-intensive follow-through. However, once a canopy of native vegetation is established in the area, the tree-invasive Australian pines will not survive."
For most people, a new year brings with it the promise of new opportunities and new challenges. Student media, in all of its incarnations, can expect no different. These are tumultuous times for traditional media. Newspapers nationwide are not only feeling the effects of the largest economic downturn in recent memory, but they are also going through an identity crisis, as more and more people turn to the internet for their news.

Well-known publications are increasingly announcing massive layoffs, discontinuing their print version, or some unfortunate combination of both. Though the going is tough, The Beacon and Student Media overall is dedicated to staying ahead of the curve by keeping a close eye on industry trends and realizing that we must evolve with it, instead of fighting change.

We will do this by experimenting with new ways of storytelling and by widening the ways in which we deliver our news to audiences.

It’s a new year; and though there will be many challenges and hurdles, there will be an equal amount of opportunities.

KASSANDRA POOL  
Staff Writer

Walking through the Graham Center can sometimes become a pain as students shuffle their feet on the slippery tiles while lunch trays are being shoved in their hands. After about five seconds or so have passed, these students might either toss these fliers into a nearby garbage can, or file or maybe even handing them to their fellow students feel lucky by actually glancing at the ad: a future performance at the University soccer field by a band or artist.

Most students have no idea how some of their classmates work to get that comedian or musician to come to campus and perform. They don’t want to keep the fun-filled unexpected situations that arise or the sometimes endless paperwork that one must follow to comply with FIU’s policies and procedures.

Some students think getting involved is a waste of time, but that couldn’t be further from the truth. It entails hard, both academically and in extracurricular activities.

I was accepted into my college years to be different. I didn’t want to drive to school only to go home later to sit in front of the television, fall asleep, and wake up the next day to do the same thing. I became involved in the Student Programming Council and from there I joined other organizations – and haven’t looked back since.

If I wouldn’t have gotten involved, I wouldn’t be sitting here typing this for The Beacon. I would still be the same shy girl whose eyes would water up when asked to speak in front of a class.

It’s not a waste of time, it’s about growing and pushing yourself to try things you have never pictured yourself doing.

Behind the scenes at SPC, students don’t see the sleepless nights to meet deadlines, having to drive to a fraternity house to use the couch because the hired artist needs one as stated in his contract. Students missing the setup crew come the day of the event only to realize that the stage rental is broken, or the times that the artist coming to perform won’t be paid on time because the hired artist needs one as stated in his contract.

Juggling school, work and campus involvement are not easy tasks. Most companies want their employees to be well-rounded. It’s not all about a high GPA, but more about what one can contribute. Students who get involved will be better suited in their careers after graduation because they will already know how to handle stress and manage a team while maintaining that high GPA.

So, the next time a flayer is thrown your way or when you sit in those ballroom laughing with your friends, consider how much work it put into the event, and how much running around it takes to make sure it all looks perfect – so you can walk out of those doors with a smile on your face.

It’s not a waste of time, it’s a way to better present yourself outside the classroom doors to get you out into the real world.
GAMERS FIND NEW REASON TO STAY UP ALL NIGHT

The top ten box office hits of ‘08

STEVEN MESA
Staff Writer

The year 2008 was an interesting one for movies. Last year has given moviegoers men dressed in suits fighting crime, assassins with superhuman abilities and broken old men looking for redemption. Here is my top ten list of the best movies of 2008.

10. WANTED

Wanted is loosely based on a graphic novel by Mark Millar and J.G. Jones. This becomes Russian director Timur Bekmambetov’s (Day Watch) first American film with an all-star cast and amazing action combined with outstanding visual effects. A femme fatale assassin named Fox (Angelina Jolie) asserts herself into the life of a man with a miserable life, Wesley Gibson (James McAvoy). She introduces him to The Fraternity, a secret society of assassins led by Sloan (Morgan Freeman), that trains Wesley to kill a rogue member of The Fraternity. The movie is funny and action-packed, with Oscar-winner Freeman delivering one of the best lines in the movie, if not the best quote of the decade.

9. IRON MAN

Iron Man became the first big summer blockbuster of the year and deservedly so. Stark is a greedy, multimillionaire weapon designer who happens to get through it – over each others heads. Good luck.

Zeldathon, a team consisting of mostly University students, were one of the recent pioneers for the first team-versus-team game marathon in which they competed against the Wily Whompers, a team known for completing a Mega Man marathon. Maybe you’d like to put your hardcover title on the line and challenge another team of players to play at the same time, competing to finish the list of games first.

So stock up on your favorite carbonated beverage, pre-order some boxes of pizza and prepare yourself for a new type of marathon.

For further inspiration for your marathon and instructions on how to get your marathon up, running and noticed, visit Gamemarathons.com.

Happy gaming!

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Happy gaming!
How-to Web site helps you accomplish New Year’s goals

EDDITH SEVILLA  
Asst. Life! Editor

On New Year’s Eve, a lot of people declare their resolutions for the upcoming year. Starting them is one thing, following through until the goal is reached is another.

For Angelica Bracho, a Miami-Dade College student studying art, the problem with meeting her goal to get in shape last year was that she didn’t focus on it.

“I was not into it. I was more concerned about getting more work contracts and I just didn’t focus on getting in shape,” said Bracho, who owns a graphic design business.

But the year has only just begun, so if you have not started working on those love handles that you’ve been dying to get rid of, fear not. Help is here.

Ehow.com, a Web site dedicated to “how to do just about anything,” recently compiled a list of instructions to help you achieve your goals in 2009.

Be realistic: Nothing screams failure more than setting goals that you know you cannot accomplish. For example, if you say you are going to quit smoking or eating chocolate—as I myself have mulled over—consider doing it in small steps as opposed to quitting cold turkey.

Want it: Own your goals. In other words, don’t start a weight loss program or register for German 101 to impress someone else. Instead, choose your goals for you.

“If you are not doing this for yourself, you won’t succeed because your heart won’t be in it,” according to ehow.com.

Do your homework: Some goals require lifestyle changes and sometimes you will need professional help to achieve them. You may want to consider the advice of a financial planner if you are looking to get out of debt. Learning to play tennis may require the skills of an instructor or someone who knows the techniques.

Focus: You will come across many distractions: text messages, phone calls, parties and so on. But keeping your goals in mind will help you stay on track. You may want to write your goals on a piece of paper and tape that paper to your mirror. That way you will be constantly reminded of the goals you have set for yourself.

Support system: Working with a friend or a group of friends with similar goals will help you stay motivated.

“You will also be more likely to stick to your plan if there are others helping you hold yourself accountable,” according to ehow.com.

Don’t let setbacks become permanent: If you fail, cheat or get off track for a day, don’t beat yourself up over it; get back on the horse right away. The longer you wait, the more difficult it will become to get started again.

Ana Brito, a graduate student working on her master’s in business administration, said that last year she made it a goal to get into FIU’s MBA program.

And that she did. Her secret? “Usually, if I put my mind to it, I do it,” Brito said.
Machines rising: Robots take over the world one song at a time

“Listen and understand. That terminator is out there. It can’t be bargained with. It can’t be reasoned with. It doesn’t feel pity, or remorse, or fear.”

This line, spoken by time travelling robotic genocide survivor Kyle Reese from The Terminator, awoken our citizenry to a very real and terrifying threat: a mass, coordinated robotic uprising.

The Terminator, a 6-foot metallic Austrian, was terrifying and intimidating and was an easy target to get us to pay attention to our potential future and, for a time, it seemed we would be ready to fight when our toasters and remote controlled cars turned on us.

But we’ve begun sleeping on this threat once again, and now the robots are smarter. They know better than to make a frontal attack. They’ve devised a new, more sinister way to begin their uprising, and most of us don’t even suspect a thing: They are coming through our radios. All throughout the world, robotic, synthesized voices are taking control of our music.

What once was our most naturally uplifting and human form of expression has been replaced by cold, electronically manipulated voices, lulling us into a false sense of security with songs about apple-bottom jeans and lollipops. If you don’t believe me, just look at the best selling album of this year: Tha Carter III.

The album cover depicts a young boy, presumably Dwayne Carter, with rings on his fingers, on his face and a finely tailored suit. The cherubic face is depicted in innocence and purity despite his obviously tough life as some sort of suffocato, or possibly a drug dealer.

This sweet, young, street wise child no longer exists, however, having been replaced by Lil’ Wayne. On his hit single "Lollipop", liberal usage of auto-tune manages to erase any remembrance of human emotion from his voice, giving a key clue to let us know he is already working for the other side.

His success isn’t an anomaly, however. Hordes of musicians from around the world have seen similar success with this type of sound.

Are they themselves the manifestation of technology against us? Or have they simply sold their souls to our future overlords in hopes of a place at their side once the revolution comes?

It is time we stand up to this musical underground movement, designed to pacify us so we don’t pay attention to the uprising before it’s too late.

Sure, Daft Punk has some good stuff, and Kanye’s usage of the technology probably wasn’t sinister at heart; but for the most part, it is too catchy and boring music anyway.

It’s not like we’re sacrificing Beethoven or The Beatles for our survival, is it? T. Pain and Akon.

We once feared machines for their killing potential. Now, we dance to music made mostly without the hand of man. If we don’t stop now, our children won’t have that built-in fear of technology that has managed to start and outlasting of machines.

If that happens, it will already be too late.
Abercrombie
& Fitch
Freshman concentrates on rebounding

MEN’S, page 12

Golden Panthers

“He’s always been a big strong kid that rebounds the basketball. Now he’s learning how to use his weight [and] strength to his advantage, knowing where to go and where to position himself,” Rouco said. “He’s a quick learner.”

Rouco also mentioned that the freshman has become better conditioned and is more physically prepared to play more minutes. Asprilla is now comfortable with his role in the team, one of the more prominent roles that a first-year player has in the conference.

“I have to rebound. In the Sun Belt, there aren’t too many big men, so defending them won’t be a problem,” Asprilla said.

PESKY INJURY

Forward Cedric Essola has dealt with a groin issue most of the season; he has played through it to become one of the most consistent players on the roster, averaging six points per game.

But the junior suffered a jammed finger on his shooting hand in the Golden Panthers win vs. Fordham on Dec. 29 that did not allow him to practice Dec. 31 after an off day.

Essola said he should be fine to play in the home contest vs. defending Sun Belt Conference Champion Western Kentucky on Jan. 8 at the U.S. Century Bank Arena.

Women’s basketball team

The Golden Panthers (3-10) started the holiday season with a conference road win at Arkansas St. Junior guard Monika Bosilj, the team’s leading scorer, scored 19 points, with 16 points, six assists and three steals.

“I think Michelle is stepping up big time. Bless her heart, she’s playing 40 minutes for us...” Inge Nissen, assistant head coach Women’s basketball team

Women’s basketball team

Women’s basketball team

Golden Panthers plagued by turnovers, missed field goals

WOMEN’S, page 12

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Inge Nissen, assistant head coach Women’s basketball team

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NOTEBOOK: MEN’S BASKETBALL

Big man preps for big role

JONATHAN RAMOS
Asst. Sports Director

When freshman center/forward Freddy Asprilla signed with the Golden Panthers out of Patterson (NC) prep school last Spring, head coach Sergio Rouco went as far as to call him arguably the most heralded incoming recruit in the history of the program.

Asked to play a role off the bench early in the season, Asprilla played significantly, but was behind senior and incumbent center Russell Hicks in points, who was averging eight points per contest and was a member of the All-Sun Belt Conference preseason team.

When Hicks endured a stress fracture at UCLA on Nov. 29, Asprilla was thrust into the starting role. After missing a few games with an Achilles tendon, the freshman has provided a strong post presence the Golden Panthers have not had since Ivan Almonte.

“I’ve gained some good experience against teams like Georgetown and I’ve gotten more minutes,” said Asprilla.

“Coach [Rouco] told me to be more aggresive and stronger.”

The 6-foot-10 Colombia native has made 14 points, 10.2 rebounds and 1.2 blocks per game over his last five contests, recording four double-doubles in the process.

In that stretch, Asprilla also scored a season-high 19 points in 33 minutes during a loss at UT-Martin.

Though Hicks displayed a sharp finesse on offense, Asprilla is a more physical and prototypical big man down low for the Golden Panthers and has averaged 13.6 points and 10 rebounds in his previous two seasons.

Asprilla is the team’s leading scorer and rebounder.

NOTEBOOK: WOMEN’S BASKETBALL

Team seeks to build upon improvement

SERGIO BONILLA
Asst. Sports Director

On a three-game losing streak, the women’s basketball team entered winter break with a 1-7 record.

So finishing the break with a 2-3 record is an improvement, right? Sophomore point guard Michelle Gonzalez feels the team is capable of much more.

“We started the pre-season playing teams from the ACC and the Big East, really good teams. I know we can win. We have the potential to do it, we just have to work hard every single day,” said Gonzalez about her team playing Sun Belt Conference opponents after a 65-47 loss to the University of South Alabama.

Recovered senior forward looks to lead

JONATHAN RAMOS
Asst. Sports Director

When senior forward Alex Galindo was cleared by team trainers to return to the court Dec. 29 for a home matchup against New York’s Fordham University, head coach Sergio Rouco did not have much to say to the veteran forward.

Rouco just told the senior to play his game and be a leader. Galindo responded by doing exactly what was asked.

Galindo scored 19 points on 7-of-12 shooting from the field, including four 3-pointers that helped the Golden Panthers snap a losing skid.

He hit 51 3-pointers last season for the Golden Panthers and has averaged 13.6 points and 6.3 rebounds his previous two seasons.

His perimeter and veteran presence in a season that has seen every starter miss a game at some point was probably what the Golden Panthers missed the most.

“We needed a senior on the floor,” Rouco said.

Galindo is looking to meet his coach’s simple demands.

“I’ve been here the longest, so I feel like for this team to go forward I should be a better leader,” Galindo said. “Talk to the young guys and give them advice and support them. Give them confidence. That’s the main thing we need right now going into conference play.”

FAST RECOVERY

Galindo, a dislocated ankle before the start of the season was a setback, but the team training staff got him on the court roughly a month earlier than expected.

With an injury that some believed had more severity than it actually had, Galindo’s leadership was evident throughout his rehab process, even before he took the court for the first time this season and reclaimed his place among the best wing players in the conference.

In one of the last pre-season practices, long before yet another slew of key Golden Panthers endured extensive injuries, Galindo watched from the sideline with his ankle wrapped while receiving treatment.

The eager senior asked his trainer how much longer he had before he could play again while he slapped his hands and cheered on his teammates.

It was one of those moments Rouco is hoping will be a common occurrence, on and off the court.

“Alex is a man,” Rouco said. “Alex is mature. His experience is tremendous.”

Galindo has watched the team’s injuries mount and the number of walk-ons