Wi-Fi access for students an issue in few areas

STEPHEN USECHE
Asst. News Director

FIU students are granted a Wi-Fi connection anywhere on campus under the 2011-2012 Audit Reports, and the Technology Fee Guiding principles. The Audit Report explains that these locations benefited administrative staff rather than the students.

According to Vice President and Chief Information Officer Rohen Grillo, 5% percent of the student tuition goes to the Technology fee, which ranges from $7 million to $8 million a year; administration and academic units together decide how the fee will be spent.

“Wi-Fi was the first thing that the money was [given to],” said Grillo.

However, $131,670 was given to install 66 wireless access points at the Kovens Conference Center, which is located at BBC; but only 11 points were actually installed. The budget was then overestimated by $109,725.

“The leftover money gets repurposed to other areas for students to utilize or for us to install Wi-Fi in areas where students need it,” said Grillo.

This is the case at CSC, where 17 wireless spots were estimated to be installed, but 47 were eventually installed at a cost of $55,860, instead of the $33,915 originally budgeted for that building. CSC mostly accommodates administrative staff rather than classrooms; on the other hand, the MARC building accommodates both, staff offices and classrooms, and the Kovens Conference Center has students, staff, and guests.

“Students and staff members utilize it during events or lectures that take place there,” said Grillo.

“But it’s also used by the public, so anybody that wants to come to the Kovens for an event can utilize it.”

Grillo explains that the reason why the Wi-Fi connection doesn’t benefit the students as much as the administrative staff is because “the administration doesn’t see students congregating in those areas.

The University has 20,000 users on Wi-Fi.

“We built a very robust and a very good infrastructure to support the Wi-Fi technology,” said Grillo. “And the reason we made an investment there is because most of the students have mobile and portable devices and they basically want to check everything on the run and it’s better to be connected to a Wi-Fi network because of the performance and reliability.”

Grillo explains that all students should have access to Wi-Fi access anywhere on campus at anytime. Guests to the University are the exception, however.

“As a guest, they don’t have the same bandwidth, they get less bandwidth,” said Grillo.

“Guests have to request to access the Wi-Fi and once the request has been approved they have full availability to it.”

NEW FOOD FOR THE NEW YEAR

The new restaurant Almazar opened this semester to replace Sushi Maki which relocated to the atrium. The restaurant offers a variety of Greek and Middle eastern food adding to the wide variety of food’s offered on campus.

Connect for Good internship beginning this spring

MADISON FANTOZZI
Asst. News Director

Students seeking professional work experience conducive to educational and career learning now have the opportunity to work with local non-profit agencies as a part of the Connect for Good internship program.

The University has partnered with Catalyst Miami, a Miami-based nonprofit organization. According to the organization’s website, its mission is “to develop and support individual leadership and strong organizations that work together to improve health, education and economic opportunity in all communities.”

Aimed at developing South Florida students into future leaders of the local not-for-profit sector, the 15-week program will match students with nonprofit organizations. The program will place up to 50 interns per semester to provide them with a firsthand working and management experience.

“Students have the highest capacity of growth and intellect for the future,” Connect for Good’s public relations representative Pricilla Bejarano said.

Thirty nonprofit organizations are hosting and offering positions including the American Red Cross, Florida Breast Cancer Foundation, Habitat for Humanity, Miami Children’s Initiative and Neighbors4Neighbors.

Bejarano recited the program’s slogan, “Nurture your major or passion, Connect for Good will make your dream career a reality.”

Internship opportunities include positions in areas from marketing and finance to web design and social media. No student is limited or exempt from this opportunity -- an internship position is available for every interest and major.

“And I endorse this [idea] completely,” Bejarano said.

Bejarano introduced Connect for Good to the senate in SGA’s Monday, Jan. 7 meeting that voted in support of the program. As of Jan. 7, there were only ten noted applicants. Fifty applicants are needed to jumpstart the program.

“SGA promotes Connect for Good and this great opportunity for students,” Student Government Association vice president Alex Castro said.

Students of all majors are encouraged to apply via the career service panther-soft joblink by Wednesday, Jan. 16. All applicants must submit a resume and the Connect for Good internship application.

Applicants can also attend an internship matching fair on Tuesday, Jan. 22 from 6 - 9p.m. Selections of internships will follow the fair. The University and Catalyst staff will match each organization with one of their priority choices and the students with one of their priority choices.

The Care for Good program will give the students the opportunity to benefit the local community through nonprofit work while also benefitting from hands-on work and leadership experience.

“This is our first shot,” Bejarano said.

“The program is starting locally and we hope to expand to universities across the United States.”

GRADBASH 2013

GRADBASH 2013
Students paying more for books than last semester

PREPARE, PAGE 8

“*For this semester, what I want to do is join clubs, and actually participate (in campus life), because I’ve been doing good in academics. I want to do good also in being a more active student,” said Accilien. “Once you leave here, you don’t want to just go with a degree. Then you know the real life, you don’t know the students. If you go to a new place (after graduation), the more students you know, you have a bigger network.”

BOOK PRICES GO UP

According to Accilien, it’s too expensive between textbooks, special equipment and associated fees. “I expect to pay about $600 this semester alone,” said Accilien. Based on the prices given by five books that students bought their books at FIU, students are spending an average of $112.50 per book, whether it be new, used or rented. Due to the high costs of books, Morales hopes her total bill will be less than $400. “Because I’m going to buy them online, not from here,” said Morales. For instance, she found a required text online for $94; the same text would cost her $200 from the on-campus bookstore. Ultimately, she recommends buying academic texts outside of FIU, “unless you have financial aid.”

According to Morales, “Amazon’s a good bet” for finding cheaper or used copies of textbooks, special equipment and associated fees. Accilien, when asked, agreed. “I’m still making the decision if I should just go online and get it for cheaper.”

Just as spring represents renewal and rebirth, so the start of a new academic semester offers the opportunity to start anew, equipped with the lessons learned from semesters passed.

THE BEACON

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Republican Party seems as divided, angry as ever

STEVE PEOPLES

AP Staff

The Republican Party seems as divided and angry as ever.

Infighting has penetrated the highest levels of the House GOP leadership. Long-standing geographic tensions have increased, particularly among eastern Republicans against their colleagues from other parts of the country. Enraged tea party leaders are threatening to knock off dozens of Republicans who supported a measure that raised taxes on the nation’s highest earners.

“They are mad as hell. I’m right there with them,” said Boehner, chairman of the Tea Party Express, said late last day, that while he has “no confidence” in the party’s members typically support. Her remarks came after GOP lawmakers approved higher taxes on high-end cuts as part of deal to avert the “fiscal cliff.”

“Forget that I want to just go online and get it for cheaper.”

“It’s disappointing to see that the Republicans have shifted their position on fiscal matters will help the House on any fiscal relief for victims of Superstorm Sandy. He said it was “disguising to watch their actions and the failure of the GOP’s most powerful elected office, House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio.

“If we have learned one of the most powerful popular voices, New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, blasted his party’s “toxic internal policies” after House Republicans initially declined to approve disaster relief for victims of Superstorm Sandy. He said it was “disguising to watch their actions and the failure of the GOP’s most powerful elected official, House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio.

“Republican’s internal struggles to figure out what it wants to be harmless exposed after Mitt Romney’s loss to President Barack Obama on Nov. 6, but they have explored in recent events. The bailout could extend well beyond the party’s abilities to win policies better on Capitol Hill. It could hamper Republican efforts to examine why they were unable to regroup and attract new voters after a disheartening election season.

“To a greater degree than the Democrats, the Republican Party has struggled with internal divisions for the past few years. But these latest clashes have seemed especially public and vicious. In the aftermath of the fiscal cliff negotiations, the discussion was not so much whether it was time to change the status quo, but more about the nature of the problem and how to address it.”

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“It’s disappointing to see that the Republicans have shifted their position on fiscal issues aren’t going away. The federal government reached its borrowing limit last week, so Congress has about two months or three months to raise the debt ceiling on any federal budget. Massive defense and domestic spending cuts are expected to begin in January. By mid March, the current spending plan will end, raising the possibility of a government shutdown.

Frustrated conservative activists and GOP insiders hope that the continued focus on fiscal matters will help unite the factions as the party pushes for deep spending cuts. That fight also might highlight Democratic divisions because the party’s liberal wing vehemently favors spending on Social Security or Medicare.

“Whenever you lose the House, the party’s going to have ups and downs,” said Republican strategist Ron Kaufman. “My anxious constituents.”

For instance, “I want to do good also in being a more active student,” said Accilien. “Once you leave here, you don’t want to just go with a degree. Then you know the real life, you don’t know the students. If you go to a new place (after graduation), the more students you know, you have a bigger network.”

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Just as spring represents renewal and rebirth, so the start of a new academic semester offers the opportunity to start anew, equipped with the lessons learned from semesters passed.
SLS: Lessons in a New Academic Life

ASHLEY ORZOZO
Contributing Writer

If there is something that stood out to me in my first year as an upperclassman amongst freshman this past fall semester it was the dreaded required reading, “I’m Down” as well as the course that required it, SLS 1501.

From my own experience, both were talked about with a negative connotation. “I’m Down” was most definitely not a crowd pleaser and freshman Yaselis Pupo referred to the course as “a waste of time and money.”

SLS is the ‘first-year experience’ course required of all students entering the university as first-time freshmen as it is part of the Undergraduate Core Curriculum. The UCC and course website describe it as follows: “[SLS] introduces students to the University policies, procedures, and services; addresses academic and career choices; and enhances study and time management skills.”

In theory, it sounds extremely beneficial to the first-time college student. But many didn’t see it that way.

“The idea of SLS isn’t so bad. However, the way the class is structured is very childish,” said freshman Carolina Moncion.

On the first day of my own SLS class, less than 20 timid faces filled the room. As we sat there each probably wondering what sort of person our professor would be, one brave soul decided to speak up and asked, “What did you guys think of the book?” Almost immediately the entire class was stirred up and the bashing of “I’m Down” by Mishna Wolff began. If you’re unfamiliar with the book, it is a memoir about a young girl’s experience of being white while growing up in a predominately African-American neighborhood.

Soon that isn’t her only problem as she is sent to a private school full of upper class white children where she doesn’t quite fit in either. Our professor entered the room, discussed the syllabus and major projects and that was that. The course was true to the syllabus.

Because of that shared hatred for the book (which I’m sure was not the University’s intention), friendships were made.

Because of the campus involvement papers, students were able to explore some of the activities the University offered that they might want not have otherwise bothered to look up. Because of the paper on “I’m Down,” students were shown the Center for Academic Success, a resource that also might have gone unnoticed in their four years at the University.

Many students complained about the course; however, a few saw the benefits it provided them with. “[SLS] helped get more involved in the social life at FIU as well as ease into the world of college studies. It helped me create new plans for my future,” said freshman Kaitlynn Gutierrez.

Though SLS awards you just one little credit, the lessons taken from the course will help anyone in their time at the University.

Back to the Balancing Act

MICHAEL BAISDEN
Opinion Editor

Spring has begun and I settle into the familiar feeling of waking up with worry, calling three different people for one simple question and walking into advising with 12 students ahead of me.

This is my eighth, and last, semester at FIU and the first day never gets easier.

My great hope is that all of you had a less stressful day than I, but in most instances this is not the case.

As the new Opinion editor for the Beacon, board member of FIU’s revived Society of Professional Journalism chapter, and aspiring graduate, the pile of responsibilities just hit me around 12 p.m. Monday morning.

I look at other students around me, juggling internships, full school schedules, a steady relationship, a job, extracurricular activities and their sanity and I admire each of them. I looked to them as role models each time I took on a new position.

But I think those people I look to are super human. I don’t know how these people find the balance to do it all.

But that is my mission, and the mission for many of us as students and people in this world. Balance. It is the one thing we should all strive for.

Balance between your boyfriend and your girl friends. Family and friends. Work and play. Food and fasting.

It may appear to many of us that balance is nearly impossible. But I never look at imposibility as a possibility.

So in between ordering books and preparing for finals, teetering on the thin wire between you and graduation, take a moment to breathe. It’s a balancing act.

Dorm living: A team sport

ADRIANNE RICHARDSON
Staff Writer

Leaving home for the first time and moving in with a roommate, or three, is not the easiest transition to make.

But as a matter of courtesy and respect, don’t force your roommate to stare at a pile of clothes, your overflowing drawers and miscellaneous knickknacks.

“I believe that just moving to college in general, people tend to over pack because it’s their first time being truly away from home for a long period of time and there is really no way you can prepare for it. So I guess it does make the housing residences clutered,” said freshman Jakari Clayton, psychology major and resident of Panther Hall.

“We’re all tried to maintain a space similar to the one that we have at home, in our bedroom, bathroom or kitchen.

But when you have a roommate, you have to respect their space and understand that you aren’t living at home anymore.

Your belongings have to fit on your half of the room, not yours and your roommate’s.

Students need to understand this before moving into a dorm or apartment in order to make living arrangements on campus a lot easier.

Unfortunately all of us didn’t come with this understanding and even after being on campus for a while, still fail to understand this very important concept.

My personal experience with Panther Hall dorms is that everything that you need is there, but not everything you want.

That is how it is supposed to be; it’s college.

But then you see everyone bringing their whole lives with them to move into a cubby hole and then the room looks cluttered, becomes harder to maintain and harder to study in with so many distractions.

It is okay if you have made the mistake of over packing because it was your first time being away from home, but as the semester goes on more items should not be added to your side of the cubbyhole nor your roommates.

We should learn that respecting another individual’s space is needed when the residence is shared between two to four individuals at a time.

Paying $4,303 per semester for a room that you aren’t comfortable in because you have slight signs of claustrophobia isn’t any way to live, especially when you have other things to worry about like research papers and exams.

The moral here is simple: I respect your space and you respect mine.

-Staff Writer
New year, new events for the Frost Art Museum

EDWINE SEME
Staff Writer

After ending fall 2012 with its Art Basel event and Breakfast in the Park, the Frost Art Museum had ongoing exhibits throughout winter break. They included Ivan Navarro’s light sculptures which end on Jan. 27, their tribute to influential artist Mike Kelley running through Feb. 24, and “Reflections Across Time: Seminole Portraits”. The Seminole portrait exhibit, which was scheduled to end on Jan. 2, will be extended to Jan. 13.

“We were delighted to take advantage of the opportunity to extend it, so that more people would have the opportunity to see it,” said Emmett Young, marketing and communications assistant director of the museum.

“Reflections Across Time”, curated by Annette B. Fromm, coordinator of museum studies, debuted in November when President Barack Obama officially made November National Native American Heritage Month. The exhibit shows the history of the Seminole Tribe through artwork including 150 years of portraits of Seminole leaders and tribal members. The pieces of artwork show the history, the pride and visions over the years.

Young says this is one of the exhibitions they’re most proud of because it brought art that is considered a national treasure from the Smithsonian Institution and other museums in Washington. The exhibition is important, he says, because it represented a one-time opportunity to celebrate part of South Florida heritage and history.

“It exposes everyone to artwork that they would not be able to see unless they went to Washington D.C., not to mention important art work of current Indian artists,” said Young.

Before the exhibit ends, a conference, “Portraits and Identity: Seminole Portraits”, will be held on Wednesday, Jan. 9 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., gathering a group of scholars and Native American artists to discuss the history of the Native American Art movement in the U.S. and aspects of portrait from ethnography, art history, and artistic perspective. This conference will include three scholars: anthropologist Dennis Weidman; art historian Alpeshe Patel and Folklorist Annette B. Fromm; along with three practicing Seminole artists, Leroy Osceola, Elgin Jumper and Pedro Zepeda.

Later that week, the University will host a lecture by Kevin Gover on Jan. 12 at 4 p.m. at the Wertheim Performing Arts Center. Kevin Gover, director of the National Museum of The American Indian, will speak about the Native American art and identity. This lecture will be part of their Green Critics Lecture Series, which serves to “introduce numerous art world luminaries to the South Florida community,” according to Young.

Its speakers are internationally renowned artists, museum curators, scholars and critics who speak on a variety of topics covering art. After the lecture, a reception will follow in the Frost. This will also mark the last weekend of “Reflections across Time,” which ends the next day. This reception will also be

the opening of “Form Transgressions: The Drawings of Agustín Fernández” in honor of the deceased Cuban-American artist. Fernandez was considered one of the masters of modern Cuban Art.

This exhibit, which is collaboration between the Frost and the Snite Museum of Art at the University of Notre Dame, will be composed of a group of graphite drawings done by him from the late 1960s to the 1990s. These drawings present an overview of his most recognizable imagery, and show the erotics of desire and vulnerability. This will be the first time an exhibit focuses solely on this group of drawings. On Jan. 15, a book signing will be held at the Frost from 11 a.m. to noon. “The book, ‘Agustín Fernández: The Metamorphosis of Experience’ is the most comprehensive exploration into the artist’s career,” said Young.

On Thursday, Jan. 10, from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., the director of the museum, Carol Damian, is set to co-host alongside David Castillo a VIP reception for the opening of the Rafael Ferrer solo exhibition at Wynwood Art Week.

According to Young, they will have an ambitious slate of exhibitions and programs in 2013, including more upcoming Target Lecture Series, which serves to “introduce numerous art world luminaries to the South Florida community,” according to Young.

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All these events will be held on the Modesto Maidique campus, and will be free of charge.
Florida celebrates its Spanish heritage in 2013

By SUZETTE LABOY

MIAMI (AP) — When Juan Ponce de Leon searched for riches in Florida, he unknowingly helped turn the Sunshine State into the first travel destination in the United States.

In April 1513, the Spanish monarchy contracted the explorer to find another island off of Cuba that was rumored to have great riches. Instead he landed in Florida and named it “La Florida,” after the “feast of the flowers” during Spain’s Easter celebrations.

Five centuries later, the state is celebrating its Spanish heritage with a series of events throughout 2013.

“It was always seen as an exotic place,” historian Dr. J. Michael Francis said of Florida. “That’s something that Florida tourism continues to market on some level.”

Although Florida’s history dates back more than 12,000 years with Native Americans, the statewide campaign “Viva Florida 2013” will highlight the start of a new era with de Leon’s adventurous voyage to the New World.

“He was the first visitor to the United States,” said Will Seccombe, president and CEO of Visit Florida, the state’s official tourism marketing corporation. “That’s 500 years ofexplorers and they kept coming back.”

Tourism is Florida’s No. 1 industry, responsible for welcoming 87.3 million visitors in 2011, according to state official estimates.

Many visitors may know Florida mostly for its 825 miles of beaches or as the theme parks capital of the world, but the “Viva Florida” campaign is designed to broaden their outlook, Seccombe said. The state will host 150 celebrations, including a series of events for Easter celebrations.

“Over time that story became more embellished,” Francis said. “What started as a myth ended up in the writings of later historians and chroniclers as history.”

“The inherently misleading said Francis, Hough Family Chair of Florida Studies at the University of South Florida in St. Petersburg, Fla. “There is no archaeological footprint. No logbook. And even if found, there’s no guarantee we would even know from that.”

The celebration, he said, is not about pinpointing the Spanish legacy but about rediscovering “and maybe even discover for the first time Florida’s colonial history.”

Francis also wants to set the record straight about the search for eternal youth: There is no mention of the Fountain of Youth in de Leon’s contracts with Spanish crowns or in his own writings, Francis said.

“Over time that story became more embellished,” Francis said. “What started as a myth ended up in the writings of later historians and chroniclers as history.”

But the legend lives on in Florida’s 700 natural springs and with spas, health resorts and yoga retreats.

Kicking off the 2013 celebration of European discovery was “La Gran Naranja” or the “Big Orange” drop — a 35-foot LED neon orange LCD descending from the side of a downtown Miami hotel on New Year’s Eve.

The word naranja comes from the sweet Valencia orange the Spanish introduced to America, later becoming Florida’s official state fruit.

Throughout the year, 150 events across the state will mark the anniversary: Drive the Spanish Heritage Trail. Dive on historic shipwrecks. Tour a Spanish basilica and mission village. Visit orange groves and cattle ranches. Taste the flavors of Florida. Other events will include plenty of festivals with re-enactments and other things to do in addition to visiting the beaches and theme parks the state is famous for.

Students ride out the one-hour journey

EXPRESS, PAGE 4

said Pauler. “We try to give them a good service, but the passengers don’t take advantage of the good service that the school is offering to give them a pleasant trip.”

He says many passengers also want to have random stops because they’re in a hurry.

“We can’t [stop] because we have our designated stops,” Pauler said.

Nikola Gage, who has recently joined the team of Panther Express drivers, has only driven the shuttle during this past fall.

“It’s unlikely we will ever know the precise landing spot,” said Nikola Gage, who has recently joined the team of Panther Express drivers, has only driven the shuttle during this past fall.

“One time the bus did get stuck on the expressway, and then I realized we were running late and we ended up getting to the other campus three hours later.”

-Stephen A. Stacheff@fiusm.com

WEEK OF WELCOME

SPRING 2013 EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 9

GOLDEN PANTHER BRUNCH

WHEN: 9:30-11:30 a.m.
HOW MUCH: FREE
WHERE: MMC Ballrooms

MMC MINDFULNESS MEDITATION SESSION

WHEN: 12:15 p.m.
HOW MUCH: FREE
WHERE: MMC GC 305

STUDY ABROAD OPEN HOUSE

WHEN: 12:2 p.m.
HOW MUCH: FREE
WHERE: MMC PC 113

WEEK OF WELCOME WITH UHS

WHAT: 12-1 p.m.
WHERE: MMC PC 141

FIT & WELL PROGRAM PRESIDENTS YOGA

WHEN: 12:30-12:45 p.m.
WHERE: MMC PC 113

THURSDAY, JAN. 10

INvolvement & Volunteer Fair

WHEN: 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
WHERE: MMC PC 113

How To Access and Manage “The IT Within”

WHEN: 12:15-12:30 p.m.
WHERE: MMC PC 113

MOODLE Student Orientation

WHEN: 1:30-2:30 p.m.
WHERE: MMC PC 113

FIU Women’s Basketball at Arkansas State

WHEN: 6:05-11:05 p.m.
WHERE: Jacksonville, Ark.

HAVE YOUR EVENT FEATURED, EMAIL US AT calendar@fiusm.com
FLU bodybuilder is lifting his way into the pros

Daniel Brey
Contributing Writer

He walks on stage, cameras flicker; his oiled, muscular frame reflecting every flash of light. With his veins bursting from his body, the bodybuilder flexes. Biceps curled, his back arched and his mind focused. Jonathan Menocal is a full-time student at FIU, working night shifts at a local club and now bouncing back from a two-year hiatus. He is just two wins away from professional status in men’s physique competition.

Born and raised in Miami, Menocal has seen a vast amount of success since deciding to take lifting weights as more than a daily hobby.

In his first competition at the 2009 NPC South Florida District Bodybuilding Championships, after 16 weeks of constant training and careful dieting, Menocal, then 18, finished first in both the teen heavyweight and overall teen class.

“Af ter my first show, I was hooked,” Menocal said.

Bodybuilding competitions require that a competitor perform a routine, so that a panel of judges may then rank each competitor based on muscularity.

After appearing on the May 29, 2009 issue of F I U Today, Men Only, Menocal’s father, Jessie Menocal, a former bodybuilder, introduced his son to longtime family friend, 2008 NPC Southern States champion and 2011 NPC Southeastern USA champion Andre Vaughn.

“Right off the bat I knew Jonathan was something special,” Vaughn said. “His work ethic was tremendous both on and off the weight rack. I was simply awed by the manner in which he conducted himself.”

With two wins under his belt, however, Menocal decided to opt out of the remaining competitions in 2009 to gain more muscle and focus on his education.

“It was a decision I had to put a lot of thought into,” Menocal said. “In the end, I felt focusing on my education and gaining some brain muscle was the right choice.”

After an eight month layoff, Menocal felt he was both physically and mentally prepared to compete again.

Menocal then shocked the bodybuilding world by entering the Southern States Championships, a level five competition (scale of level 1-6, six being national). Despite the eight-month absence from the sport, he showed no signs of rust after placing second in the teen heavyweight division, and taking home the Most Promising Teen award.

At just 19 years old, Jonathan Menocal, unshaken by the pressure of competing on a national stage, finished third in the teen heavyweight division at the 2010 Pittsburgh GNC Teen National Championships, a level six competition.

“Never waved,” trainer Andre Vaughn said. “He was as cool as ice.”

Following nationals, despite placing in the top three in every competition he participated in, Menocal once again stepped away from bodybuilding.

Despite money woes, triathlon club runs on

Bryan Palacio
Contributing Writer

There are sports that test your abilities, sports that test your endurance, and then there are triathlons.

Imagine swimming two and a half miles, biking 112 more, and running a full 26.2-mile marathon consecutively in one day. That grueling task is called the Ironman and it’s the pinnacle of triathlons.

Senior Michael Meyer, president of the FIU Triathlon Club, is no stranger to the Ironman. In his five years competing, he has already completed the race twice, an accomplishment some competitors never get to see.

“You hear the words you have only heard in video. ‘You are an Ironman,’ and at that point it hits you,” Meyer said. “No words can describe the feeling of joy and happiness. For some time, the pain stops and you finally receive your medal.”

Meyer runs the team of 62 registered members, of which only about 20 are active, along with Vice President Ernesto Diaz and Treasurer Frank Betancourth. Having started the club a year and a half ago, the trio is in charge of conducting practices, holding team meetings, recruiting members and finding sponsors.

Obtaining the necessary funds to compete is a challenging task for the FIU club, unlike their competitions from more well known and much better funded universities like FSU and UF.

“Our biggest detriment is finding the funds to be able to compete. A good value for a decent bike is around $2,000. You can go and buy a bike at Wal-Mart with a steel frame for a few hundred dollars and you’re never going to win,” Meyer said. “The club is fairly new, having been started [in fall 2011], so we don’t really have the money to send 10 members to every competition, almost all of it comes out of our own pocket.”

The club gets $1,000 to spend on tangible things like suits and equipment for all its members, a cost that far exceeds what they are given. Also, races are usually held in Central Florida, where they are more accessible to all the schools. This leads to more costs like gas, hotels, food, and other traveling expenses.

FLU does not cover any of those expenses, even the registration fees to race.

“It can be difficult to support our members because we are ill prepared,” said Betancourth.

“Had we have more funds, there would be more of the student body participating.”

Their three sponsors Trinity, Bike Tech, and Florida Running Company get them equipment and gear, like bikes and Tri Suits (a one-piece body suit worn throughout the entire event), at a discounted price, but even then it is still very expensive for many of the competitors.

Many of the members are new to the sport meaning they are signing up equipped with little to no gear.

But the club looks past its budget constraints and continues to enjoy the growth of the sport.

Triathlons are gaining more and more fame each year. The club’s registration numbers have escalated each semester since its inauguration and continue to climb. The numbers are also increasing globally with the Ironman competition having to add an extra series to accommodate for the amount of competitors.

With FIU already having its foot in the door, the triathlon competition brings a large potential success with both a school and sport beginning to make a splash.

“In the future, I see the club expanding with both more members and experience. A goal I have for the club for the upcoming year is to have a full team to race in several local competitions. I look forward to working with the community to get our name out there in order to gain some members.”

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FOOTBALL

More questions after Turner hiring than before

FW athletic director Pete Garcia is a walking question mark. Why fire Mario Cristobal after extending his contract and winning two bowl games? Where did he find newly hired head coach Ron Turner? What are his expectations for Turner this season?

All these questions are surfacing from FIU’s recent football coaching controversy. Cristobal had a mediocre 27-47 record while he coached here, but looking at his career through context suggests he brought the program from nothing to something.

FIU was one of the worst NCAA Division I schools in the nation after a 0-12 record and scandal only five years ago. Cristobal leveled the playing field in the Sun Belt Conference within three years. Still though, after only one winning season in 2010 where he went 7-6 and won the Little Caesar’s Bowl, should his firing have been expected?

Now that Ron Turner is the new head coach, PGA Tour season definitely shouldn’t have been fired. Turner has a Sugar Bowl appearance to his name, but Cristobal was the better coach for FIU. Cristobal had 15 recruits from Florida who were highly considering the Panthers as their first choice according to Rivals.com.

When did Garcia expect FIU to be at this point? Their attendance is wretched every home game. While Cristobal wasn’t great, he delivered success in two bowl games and a step forward toward entering Conference USA. Maybe Garcia felt Cristobal was not good enough to further the program’s capabilities in the new conference.

Turner coached in a prominent Big-10 Conference where he made it to the Sugar Bowl with a 10-2 season in 2001. Other than that, he is as mediocre as Cristobal was. He has jumped from college to the NFL time and again. Is this a platform job for him?

With Garcia labeling Turner as the best quarterback coach in college, hopefully he can bring more offensive prowess than the Panthers had with Cristobal. Recruiting is for Turner to worry about. He will definitely be in the hot seat now that FIU is entering C-USA.

It seems this was more of a desperation hire to get a “big name” head coach. The only popularity he might have is his last name, which one can relate to his brother Navy Turner, former San Diego Chargers Head Coach.

FIU will probably have a poor recruiting class this season. Turner said he had to research FIU before even taking the interview, which is concerning. With the mecca of high school football being in your backyard, an unfamiliar face coming to recruit will be difficult. There already are at least four other major universities who have the upper hand in Florida in recruiting over FIU.

Garcia better hope he made the right decision in hiring Turner with the pressure being put on FIU entering C-USA. Garcia will probably give Turner about three years to show improvement in recruiting and wins before it’s on to the next one -- whether Turner wants to or not.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

PGA Tour opener delayed again by wind

On the third attempt at starting the PGA Tour season, Matt Kuchar stepped to the tee at Kapalua and could barely hear his name through the wind. When he finally steadied himself, a gust blew his golf ball off the tee. And then it happened again.

“We had a postponement, but we missed the first day so we had a chance to go through with this,” Kuchar said. “Made the best of it.”

But not for long. Just more than one hour after the Tournament of Champions finally got under way, the second-round fairway was scrapped again with all the scores erased.

Most golf tournaments end on Sunday. This one couldn’t even get started Sunday.

The wind came roaring from the Plantation Course at Kapalua again, and left officials no choice but to stop play and try to start again. With more manageable wind in the forecast, the plan was to play 36 holes Monday and finish with 18 holes Tuesday. That was good news for Ben Curtis. He had birdie putts on the first two holes and was 5-over par. “It’s crazy. That’s the only way to describe it,” Curtis said. “I’m happy to be out of the greens in regulation at the start and walked away at 5 over. But hey, at least we had to try.”

And they will try again. Rickie Fowler will hit the opening tee shot of the 2013 season on Monday -- for the third time this week.

For those wondering why this tournament keeps getting postponed, an hour of television Sunday was all the evidence they needed. Ian Poulter opened with his iron 4-iron shot to the 13th green and was so stunned to see it come up short that he looked at his small gallery for the longest time, repeating loud enough for them to hear that he was only 138 yards from the front of the green. Off to his right, Charlie Beljan had a search party stomping through high grass to the right of the 10th fairway looking for both his tee shots. He had a 15-foot putt for triple bogey when play was stopped.

Moments later, a call came over the radio for a ruling on the 12th green. Scott Stallings was trying to tap in a 2-foot putt when a gust blew his ball into a corner. “We need to try to put the show on,” Poulter said. “Hyundai spent a lot of money. We want to play. Fans want to see us play. TV wants to see us play. We’re backed into a corner. I don’t think they understand how windy it really is. Now they’ve seen it.”

It was comical from the start, with Kuchar having to tee up three times before he could hit, and removing his glove in frustration. “I was waiting to see if it would pass,” Kuchar said. Jonas Blixt had a 1-foot par putt on the 10th hole and took about two minutes. He had to wait as a cup and someone’s hat blew across the green.

Blixt has played 10 holes over two days in these conditions in 1-under par. None of it counts, but the Swede learned one thing.

“There’s no instruction book for this,” Blixt said. “You just go by instincts.”

The Tournament of Champions was supposed to finish on Monday, the day it now hopes to start. The tour insists on a 54-hole tournament, no matter how complicated that will be with the next tournament, the Sony Open, starting on Thursday in Honolulu.

Andy Puzder, the tour’s chief of operations, said television and operational equipment can only be transported to Oahu on a barge that takes 16 hours on a good day. The plan was to televise the final round at Kapalua, and go with a limited TV production for the opening round of the Sony Open.

Defending champion Steve Stricker lounged in a sofa in the dining room watching the NFL playoffs with Dustin Johnson and Brandt Snedeker. Along with Bubba Watson, they have yet to tee off all week. Fowler made it through eight holes Friday and five holes Sunday. But what a wild hour of golf that turned out to be.

“It seems like the first day was a cake walk compared to today,” Webb Simpson said. “But you know, they’re trying to get us to play some golf. Matt and I were hanging in there, and it was fun. But you don’t want to see stupid things happen. I think that was what they were trying to see.”

Carl Pettersson began his round by hitting his tee shot into the native grass for a lost ball and a triple bogey. Kyle Stanley had 88 yards to the 10th green and went with a punch 9-iron that sailed over the green.

REFUTING MURPHY’S LAW

Tymelip Murphy scored 20 points and 10 rebounds in Monday’s 74-72 win over Bethune-Cookman. Murphy recorded at least 20 points and 10 rebounds in all three home games en route to the Panthers breaking even at 7-7 on the season.

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WANT TO BE A WRITER FOR THE SPORTS SECTION?

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Fishermen hoping for help with Sandy storm losses

First semester freshman Tyler Rosario seems to understand the danger of similar pitfalls, even without the benefit of previous college experience. Asked what he wants to do differently from last semester, when he was still in high school, Rosario said, “To be really honest, I’m just trying to break old habits that I had in high school and just kind of focus and move forward.”

The new semester is a time for applying lessons from previous experience. Ronan St. Hubert, a sophomore chemistry major, believes in the power of hindsight. Hubert cautious about becoming too intensely concerned with the daily grind however: “Sometimes you’ve got to know when you have to relax a little bit. Because when you go too hard in those classes and you don’t relax yourself a little bit you can actually go crazy.”

As Mendoza intimated, directing her energy away from the college experience. “There’s a lot of distractions when you get to college, but you’ve got to focus on your work.” Mendoza said it. “Just focus on school,” Mendoza said. “That have the same goal and are very ambitious, because there’s a lot of distractions when you have to relax a little bit. Because when you go too hard in those classes and you don’t relax yourself a little bit you can actually go crazy.”

Junior Stenia Accilien is also directing her energy away from the classroom and toward other areas of the college experience. “There is a 75-foot section of our pier that’s just gone,” he said. “We couldn’t get trucks to transport the product,” said Dwight Kooyman, who manages two of Viking Village’s scallop boats. “I have five guys that work for me that couldn’t work that entire time. If they don’t work, they don’t get paid.”

They’re all waiting to see whether Congress includes them in the billions of dollars in storm reconstruction aid it is considering. Less than three weeks after the Oct. 29 storm, the U.S. Commerce Department declared a fishery resource disaster for New Jersey and New York. But all that did was authorize the federal government to disburse any aid that Congress approves.

Specific plans for applying for and distributing any aid to fishermen still have to be formulated.

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