FIU baseball takes its perfect record and surprise conference opponents. FIU’s partnership with Pepsi brings out over-com- mercialization practices within the university.

The new FAFSA application has arrived and it’s making lives a bit easier.

SPOTLIGHT

AT THE BAY

FAFSA

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COMMUNITY

FBLA prepares for national competition

HECTOR MOJENA
Staff Writer

In the fight against cancer; no event has seemingly proven more effective than the American Cancer Society’s Relay for Life. Started in 1985 by Dr. Gordy Klatt, this event has become not only a means to raise funds to support cancer awareness, but also a venue in which cancer survivorship can be celebrated.

Relay for Life will take place March 5 and 6 and run an estimated 15 hours. Speaking to this year’s marketing director, Angela Baker, provided a personal story endemic to all who are involved in the relay. “Both my grandparents had cancer; it affected everyone. It hits that soft spot and you say, maybe I can go without that late today [and don’t],” she said.

Every year since 1985, the marathon has expanded, with many teams competing each year to raise as much money as possible for the cause.

The essential component of teams forming to run a marathon has broadened into a much larger set of festivities. Each year, the Luminaria Ceremony honours those who have been affected by cancer and their brothers and sisters who have succumbed to it. This year, professor Jeffrey Knapp, a long-time FIU faculty member whose own efforts bolstered support for Relay.

FBLA at FIU is looking to promote competitiveness, as well as creating opportunities to network with business students and leaders from around the country. This organization has created partnerships with GEICO and the Pepsi Bottling Group, among other Fortune 500 companies.

“The essence of FBLA starts with the competitive edge that we thought FIU was lacking,” said Bruno Cevallor, FBLA’s official reporter.

FBLA, page 2

Haiti recovery to be discussed at teach-in

GABRIEL ARRARÁS
Asst. News Director

FIU will host its second ever teach-in as part of the University’s long-term commitment to Haiti’s recovery. The School of International and Public Affairs, as well as the Latin American and Caribbean Center, are hosting the teach-in which will be Haiti themed. According to an e-mail sent to the University community by external relations, the discussion will include the country’s economic, political and social reconstruction, as well as the cultural preservation and public health issues it faces, in action.

The teach-in will take place on March 6, from 1 to 4 p.m., in the Rafael Diaz-Balart Hall Auditorium at Modesto Madrille Campus. It will consist of two panels, each followed by a question and answer session. According to the e-mail, the first panel will feature Robert Magazine, associate professor of Haiti, page 2

Campaign markets

MELISSA CACERES
Staff Writer

If there are any doubts as to what exactly FIU is, President Mark Rosenberg and the External Relations Division are now working to provide a clear definition.

The University-wide branding campaign called Worlds Ahead was officially launched on the morning of March 2, at the Graham Center Ballrooms with faculty, administration and students present filling up every seat. Viewers who were not able to attend were given the chance to watch the presentation via Webcast.

“How many professors here have traveled to a conference and gotten the blank stare of unfamiliarity when you say FIU? How many of our professional staff have had to say it twice? Don’t you think we are way too big and far too good for that question, [FIU who?]” Rosenberg said.

“We’re launching a campaign that we want to put that question to rest. We’re here today because FIU is worlds ahead and it’s time that everyone knows it.”

Worlds Ahead, which was prepared and researched during the course of 2009, aims to expose FIU as an institution to the community through marketing initiatives, which currently include a promotional commercial showing University students and alumni in action.

According to the research conducted by Stumats, one of the nation’s top education marketing firms, only 30 percent of those surveyed rated the University as FIU, page 2

WEATHER

FIU Tennis, March 4, 9 a.m. The College of Arts and Sciences will host an open house for the Career Services Office.

RELAY FOR LIFE 2010

RELAY, page 5

Every year since 1985, the marathon has expanded, with many teams competing each year to raise as much money as possible for the cause.

The essential component of teams forming to run a marathon has broadened into a much larger set of festivities. Each year, the Luminaria Ceremony honours those who have been affected by cancer and their brothers and sisters who have succumbed to it.

This year, professor Jeffrey Knapp, a long-time FIU faculty member whose own efforts bolstered support for Relay.

FIU, page 2

...more events can be found on our Monday and Friday issues of THE BEACON...
Wave takes lives and damages cruise ship

Two people aboard a cruise ship were killed after a 26-foot wave hit off the coast of France. According to CNN, 14 people were also injured as a result of the wave that hit the Greek Loutos Cruise ship. The wave also caused damage to five windows on the ship.

Shortly after the incident, the ship and its 1,350 passengers returned to its home port of Barcelona, Spain.

The Beacon – Friday, March 5, 2010

2

Additional copies are 25 cents. The Beacon is a campus-wide initiative to enhance the social, economic, environmental, political and demographic equilibrium. Residents interested in business-related entities, with a total of a quarter million dollars. The project coordinator of Digital Library of the Caribbean, will host the second panel. According to external relations, the second panel will present an update on FIU’s initiatives to assist Haiti with the preservation of its archives and valuable historical collections.

Known as “Protecting Haitian Patrimony Initiative,” international contributors will come together to support Haitian libraries and archives and valuable historical collections.

The event is free and open to the public but an RSVP is requested. For more information, contact the School of International and Public Affairs at 305-348-7266.
Village tent, where she says, "I went along for some "real" Mexican at this place by Biscayne Southern Mexican Restaurant, 15400 Bay Campus called Cheen Huaye. It was super cozy, the people are so happy, and the students welcomed us right in, and offered a drink on the house when there weren't any seats. Kish and I ended up talking for two hours without getting the check thrown at us. There is nothing more important than nausea."

I now see that I shouldn't have dismissed Mexican food just because your restaurant doesn't know how to do it as well as Cheen Huaye. Kish had the pico-de-pollo, a grilled filet of chicken breast marinated in sour orange and smashed garlic, topped with chilimole, esquache red onions, and fresh cilantro. It's served with vegetarian fried beans, Mexican rice and garnished with salad for $12.95.

I don't eat meat, but this dish almost made me take a bite of the chicken. Still, I didn't give in - mainly because I had my own dish to worry about.

I had the Tostada Vegetariana, crispy corn tortillas, topped with vegetarian re-fried beans, lettuce, pico de gallo, table cream and Mexican cheese and guacamole for $9.95.

Every bite of my dish made me smile. What made it better was that it came with fresh-made chips and salsa that was more than a cup with tomato and cilantro.

This place is super cozy, the people are so happy, and it feels like walking into a friend's house. The owner welcomed us right in, and offered a drink on the house when there weren't any seats. Kish and I ended up talking for two hours without getting the check thrown at us. There is nothing worse than sitting down in a restaurant and thinking, "When can I leave and how did I get here?"

Homemade food. Good conversation. Awesome weekend.

Catch "Weekends with Paradise" every other Friday. Our writers pay for all food and experiences and are not compensated in exchange for positive reviews.

"The spots were happy, the guests were happy, and the students were happy," Rajnish said. Rajnish was also a part of the festival last year, where she worked at the Loews Hotel's media suite and also at the festival's Fun and Fit as a Family Zone, an area in the festival dedicated to kid-friendly options for healthy meals.

Born in Italy, Rajnish, a lover of travel, moved to the United States at the age of five and moved between Georgia and Saudi Arabia until she settled in Miami to attend FIU in Fall 2008. She also spends her summers in Switzerland.

"I never thought I'd be in Miami of all places," said Rajnish. "I feel I'm exactly where I'm supposed to be in my life right now." Eventually, she aspires to run an environmentally-friendly luxury hotel in Switzerland or Colombia.

"This field allows me to communicate with others and make other people happy," she said. "That's what I love about hotels. Normally when you go on vacation, people are happy."

Aside from traveling and the responsibilities of the festival, she is also a full-time student who likes to play volleyball and watch movies. Still, all the work put into this festival and hectic schedule, she will be going through withdrawal now that it’s over.

"I want people to know how great an experience this is," Rajnish said. "No matter what position you play in this festival, everything is important. It's a great opportunity for networking possibilities and meeting new people. I recommend this no matter what you're studying."
This soldier's view: end Don't Ask, Don’t Tell

CHRISTOPHER DIAZ
Contributing Writer

I have never been able to understand the thought process behind “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” as a policy. Of course, you could note that the fact it limits the amount of possible recruits for the military. Then there’s the fact that it costs millions of dollars to uphold the policy.

Then there is the moral issue at hand: a federal entity openly supporting a manner of segregation, which brings back memories from basic training when I met a young man who had never met a minority, aside from those he’d seen on TV. There was basic training, the Army told us that there is no such thing as being black, white, male or female. We were all soldiers; all they saw was green drab. We all had similar problems. We all had the same gripes and the same nonsense to deal with.

While there, I met a young man who could only be called “incredibly effeminate” though not homosexual. One night, while out in the field, he was held down and beaten with socks filled with rocks. They were careful not to hit his face. They held him down and brutalized him without relent.

The young man eventually brought this to the attention of the drill sergeants. He walked into their office with a few other soldiers, including those who helped beat him. He came out visibly upset, being told that he was making this all up and trying to cause problems. I remember the tears he was fighting back. The look on his face was both of confusion and hurt, showing a sense of betrayal. But many thought he deserved it. He was guilty of angrily talking back to those who harassed him.

There was a time when blacks were not allowed to serve in the military. Then with time they were allowed to fulfill certain roles, but on a limited and segregated basis. Fast forward to today and they make up a large percentage of our troops and do an outstanding job.

Of course, there are bigots and homophobes out there. But I would like to think that in a country where service in the military is voluntary, where people risk their lives and sacrifice much to uphold the Constitution and keep us safe, that they would be judged on the merits of their ability.

Now it is hypocritical to say that denying someone belonging to a racial or ethnic minority to serve in our military based on prejudice, and then say that gays cannot openly serve in the military? Would it be right or reasonable to ask those who are minorities to mask or hide their ethnic or racial identity?

I have heard time and again about unit cohesion and troop morale. Quite frankly, there would be some problems if homosexual were not allowed to openly serve. There would especially be conflict with those whose norms and upbringings are radically opposed to homos. We have been here before when we talked about allowing blacks or women to serve in the military.

The military is only as good as the men and women in it. If we deny perfectly skilled and qualified men and women to serve, then not only do we weaken or lessen our national defense, we are guilty of an unconstitutional hypocrisy.

In my time as a soldier, the subject of the draft has come up quite a few times. The overall consensus among soldiers was that there was no way any of us wanted to be “boots on ground” with a draftee. There is no way we want to be in a BOF (forward operating base), or heading down in a convoy with someone without a clue of what the heck they were doing.

When your life is on the line, do you want to work with a person of a different gender, race, ethnicity, or sexuality? Is. You want someone who won’t get you or your buddy killed.

We can pretend that homosexuality doesn’t exist. But in times like these when we are waging two wars and trying to instill democracies in other parts of the globe, then we should ensure that we have the best and brightest troops, and that our democracy is one to be proud of.

If we are to be a “shining beacon on a hill,” let’s prove it with actions and not rhetoric.

Streamlined FAFSA application a welcome change

DEAN WILLIAMS
Staff Writer

Something particular caught my eye while completing my taxes online at some point during the process, the site asked me if I or anyone in my household would be attending college next academic school year.

Along with my 1040, I was able to print a single form that provided me with line-by-line instructions to complete my FAFSA, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. I then logged into my account at fafsa.ed.gov, where the single sheet made the process much more efficient. While completing the FAFSA, I noticed that I was allowed to skip many questions that did not relate to my financial situation, based on my responses to a few simple questions.

Instead of re-entering information that remained the same from last year such as address, e-mail, etc., FAFSA simply remained the same from last year such as address, e-mail, etc., instead of waiting weeks, instant estimates of Pell Grant and student loan eligibility are provided after completing the online form.

These changes bring a once-bloated process into an easily managed application, great for students whose time is precious. These changes are in response to a September 2009 joint study conducted by the National Economic Council and the Council of Economic Advisors titled, “Streamlining the Financial Aid Process: a Case for an easier, faster, and more accurate FAFSA.”

The study concluded that the FAFSA, before revisions, was six pages long, required responses to over 150 questions, and could easily take over an hour to complete. The study asserted that approximately 1 million students would have been otherwise eligible for aid failed to complete the application because of the tedious process. Student aid programs, in effect, were failing to ensure that qualified students receive financial assistance in pursuit of a higher education.

Questions relating to one’s assets on the FAFSA are not furnished by the IRS, making access to such information tedious at best. Completing the FAFSA requires one to reveal information pertaining to college savings, which students, colleges, and states and institutions to include such savings in their calculation of a student’s estimated need, which creates a negative perception about college savings funds, leading many to misrepresent or shift assets into untaxed categories.

Legislation has been introduced to reform the process, so that an applicant would be asked if they own more than $250,000 in savings and investments to determine whether it would be necessary for the student or parent to answer questions as it pertains to investments.

The study shed light on the verification system, noting that it is in need of reform, too. Students and institutions spend an estimated $432 million annually because of the verification process. Not only do institutions fail to match the information that students provide during the verification process, but only one-third of all students are required to undergo verification, meaning that the process fails in pinpointing the misrepresentation of financial information for two-thirds of all students.

Together, these factors, the study maintained, contributed to $600 million in Pell Grant overpayments in 2001 and 2002.

While there are still shortcomings with FAFSA, the Obama administration finally managed to effect change. Thankfully enough, these changes assist more students in obtaining financial aid through a hassle-free process. Further legislation will streamline the verification process to capture funds that can put back into the system, as well as address the issue of the reporting of investments so that the process is fair and balanced toward middle-class Americans.

This is an instance where Obama set a high standard, and fortunately enough, was able to meet it. In the end, all benefit from the current changes, and will benefit from future reforms to the FAFSA and student aid programs.

“Don’t Ask Pepsi” or “Drink Pepsi at FIU,” not “pursue knowledge” or “be better citizens.”

I see no other interpretation from these signs. FII seeks an ideologue that the community has done an excellent job of establishing one over the recent years.

We don’t believe that we need to incorporate non-FIU symbols on posts, bus stops, or other areas. I understand and respect that corporate sponsorship is practiced practically everywhere, but the deal with Pepsi included a not-so-glorious addition to the University, which is still a leading institution, not a forum for corporate interests.

- Orlando Leone, junior electrical engineering major

Pepsi ads taking over campus

WINNERLOSER

Check out Pepsi and Monster drink vendors on campus in itself does not bother me. My problem is with the signs that hang between the Gold and Blue Garages, and other areas around campus.

“The good words: “knowledge”, “community”, “prosperity”. Words to live by. If they did not have corporate logos and maybe inserted FIU-based symbols instead (or even better, no symbols at all), it would be more acceptable for me.

You see, the Pepsi insignia substituted the “O” in “knowledge.” It seems that the deal with Pepsi included not just new drinks, but propaganda, to which my intuition perceiving as such.
The Relay, page 1

for the event, passed away and the event has a special significance for all involved.

According to Baker, "he was one of our biggest fundraisers" and he will be sorely missed.

The Fight Back Ceremony is another big part of the proceedings.

It acts as a personal pledge to take up the fight against cancer by giving up something (like smoking) or developing some new, healthier habits.

"We have a volunteer chair, so if you want to get involved the night of you can get to her," Baker added. "Volunteers sign up for four-hour shifts and they get a T-shirt as well. They are assigned to committee members who need help since there are only about 15 of us."

The breadth of activities doesn’t necessarily end with these things.

In addition to the mara-thon and ceremonies, there are ways that one can donate for the cause.

The Relay for Life Web site, http://www.relayforlife.org/relay/, allows visitors to donate as much as they want and doesn’t require partici-pation in the event.

Ultimately, this year’s Relay for Life looks to be a continuation of the beauty and goodwill that has so dominated these occasions. It’s not too late to enter a team, after all.

For more information on volunteering, contact Juaila Mirzaei at jmjrze218@ yahoo.com.

I f I had $1 for every cell phone manufacturer, I’d be a rich guy. However, if I had $1 for every one of them who made a difference, I’d have maybe $3.

HTC Corporation was founded in 1997 and began humbly as a company that designed hardware for cell phone companies to sell under their own brand, otherwise known in the biz as an “original design manufacturer.”

So, they would design a phone that would be sold, for example, as the “T-Mobile MDaAc3000” or whatever ridiculously fantastic, Star Trek-sounding, pattern of numbers and letters they thought of.

Though an interesting (and lucrative) business model, I have always thought HTC made a hell of a phone, and branding their Windows Mobile devices as a Microsoft endorsed device is doing the potential of the company’s brand a dis-service.

Then, all of a sudden, things changed at HTC, and they started kicking large amounts of ass. HTC began churning out phones with both Windows Mobile and Android. The difference between then and now, however, was that HTC was branding their own phones but also innovating on the software as well.

The biggest accolade, I think, that this company has on its list of accom-plishments is that it made HTC smartphone palatable.

HTC created the “Sense User Interface,” a sort of mock over the Windows Mobile OS that hid its flaws and errors and adapted it for touch interface before Microsoft ever thought of doing it.

Microsoft’s ill-fated operating system terested on the brink of complete market failure until HTC came along and resurrected it from the dead.

The company later worked dropped Sense UI on Android, though, granted, Android is not nearly as horrible as Windows Mobile.

In the past five years, HTC has given consumers something that they never dreamed of having in the mobile technology: choice.

Currently, the company has over 20 devices on the market, powered by both Android and Windows Mobile operating systems.

The company also boasts hardware partnerships with Microsoft and Google, with whom they partnered to build the Google-branded Nexus One device.

At the end of the day, HTC has gone from an “original design manu-facturer” to one of the biggest influ-ences in the mobile industry -- and that has made it a prime target for Apple.

On March 2, engadget.com broke that Apple filed a massive lawsuit against HTC citing that it has infringed 20 iPhone patents.

According to the filing, HTC has allegedly infringed such popular patents as “Time-Based, Non-Constant Translation Of User Inter-
Dog makes its debut in play

CHERRY, page 5

STEVE MESA Staff Writer

Avid film buffs or those seeking films different from the usual big-budget blockbusters can look forward to the 27th annual Miami International Film Festival, which begins tonight at the Gusman Center for the Performing Arts in downtown Miami.

Tonight’s opening film is a 2009 Cannes Film Festival favorite, Looking for Eric, the latest movie from director Ken Loach (The Wind That Shakes the Barley). The film is about a post worker named Eric (Steve Evets), a soccer fanatic suffering from a mid-life crisis. As his life starts to take a downward turn, he begins to receive philosophical life coaching from his hero, Manchester United’s legendary French soccer player Eric Cantona.

Two of this year’s Oscar-nominated films will also be screened at the festival. The Milk of Sorrows, a Pervuvian import, will be shown as part of the festival’s yearly exchange linking experienced professionals with up-and-coming filmmakers. The film is about a woman who suffers from a rare disease that is transmitted from the breast milk of women who have suffered trauma from the ongoing war and terrorism.

The Secret of Their Eyes is an Argentinian film about a retired prosecutor who re-examines the unsolved murder of a young woman from Buenos Aires. This film will be screened at the Gusman Center on closing night, preceded by the festival’s award ceremony.

Aside from these Academy Award-nominated titles for Best Foreign Language Film, MIFF will also showcase recent films from a selection of Oscar-nominated actors and filmmakers.

Oscar-winning writer and film director Michel Gondry ( Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind) will screen his documentary, The Thorn in the Heart, this being its United States debut. The documentary chronicles the life of Michel’s aunt and family matriarch, Suzette Gondry, and her troubled relationship with her son, Jean-Yves.

Gondry’s entry will compete with other documentaries, including a revealing portrait of the creator of Playboy, Hugh Hefner: Playboy, Activist and Rebel, and the story of Pablo Escobar as told by the infamous cartel lord’s son in The Sins of My Father. Academy Award-nominated actor Andy Garcia (Ocean’s Thirteen) leads an all-star cast, including Emmy-winner Juli-anne Marguiles (The Good Wife) and Oscar-winner Alan Arkin (Little Miss Sunshine), in the Miami International Film Festival’s opening night film, Looking for Eric, which will be preceded by a special screening of the festival’s award ceremony.

Steve Evets, who plays the role of Eric, a post worker who begins to receive philosophical life coaching from his hero, Manchester United’s legendary French soccer player Eric Cantona, is nominated for a supporting actor Oscar for his role in the film.

For more info and to purchase online tickets, visit miamifilmfestival.com.
Barrett, Rojas collect accolades as team starts strong

STEPHANIE GABRIEL
Asst. Sports Director

The FIU softball team has been cleaning up. Just after sweeping Western Kentucky in a three game series on Feb. 26-28, senior pitcher Kasey Barrett and freshman slugger Brie Rojas swept the Sun Belt Conference softball awards with Pitcher and Player of the Week honors.

For Barrett, the award is her second so far this season as she was also named Pitcher of the Week on Feb. 22.

Meanwhile, Rojas enjoys the first honors of her collegiate career after batting .667 across the three contests against the Hilltoppers.

“It feels great. I’ve been working hard so I think I deserve it,” Rojas said. “The team is behind me and it is all flowing into place.”

The first year player, who stands at about 5 feet, knocked out a pair of three-run homers in game one against WKU and recorded six of FIU’s seven RBIs.

“It’s about quality at-bats every time,” she said. “I go to the plate feeling confident and I just think, ‘I have to help my team out.’”

With just two losses as of March 3, the FIU bats have been flowing, but players and head coach Beth McClendon are aware that the pitching staff has also played a huge role in the team’s early success.

“Our pitching staff is fantastic and they keep working hard,” Rojas said. “The hitting is coming along just as well.”

Barrett threw two complete games against WKU and notched a 0.58 ERA in 12 innings of work while also striking out 12 batters. She holds a record of 6-1 as of March 3 and leads the entire pitching staff with an ERA of 0.47.

“I really think that our offense and knowing that there’s defense behind me to make all the plays has helped me out a lot,” Barrett said.

“And then when I have run support that defi nitely allows me to relax.”

McClendon agrees that although Barrett has been successful since her arrival to FIU, she continues to improve.

“I think she is doing a better job of approaching each game more focused on herself and being self-effi cient,” she said. “She’s trying to go out and do the same thing every game no matter who we’re facing.”

The team continued play on March 4 against Eastern Michigan at FIU, with results available on FIUSport.com, and will travel to the Univer-

SOFTHAL
SEASON STARTING SOON!
South Florida’s Newest 18 & Over Wood Bat Baseball League

PLAY BALL!
...IN THE MIAMI ABL

GOLF
The Golden Panthers finished second at the 2010 USA Lady Jaguar Invitational with a +55 (919) on March 1 and 2.

Unfortunately for FIU, Memphis rallied on Wednesday to finish fi rst after the Golden Panthers led a hold going into the fi nal day.

Christina Marin finished third overall individually with a +7 (223), just behind Memphis’ Marissa Steen, who beat out Lauren Cate in a playoff to win.

The Golden Panthers will travel to Phoenix, Ariz. next on March 16 to take part in the University of Nevada Invitational.

Compiled by Spencer Mantley, Tom Dean, and Jonathan Ramos.

The Beacon – Friday, February 26, 2010

Sports

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Sports
MEN'S BASKETBALL
Tournament offers redemption

JOEY CRUZ
Staff Writer

Whit FIU forward J.C. Otten out for the postseason with a torn ACL in his right knee, the Golden Panthers head to Hot Springs, Ark. to take on Denver in the first round of the Sun Belt Conference tournament with a major challenge in the size department. “He’s averaged a double-double in the past 10 to 15 games,” FIU point guard Phil Gary Jr. said. “I might even have to move to the two spot at my size (5-foot-11) and grab rebounds.”

Playing without Otten (6-foot-7) will not be the only obstacle FIU has to overcome.

In the lone regular season matchup between the two on Dec. 17, Denver (17-12, 10-8 Sun Belt) had a great offensive night, especially from beyond the arc while shooting 50 percent from the three-point line. They have slowed down the Chicago native, including the recoccurring issue of tendinitis in his left knee.

After the loss against Middle Tennessee on Feb. 25, Gary slightly sprained his left wrist, but fortunately for FIU, it’s not his shooting hand.

In recent practices, FIU has been focusing on some of the basics of the game in order to be successful in the post season. According to sophomore Rakia Rodgers, the team has focused on handling pressure because teams love to use a full-court press against FIU, who averaged 20.1 turnovers this season.

“We’ve been working on pressuring because we know that the teams we’re going to play are probably going to try to put a lot of pressure on us,” Rodgers said. “We’ve also been working on handling pressure, blocking out, and rebounding.”

In the end it will all come down to defense.

“We’ve been focusing on defense more than anything. Defense wins games along with rebounding,” she said.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
Carey leads FIU to No. 7 spot and earns SBC award

STEPHANIE GABRIEL
Asst. Sports Director

Elisa Carey was close to unstoppable this season.

Her efforts, which include a team-high 13.8 points per game, earned her a spot on the All-Sun Belt Conference Second Team and have also led the FIU women’s basketball team to the No. 7 seed in this weekend’s SBC tournament.

Carey hopes to lead her team again as FIU (14-15, 7-6 SBC) out-rebounded the Pioneers last time we played them.”

Despite the outcome, FIU (7-24, 4-12 Sun Belt) had a great offensive night, especially from beyond the arc while shooting 50 percent from the three-point line. They were very hard [during the season],” Russo said. “They were very aggressive and athletic team.”

FIU did not look like a No. 7 team the entire season. They started out with a 3-7 record in conference play before going on a six game win streak and then ended the season with two straight losses to No. 2 Middle Tennessee and No. 3 Western Kentucky.

In the end it will all come down to defense.

“We’ve been focusing on defense more than anything. Defense wins games along with rebounding,” she said.

BASEBALL
First road trip of season poses test

JOEL DELGADO
Asst. Sports Director

The Golden Panthers (6-0) put their perfect record to the test as they head west for a tournament in Surprise, Ariz. in their first road trip of the season.

BIG TEST
Playing four games in four days forced head coach Turtle Thomas to make some adjustments to the starting rotation, including having Daniel Desimone start the first game of the tournament on March 4 vs. Utah Valley.

Scott Rembisz will pitch vs. UC-Riverside with Carey Polizzano on the mound against Cal Poly. Aaron Arboleya will handle the most difficult game of the tournament against Arizona State (7-0), the No. 12 team in the nation according to the latest Baseball America Top 25 rankings.

“He’s been good,” Thomas said of Arboleya. “Hopefully he’ll continue to improve. The big thing with Aaron is that he needed to develop a second and third pitch that are good, quality college pitches. And he needed to keep the ball down in the strike zone better. And those are two things that he has done a better job of this year.”

In addition to adding speed to his fastball, Arboleya has also developed his slider and changeup, pitches that have allowed him to have a 1.80 ERA and nine strikeouts in his two starts.

SWING AWAY
Thomas has also been pleased with the way his off offense is performing so far this season. Garrett Wittels leads the team with a .538 batting average with seven RBIs, but Thomas has stressed that FIU’s success at the plate is attributed to consistency throughout the batting order.

“You can’t just have three or four guys at the top of the order and the guys at the bottom of the order can’t hit,” said Thomas. “We feel like we have 13 or 14 capable hitters.”

The team as a whole has been efficient in its first six contests with a .360 overall average.

FIU head coach (sigh Thomas will return from a one game absence to lead the Golden Panthers into the Sun Belt Conference tournament on March 6. They have slowed down the Chicago native, including the recoccurring issue of tendinitis in his left knee.

After the loss against Middle Tennessee on Feb. 25, Gary slightly sprained his left wrist, but fortunately for FIU, it’s not his shooting hand.