Ramirez, Battle elected SGC presidents

JASMYN ELLIOT
PHILIPPE BUTEAU
The Beacon

After campaigning for students’ votes and addressing their platform, the dust of the election settled to reveal the future leaders of Student Government Council at Modesto Maidique Campus and Biscayne Bay Campus on March 31.

Helena Ramirez, Cristin “Cici” Battle, Nick Autiello and Denise Halpin are president and vice president elects of SGC-MMC and SGC-BBC, respectively.

After thanking students for participating in this year’s elections, Larry Lansford, associate vice president of Student Affairs, announced the winners of the senatorial and uncontested presidential races at MMC.

Ramirez, the current speaker of the SGC-MMC senate, received 1,285 votes. She said in an interview with Student Media after the results were announced that she’s ready to get to work.

“We’re going to be putting out cabinet applications early next week,” Ramirez said.

Autiello, the current chief of staff under current SGC-MMC president Anthony Riorda, said in an e-mail interview with Student Media that he and Ramirez have already started preparing. He also said he will start working with the senate starting next week.

“I will be coordinating with the senate to have a successful transition in the legislative branch and to prepare the senate for leadership elections,” Autiello said.

Ramirez said despite there still being “room for improvement,” this year’s elections went well overall.

“Considering this is the first year we used Votenet and so many races being uncontested, I think it was successful,” Ramirez said.

Ramirez said both the experience and the announcement humbled her. Autiello said he’s well overall.

“I am so grateful,” said Battle. “I would like to thank the students, the administration – and my mama. I’m so excited!”

With 331 votes, Battle won the support of everyone who helped me along the way,” Autiello said.

The BBC winners were announced in Panther Square.

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The BBC winners were announced in Panther Square.
**NEWS FLASH**

**FIU**

FIU ranks 42 out of 50 schools for most attractive student body

Pop culture Web site PopCrunch.com has revealed its list for the top 50 “Hottest Student Bodies” in the nation. FIU made its first appearance on the yearly list, snagging the 42nd spot on the list. Florida State University took the No. 1 spot. University of Florida ranked third, and University of Miami ranked 25th.

**LOCAL**

SeaWorld trainer autopsy confirms drowning, trauma

An autopsy report released Wednesday confirmed that a SeaWorld trainer killed after a killer whale pulled her underwater died of drowning and traumatic injuries to her body. According to CNN, Dawn Brancheau, 40, was working with a whale named Tilikum in knee-deep water at SeaWorld in Orlando on Feb. 24 when the animal grabbed her by the ponytail and pulled her underwater in front of shocked onlookers at the park’s Shamu Stadium.

**NATIONAL**

Obama administration reveals plans for off-shore drilling

President Obama unveiled plans Wednesday to open large swaths of U.S. coastal waters in the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico to oil and natural gas drilling.

According to CNN, the administration plan would include lifting a 20-year ban on drilling off the Virginia coastline, while putting the clamps on sites such as south-west Alaska’s Bristol Bay.

**WORLD**

Suicide bombs detonate in Russia two days after deadly attack

Suicide bombers killed at least 12 people in Russia’s North Caucasus on Wednesday, two days after deadly attacks in Moscow that authorities linked to insurgents from the region.

According to Reuters, the coordinated attacks in the town of Kizlyar, in the Dagestan region close to its border with Chechnya, were latest outbreaks in a surge of violence in the Caucasus a decade after the Kremlin’s second of two wars against Chechen separatists.

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**COUNCIL DISCUSSES CONSTITUTION**

**PHILIPPE BUTEAU** Senior Staff Writer

The University-wide Council approved changes to the new constitution that will impact not only the incoming administrations but also next year’s elections.

At the March 27 meeting, the UWC approved changes regarding candidate qualifications for Student Government Association presidents and vice presidents, Biscayne Bay Campus having a single ticket for president and vice president and salaries of specific SGC positions.

Prior to the change, student government presidents and vice presidents must have held a position within SGA for at least two semesters or 154 consecutive days. The vice president does not have to hold a position within student government to be qualified.

Christin “Cici” Battle, SGC-BBC vice president, suggested the qualifications for president and vice president be increased to four semesters for president and two semesters for vice presidents.

She said every year people have decided to run for vice president without having held any position.

“You have people who pop up and want to be president or vice president. I don’t think that’s cool,” Battle said.

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**SGA TO GO AFTER FRESHMEN AND SOPHOMORES AND IN TURN CREATE A CONTINUOUS CYCLE OF LEADERSHIP**

Anthony Rionda, SGC-Modesto Maidique Campus president, agreed with Battle on requirements for president, however, he disagreed on vice presidency requirements. He felt that decision would limit outside ideas. Rafael Zapata, SGC-BBC adviser, agreed with Rionda saying that if the amount of someone to have been in SGA increased, it would decrease the number of candidates.

“I wouldn’t want to be so elitist that the only [SGA president and vice presidents] come from inside SGA,” Zapata said.

Jose Toscano, SGC-MMC adviser said some sort of qualifications should be placed for vice president, otherwise it would boil down to a popularity contest.

“If some celebrity was a student at FIU and running for vice president of SGA, then everyone is going to vote for that person,” Toscano said.

Zapata also said there have been “great vice presidents” who have not been in SGA, and awful vice presidents who have.

“Being a member of SGA does not determine whether you’re going to be a good president or vice president,” Zapata said.

As the debate wore on the requirements for vice president became tied to the fate of the individual ticket system at BBC. The representatives from both campuses agreed that a president would not pick a running mate who wasn’t qualified.

Like the requirements, the single ticket system was also a topic where Battle and Zapata butted heads.

Zapata said if a ticket was in place now, no one running for president or vice president would have wanted to be affiliated with the other person.

“I don’t think we at this campus will be able to sustain having a ticket,” Zapata said.

Battle said Zapata isn’t a student, and as a student she feels BBC should have a ticket.

Sholom Neinstein, SGC-BBC president, was on the side of not having a ticket.

“He has never been at the University and he’s always been saying that this is the aspect that the University is working on and it’s the aspect that we need,” Zapata said.

According to Rionda, at Biscayne Bay the current ticket system was “created by people who didn’t have a ticket, that person, they didn’t want to see a ticket. It’s a mistake.”

Toscano also said there was a special referendum at a meeting that SGC vice president would receive 75 percent, chief of staff, speaker of the senate and comptroller would receive up to 40 percent of the president’s salary.

The constitution was not on the ballot during general elections. However, Toscano and Zapata will put it up for a special referendum at a later time that has yet to be determined.

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**COUNCIL DISCUSS SALARIES, SBC SINGLE TICKET SYSTEM PROPOSED**

**CHRISTOPHER LEE ADAMS** Senior Staff Writer

The SGC-BBC and SGC-MMC are working on a special referendum that would limit outside candidates for SGA president and vice president.

As the debate wore on, the single ticket system was also a topic where Battle and Zapata butted heads.

Zapata said if a ticket was in place now, no one running for president or vice president would have wanted to be affiliated with the other person.

“I don’t think we at this campus will be able to sustain having a ticket,” Zapata said.

Battle said Zapata isn’t a student, and as a student she feels BBC should have a ticket.

Sholom Neinstein, SGC-BBC president, was on the side of not having a ticket.

“Students approached me and [Zapata] saying they don’t think we should have a ticket,” Neinstein said. “It doesn’t matter if it was three or 100 students, students decided they weren’t interested.”

Rionda argued in favor of a single ticket by saying he would prefer if a president and vice president believed in each other enough to run and be judged together.

With qualifications determined and a single ticket established, all that was left was deciding the salaries of these positions. The SGC president receives a salary of up to $13,000 and every other SGC position received varying percentages of these numbers.

It was decided at the meeting that SGC vice president would receive 75 percent, chief of staff, speaker of the senate and comptroller would receive up to 40 percent of the president’s salary.

The constitution was not on the ballot during general elections. However, Toscano and Zapata will put it up for a special referendum at a later time that has yet to be determined.

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**E-BOARD AND PRODUCTION STAFF**

**NEWS INFORMATION**

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WEEKENDS WITH PARADISE

Wine, sushi bar great spots to break dry spell

Let me start by saying that I am not an alcoholic.

Now that I’ve cleared that up, I must say that I really needed a drink this week. In fact, I have been craving one since spring break. It all started because, somehow, I seemed to be the only person of age who didn’t even have a drink on St. Patrick’s Day. I know, it’s pathetic. So this weekend, I decided I would fix my little problem and go to Libation for the Love of Wine, located in the Weston Town Center, 1724 Main St., Weston.

Libation is one of those swanky wine bars where you put money on a pre-paid card and sample wines from all over the world with a staff that actually knows what they are talking about to guide you.

The price per glass can range from $4 to $10, based on the bottle. To get a real bargain, go on a Thursday because the money you put on your card will double.

The prettiest bottle I saw was ironed made by Ed Hardy. That’s right: for those who can’t get enough of the tacky clothing, here is a bottle of wine to go with your egotistic personalities. I would tell you how it tasted, but I couldn’t bring myself to give that man my hard-earned money.

When I went to Libation, I was with my friend Anny; we had about two glasses of wine with this delicious cheese and fruit platter that featured brie, cheddar, blue cheese, gouda, manchego and crackers with grapes for $11.

This place may be pricey, but if you want to sit down and have a relaxing drink, it’s totally worth it.

I have to warn you, and I wish someone told me, for some reason this place attracts a 35 plus crowd. So, be on a look out for creeps.

Of course, I have this little fat kid in me who needs to eat more than crackers and cheese to be happy when I am drinking. Wanting to be healthy, I headed over to RA Sushi Bar Restaurant, 201 SW 145th Terrace, Pembroke Pines. Since this place is a bit expensive if you eat alone, go with a group and make it worth your while.

Also, I make sure to eat outside on the sofas. Nothing personal, but I just hate the conventional bar stools when I know there is a more comfy alternative.

I usually have the tuna salad for $9 and order a tuna roll for $4 and a sake for $5 along with edamame pods that cost $4.

So why am I sending you to this overpriced place? Two words: happy hour!

This magical time of day happens between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

The hot sake is only $1, domestic beer for $3 and certain mixed drinks for $5. I love places that I can enjoy a beer without breaking the bank.

My friend, Bia, and I spent at least two hours going through the menu and kept ordering more and more along the way.

Just to be clear, I didn’t have more than two drinks at either of these places. I don’t recommend getting carried away.

This election is the first year the University used VoteNet for SGA elections. However, the numbers include both online votes and paper ballots.

Toscano said the service runs well and it’s accessible, although he acknowledged students at BBC had problems voting.

He said the same problem the University had with Acceleration, the company the University used last year for voting, arose again. The problem is when students have 50 percent of their classes on both campuses, they had trouble signing in to VoteNet.

Toscano said the list of students they receive from the registrar’s office prioritizes campus, then major. So in the future SGA will tailor their elections policy according to what the registrar has to eventually move away from paper ballots.

There was a higher proportion of online voters for the lower-division, at-large and Arts & Sciences senatorial races at MMC, according to Toscano.

Additional reporting by Gabriel Arraras.

Dil petitioning for justice

SGC-BBC announces new senators

Vice president elect Denise Halpin celebrates with her fellow students on March 31 in Panther Square after receiving news of victory.

ELECTIONS, page 1

It was in his best interests to resign,” said Chikishev.

According to Zapata there is no procedure for absentee ballot voting, which is why Chikishev’s actions warranted disciplinary action.

Zabrina Arabhi, SGC-BBC lower division senator, believes Chikishev “made the right choice.”

Despite the scandal surrounding his resignation, SGC-BBC Honors College Senator Rafael Zappata said Chikishev “made the right choice.”

According to Zapata the council is set to meet on March 31 and April 1 to discuss the possibility of impeachment.

“It was in his best interests to resign,” said Zapata about Chikishev.

According to Zapata there is no procedure for absentee ballot voting, which is why Chikishev’s actions warranted disciplinary action.

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Despite the scandal surrounding his resignation, SGC-BBC Honors College Senator Rafael Zappata said Chikishev “made the right choice.”
Health care reform still rough around the edges

The New York Times

The hour-long speech "was a good lesson," says one participant. From the floor comes a "very deep" sense of frustration. "Progress is too slow," according to another.

The House bill "will not achieve the goals of health care reform," says one speaker. "The bill is too focused on the interests of health insurance companies," according to another.

The Senate bill "will not achieve the goals of health care reform," says another speaker. "The bill is too focused on the interests of health insurance companies," according to another.

The White House Bill "will not achieve the goals of health care reform," says another speaker. "The bill is too focused on the interests of health insurance companies," according to another.

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This year’s SPC concert to feature Pitbull, Kid Cudi

MARIA MURREL
Staff Writer

As finals week nears and it seems like spring break was just a bit too short, the folks at the Student Program- ming Council work hard to execute the big event they’ve been working for all year.

Up Roar at the Modesto Maidique Campus is a week-long celebration of the end of the school year, as well as a breather for students swimming in term papers and presentations.

Ana Casas, public relations major and SPC vice president of external relations, explained, “It’s pretty much an event to get as many students as possible to enjoy something out of their routine close to finals.” The affair is free for students, as the funding for SPC programs is covered by tuition costs. As a whole, it’s comprised of a concert, a comedy show and a “large Pit event” in the Graham Center Pit early in the week.

The Pit functions serve to promote the comedy special and, more specifically, the concert, which is the highlight of Up Roar week. To finish off the merri- ment, SPC organizes a movie night, preferred by on-campus residents.

Starting April 6, FIU Panthers will have the opportunity to participate. Pit events include a CD-making booth in which students can record their own album and take it home with them, a photo memorabilia booth with a special Up Roar magazine backdrop, and a candy bar, all free of charge.

Later that night, comedian Jo Koy, popularized by his appearances on comedy tours and cable network Comedy Central, will take the stage at the GC Ballrooms. On April 9, two showings of the recent film Sherlock Holmes will air in GC 140 for students’ viewing pleasure.

In the past, SPC has brought to the University acts the caliber of Ludacris, Grammy-nominated Latin band Locos por Juana, Fabolous, One Republic and Jack’s Mannequin.

Following in the tradition of booking big names, SPC managed to reel in rappers Pitbull and Kid Cudi. On April 7, at 8 p.m. in the U.S. Century Bank Arena, students will enjoy a free concert featuring these crowd favorites.

Two of the best known popular music stars of the day, these musicians represent the opinions of thousands of FIU students who answered surveys provided by SPC.

The council collects data at events year-round: students’ gender, ethnicity, age, preference in genre and frequency of attendance to SPC events, among other factors.

“I guess [they] worked, because we sold out within 4 days. We try to get artists that are similar, yet different, so we can attract as many people as possible,” Casas said, regarding the effectiveness of the SPC surveys.

Keeping the student body’s pref- erences and best interests in mind, SPC was not only concerned with the kind of acts present at Up Roar, but also the number of students aware of the nature of the show.

The members of SPC made it a point to stress that this hootenanny is free for FIU students because in the past years students did not attend Up Roar events thinking these came at a cost.

“This year we focused on branding and getting the word out about our events to stress that this hootenanny is free for students,” Casas said. Regarding the number of attendees to FIU events, among others, he added, “This year we focused on maximizing this hootenanny is free for students.”

When the Nexus One was released in January, there was no major marketing blitz, and the only way you could buy it was online through Google’s T-Mobile. That meant that you couldn’t swing by T-Mobile, who offers the N1 on the cheap with service, to check it out and you didn’t even hear about it until you saw it pop-up on the Google homepage – all the way at the bottom.

Flurry Analytics released a 74-day sales comparison of Google needs to tighten open source platform on Android OS

Google has developed a robust and open mobile platform with Android OS, but the way things are going, they don’t want you to know about it.

The search giant’s approach to marketing and distributing their operating system is puzzling and will no doubt lead to a frag- mented user experience, something that customers, nerds and main- streamers alike will not like.

Currently, there are enough Android devices out there to shake a stick at. Seriously, I have attempted to shake a stick at them and failed miserably … the numbers were overwhelming– cell phones, smart phones and even tablets like the upcoming Dell Mini 5, and eBook readers like SpringDe- sign Alex.

However, where Google is going astray is in its implementation of Android in the smart phone domain.

The idea of a plat- form that is open is enticing even to me, a rabid iPhone loyalist that uses a laundry list of Google services. I’d be lying if I didn’t say that my cursor has hovered over the buy now button for the AT&T compatible version of the Google Nexus One, its flag- ship device.

It syncs with all Google services flawlessly and gives me a more open platform for my phone, including multi-tasking – something the iPhone can’t do. But, Google is failing where Apple has succeeded: creating a single user experience.

The iPhone lives in a bubble, its hardware is built to compli- ment its software and vice-versa. With Android however, this is not the case. Android’s open-source nature lends the OS to be manipulated and, in some cases, improved by companies that use it such as Motorola with the crap-tastic MOTOLBLUR, and HTC’s version of Android with Sense UI.

The downside of all this is that Google does not main- tain these devices directly. So, for example, when Android 2.1 was released, users were at the mercy of the manufacturers, not Google, for their updates.

This fragmentation has already begun. You have devices out there ranging in power, screen size and memory and all of this needs to be taken into account when writing and designing an OS. You can’t update them all, because they can’t all support the update.

Google’s answer to Android uniformity is the Nexus One. But, as with the other devices, Google’s strategy for getting this device in your hands is a bit odd.

When the Nexus One was released in January, there was no major marketing blitz, and the only way you could buy it was online through Google’s T-Mobile. That meant that you couldn’t swing by T-Mobile, who offers the N1 on the cheap with service, to check it out and you didn’t even hear about it until you saw it pop-up on the Google homepage – all the way at the bottom.
Android’s survival depends on creating a single experience for users

Google’s Nexus One, the Motorola Droid and the first-generation iPhone. The Droid, backed by its massive ad campaign with Verizon Wireless, sold a whopping 1.05 million devices and the iPhone sold 1 million. The N1 sold an embarrassing 130,000 units.

To make these numbers even more appalling, keep in mind when the iPhone was first released, customers had to pay with $600 to buy one, that’s $170 more than the unlocked N1. Not surprising, Google really doesn’t care about the low sales figures of its flagship device, citing the crazy number of Android devices out there.

“The Nexus One is one of a fast-growing number of Android handsets which have been brought to market through the open Android-ecosystem,” Google said in a written statement responding to those figures.

If Google wants to snatch away the open source just a bit. Google needs to establish a set of minimum hardware requirements for an Android device, much like Microsoft has with its terribly named mobile OS, Windows Phone 7 Series.

This would go a long way to not make it easier to role out updates, but also in giving the user a quality experience by making sure their hardware is not underpowered.

They also need to make sure that companies like Motorola and HTC are pushing updates to users in a timely fashion both for devices that have the pure Android experience, like the Droid, and those with altered versions, like HTC devices with Sense.

Creating a single experience for users is vital for Android to survive. If Google wants to go to war with the iPhone, they need to mobilize their troops and make sure they are all wearing the same uniform.

Fistfuls of Tech is a weekly tech column. Look for it every Friday.

Free concerts, move night, helps students de-stress before finals

making sure all the students knew that our events were free,” Casadas added. “Our funds come from tuition, so it’s almost a waste not to go to our events.”

Every FIU student funds SPC’s and its events when they pay their tuition. Therefore, it would be unfair to these students if they were unaware that they had already paid their entrance fee, deprived of an opportunity to participate due to allotted spots going to people outside the University.

For this year’s Uproar, the council employed a more stringent strategy for dispensing concert tickets.

“All our funds have to be invested in students. So, for our concerts this year, for example, you only get one ticket per ID to make sure that everybody that was there was an FIU student.”

Casadas said. The council succeeded in getting the word out more profusely this year. This feat was achieved through the use of Facebook and other media.

SPC is made up of students from all sorts of academic and cultural backgrounds, specializing in communications, business or the arts.

Throughout the school year, SPC members and officers work on smaller productions that prepare them for what is portrayed as the “Big Kahuna” of student events: Uproar. The fest was formerly called UP Rock, before the campus was renamed.

“Our funds are going directly back to the students,” Casadas said.

\[ Sudoku answers from 3/31 \]

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\begin{array}{cccc}
7 & 8 & 2 & 3 \\
1 & 4 & 6 & 9 \\
8 & 3 & 4 & 5 \\
9 & 5 & 1 & 6 \\
2 & 7 & 1 & 3 \\
4 & 2 & 5 & 8 \\
3 & 1 & 9 & 2 \\
6 & 7 & 8 & 5 \\
\end{array}
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Freshman Xavier Thomas danced on stage during Dueling Pianos hosted by SPC-MMC on March 25 in the GC Ballrooms. Creating a dueling piano bar, the event featured two live pianists and a coffee bar.

Piano Man

End of Life

Rottentomatoes.com

“Crazy stunts, a huge gameworld, and a playful use of 3D--but ultimately, the story makes it memorable.”

Keith Phipps - The Onion (A.V. Club)

**Quick Picks**

**MUSIC**

Will Be by Daft Punk - Random Access Memories. The album’s a move in a different direction than the group’s last album but still maintains the same signature sound.

**MOVIES**

Pitchfork

“...see Racecar drivers and a huge laser light show...”

Zach Kelly - Almost Famous

**GAMES**

GameSpot

“Just Cause 2's open-world structure and gameplay are the only real issues.”

Keith Phipps - The Onion (A.V. Club)

**ARTICLE**

The Beacon - Friday, April 2, 2010

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Linda Lee/FIU Daily

8.8/10
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LINDA LEE/THE BEACON
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Rottentomatoes.com
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Rottentomatoes.com
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97/100
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Lessons from the Bean Field: A column on studying abroad.

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Fondon gets nod; Arrojo a question mark for Friday

Baseball Stadium, page 8

FONDON IN

R.J. Fondon will start in the second game of the series in place of No. 2 starter Corey Polizzano.

Polizzano struggled in his last start on March 27 against UALR, where he surrendered six runs, five of them earned, before being pulled in the second inning. On the season, Polizzano is 2-2 with a 7.76 ERA.

Fondon has made eight appearances on the mound for FIU and is 1-1 with a 4.18 ERA. He had a given up 23 earned runs this season. In remembrance of FIU football player Kendall Berry, who was killed at the school’s Modesto Maidique Campus on March 25, each FIU softball player will sport the No. 19 on their batting helmets.

“We hope that his loss wasn’t in vain and that all of these kids can learn something from that,” McClendon said. “We want to go out everyday and do something in his honor and make sure we appreciate every opportunity we get to take the field.”

FIU vs. UNT

- Time: 7 p.m. (Fri) 9 p.m. (Sat)
- Where: April 2-3
- Where: FIU Softball Field

As for UNT’s pitching, senior Kaylee Burri said. “This year I’ve worked a lot with Coach on using different pitches (curve and rise) so that people can’t guess what I’m going to throw.”

Meanwhile, FIU’s offense continues to roll as they rank second in the SBC, as of March 25, for team batting with a .296 average.

Lead the young but explosive lineup is freshman Brie Rojas with six home runs and a .433 percent batting average.

Sophomore Ashley McClain has also shown her power at the plate. She has a team-high 36 RBIs.

Like the Golden Panthers, the Mean Green also boasts some big hitters. FIU, however, has scored 55 more runs than North Texas this season.

They don’t sac much and they don’t bunt much. They rely on power and getting base hits,” Burri said. “We’ve been doing little range drills to prepare for a power hitting team.”

Lisa Johnson leads the Mean Green batters with a .358 average and seven home runs.

As for UNT’s pitching staff, Ashley Lail (7-3) is the go-to hurler. The senior has a given up 23 earned runs this season.

The last time UL came to FIU Stadium in 2009, the Golden Panthers took two out of three in the series, with Corey Polizzano getting the lone loss. Polizzano will not start this weekend.

SUN BELT SOFTBALL STANDINGS

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*All records up to date as of March 31.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

The University Fee Committee will be holding public hearings on

Wednesday, April 7, 2010
BBC - WUC 155 at 10:00am
MMC - GC West Ballrooms at 2:00pm

The objective of these meetings will be to give interested individuals an opportunity to hear arguments pertaining to the proposed increase to the Student Health Fee. The amended fee will become effective in the Fall 2010 term. Students and other interested individuals are invited to attend these meetings.

JOIN OUR STAFF!

The BEACON is always looking for talented and reliable individuals to join the staff. If you have an interest in writing, photography, or even grammar, don’t be shy. Stop by one of our offices located in GC 210 and WUC 124.
FIU seniors shine in last home game

SPENCER MANLEY
Staff Writer

Facing a tough foe in their last home match of the season, the Golden Panthers’ outgoing senior class stepped up to lead FIU to a 4-3 win over No. 66 ranked Brown on March 31.

Maria Muci Torres, a sophomore, was the clincher for the match.

She defeated her opponent in three sets (2-6, 7-5, 6-4) after being down 4-1 in the final set. "I had to win it," said Torres following her clincher. "I had to pull it off for the team."

Torres’ clutch victory came following Liset Brito’s 6-3, 4-6, 7-6 (9-7 in tiebreak) much needed win in singles competition.

“I’m exhausted,” said Melissa Applebaum, who celebrated her 30th career victory in her second year as FIU head coach. “This match was huge for the girls.”

The seniors on the team, Maria Dolores Pazo, Priscilla Castillo, and Maria Jose Vallasciani were honored by their teammates and coach.

The Golden Panthers had just lost a disappointing match to No. 25 DePaul on March 26, just a day after the murder of FIU running back Kendall Berry.

“The circumstances going into that match were very abnormal,” Applebaum spoke of the tragedy. “I would have preferred to play that match the following day in order to give my girls time to emotionally get through what happened, but it is what it is.”

Senior Priscilla Castillo, who was swept in the DePaul match, 6-0, 6-0, made quick work of Brown’s Catherine Stewart, beating her 6-2, 6-4.

“[Brown] is a good team and their ranking does not reflect their ability,” Castillo said of her competitor. “They have beaten teams that we have lost to, so this is a good win.”

Castillo was the first to finish in singles competition on a sunny, 77-degree Miami day. “It’s at least 10 degrees hotter on the courts, north and they aren’t used to this weather,” Castillo said.

Following Maria Spenceley’s loss (6-3, 7-6, 7-5) the Golden Panthers were only one singles match away from losing. Castillo watched on as the fate of the match was left to Brito and Muci, both of whom were down 4-1 in their final set.

“I was really frustrated at the time and my opponent [Cassandra Herzberg] was playing better,” said Brito. “I didn’t even know the score at the time. I was just trying to fight against myself because I was really tired.”

A very crucial call was made in the third set on a play that was originally ruled out of bounds, but was overturned in Brito’s favor. “I saw it in, so I challenged it,” Brito said.

Following the match, the tennis squad celebrated their final home victory of the season, as well as the seniors on the squad with a cake that read “Congrats Seniors.”

The Golden Panthers will now have a week and a half off before traveling to Orlando to play UCF on April 10 at 12 p.m. The match against the Knights will be their final one of the season, after which they will travel to North Carolina to defend their Sun Belt title from last year in the conference’s most potent pitching staff.

The Louisiana-Lafayette pitching staff has proven to be the most efficient unit in the conference with a team ERA of 3.54, the lowest in the Sun Belt, while opposing teams have only been able to hit a meager .247 against them.

Zach Osborne is the Cajuns’ ace, compiling a 3-1 record with a 2.05 ERA in six starts coming into this weekend and will provide the Golden Panthers with one of the biggest tests of the season.

The series begins April 2 at 7 p.m. at FIU Baseball Stadium.

“He’s a quality Sun Belt Friday night starter,” Thomas said of Osborne.

FIU enters the weekend with a conference-high batting average of .346, bolstered by three hitters who are among the top of the conference: Garrett Wittels, Mike Martinez and Pablo Bermudes.

But Thomas has stressed that both the offense and the pitching need to show up every game if the team is to remain competitive.

“We’ve got to hit on days when we pitch and pitch on days when we hit,” Thomas said.

“We’ve got to put those things together on a more consistent basis.”

The series begins April 2 at 7 p.m. at FIU

FIU Head Coach Turtle Thomas relays a sign to one of his players earlier this season. The Golden Panthers will look to rebound against UL after losing a series to UALR last week.

Golden Panthers put their offense to the test vs. UL

JOEL DELGADO
Asst. Sports Director

FIU (15-9, 3-3 SBC), the conference’s leading offensive unit, takes on the Louisiana-Lafayette Ragin’ Cajuns (12-12, 3-6 SBC), the conference’s most potent pitching staff, as both teams look to improve their standing in the conference with the Sun Belt schedule in full swing.

“Every one of 30 conference games is equal to the next,” head coach Turtle Thomas said. “They beat us pretty soundly last season and in the Sun Belt Tournament.

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The series is also a workhorse, currently second in the conference in innings pitched with 44, averaging 7.33 innings per outing while string out 47 batters in that span.

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