Four-day schedule set for Summer

GABRIEL ARRARAS
Asst. News Director

When summer rolls around, FIU will once again adopt a modified workweek schedule.

Starting June 25 until Aug. 5, the University will begin operating on a four-day, 10-hour schedule for the 2010 Summer B semester.

“I love there are positive benefits with this schedule as long as we continue to emphasize quality service,” said President Rosenberg in an e-mail to all FIU faculty and staff.

FIU has operated under a four-day schedule the past two summer semesters. According to Rosenberg, the four-day schedule has saved the University approximately $337,000 in utility fees over the past two summer semesters.

“It [also] reduces commuting costs for our employees and it provides faculty and staff extended time with their families,” he added.

A survey taken by the University showed results indicating that more than 80 percent of FIU’s faculty and staff were satisfied with the four-day work schedule and would like to have the program implemented again this summer.

According to Rosenberg, the Division of Human Resources will be providing further reminders regarding the implementation guidelines and logistics as the start of the four-day schedule approaches.

“We look forward to the participation of each of you once more in making this a successful endeavor and thank you in advance for your continued dedication and contributions to the University,” Rosenberg said.

Roundtable tackles cyber law

MEENA RUPANI
Staff Writer

Web sites like YouTube provided the Tuesday Times Roundtable a topic Feb. 9, revolving around the subject of intellectual property law.

Each week the roundtable discussions are sponsored by Student Government, The New York Times and the Global Learning for Global Citizenship and are used to enhance the students’ perspectives on global issues, according to the Student Government Web site.

Hosted by Professor Hannah Travis, a former attorney for human rights and intellectual property, he has recently been focusing on the issue of cyber law in his recent publications, according to the College of Law Web site.

The specific New York Times article discussed was published in March 2007 and dealt with Viacom suing YouTube for more than $1 billion in damages for “some 150,000 videos that Viacom claims it owns and YouTube users have shared.”

According to the article, the complaint by Viacom is that YouTube has used technology to willfully infringe copyrights on a large scale.

Before beginning the discussion of the article, Travis provided some background on the YouTube Web site.

“In 2003 and 2004, students from the company PayPal decided to construct a Web site where users could post videos to a common site. It would be user created and user generated videos. This would be a better alternative than going to a site owned by Viacom such as NBC, MTV, etc.,” Travis said.

According to Travis, YouTube was willing to take it down but other users are going to continue to re-post videos. They also could set up an automatic filter but then these companies must give every clip they own to YouTube in order for YouTube to filter these videos out.

“Instead Viacom sued YouTube and then others began to follow. The English soccer league and these anime producers also became involved in this case. It has now turned into a class action suit,” Travis said.

Then Travis turned the discussion onto the students and wanted to know if they believed YouTube was doing enough to settle with Viacom or if could they be doing more to appease these companies.

Two specific students were
President addresses student concerns

With an auditorium filled with students and faculty, University President Mark Rosenberg addressed issues and concerns during an annual town hall meeting on Feb 9.

The meeting, held in the Mary Ann Wolfe Theater at Biscayne Bay Campus, gave students the opportunity to ask Rosenberg questions.

One of many issues brought to the president’s attention involved gender-neutral bathrooms on campus. Junior and liberal arts major Jason Remedios presented the need for the bathrooms and importance of its accessibility to all students.

Remedios, also the promotional communications chair for Stonewall Pride Alliance, organization which supports gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and ally students at the University, said such facilities would benefit the transgender community.

“I know that we don’t have a large population of transgender students, but we do have them. Will they be facilitated?” Remedios said.

In response, John Cal, assistant vice president of facilities management, said that the University currently does have several family bathrooms, which may be considered gender-neutral.

Furthermore, according to the Assistant Vice President of Business Services Jeff Krablin, students will now be offered an additional family bathroom in the new Parking Garage 5 building, currently in construction.

“We’re taking a step in the right direction,” Rosenberg said.

Yet Remedios felt the issue was left unresolved.

“Family and gender-neutral [bathrooms] are not the same,” said Remedios in an interview with The Beacon.

The greatest concern shared by students related to campus transportation and the

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Electroencephalography

SGC-MMC, page 1

learned a lot from him. She said she worked with him on the Constitution.

None of the senators had any questions for Koppel, a former SGC-MMC intern, who was voted in unanimously.

Taylor Prochnow, senator from the Engineering Center, said she was concerned that Blasco did not give specific examples on how elections in general will be improved.

“It didn’t seem like there was any real plan in action,” Prochnow said.

YouTube, Viacom lawsuit among topics

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actively participating throughout the duration of the discussion.

Political science major David Dixon, a junior, did not believe YouTube could possibly do anything else.

“YouTube is acting reasonably, they are doing all they can. They have no possible control over what is being submitted,” Dixon said.

Another student, international relations major Ludovico Pereira, a junior, brought up the competing Web site of Hulu.

“Hulu gets permission from copyright holders, they are at the mercy of Viacom and other companies. YouTube is a different type of site and it should not be shut down by these large corporations,” Pereira said.

Professor Travis then brought up the controversial topic of parodies and mash-up videos.

Mash-up videos are when music is added to video or news clips to make them a humorous segment, similar to a parody.

“Parodies and mash-ups should be legal because they are substantially different than the original. However, if YouTube has to automatically filter out copyrighted clips this will include the mash-ups and the pardo-


dies,” Travis said.

Dixon commented on this controver-

sial topic.

“Mash-ups and parodies should be allowed. Users should have some freedom of speech and the ability to say what they want to a degree,” Dixon said.

Todd et al.

The toward the end of the discussion, Travis brought up the fact that there are already versions of the site in different countries.

According to Travis, the sites in other countries will be difficult to control because they have different rules and different statutes.

“In the end, there are two possible solutions, we could stop U.S. infringement inside the country and at the border. Or allow the YouTube site to keep running or else foreign businesses will benefit instead,” Travis said.

Students brought up the idea of a monthly subscription fee to the site. However, Pereira argued that this would prove to be expensive to users.

“We have to assume that people will pay if they want higher quality videos like the ones given on iTunes as long as YouTube remains to show low quality videos,” Pereira said.
**LIVING SINGLE**

Valentine’s Day guide for singles and couples

It’s that wonderful time of year again when men and women alike get together and express their undying love for each other. For many, Valentine’s Day is a day filled with romance. For others, it is a horrible reminder that they are indeed living single.

However, there is no rule that says this day is only for couples. In fact, there are several ways that singles can have fun on Valentine’s Day.

For instance, you can get together with all of your other single friends and go to the movies and out to eat. If you are one of those people who have not collected many friends, or maybe you are new in town, well you happen to be living in a city that is known for its night clubs. You can put on a nice out fit, get all dolled up and go dancing. Who knows? Maybe by the end of the night, you will not be single any longer.

For those of you who are not living single, here are a few things you can do to make your significant other smile on Valentine’s Day.

Guys, women absolutely love receiving flowers at work. I think it’s the look of envy on the faces of their co-workers that fills their hearts with joy the most.

In fact, women like the attention so much that sometimes they actually send flowers to themselves.

For those who are dating on a budget, you can still pull off a romantic evening. All you need are some candles, soft music, and if you don’t know how to cook, take-out (if you go with the latter, keep it a secret).

Women love to be wined and dined, and many would prefer a romantic dinner at home versus going to a noisy crowded restaurant.

Ladies, we have to do our part as well. I know some women view Valentine’s Day as a day to be on the receiving end of the gifts, but I’m here to tell you that is just not so. We have to make our significant others feel loved too.

This can be achieved in several ways, but I don’t recommend having flowers delivered (men don’t feel the same way about that as we do). You can prepare a romantic candlelit dinner, buy him a bottle of his favorite cologne, or you can go in for the kill: stop by Victoria’s Secret and pick out the sexiest piece of lingerie your money can buy. Trust me, this will make him very happy.

Whether you decide to spend the evening with your friends, family or significant other, be safe and have a happy Valentine’s Day!

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**SWEET HEARTS**

Sidney Emmanuel, a senior in computer engineering (left), purchases a cupcake from a Valentine’s bake sale hosted by Alternative Breaks members Bethinda Bo- lene, biology senior (front right), Nedly Molina, social work sophomore (middle right), and Portia Morell, computer engineer (back right), on Feb. 10. Proceeds will go toward disadvantaged children in the Dominican Republic.

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**Shuttle service discussed**

TOWN HALL, page 2

Francis read a question submitted by an anonymous student that said, “With a University mandating health insurance for its students how can a decision like this be left to SGA?”

According to Rosenberg, a state-wide discussion regarding the matter due to the inadequate coverage of the typical college health fee. “Students are finding that if you break an ankle or arm that they don’t have any place to have it fully covered,” said Rosenberg.

Rosenberg also pointed out that, despite the cost it may add to tuition, the mandate would be well worth it.

“The argument is that if we did it state wide we could get insurance, for the semester, that could be full coverage for around $300 or $900. A lot of money but when you consider what you might need, it could cover a lot.”

According to Rosenberg, the health mandate is “not even close” to being implemented. The health insurance mandate as it stands would not apply to students who already have adequate coverage, according to Rosa Jones, vice president of student affairs.

“Students with insured will be exempted from the requirement, students out insurance would be required. But at President Rosenberg said we seem to be quite far from that recommendation. There is a lot of discussion and SGA students from along the state are weighing their part as well. I know the answer to that question myself. I know this is a continuing challenge for us to offer transportation between both campuses at the times needed and the availability that you need,” Rosenberg said.

Krabler said the bus is subsidized in part by Parking and Transportation and is a high cost to transport a bus back and forth.

“The right thing to do is to go back and look at those numbers in again and do further analyze to see if there is a service that may be more affordable,” Krabler said.

Several of those in attendance seemed frustrated not only by the cost but also the lack of communication from bus drivers.

“Sometimes they take alternative routes instead of the Turnpike,” said Ed Yellin, a campus services associate who has taken the shuttle for the past 30 years.

According to students the alternate route may take an hour instead of 30 minutes to get to the other campus.

“I know sometimes when you sit in the bus you wonder why is the driver taking an alternate route but they may be trying to avoid something,” Krabler said.

Christin “Cici” Battle, SBC student government vice president, believes these are issues that may be resolved if the drivers communicate more effectively with students.

“This bus issue is very very important and we have to get it right and the only we can do is try,” said Rose Jones, vice president of student affairs.

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Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell is fiscally irresponsible

DEAN WILLIAMS
Staff Writer

Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell (DADT) has been a source of controversy since its inception in 1993, during Bill Clinton’s first term. The political atmosphere at the time was such that the Clinton administration, in conjunction with the Army and Congress, sought to devise an amicable manner in which homosexuals could continue serving the military and retain their basic human rights, all while protecting the military’s integrity as the strongest in the world.

As one of the highest ranked and decorated military officers in the United States’ armed forces, chairman of Joint Chief of Staff and chief military advisor to President Obama, Admiral Mullen feels compelled to state his support for repealing “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” a viewpoint quite different from that of the armed forces.

“I am speaking for myself and myself only,” Admiral Mullen asserted after his testimonial in Washington D.C. on Feb. 2.

Instead of the question being centered on whether homosexuals should be allowed to serve openly in the military, perhaps it should serve as a result of DADT, from 1993 to the present.

Since the Sept. 11 attacks, a study conducted by Serovich, a creative one, a brave one, and be gay at the same time.”

The language used in the policy makes it clear as to why DADT is so controversial. The policy, as stated in Chapter 10 of the United States Code, Section 654, prohibits anyone who “demonstrates a propensity or intent to engage in homosexual acts” from serving in the armed forces of the United States; “it would create an unacceptable risk to the high standards of the moral code, order, discipline, and the unit cohesion that are the essence of the military capacity.”

Understanding the shortcomings of DADT will involve a look at studies conducted by two credible organizations.

As of February 2005, the Government Accountability Office estimated the overall cost of DADT at approximately $100.5 million, with recruiting costs totaling $95.4 million for training enlistees and $7.9 million for recruitment costs.

The UCRBC’s estimated costs of DADT is significantly higher than the GAO’s calculations, considering GAO didn’t take into account the value that the armed forces lost as individuals were dismissed under DADT. This notion of perceived value that the UCRBC bases its calculations is just a precursor to the shortcomings of this policy.

“Boston Globe writer Bryan Bender notes a total of 13,000 troops have been discharged as a result of DADT, from 1993 to the present.”

Some may find my analysis an inappropriate interpretation of the law. Those in favor of maintaining the law argue that with the volatile state of both foreign affairs (i.e., the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan) and the American economy, now is simply not the time to overturn DADT.

In response, I offer the old adage, “excuses are the tools of incompetence.”

As it pertains to economic volatility, it would be fiscally responsible to repeal DADT, as it would afford the armed forces anywhere from $190 to $363 million over the span of a decade.

While it might equate to a small part of the defense budget, continued fiscal responsibility will be necessary to ensure that the nation’s safety can serve.

As it relates to foreign affairs, the armed forces is discharging qualified men and women because of their sexuality, which infringes upon the “unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” as dictated in our Declaration of Independence.

For servicemembers discharged because of DADT, it is disheartening to know that their rights are infringed upon because of intellectual and social shortcomings.

In the words of Consul David Saranga from the Israeli Consulate in New York City: “It’s a non-issue. You can be a very good officer, a creative one, a brave one, and be gay at the same time.”

BRINGING HIGH-SPEED RAIL SYSTEM WILL ALLEVIATE TRAFFIC

CHRISTOPHER DIAZ
Contributing Writer

A high-speed rail system in Florida just might be the solution to a high-speed rail system.

On Jan. 28, the day right after his SOTU address, Obama traveled with Vice President Joe Biden to Tampa, Fla. to announce the construction of an 84-mile high-speed rail line that goes from Tampa to Orlando.

Hopefully this initiative will spread to Miami, to address our own traffic problems, which have increased dramatically over the last 10 years.

Remember a time when traffic in Miami occurred between 7 a.m. to 9 a.m., and then from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.? Well now you can pretty much encounter a pretty intense amount of traffic at any time of the day.

And it’s only going to get worse.

As population grows with the increasing urbanization, the idea of a mass transit system you want to create a grid.

A grid provides relief to our increasing population and our increasing urbanization. The idea is to have a mass transit system that will put any person from point A to point B (and do so quickly and reliably) without the need of a personal vehicle.

Subways and metro rails are far more reliable and faster, but they do not serve major areas.

In order to have a good mass transit system you want to create a grid.

It would be fiscally responsible to repeal DADT, as it would afford the armed forces anywhere from $190 to $363 million over the span of a decade.

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“Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell is fiscally irresponsible.”

Opinion Editor

David Barrios
Contact Us

Despite distance, V-Day can be sweet

IRIS A. FEBRES
Staff Writer

For those with sweethearts in another state or overseas, Valentine’s Day can be a real bummer. At this time of the month, you’re inundated with images of couples – happy, sappy, totally-in-love couples – exchanging gifts in their extremely cheesy glory. Meanwhile, you wonder when you and your honey are going to be back together, in person, for X amount of time.

Perhaps you’re lucky enough to get to see your beau on a regular basis, but when distance comes into play (and you’re on a tight budget), it can cost a pretty penny to fly out of town for a weekend.

If you can’t be with your sweetheart for Valentine’s, there is still plenty you can do to make your Feb. 14 happy, sappy and lovely for you both.

EXCHANGE GIFTS

You don’t have to spend a lot of money on your sweetheart in order to provide them with The Perfect Gift. Being in each other’s arms is much more valuable than a cologne set or a shiny bracelet. However, small, homemade gifts – a poem, a drawing, a picture frame – are much more meaningful than something with a big price tag. After all, these are personal to you.

When you exchange gifts, do it together – open your presents via webcam, if possible. (If you don’t use Skype, which you can download for free at skype.com, do yourself and your significant other a favor and get it now. The program features messaging, Voice Over Internet calls and video conferencing abilities. However, a microphone and webcam is required.)

If no camera is available, do it over the phone. The point is to share the moment together – not to impress your sweetheart with a showy present.

HAVE AN “E-DATE”

While my friends chuckle at this phrase, e-dates are absolutely necessary when you’re in a long-distance relationship.

Essentially, it’s the same as a regular date, except the two of you aren’t physically together. Set a weekend.

You can spend time with your sweetheart via webcam, using a program such as Skype. If no camera is available, do it over the phone.

V-DAY, page 1

on Sunday, the closing event being the 11th Annual “Movement and Music” Valentine’s Day Concert at 7 p.m. The Solday Festival of the Arts is a celebration of the literary, visual and performing arts in sunny South Florida. For $20, couples and friends can join pianist Johnny Rodgers in a tender moonlit sonata.

If an evening among exotic plants seems more interesting, Fairchild Tropical Gardens is also hosting a concert event, this one featuring Jon Secada. Doors open for picnics at 5:30 p.m. on Feb. 14 and tickets cost $60 for non-members.

Of course, one can always abide by the tried-and-true way of the Valentine: a romantic dinner and a movie. Or one could take a less traveled path and take a date to the Miami International Boat Show & Strictly Sail. Tickets start at $16 and will grant patrons access to all of the boat show’s features, including a Guy Harvey show and a meet-and-greet with none other than SpongeBob Squarepants.

Maintaining the spirit of V-Day, the Miami Seaquarium is holding a “Dine With Squarepants.” The event has been popular in the past so availability of supplies is limited. SPC recommends arriving early to make sure you are able to participate.

Along with the stuffed animals, there will be other giveaways including candy and T-shirts.

This Valentine’s, spice it up and see what Miami has to offer.

Feeling cuddly? Build a bear for free

MARGO BARTLETT
Contributing Writer

On Feb. 12, The Student Programming Council will be hosting a Valentine’s Day event in the Graham Center Pit from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The event will feature products from the Build-A-Bear line of stuffed animals and will give students the opportunity to create a personalized gift for their loved ones.

There will be several different bear “skins” to choose from including monkeys, koalas, bears, teddy bears and hippos. Each bear will come with its own birth certificate.

Typically, Build-A-Bear animals range from $10 to $25, but SPC will be providing them to students at the event for no cost.

Students get the chance to build a bear without paying the prices that Build-A-Bear charges, said senior and SPC secretary, Linda De La Paz.

The event has been popular in the past so availability of supplies is limited. SPC recommends arriving early to make sure you are able to participate.

Along with the stuffed animals, there will be other giveaways including candy and T-shirts.

The Beacon – 5 www.fiusm.com Friday, February 12, 2010
Virtual dinner, movie can be just as good

aside time for just the two of you and plan something to do together. You can do dinner and a movie; plan a meal you can both have (my boyfriend and I usually order in sushi) and pick a movie you both can watch.

Synchronizing the film to play at the same time can be tricky, but it can be done (minute markers are your friend)! Aside from this, you can play games online (I’m partial to pogo.com for board games and Sketch.net for a Pictionary-like experience).

GET TO KNOW HIM (OR HER)

Because the two of you will have some time to talk, use it to get to know your honey better. Do you know his favorite color? Do you know her favorite place for coffee? You’ll be surprised about how much you’ll learn about your sweetheart by just asking them questions.

Make a game out of it and take turns. If you don’t know what to ask, scour the Web for question lists. If you have an iPhone, there’s an app called “Question of the Day” that cycles through questions in varying degrees.

Make sure there’s a progression with the questions you ask; as time passes, dig deeper to see how much more you can learn. There are plenty of suggestions to choose from once the day finally arrives.

Having both of you involved with your future plans guarantees dates both of you can enjoy. While he may want to go hiking one day (which you may or may not be a fan of), the next day you can catch an opera. It’s all about finding a balance.

Finally, if you’re stuck for more ideas, there are plenty of Web sites with more ideas than even I can think of. For example, lovingfromdistant.com lists many ideas for gifts, as well as advice and testimonials from couples currently in long-distance relationships.

This Valentine’s Day, let your sweet heart know you care. Make the day special enough to last until you two are together again.

STUDY AGAINST HEART DISEASE

Janna Bres Low in a 45-min. walk through campus part of Heart Healthy Month.
WHERE: 12:15 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: Field Center

Teach-in on the women and girls of ONG

Educate yourself about what’s happening to the women of Congo. Presented by Jean Maleka Kanir, Ph.D.
WHERE: 4:00 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: GC 110

FRI, MAR. 5

WHERE: Softball Field

COCONUT GROVE ARTS FESTIVAL

WHERE: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
WHERE: 3390 Mary Street, Coconut Grove

LEI OF THE MIND

WHERE: 8 p.m.
WHERE: Coral Gables Performing Arts Center

MIAMI ART MUSEUM

Second Saturday Art for families, “Wood Media Marvels”
WHERE: 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.
WHERE: Free
WHERE: 101 N Dixie Highway

Miami Beacon

WHERE: 3390 Mary Street, Coconut Grove

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ATTENTION MATH AND SCIENCE MAJORS! We are looking for high achieving college students, familiar with upper levels of high school mathematics and science such as chemistry, physics, algebra, algebra 2, geometry and calculus, to join our staff. Must have excellent written and verbal communication skills. Several job openings available at our Learning Center. Flexible hours and excellent pay.

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Blowouts, uneven play highlight fraternity rivalries

BRIAN AYALA
Contributing Writer

The mercy rule caused three of the five games played in this week’s Fraternity intramural basketball league to end early.

**LAMDA THETA PHI 33, SIGMA CHI 27**

Lamdba Theta Phi Latin Fraternity Incorporated (1-1) defeated Sigma Chi (0-2), 27-33.

Sigma Chi rallied at the start of the second half with a 7-0 run to come within four points of Lamdba, but they were unable to finish some defining plays to put them ahead.

While Lamdba would try to pull away, Sigma Chi hung around with solid point shooting.

In the final minutes of the game, Lamdba tightened up their defense and Sigma Chi missed crucial key shots.

“We were up, so we were trying to control the ball and force them to foul us so we can go to the free throw line,” said Lamdba guard Jorge Rivera.

Lamdba defeated Sigma Mu (1-1) 34-37.

Both teams struggled offensively in the first half, but in the second half, Sigma Mu changed their game plan to penetrate through SigEp’s 3-2 zone defense to score points in the paint. “Our defense were being a little more aggressive,” said Sammy forward Marcos Jimenez. “At the beginning, we were letting them do whatever they want and taking open shots, so we started pressuring the ball more and on offense we worked the ball around by passing and tried to get to the open man.”

SigEp stayed close in the final minutes of the game, but they missed some critical free throws down the stretch and ultimately fell short. SigEp fell to 1-1 on the season while Sigma Mu Alpha etched their record.

**INTRAMURAL BASKETBALL: FRATERNITY LEAGUE STANDINGS**

**KAPPA ALPHA PSI 49, PI KAPPA ALPHA 17**

Kappa Alpha Psi (2-0) defeated Phi Gamma Delta (2-0), 55-15.

FIU, the league’s worst team by point difference, was incapable of handling PiKapp’s full court press, creating numerous turnovers and easy baskets.

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Prior to FIU, Rojas led the Cowboys to a state championship in 2009 and was also named defensive player of the year.

“She really exciting and think her personality really goes along with it. Nobody expects somebody that little to do things so she does so I think that she’s going to be a fun favorite,” continued McClendon. “This kid is a power hitter in a 5-foot tall body.”

**ON THE MOUND**

Returning to the mound as the same pitching staff from last season will be key for Barrett, Paige Cassady, Jennifer Giandeik, and Ashley McClain.

Giandeik expects this part of the team to be the strongest, especially since Barrett will be participating in her last year as a Golden Panther.

“I think we’re experienced in the key spot, which is on the mound. We want all that workload that will carry us through just about any situation we face,” said the coach. “I think [Barrett] is in a better spot than she’s ever been. She’s worked really hard this year. I think she’ll just continue to build and this will be her best spot.”

Barrett has handled most of the pitching load since her arrival to the team in 2008. Last season, with a win-loss record of 18-13, the right-hander threw 220 innings with a 1.94 ERA and 197 strikeouts.

“Barrett isn’t wrong for how valuable she is to the team. Just her as a person, on and off the field, you’re not going to find a better kid or someone with more integrity than that kid has,” said McClelland. “She’s definitely more than just a pitcher for us. She is 10 percent of the leader of this team.”

Although Barrett is the go-to pitcher, she is confident that the rest of the staff will be able to dominate the mound behind her.

“I feel that if I ever get in trouble there’s Jen, Ash, or Paige to come in and help me,” said Barrett. “I don’t feel that I have to be the one on the mound.”

Giandeik and McClain enter their sophomore seasons this year while Cassady is playing in her final year as a Golden Panther.

As a freshman, Giandeik contributed right away and went 10-10 at the mound with a 2.71 ERA over 121 innings. McClain pitched 45 innings with a 2.49 ERA while Cassady threw 30.4 innings and accumulated a record of 1-4 in 2009.

“(Giandeik) was probably the hardest worker feeling that she threw a lot of drops last year. She’s worked on a couple of other pitches (curve and rise) so that she doesn’t have to rely on just one,” said McClendon. “She’s thrown really well and I think that you are going to see her as our most improved player.”

**OFFENSIVE EXPLOSION**

According to McClendon, the multi-talented McClain along with catcher Welch, freshman Rojas, and veteran Spiers will be the heart of the Golden Panthers batting lineup.

Last season the team compiled a batting average of .249 and totaled 211 runs and 286 strikeouts.

Rojas proved to be a dynamic offensive duo as freshmen in the 2009 season. McClain batted .285 while Welch led the team in RBIs with 30 and tied for most homeruns on the team with five.

“McClain is the one who you will see the most from offensively. She did some really good things at the end of last year, making the defensive team and she really turned it up last but she is an extremely talented hitter.”

McClain had five three-hit games this season, and should see her power numbers improve from 2009, when she hit one home run.

What Coach Says Goes

In order to help her manage all the talent brought in this season, McClendon hired assistant coach Megan Higgicanthom during the off-season.

“The biggest selling point for me with Megan was that she was such a talented player,” said McClendon. “She set a ton of records, did so many things in her career, and played a bunch of different positions and she brings all of that experience, competitiveness, determination, and enthusiasm to our kids. She kind of expects that from us.”

Higgicanthom enjoyed a four-year softball career at the University of Minnesota before joining the FIU coaching staff.

Lindsay Lefebur will return as the other assistant coach in her third year alongside McClendon.

BATTLE TO THE TOP

Although the 2010 schedule is challenging and includes competition against six squads that reached NCAA Championship Regional action a year ago, players and McClelland are confident that they can at least compete for the conference title.

“Talent is not holding back. “I want to win conference, I feel like we’re better than three but it’s a good spot to start the season,” said McClelland.

In the preseason polls released earlier this week, FIU was picked to finish in third place in the Sun Belt Conference with 58 points behind Louisiana and Troy who finished with 80 and 70 points, respectively.

“I think that these kids are going to surprise a lot of people and I hope that we put ourselves in a position where we’re going to be in the post season no matter what our finish is in conference but we’re in it to get first,” said McClelland.

Overall, the coach feels that as long as the FIU team is healthy, the freshmen are able to step in and play right away, the Golden Panthers are guaranteed to be competitive not only in the regular season but also the post-season.

Although it hangs on how these freshmen respond to division I softball and if they do things they’re capable of we’re right there,” she said. “I feel like this group is a post season team if we can stay healthy.”
Infusion of talent bolsters Golden Panthers

The FIU softball field may look a bit rough with all the hard work that has taken place over the winter months. The catcher should back up Jenny Welch this season.

Outfield recruit won three state championships at local powerhouse American Heritage. A slap hitter with surprising pop.

Alexandra Casals starred at local staple Florida Christian, where she led her team to a district title in 2009. The newcomer held the potential to be the most highly recruited player of the class, according to Stephanie McClendon. "She doesn't just touch it and run. She can hit the ball out when she wants. She's unlike a lot of kids I've had."

Jessy Alfonso, on the team. The newcomer held the most highly recruited player of the class, according to McClendon. "She can play anywhere on the field because she's so athletic so she gets moved around a little bit more but arm strength I would put that kid up against anybody too, she can really throw."

Also on the list is Beth Peller from American Heritage High school in South Florida. The outfielder was a second team all-state selection as a sophomore and helped the Patriots to championships on three different occasions.

According to McClendon, Peller has a style at the plate that is really different from anything she has ever seen but expects her to be able to contribute right away. "She's real different; she's not your typical slapper," said McClendon. "She doesn't just touch it and run. She can hit the ball too; she can hit the ball out when she wants. She's unlike a lot of kids I've had."

Paty Zavala is the only out-of-state recruit this season. The infielder attended Sonora High School in Whitter, California where she was named first team all-league in 2005 and second team all-league in 2009. "Patty is the most experienced of them all. She just played against some great competition in California," said McClendon. "She's had so many quality at-bats in her life that I think that's really going to show in the games where as some of the other freshmen might struggle with the pitching."

Last is local Brie Rojas from Cooper City High School. "Brie is going to be the crowd favorite," said McClendon. "She is just a little fireball; always talking and always joking. She swings her shoes every time; she's already hit three home runs in 10 scrimmages this spring."

Softball welcomes six teams for season opening series

STEPHANIE GABRIEL
Asst. Sports Director

The FIU softball team will open the 2010 season with some of the toughest competition they may face all season long.

Head coach Beth McClendon, however, is ready to grab fans’ attention and turn some heads this weekend when the team is ready to grab fans’ attention and turn some of the toughest competition they may face all season long.

season with some of the toughest competition they may face all season long. I'm really hoping we can turn this off-season.

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