Fair brings games, rides, parking plinth to UP campus

JORGEX VALENS
Asst. News Director

The fair has returned to South Florida, bringing new rides, food, fanatics and contributions to the FIU community.

The Miami-Dade County Fair and Exposition, Inc., will be on South Florida for 20 days, however, as impact on the local community has been seen for 59 years. The fair will be held at the Fair Expo Center next to FIU from March 26 to April 12 and this year it will be presented by Volkswagen.

The fair, which will be celebrating its 85th year, is ranked as one of the longest and most successful fairs in the nation and attracts more than 700,000 attendees per day.

For the University, this may cause some problems.

“We have enough parking problems as it is,” said student Kelly McGee.

The Public Safety and Parking and Transportation departments will be working in conjunction to ensure that fair goers and FIU students alike experience smooth and secure parking.

Fair parking will be limited to Parking Lots. Three and Four, along with Blue and Gold Garages. Lot Five will be closed two weeks prior, during, and two weeks after the fair, as it will be in use by fair personnel.

Some students have expressed that the University should prioritize fair goers in regards to parking.

“The fair didn’t affect the school as much to ten years ago,” said Alex Paz, student.

Some students have expressed that the University should prioritize fair goers in regards to parking.

“However, our campus population has steadily increased over the years and both FIU and the Belt Conference opponents.

Softball dropped first three games vs. Sun Belt Conference opponents.

柯梦,, March 5, 12 p.m. This G-Box rental is to the Brickell and University Village. Finally, a picture can’t get us to understand what really going on in Relays, at AT MD.

The G-Box, a videogame rental kiosk from online videogame rental giant GameFly, was scheduled to open at University Park’s Bookstore on March 3, according to Assistant General Manager Dan Salvyragh. Terms of the deal between the bookstore and GameFly were not disclosed.

“We did some research on the kiosk business and understood how it worked on the movie side,” said GameFly co-founder and vice president of Business Development, Sean Spector. “We thought it’d be interesting to try it out for games.”

The kiosk will feature Xbox 360 and PlayStation 3 games at a rental price of $2.99 per day. Wii and PlayStation 2 games will cost $1.99 per day.

The kiosk will be located in front of the checkout counter, near the bookstore’s indoor entrance.

“The prices sound pretty fair,” said Derrick Gomez, a freshman computer science major who frequently plays videogames at the now defunct Gracie’s Grill.

“Desired games are selected by the retailer on the G-Box via a touch screen. Once the game is selected, a credit card must be swiped to obtain it. The credit card is charged daily until the game is returned to the kiosk; the games must be returned before 5 p.m. before the store’s closing time.

“Sometimes, students don’t want to deal with the hassle of shipping games in and waiting for them,” said freshman finance major Chris Pieda. “This is more of a convenience thing.”

The fee for a lost or damaged PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360 game is $75. Damaged or lost Wii and PlayStation 2 games will cost $50. Spector said these fees are more expensive than the actual price of the respective games because GameFly must not only re-buy the game, but ensure it is restocked into the G-Box.

“It seems a little pricey, but somebody needs to buy the game and bring it to the machine,” Gomez said.

Texas Tech and Louisiana State University were the first two campuses to debut the G-Box and FIU will be the third university to obtain one.

“I think it’ll be great for residents on campus and commuter students who are gamers. It seems like a gamer’s paradise,” Gomez said.

Spector believes the University was a perfect fit for the next site of the G-Box.

“There is a certain amount of gamers in that vicinity, and it’s a great campus,” Spector said, noting that the kiosk will also offer student discounts when it comes to gaming, especially in the suffering economy.
Fun auctions promote public service

The College of Law held its second annual Summer Public Interest Fellowship Auction this past Friday in the Rafael Diaz Balart Hall Courtyard. The silent and live auction’s proceeds generated funds and support for the college’s in-house student public interest fellowship fund.

This fund provides a stipend for law students working in full-time, unpaid public service internships over the summer.

“For students who really want to make a difference through public service, this auction will help generate the funds they will need to work pro bono this summer,” said Andrea Stone, a second-year law student and auction committee member.

“It’s the start for a great tradition at the FIU College of Law.”

The program encourages students to work in service-oriented organizations and also teaches the importance of careers that give back to the community.

The auction was presented by Sunset Auction Company and included auctioneer Bryan Kinsley and ring man Charlie King.

Kinsley livened the crowd by chanting an auctioneer’s trademark of quick, repetitive sounds or “fillers,” while King circled the audience trying to find the highest bidder for the item at hand.

“We were here to make sure the audience was enjoying itself and to make sure items were bid for as high as possible and we think we were able to accomplish that tonight,” Kinsley said.

Mariana Rios, a second-year law student, explained why an auction such as this is important to the law students of the University.

“The public interest auction will enable a group of law students to help those who need legal aid most while instilling a tradition of public service at the law school,” she said.

This year’s auction is expected to break last year’s raised total, which amounted to more than $10,000, in part by offering items in the silent auction including brunch at the Biltmore Hotel, tickets to the Sony Ericsson Open and the honorary first pitch at an FIU baseball game.

Items up for bid during the live auction this year not only included international wines and Starbucks gift cards but also lunches and dinners providing students the opportunities to meet one-on-one with their professors in casual settings.

These opportunities included cocktail parties and an auction for dinner at the Bistro 48 with College of Law Dean Leonard Steinschneider and bowling, beer and burgers for seven professors in Norberg.

Another lunch date up for auction was an afternoon of the sampling of New Orleans’ delicacies for eight with professor Thomas Johnson and his wife. The day will include stops at Pat O’Brien’s for hurricanes — a famous New Orleans drink — Arnaud’s for shrimp remoulade, Felix’s for stuffed crabs, Central Grocery for muffuletta and Café Du Monde for beignets and café au lait. The evening will conclude with a home-cooked meal at the Baker’s home prepared by Baker herself.

Law students also bid on the opportunity to dine with professor Scott Fingerhut at lawyer hotspots La Loggia, where a group of four can network with a select group of judges as well as criminal and civil trial and transactional lawyers.

Fingerhut will also sponsor students’ inaugural membership into the local, voluntary bar association they choose.

“This event is really about helping FIU law students have the opportunity to make a difference in their communities and develop into ethical, compassionate professionals,” said Nicole Teynov, the event’s student committee chair and second-year law student.

Assistant Dean for Admissions and Student Services, Michele Mason, and her assistant, Maria Madriz, as well as Teynov and second-year law students Rios, Andrea Stone and Olivia Rodriguez spearheaded the auction.

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POLICE NOTES

A 2005 BMW was removed from its original parking space and then found on Parking Lot Three.

A student reported theft from her vehicle while parked in Parking Lot Six. Items stolen included a Florida Sun Pass, $350 pay check, a pair of $100 high heels and $150 worth of CDs.

Vandalism was reported in a Primera Casa elevator. Pictures were taken of the graffiti, which was removed later that day.

SGC-UP takes action on debacle

A press release by Athletics stated that they “tried to work around these restrictions to accommodate Relay for Life. The Relay for Life staff felt they could not work within the FIU Stadium policies and therefore decided on their own not to hold the event at FIU Stadium.”

The Student Government Commission University Park responded to the situation with a resolution calling for Athletics to repeal food and beverage prohibitions for this event while calling for the football team to move their practices.

“This resolution isn’t meant to be disrespectful toward anyone. It’s merely meant to signal our displeasure with the way the situation was handled,” said SGC-UP Senator Chris Cabral, main author of the resolution.

“We as the football team is more than willing to cooperate with Relay for Life, we realize that it is more an issue with Athletics rather than just with football. When everyone during the decision’s decision, it seemed as if they said that some fake grass was more important than cancer research,” said Ben Badger, SGC-UP press secretary.

This follows after SGC-UP invested $500,000 in a year partnership with Athletics.

“It’s horrible because students helped pay for the stadium and we’re not using it,” said sophomore Marchel Tinker.
Conference shows women how to be successful leaders

ANDREA CRUZ Staff Writer

At first look, politicians, charity workers and celebrity chefs might not seem to have many things in common. Women from all these fields, however, will come to the University to share their experiences as leaders for the Women Who Lead Conference.

“It’s a great opportunity for students to see women who have taken different paths but still came out successful. And to kind of start to open up their minds about possibilities and what their options are,” said Bronwen Bares, coordinator for the Center for Leadership and Service and the Women’s Studies Center.

The conference will be held at the Bisceayne Bay Campus from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on March 6 in the Wolfson Center Ballroom.

“University Park has hosted a successful conference for several years, and we decided that the students in SHTM deserved a great program also,” said Diann Newman, assistant professor at the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management.

The day-long conference will open with a lecture by celebrity chef Michelle Bernstein, who owns Michy’s, a Miami-based restaurant.

Bernstein’s lecture is sponsored by the SHTM as part of the Dean’s Lecture Series.

“We are pleased that Chef Michelle Bernstein enthusiastically agreed to be our keynote speaker for the BBC program,” Newman said. “She was very happy to support our program that encourages women to become leaders.”

Along with Bernstein, the event will include session topics such as “Triumphs and Trials: The Evolution of a Woman Leader,” which covers issues faced by women in power and will end with “A Women’s Guide to Visionary Leadership and Salary Negotiation for Women,” which will include a leadership development session and information on salary negotiations specific for women, according to Bares.

The conference is funded by the Student Government Association, Career Services, the Center for Leadership and Service and the Women’s Studies Center.

It is co-sponsored by SHTM, the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, the College of Engineering and Computing, the College of Architecture and the Graduate School and the College of Business Administration.

“The purpose is for our female students to meet and interact with women leaders in various industries,” Newman said.

“They will hear about their trials and triumphs in the panel discussion and will have an opportunity to lunch together and share in a more intimate setting.”

Anyone can attend after filling out a registration form online.

The registration form asks for general information, as well as meal preferences for lunch and availability of participants for volunteering during the event.

Although the event is geared toward all University students, anyone from the community can participate, according to Bares.

“We often have other faculty and staff members attend, and occasionally we’ll even have community members come, but not a lot,” said Bares.

“A lot of it is paid for by student funds, so we are really trying to make it for the students.”

Refreshments, including lunch, will be provided for those who register for the conference.

The conference will also be held at University Park campus on March 27 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. in the Graham Center Ballrooms.

Keynote speaker Lindsay Hyde, founder and president of Strong Girls, Strong Girls, a non-profit agency that guides college women to serve as mentors, will speak in three different sessions at UP.

Hyde, a Miami native, founded the organization during her freshman year in college.

For registration and more information, visit women.fiu.edu or contact the Women’s Center at (305) 919-5359.

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Extended Aquatic Center hours tentative for the Fall semester

Camilo Sanchez enjoys using the newly remodeled pool in the Aquatics Center after a workout, but holds one major issue with the center—the times it is open.

“Extending the hours would be ideal,” said Sanchez, a junior international business major. “Some people prefer going to work out after they come back from work.”

According to Christina Reddick, the University’s Aquatics Center coordinator, a problem the center faced when the pool first opened was when to open to students.

“We looked at what times people used the gym the most to find the most popular pool times,” Reddick said.

The pool is open Monday through Friday from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m., and on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. It is closed on Sundays.

A reason for the pool’s hours, according to Reddick, is the number of lifeguards working for the Aquatic Center.

There are currently eight lifeguards on staff, and there need to be three present at all times to do a rescue. With the number of lifeguards on staff, it is only possible to maintain three lifeguards at a time on these hours because they all work part-time, according to Reddick.

The hours for the Aquatic Center may be extended for the Fall semester from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. during the week, and 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturdays to accommodate students who want to use the pool at earlier times.

However, before the hours can officially be changed, Student Government Association must approve a request for extra funds, according to Reddick.

Frequent pool users, such as April Hannan, junior philosophy major, are happy about the potential change in times.

“I would love it. I use it every day,” said Hannan. “I go to [the pool] after my workout.”

According to Hannan, extended hours would mean that she could work out and use the pool before her morning classes.

But for students such as Juan Carlos Remedios, who uses the pool at least three times a week, having the pool open at 9 a.m. would not be enough because most students work out earlier in the morning.

“We want to be able to swim in the morning,” said Remedios, a junior public relations major. “Think of it this way, if you wake up in the morning and you say ‘I want to go to the pool,’ that’s your motivation. But at 6 p.m. it’s ‘I’ll swim for half an hour,’ rather than ‘I want to swim for two hours’, early in the morning.”

The Aquatic Center includes two pools, a diving well and a swimming pool, but only the swimming pool is open to students. According to lifeguard Alex Sergio, the diving pool is only supposed to be used in swimming competitions and students do not have access to it.

“This is something that students such as Remedios have an issue with.”

“My issue is that we cannot use the diving pool. We should have access to both pools because we are paying to use both pools, not to just use one and the other for competitions,” said Remedios. “Let’s say you want to try out for the diving team, how do you try out without practicing?”

In addition to the restricted hours and the limitations on the diving well, the swimming pool is not open in its entirety to students, according to Reddick. The swimming pool usually opens the shallow 4-foot section first, and opens up more lanes throughout the day as more people come. About 100-200 people come to the pool every weekday.

Aside from having the option of using the pool after a workout, students and clubs can reserve it for free if they want to host a specific event like graduations or birthdays, according to Reddick.

“The Aquatic Center is a meeting place where students can socialize, it helps students feel relaxed,” Reddick said.

“Come outside, bring your laptop, surf the Web and enjoy the great breeze.”

Sergio, a junior hospitality management major, said that he would like to see more people taking advantage of the pool to throw parties and hang out with friends.

“People should start to party here,” Sergio said. “Just imagine being in the pool with a DJ with chairs and love seats. It’s a really chill place for people.”

However, there are restrictions for using the pool for parties and club events. There is a maximum capacity of 252 people, and alcoholic beverages, glass containers and food are prohibited on the pool deck.

The Aquatic Center includes showers, locker access, certified lifeguards, waterproof DMX speakers constantly broadcasting a variety of music, Wi-Fi and pools heated to about 82 degrees.

Even though the aquatic center comes with its share of critics, for some students, such as Amanda Penas, a sophomore nursing major, it is using it because it’s cheaper and more convenient than going to the beach, having to drive and spend money on gas.

“The fact that my friends and I have a place we can enjoy the sun and not go broke is great,” Penas said.

For more information, visit www.fiu.edu.

Additional reporting by Maureen Nino.
Recession prompts drastic luring acts

Parents of prospective college students no longer have to throw a party when their kid receives a college acceptance letter since many schools are starting to include a party within the envelope.

Frequent videos of fireworkstos bomb out confetti, U.S. News and World Report states that prominent learning institutions, such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, College and Bryn Mawr University are sending out fun-filled packages to try to encourage students to choose them in a tough economic climate, where pricey universities are just as worried about being accepted by students as the other way around.

I watched the congratulatory acceptance videos for Elon University, which seemed more like a video showing off the campus to prospective students, and Bryn Mawr College, which was cute in a horribly corny sort of way — and my adrenaline really didn’t get pumping.

Videos are pretty neat, though, and probably the easiest thing to implement since they do not require putting anything extra into the envelope, and some, like the University of Georgia’s animated firework videos, have already reportedly become some sort of tradition. Sending students college memorabilia, such as T-shirts and bumper stickers, are a good idea and will likely inspire some sense of school spirit before students even step foot on campus for orientation.

Colleges should be wary of going overboard, though. Remember, one of the primary reasons for trying so hard to attract students is the economic situation. Is sending a T-shirt to a student, who may have applied to 10 other schools, really cost effective? Maybe, but only if school officials see that a higher rate of students are actually picking their school.

For as long as I can remember, high school seniors have been breathing into paper bags, nervously awaiting responses to their college applications. The words, “Congratulations, you’ve been accepted!” has always been enough to make teenagers jump up and down and families throw parties, and that hasn’t really changed.

Though admittedly, the confetti that MIT includes with their letter makes the party planning a heck of a lot easier. All in all, creativity is always the best response to changing times and it’s interesting to see what colleges are doing instead of just sending out letters. Simple things like videos and sending out certificates instead of simply letterhead are great, cost-effective ideas.

But schools that are putting forth a huge focus on acceptance celebrations need to be careful not to alienate students that did not make the cut but still put a lot of time, money and effort in trying to get into their institution.

Rice University is going green by sending out rejections via e-mail, but the same U.S. News article indicates that students feel extremely disheartened by short electronic messages that say as little as “Admissions Decision Denied.”

Another problem with electronic notifications of acceptances and rejections is interruptions in high school classes, as students check their e-mail on their phones and either become extremely excited or depressed during class.

Some colleges are only sending them out Friday nights or similar. This is a great idea because I can certainly recall many students eagerly hitting the refresh buttons for their e-mail inboxes during class or lunch back in high school.

Though there is no wording that can make a rejection notice from a college you had your heart set on not hurt, the amount of sincerity in it can greatly impact feelings about that institution. Letters should thank the applicant for applying and, if possible, list reasons for rejection.

Wooing accepted students is important, but so is keeping up an institution’s reputation even with those who aren’t going to be attending. Times change and colleges are changing with it.

H o p e f u l l y these inter- esting ideas and lack of attention to denials will be refined over time so that the change will be for the better.
Ever wanted to know what it’s like being part of the church of hardcore? Well, if you happened to be in Fort Lauderdale this past Friday, Feb. 28, you were treated to an experience nothing short of biblical. Brokencyde, Senses Fail and headliners Hollywood Undead made their first Florida stop with the Saints and Sinners Tour, playing to a nearly packed house at Revolution Live.

**BROKENCYDE**

Brokencyde was, no offense, a little less interesting than a singer/songwriter playing yet another gig at Starbucks. They do deserve credit for getting a few young girls to scream their brains out during their set, but aside from that it was your typical three guys running aimlessly around a stage and screaming into a mic with their mandatory DJ (laptop bearing)/keyboardist in the back, slapping the life out of a few buttons and keys.

As the band packed up their set, there was a sense of anxiety in the crowd. I’m not sure if it was the relief of the end of the set or the anticipation for the next band to hit the stage.

**SENSES FAIL**

Senses Fail took the stage in a manner that can only be compared to the calm before a storm, one that would certainly leave some casualties behind. With the sound of the first guitar riff, singer Buddy Nielsen was barely able to introduce his band before he started throwing himself around the stage, moving like a man possessed by his music. Playing songs from their latest album, *Life is Not a Waiting Room*, Senses Fail captivated the crowd like a preacher enamours his congregation.

Nielsen plunged head first into the middle of the crowd to sing “Sick or Sane” right along with the fans. The floor trembled with energy as Nielsen commanded it with the simple movement of his hands. As soon as the sound of drums and guitar riffs converged so did the crowd, running back to the middle with an energy that made the floor tremble and mosh pits quickly erupt. With a huge smile on his face, Nielsen carried on with his performance.

As their set came to an end, the crowd wasn’t ready to let them go, as “one more song” chants were screamed by fans throughout the venue. Senses Fail accomplished the one thing every band wants out of a performance: leaving the crowd hungry for more.

**HOLLYWOOD UNDEAD**

As Hollywood Undead took the stage, it was apparent that their opening act had stolen the show, if only for a brief moment. An energetic set was enjoyed by those that managed to find the strength to stay till the end, most probably just out of curiosity to finally see the faces behind the masks.
If you think fiber is only for older folks, think again. Fiber can help you reduce your chances of developing various conditions including heart disease, diabetes and constipation, according to an article published by the Harvard School of Public Health. Keep in mind that your age does not make you immune to these conditions.

“When eaten regularly as part of a diet low in saturated fat, trans fat and cholesterol, soluble fiber has been associated with decreased risk of cardiovascular disease,” according to the American Heart Association.

The association suggests you consume oat bran, oatmeal, beans, peas, rice bran, barley, citrus fruits, strawberries and apple pulp, all of which are high in soluble fiber. When I think of fiber cereal, FiberOne Cereal comes to mind. And if you've never tried this card-tasting cereal, I suggest you try it.

For those of us who made this discovery after we opened our box of bland FiberOne, trashing the cereal's front cover suggests a tasty alternative I had not tried until recently: adding fruits to your fiber cereal's milk. Although I had never tried this approach before, I was so delicious, I couldn’t think of a better meal for breakfast. FiberOne provides other delicious treats such as granola bars and yogurt.

If you’re strictly not about to leave anything of value visible inside their cars, as they can be the a target for any robberies,” Ochipa said.

Public Safety officers will be patroling all the parking structures and lots on FIU property. However, security inside the fair will be handled by the Miami-Dade County Police Department.

This year, the event will offer 100 rides, 170 food vendors, 50 games and various souvenir and gift shops. It will also feature the World of Agriculture exhibit, a daily Mardi Gras parade, competitions and free live entertainment.

The fair is associated with Miami-Dade County Public Schools. However, all Miami-Dade County public and private school students will receive free admission to the event.

Each year, the fair offers students a variety of exhibits to experience, ranging from education, art and even horticulture and agriculture.

Youth Fair offers discounted student tickets, ride passes

These exhibits are meant “to encourage and reward student achievement in a variety of educational and informative exhibits,” according to the Miami-Dade County Fair and Exposition’s Web site.

The fair also supports FIU as it has donated over $2 million for the University’s community stadium and another $1.4 million toward advancing FIU’s performing arts center.

The fair also provides over $500,000 each year in grants and scholarships.

Tickets for the general public are currently on sale on the fair’s Web site. General admission tickets are $8 online and $9 at the door. Rides coupon packages and special “pay-one-price” ride passes are also available.

The fair will be providing special discounted tickets for FIU students, who will receive $1 off general admission tickets, $3 off the 24-ride coupon sheets and $5 off of the “pay-one-price” tickets, good for unlimited midway rides Monday through Friday.

Tickets will be on sale from Feb. 20 to Mar. 24 from 12 p.m. - 5 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and at 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday at the Graham Center Ticket Office.

Honest Abe honestly didn't know.

Law price on bread. Alive?

Here’s your check, sir $5.72

Who are you? Where did you get this?

Join our staff!

Stop by one of our offices located in GC 210 and WUC 124.
The Beacon – Wednesday, March 4, 2009

SPORTS

WOMEN’S, page 8

team. If we put everything together we can win the game,” Boulaj said.

The Golden Panthers lead the all-time series, 11-8, against the Jaguars, but it was South Alabama who swept this season’s series, 65-47 on Dec. 20 at the U.S. Century Bank Arena and 66-52 on Feb. 11 in Mobile.

Both teams picked their bags early in last year’s conference tournament after losing in the second round. FIU was the No. 7 seed and fell to University of Arkansas at Little Rock, who was the No. 2, while South Alabama, in the No. 5 spot, fell to No. 4 Arkansas State.

“We’re starting out 0-0 now, the tournament is what matters, one loss and we’re out,” Truogott said. “What happened this season doesn’t matter as long as we build on it and look past it.”

Perhaps the Golden Panthers will be able to repeat their streak of not being knocked out in the first round of any conference tournament since ’88-89, when they dropped in the opening round to Georgia Southern, 84-66.

FIU is shooting at about 37 percent with 54 ppg while the Jaguars are at about 39 percent and averaging 66 ppg. Despite the poor field goal percentage and weak record, some Golden Panthers are convinced that their true potential has yet to be displayed.

“Our biggest advantage is the fact that we’ve heard a really hard year, no one has seen our potential,” Traugott said. “Only we know our potential, they don’t know what’s coming.”

The winner of Wednesday night’s matchup will move on to the next round in Hot Springs, Ark. to take on either Troy or Louisiana.

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From small towns to major metro areas, the American Cancer Society offers career opportunities for every talent. Our opportunities include patient services, fundraising, advocacy and much more. The benefits are exceptional and include paid time off, tuition reimbursement, insurance and retirement plans.

MEN’S, page 8

at it. He brings a lot of passion for us,” Rouco said.

The Golden Panthers scored 73 points in their first trip to the CajunDome, a season-high for a game away from the U.S. Century Bank Arena, behind a career-high 22 points from Nikola Gacesa.

FIU shot nearly 48 percent from the floor, but was outdueled by UL from above the arc, with UL posting a 14-for-30 three-point shooting effort, while the Golden Panthers hit just 4-of-21 from long range.

Led by a career-high 31 points from Chris Gradnigo, the Ragin’ Cajuns posted a 49 percent field goal percentage, something FIU must address if Hot Springs is in the near future.

“It starts with us being better on defense,” Taylor said.

Josue Soto echoed those sentiments

“We have to pick it up on defense, we need to play harder and with more intensity,” he said.

Having dressed its full compliment of scholar- ship players just once this season, in the final game, FIU has not had the opportunity to experience the whole of its team’s upside, but the Rouco is optimistic about the upcoming test.

“It’s conference time. I think we’ll make a nice run. They’ve been through a lot. It’s 0-0 right now for us,” Rouco said.

The Golden Panthers are participating in their ninth Sun Belt basketball championship, in 11 Sun Belt seasons, and have advanced as far as the semi-finals just once in 2005, when the Golden Panther run was ended by eventual tournament champion UL.

That meeting is the only time the Golden Panthers and Ragin’ Cajuns have met in the SBC championship.

BUNTING: Carolina Rojas makes a play during a game earlier this season. FIU has lost four straight games and scored just four runs in the last three games.

MEN’S SOFTBALL

innings. During the top of the 10th, the Lady Toppers got the first two batters on base, which set up the inning’s two runs to take a 4-2 lead headed to the bottom of the 10th.

Gniadek drove in Welch with a double to centerfield. She stood at second base with two outs for Ashley McClain who flew out to left field to end the extra inning contest.

WESTERN KENTUCKY 4, FIU 1

Jennifer Gniadek could not catch a break, and the Golden Panthers could not figure out Rogge.

After pitching 10 innings on the day before, Gniadek started the final game of the series. Rogge pitched another complete game and gave up just four hits and one run. Her one-run performance capped off a series in which she won every game.

Gniadek’s arm did not hold up as she lasted three innings and let in two earned runs for her sixth loss of the season.

Jessica Landauro drove in the only run of the game for the Golden Panthers in the second inning to tie the game at 1-1, but the Lady Toppers scored two runs the following inning. The Golden Panthers never crossed the plate again and lost 4-1.
**Golden Panthers have rough weekend**

**SERGIO BONILLA**
Asst. Sports Director

Despite starting the season 10-6, the Golden Panthers softball team is now in its first losing streak of the season. The first of four consecutive losses came against Fordham, but the most recent losses hurt a bit more.

On the road facing the Western Kentucky Lady Toppers (10-3, 3-0 Sun Belt), the Golden Panthers dropped their first three games against a Sun Belt Conference team on Feb. 28-March 1. The team’s pitching did a formidable job, but the offense managed to produce just four runs during the three-game series.

Lady Topper Ryan Rogge pitched 16.1 innings and gave up just one earned run in the series.

She also recorded every win against the Golden Panthers.

**WESTERN KENTUCKY 6, FIU 0**

For the Golden Panthers, hits came at a premium while errors came in bunches. The team’s offense was shut out and limited to four hits for the game – the same amount of errors the team committed.

Western Kentucky starting pitcher Ryan Rogge had control of FIU’s batters during the entire contest.

She pitched a complete game striking out five batters and not allowing a walk. FIU’s starter Kasey Barrett pitched five innings and gave up five runs, but only two of those runs were earned.

The errors were spread out across the diamond with two coming from the outfield and two from the infield.

Infielder Jenny Welch provided two of her team’s four hits as the Lady Toppers scored at least one run in five of the seven innings.

**WESTERN KENTUCKY 4, FIU 3 (10)**

Jennifer Gniadek pitched 10 innings and was the game-tying run on second base, but she still lost her fifth game of the season as Rogge came up with her second consecutive victory.

Whereas last game the Golden Panthers committed many errors, this game the Lady Toppers made five of their own.

Those errors led to two of the Golden Panthers’ three runs.

The Golden Panthers jumped to an early 2-0 lead in the first inning but would not score for the next eight frames.

**TOUGH LOSS:** The Golden Panthers lost in 10 innings to WKU on Feb. 29 despite 10 solid innings from Gniadek.

**Men’s, page 7**

**Golden Panthers ready for road challenge**

**ANDREW JULIAN**
Sports Director

In each of the last two seasons, the Golden Panthers have been ousted in the opening round of the Sun Belt Championship by Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton; this year, FIU will try their hand at advancing to the second round with a first-round test at the University of Louisiana where FIU dropped a 90-73 decision to the Ragin’ Cajuns on Feb. 5.

“Everybody’s getting healthy and believing in each other,” said guard Nick Taylor, about what has buoyed FIU’s mindset going into the tournament.

Health would be a big key for FIU to advance out of the first round for the first time since 2005.

Freddy Asprilla missed the first contest between the two teams and he left a void in the paint. Asprilla averaged 17.3 points and 11.4 rebounds in 11 conference games played, and will if not provide presence, at least a different feel for the FIU offense and defense for UL to have to look for.

Asprilla has been hampered by herniated discs in his back, but maintains he’s ready to go for the tournament: “It doesn’t bother me too much right now, but it still hurts,” Asprilla said.

Golden Panther head coach Sergio Rosco is also pleased to have his big man healthy for the start of the conference tournament.

“Now is when [Asprilla] is beginning to get in shape and be on his total game. This is the kid that we know about. I think he’s got his confidence back, but he gets it by working hard every day,” Rosco said.

**Women’s, page 7**

**Healthy roster gives team momentum**

**ANDREW JULIAN**
Sports Director

The women’s basketball team will travel to South Alabama on March 3 to take on the Jaguars in the first round of the Sun Belt Conference Tournament.

FIU finished the regular season with a 6-23 overall record, 4-14 in SBC play to gain the No. 12 seed while the Jaguars finished 10-19 with a 10-8 record in conference play, making them the No. 5 seed in the tournament.

The Golden Panthers, who are coming off a 57-48 loss to Florida Atlantic University, will seek solid performances from junior guard Ashley Traugott and forward Marquita Adey who combined for 26 points their last time. Monika Bosilj will also hope to be a key contributor, the junior guard averages 14.6 points per game; however, she went scoreless in the team’s season finale.

“We talked yesterday as a team and today we accomplished a lot in practice,” said Bosilj after the team’s final practice before hitting the road to Mobile, Ala.

“Everyone had a good attitude today even though we had a really hard practice, we feel positive and worked on some fundamentals,” Traugott said.

Meanwhile, South Alabama dropped their season finale to Troy, 66-63, and will rely on Jessica Starling who averages 15.1 ppg and Shaiken Netles, who pears in about 14 ppg to lead the way against FIU.

“Now is when we have to play our best ballgame and play with a lot of energy,” starling said.