

GOING GREEN

BBC celebrates the environment

NO SMOKING

Smoking bans intrusive

GRIME REDEFINED

British rapper comes stateside

RUNNING WILD

Track athlete sets sights on Olympics

AT THE BAY

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LIFE!

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UNIVERSITY SUPPORT PERSONNEL

Workers cope with stresses of looming cuts

DANIELLA BACIGALUPO
Staff Writer

The University Support Personnel Senate meeting on April 9 addressed the state budget crisis in a preliminary discussion before today's town hall meeting in the Graham Center Ballroom.

The USPS meeting agenda centered on the potential impact of the budget crisis on personnel.

According to University President Modesto Maidique's April 10 newsletter, the University issued a Request for Proposal for a vendor to perform a bundle of services including mail, copying and printing. According to both the letter and the meeting, the proposals have not been evaluated.

Senior Vice President for Finance and Operations Vivian Sanchez emphasized that issuing an RFP does not mean the services will be outsourced, but rather, ensures that all operations will be assessed for savings.

"To really understand what is going on, the only way we are going to be able to do that is through open dialogue," Sanchez said.

State fund cuts threaten the University with a budget gap up to \$25.2 million in the next two years, forcing the University to start analyzing its expenses and revenues.

Sanchez clarified that the three-year budget plan being formulated by the University will depend heavily on the prioritization of the University as a whole. Importance will be strategically placed on colleges and departments, research and investments that will further develop FIU as a research institute, she said.

The budget cuts' impact on academics will be the main focus of the Town Hall meeting.

During the USPS meeting, Sanchez implied that prioritiza-

USPS, page 2

SWEET MELODIES



FIUSM.com
COMPLETE EVENT GALLERIES ONLINE

FERNANDO GARCIA/THE BEACON

HEADLINING: Ryan Tedder, lead singer of One Republic, performs as part of the Croc's Next Step Tour on April 10 at 8 p.m. at University Park's soccer field.

TENNIS

Hidden gem of Athletics

DARREN COLLETTE
Staff Writer

No FIU sport has excelled to the point that they are feared by other NCAA teams, but there is some hope.

The most elite FIU team practices in the sweltering heat, right past the Pharmed Arena and the portable classrooms on the tennis courts.

These courts are home to the FIU women's tennis team, winners of three consecutive Sun Belt Conference Championships and on track to win its fourth in a row.

"There is a lot of pressure this year to win a fourth one, and it would feel great if we could achieve that," said senior Egle Petrauskaitė, who is a three-time Sun Belt Conference Player of the Week.

The team's prestige is not hidden beneath the 10-8 season record but, rather, the number of ranked opponents FIU has faced. The Golden Panthers have played against five ranked teams in the top 25.

Although FIU was unable to win any of those matches, it has beaten two teams ranked in the top 40 and one ranked in the top 50.

No other athletic program

TENNIS, page 12

Town hall meeting to focus on budgets

CHRIS TOWERS
Asst. News Director

The next Town Hall meeting regarding University-wide budget cuts in the upcoming school year will be held on April 14 from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. in the Graham Center Ballrooms.

The meeting will be broadcast to the Biscayne Bay community simultaneously in the Wolfe University Center Ballrooms.

In a newsletter dated April 10, University President Modesto Maidique said the main topic of conversation for the meeting will be the process by which the university evaluates colleges, centers and institutes based on how

their contributions "fit with the university's missions of education and research."

of each of our centers and institutes that began last year," Maidique said in the newsletter.

“Modesto Maidique, University President

You will hear recommendations that came out of a thoughtful and exhaustive baseline evaluation of each of our centers and institutes ...

Recommendations for cuts will be made based on those criteria, though the newsletter also stresses that nothing will be made final at these meetings.

"You will hear recommendations that came out of a thoughtful and exhaustive baseline evaluation

Maidique said that more meetings, plus review by Faculty Senate and the Budget Stabilization Taskforce will be necessary before ultimate approval is given by the Board of Trustees.

The meeting is open to students, faculty and staff, who will

be allowed to ask questions of the President and other senior leaders of the University.

Colleges that expect to be especially affected by the cuts are encouraging their students to attend.

To go along with discussion of budget cuts regarding educational issues, the meeting will also include further discussion of issues that were brought up at the University Support Personnel Senate meeting on April 9, which included a potential proposal to streamline positions that are deemed of unnecessary financial weight.

Additional reporting by Ben F. Badger Jr. / Beacon Staff

THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS

MONDAY • APRIL 14

Midnight Breakfast

11:59 p.m., Panther Square (BBC)

TUESDAY • APRIL 15

STARS Workshop

11 a.m. - 12 p.m., MPAS Conference Room (BBC)

Panther Power Meeting

2 p.m., WUC 157 (BBC)

Midnight Snack Attack

11:59 p.m., Panther Square (BBC)

Honors Council General Meeting

3:30 p.m., GC 150

Ride the Light Fund-Raiser

8 p.m., Graham Center Pit

WEDNESDAY • APRIL 16

SGA General Meeting

4 p.m., GC 150

GSA Awards Banquet

7:30 p.m., GC 243

THURSDAY • APRIL 17

College Democrats End of the Semester Party Extravaganza Festival

6 p.m., Gracie's Grill

Anything Goes Anime Film Club General Meeting

8 p.m., Chemistry and Physics 197

Classes End

Compiled by *Kassandra Pool*

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND COMPUTING

Progress announced during meeting

CHRISTINA VEIGA
News Director

Camilo Silva, Student Government Association Engineering Representative, held a town hall meeting to discuss his accomplishments and works in progress before his term expires.

Interim Dean Amir Mirmiran was also present at the College of Engineering and Computing to give an administrative progress report and field questions from the crowd of about 15.

Students had University-wide budget cuts on their minds for the first time.

Junior Lizeth Caldera, biomedical engineer major, brought up several questions regarding the cuts after having trouble signing up for summer classes.

"I don't think you need to worry

about much," Mirmiran said. "As long as enrollment is appropriate, the classes will be offered."

The dean said the center will be looking into ways to "readjust" operations, such as offering less popular classes only once a semester and eliminating duplication of services.

"I think the dean has his heart in the right place," Caldera said. "He seems responsive."

Silva touched on issues of concern that *The Beacon* has been following since 2007. One of the top issues was the state of disrepair the Engineering Center has been in since Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

According to Silva, FIU submitted paperwork to the Federal Emergency Management Association for funds

to repair the damage. However the paperwork was filled out incorrectly, causing the delays in repair. Silva said the papers are in the process of being resubmitted.

The Beacon also reported in 2007 that no gas line is installed for food services at the center. Silva said the center is still working on installing the line in order to provide students with more food options. Surveys conducted by Silva reveal a student desire for Chinese food and more vegetables due to the diverse student body at the Engineering Center.

Mirmiran announced progress from the last town hall meeting held earlier this semester. The dean said the center was working on safety issues and beautification issues, which were both raised last semester.

Budget cuts leave University support personnel at risk, anxious

USPS, page 1

tion might mean the layoff of an untold number of USPS members if their specific services are deemed an unnecessary financial weight. To compensate for their unemployment, the University has created a job search program to help personnel find jobs.

Daniel Townsend is the associate director of Facilities Management and

a member of the Budget Stabilization Task Force formed by the University to review and recommend proposals to the Board of Trustees. Along with President Maidique, the Board will make the final decisions regarding the three-year budget plan.

Townsend believes the job search program could only be "beneficial" to all USPS members. But for some members like Livio Dominguez, Assistant Post Manager of the campus post mail room, the job search program provides little comfort.

Dominguez has worked with the University for 28 years and is only two years away from retirement.

"If they let me off now, what am I going to do about my age?" Dominguez said.

According to the April 10 weekly presidential budget update e-mail, the USPS meeting "was a lively standing-room-only discussion, from which several new ideas emerged."

One of these ideas was the creation of a rumor control hotline.

The hotline might prove necessary as rumors circulate about the implications toward academics which have included department mergers.

The Office of the President's "Budget Crisis" webpage states that "the budget reductions mean [students] will be in more crowded classes, will have overworked advisors and may take longer to obtain a degree because of fewer opportunities to take the classes they need to gradu-

ate."

Rosa Jones, vice president of Student Affairs and Undergraduate Education, and member of the Budget Taskforce, said she could not comment on the budget crisis and its affect on students because she did not attend the USPS meeting.

Sanchez refused to answer academic questions stating that those would be answered during the Town Hall meeting.

Reductions in operation tools like the golf carts and "non-critical" services like the 24-hour Information Technology support are the only clear budget modifications that will take place up to this point, Sanchez said during the USPS meeting.

The Town Hall meeting will take place April 14 from 3 to 5 p.m.

Budget taskforce meeting closed to media, public

CHARLIE GRAU
CHRISTINA VEIGA
Beacon Staff

Before an April 11 Budget Stabilization Taskforce meeting, two *Beacon* reporters were surprised when they were told the meeting was not open to the public.

While attempting to enter the conference room, an official from the Division of Business and Finance said it was not open because it was an "advisory meeting and no decisions were being made."

But Florida's Sunshine Law, Chapter 286, Florida Statutes, states that all meet-

ings of any board or commission of any state agency or authority are declared to be public meetings open to the public at all times, and no resolution, rule or formal action shall be considered binding except as taken or made at such meeting.

The board or commission must provide reasonable notice of all such meetings.

The meeting was announced in University President Modesto Maidique's weekly budget crisis newsletter which is posted on the FIU Web site and sent to student and faculty's e-mails.

An hour before the meeting began, *The Beacon* received an e-mail from the Office of Media Relations stating "this meeting is not a public meeting under the Sunshine Law and was not noticed as such. I don't think [*Beacon* reporters will] be able to sit in."

Upon hearing the reasoning for the closed meeting, *The Beacon* contacted The Florida Attorney General's Office and the Student Press Law Center.

After explaining the scenario, both entities agreed that there is no exception under the Sunshine

SUNSHINE, page 3

THE BEACON

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Attorney General's office says meeting should be open

SUNSHINE, page 2

Law that would make the Budget Stabilization Taskforce meeting private.

The Sunshine Law applies not only to the meetings of elected bodies, but also to appointed and advisory boards.

In cases such as *Ruff v. School Board of Collier County* and *Town of Palm Beach v. Gradison*, Florida courts have ruled that the entire decision-making process is subject to the Sunshine Law, and not just at official meetings to vote on final decisions or actions.

Both reporters entered the meeting with 15 minutes remaining, to the surprise

of Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Vivian Sanchez, who is leading the taskforce.

With the meeting over, both reporters were looking to question administrators who participated in the meeting, but FIU Associate General Counsel Rafael Paz asked both reporters to leave because they were on "private property."

The meeting took place at the MARC building at University Park.

When told to leave the conference room, Paz said both reporters were trespassing.

In the last minutes of the meeting, the taskforce went over ways to reduce nonacademic spending in

response to pending budget cuts.

According to a packet provided to *The Beacon* by personnel in Sanchez's office, "FIU cannot continue to provide the breadth of services it does today."

Key points in the packet included:

- Protecting the University's core services
- Redirecting expenses to appropriate funding sources
- Creating new revenue sources to cover cost
- Identifying savings and investment funds

Additional reporting by Ben F. Badger Jr./Asst. News Director

Police Notes

- April 2: Police were called to Lakeview North in reference to a male and female shot with a BB Gun. He was struck in the face, on the right cheek. Upon arrival of the police, witnesses stated that the shot came from a second story window on the N.W. side of the dorm. Housing personnel stated that it appeared to be coming from dorm room 241. When the Officers arrived, the resident, Mr. Jeanniton Lewis, opened the door and gave officers permission to enter the room. Once inside, the suspects, Amah Kromah and Daimen Stanback were located. A subsequent investigation and search of the suspects revealed a CO-2 cylinder found in front of Stanback's shorts. The BB Gun was recovered on the floor next to Stanback on a pile of clothes. Stanback later spontaneously admitted to firing the gun at the male victims. Miami Dade Fire Rescue responded and treated the male victim and released him on the scene, advising him to seek medical attention for the injury. The female victim did not require any medical treatment.
- April 2: At around 7:15 p.m., an FIU student walked into the Baseball Stadium smoking a cigarette, a violation of the Student Code of Conduct. The student was requested several times to extinguish the cigarette by a Contemporary Service Company employee. The student refused, stating, "I do what I want to do," and continued to smoke his cigarette. An officer was contacted, at which time the student extinguished the cigarette on the floor. The officer witnessed this however, escorting him out of the stadium.
- April 4: Police were dispatched to Lakeview South in reference to a burglary. The victim, a female FIU student and resident, stated that the previous night, she had left her dorm room to go out. Upon returning in the early morning hours of the next day, she found that the door to her room was opened. Inspecting the room, the victim found that unknown person(s) entered her room without her permission and took her laptop. The victim said that she could not remember if she locked the door to the room.
- April 6: Police were dispatched to University Park Towers 621A at around 2 a.m. in reference to the smell of marijuana coming from that location. Upon arrival, the two officers called were given consent to enter by the resident of the room. Another FIU student and a non-FIU student were also in the room at the time. When asked what the odor was, the resident stated that it was cigarettes. Inspecting the room, the students admitted that they were in fact smoking marijuana. Both students each had a clear plastic sandwich bag with marijuana located in their purse. The marijuana was confiscated and totaled 1.5 grams.

- Compiled by David Barrios

NOW HIRING

The **BEACON** is hiring all for positions for the 2008-2009 academic year. For more information, stop by one of our offices located in GC 210 and WUC 124 or e-mail Charlie.grau@fiusm.com



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For more information go to www.broward.org/bct, or call 954-357-8400; 954-357-8302 (hearing-speech impaired/TTY)

BROWARD COUNTY
Transit

A service of the
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Go Green Week has arrived Event promotes eco-friendliness

SUSANA RODRIGUEZ
Asst. News Director

To close out a campus wide initiative to be more environmentally friendly, Biscayne Bay Campus will hold Go Green Week from April 14-16.

"We've been doing all kinds of events and contests on going green," said Zach Trautenberg, Go Green Week's committee chair. "This is the closing of the Go Green theme and we want to get feedback from students."

Three environmentally themed events will be hosted, beginning April 14 with Activities Day.

Running from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., pizza will be served while students make bracelets and cell phone charms.

"We're going to be using all organic beads for both men and women," Trautenberg said. "They got all kinds of beads - from rhinestones to sports beads like basketballs and footballs."

Zach Trautenberg, Go Green Week committee chair

You don't have to become a tree hugger and live in the woods to be eco-friendly. You can just bring your lunch in a paper bag.

Surveys will be conducted to gauge the impact BBC's Go Green theme has had on campus.

"We're giving students surveys on what we've done, what we could do to make it better, what the University is doing to become more eco-friendly and what they themselves do to be eco-friendly," Trautenberg said.

A nature walk will be hosted on April 15 in the Wolfe University Center loggia - the patio behind the gym and new cafeteria.

From 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., music and food will be provided while students participate in games and the walk.

"There's three purposes for this - to help the students know about natural resources we have on

campus like the bay, second to show students how to have a more environmentally friendly picnic and then the last part is we're going to be doing some green-friendly games to help students learn about the recycling process," Trautenberg said.

Students will play a game where they will have to sort out recyclable items and place them in the correct bins as fast as they can.

"I'm going to try to get some clean garbage and mix in some cans, bottles, empty coffee cups, paper with and without staples," Trautenberg said. "They get to see how to do it right and what happens if they do it wrong."

Go Green Week's close on April 16 will coincide

with National Wildlife Federation's Chill Out, a national broadcast showcasing universities renown for their efforts to stop global warming.

By stopping by WUC 155 at 7 p.m., students will be able to phone in during the program to ask questions about environmental issues.

For more information and to RSVP, visit www.wuc.fiu.edu and click on the Go Green Week banner.

"I see students getting more of a grasp of what it means to go green and help the environment," Trautenberg said.

You don't have to become a tree hugger and live in the woods to be eco-friendly. You can just bring your lunch in a paper bag."

NEWS FLASH

Final kayaking trip of the semester

The Biscayne Bay Campus' Recreation department's Kayak Days on the Bay will hold their final kayaking trip of the semester on April 26 at 10 a.m.

Participants will meet at the Biscayne Bay boat ramp behind the Aquatic Center. No experience is necessary and equipment will be provided.

The event is free and open to everyone. For more information, call (305) 919-4595.

Writers on the Bay presents screenwriter

Writers on the Bay Reading Series will host a lecture by April Smith - an Emmy-nominated television writer, producer and novelist - on April 17 at 8 p.m. in WUC room 155. Smith's screen work includes writing for television shows "Cagney and Lacey" and "Chicago Hope."

Judas Horse, the third novel in her mystery series featuring FBI Special Agent Ana Grey, was published earlier this year. Attendance is free and open to the public. For more information, call (305) 919-5857.

Celebrating environmental art

Four stainless steel sculptures on loan from environmental artist Ross Power will be presented on April 14 at 5:30 p.m. at BBC.

The monuments that make up the Biscayne Bay sculpture garden are named Focus, Future Wave, Reflective Man and No Turning Back. The artwork represents BBC's commitment to the environment according to Vice Provost Damian Fernandez. For more information, go to www.rosspower.com or call (305) 919-5700.

- Compiled by Susana Rodriguez, Beacon staff

RAISE THE ROOF



NATHAN VALENTINE/THE BEACON

INSULATION ROUNDUP: Construction workers deconstruct three layers of insulation atop the Hospitality Management building at the Biscayne Bay Campus on April 11. The roof replacement is one among many renovations to the HM school including the installation of hurricane proof glass.

Midnight munchies reduce student stress

ANA PEREZ
BBC Life! Editor

It's that time of year again where stress is in the air because the semester is coming to a close and finals are amid.

However, Campus Life and Orientation, along with Campus Recreation and the Wolfe University Center, are coming to the rescue with a "Midnight Breakfast" from

in various stress relieving activities such as yoga, zumba and massages.

There will be giveaway baskets, filled with goods, which will be given out on a first come, first serve basis. The assortment of breakfast foods will be catered by Aramark. The breakfast is only for students, and there is no cost to attend.

"Come in your pajamas, come

Joanne Oates, Midnight Breakfast committee chair

Come in your pajamas, come from the library, come from out of the bushes; it doesn't matter.

11 p.m to 1 a.m. When the clock strikes 12 on April 22 students will be able to gorge themselves with pancakes, waffles, eggs, bacon, muffins and bagels.

These are just a few of the foods to be served for BBC students. Joanne Oates, chair of the "Midnight Breakfast" committee, said it's the perfect remedy for students in despair.

"We do this event so students can relax and re-energize for finals," said Oates, a graduate assistant in Campus Life and Orientation. "Midnight Breakfast is the key to a stress-free week."

Students will be able to engage

from the library, come from out of the bushes; it doesn't matter," Oates said, describing the event's relaxed atmosphere.

Teasing Midnight Breakfast, Snack Attack - a munchies giveaway in the flagpole area - will be held from 8 to 10 p.m. on April 21.

Craig Cunningham, director of Campus Life, said the reasoning for the event is to allow students to relax.

"It's a chance for people to come, get some food and coffee, socialize, and let off some steam during finals."

THE BEACON | Editorial

University violates Sunshine Law by denying reporters access to public meeting

Now more than ever, students need to know how their tuition money is being handled and which departments will be the most affected due to impending cuts that could be the worst in the history of the University.

Knowing and believing students have the right to know these things, *The Beacon* sought to report on the Budget Stabilization Taskforce meeting April 11.

On the agenda was the University's "Non-academic budget reduction methodology," which included a detailed outline of what the spending priorities of the University would be in the coming year.

The Beacon understands that the administration, headed by University President Modesto Maidique, has some difficult decisions to make soon.

The decisions made now in relation to the pending University funding crisis could have dramatic repercussions for the 38,000 students who are currently enrolled at this University.

Approximately one hour prior to the meeting, *The Beacon* was told by the office of Media Relations in an e-mail that the meeting was private and that *Beacon* reporters could not attend.

Undeterred, *Beacon* reporters arrived at the meeting site only to be denied entrance by officials of Chief Financial Officer Vivian Sanchez.

The action taken by the University is a clear violation of Florida's Sunshine Law, laws which mandate that publicly funded institutions make their meetings and records open to the public.

Based on precedents set by the Florida Supreme Court in numerous cases, *The Beacon* believes that administration acted in error.

The Florida Attorney General's office was contacted, which confirmed that the meeting fell under the jurisdiction of the Sunshine Law, making it open to the public.

A representative from the Student Press Law Center, based in Arlington, Va., also stated that the University was in active violation of the Sunshine Law.

As the Florida Attorney General's Office and the Student Press law center confirmed, the effort to suppress public access to critical hearings is an affront to the rights of every student and faculty member at the University.

In the landmark case *Town of Palm Beach v. Gradison* (1974), the Florida Supreme Court ruled that all committee or commission meetings held by public institutions are to be open to the public if they have any bearing whatsoever in the decision making process.

Another Florida Supreme Court decision, *Silver Express Company v. Board of Trustees of Miami-Dade Community College*, upheld and further defined such rights.

It stated that all "governmental advisory committees, which have offered up structured recommendations – at least those recommendations which eliminate opportunities for alternative choices by the final authority, or which rank applications for the final authority – have been determined to be agencies governed by the Sunshine Law," according to Florida Attorney General Bill McCollum's Web site.

While *The Beacon* ultimately sat through the meeting's final 15 minutes, the troubling nature of the events surrounding our attendance speak to a larger issue.

Florida International University is a publicly funded institution and belongs not to some group of University officials but to every student, faculty member and taxpayer in the state of Florida.

Meetings that are critical to the future of this institution, even if the meeting is simply to discuss or eliminate options, should be fully accessible to the public – not only as a matter of legality but as a matter of principle.

LOSING LIBERTIES

Berkeley City bans outdoor smoking

MATTHEW RUCKMAN
Contributing Writer

On March 25, the Berkeley City Council banned outdoor smoking in all of its commercial areas.

Yes, outdoor meaning everywhere not inside.

And since you can't smoke inside anywhere but your own home, it seems Berkeley, Calif. smokers will have to travel to the Moon when they wish for a puff.

Berkeley, while always on the cutting edge of lunacy, has taken the most extreme stance to date concerning smoker's rights.

Credible cases can and have been made against lighting one up inside of hospitals or old folk's homes.

But outdoors? In public? Where second-hand smoke is about as destructive as baby farts?

In a statement released by Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates concerning Berkeley's new steps he said "Tobacco use is still Berkeley's number one killer

outdoors, seems to be more a vehicle through which the City Council is imposing their sensibilities on another, also known as tyranny, and aims at stopping

stand.

This is one of the sacred principles of our country – be happy, even if it costs you white teeth and good breath.

“ This slippery slope is dangerous to go down because while you may not smoke, you may do something else the City Council will not approve of ... ”

smokers from smoking entirely.

This slippery slope is dangerous to go down because while you may not smoke, you may do something else the City Council will not approve of, which may be next.

Granted it's just local government, but it sets an alarming precedent that others may follow.

So is it government's place to label perfectly legitimate activities as killers?

Activities most people partake in everyday could be considered lethal by the Berkeley metric. Promiscuous sex after all, leads to STDs.

Some chocolate leads to high cholesterol and an entree of blowfish could poison you.

All bad behaviors, given there is a risk involved, but none overtly lethal, since penicillin.

Smoking, like any other activity, carries these same risks and is being singled out.

And often when looking at the costs, especially of bad behaviors, some overlook the benefits. People enjoy smoking like they enjoy sex, or else they wouldn't do it. It may not be something I understand, or you, or even the smokers, but you can enjoy something you can't understand and, more importantly, someone else can enjoy something you can't under-

Robert Frost said "Happiness makes up in height what it lacks in length." Sure smoking may also cost you your life, but living, from one end to the other is a suicidal enterprise by itself.

Getting out of bed is a risk, stepping out of your front door is a risk, and it seems to me the object is not to prolong life indefinitely, but delight in it definitively.

I think those, like the City Council, whom would take away its citizen's right to choose whether to take a bite from the sexy, chocolate-filled fish of life commit a crime, not a service.

So Berkeley's actions, to me, are not some righteous crusade waged in the interest of the perpetrators, but a local government cherry-picking a minority pleasure they don't understand and harassing those that do.

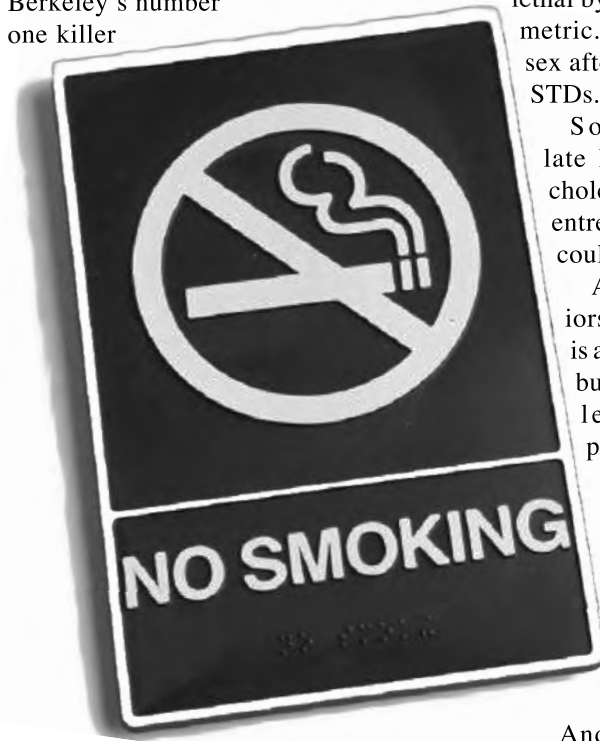
With what end result?

Yes, a smoke-free environment, but also slavery.

Because what is slavery, a person telling another person what he can do, which begins with telling a person he can't do one thing, then two things, then everything until the only thing he can do is what the other tells him.

This is the slow regression of democracy to a carcinogen-free despotism.

So my message to Berkeley, and to those that would substitute a smoker's pursuit of happiness with their own, would be to read the Statue of Liberty's inscription, which proclaims, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free," and look past the literal meaning of the words to the broader and more satisfying message that your life is yours.



... Strong tobacco prevention and control policies will move us closer to developing a tobacco-free future for all Berkeleyans."

Calling your self a Berkeleyan aside, the ban is unparalleled and the power this tiny local government seems to hold is scary.

The ban, as it pertains to the

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

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Rascal reinvents Grime game

CHRIS MARTINEZ
Contributing Writer

Dizzee Rascal has been both at the forefront and on the sidelines of the U.K. underground phenomenon known as “Grime” since its genesis in the streets of East London in the early years of this decade. Two award winning albums, 2003’s *Boy in Da Corner* and 2004’s *Showtime*, have earned Rascal, nicknamed “Da Raskit,” a place in the pantheon of top Grime MCs, while his eclectic production skills and flow have garnered fans beyond the base of British Garage and Grime fans.

His ability to go beyond the established norms of urban British music and reach out to unconventional audiences has also hurt Dizzee’s position in the Grime community.

Unfortunately, Dizzee’s latest record was not to be released in the U.S., perhaps due to the sales of the previous two albums, which made headlines in the underground and indie presses but failed to break into the mainstream consciousness.

This was regrettable as the album’s reception was strongly positive, with the Sunday Telegraph (U.K.) proclaiming “*Maths*” to be “the most important album to emerge from the black British underground,” while Pitchfork Media claimed that it could have been the most accessible album to American listeners.

Fortunately, upstart underground hip-hop label Definitive Jux has released the album in CD and vinyl format stateside, giving the American audience a copy of the groundbreaking album



GRIME TIME: Dizzee Rascal performs in front of fans May 1, 2005 in Europe.



Dizzee Rascal on the cover of his 2003 album *Boy in Da Corner*



Dizzee Rascal on the cover of his 2004 album *Showtime*



Dizzee Rascal on the cover of his 2007 album *Maths + English*

on April 29.

Unlike Dizzee’s previous albums, which were characterized by dirty Grime riddims

and a nearly neurotic lyrical content, “*Maths*” presents a very different Dizzee where he seems liberated from the label of Grime. In fact, very

little of his latest oeuvre could be described as “Grime,” as he branches out his MC skills to rhyme over Drum-n-Bass, Garage and other genre-mashing tracks.

The result is an album very different from its precedents.

It’s almost as if he is purposely distancing from the very scene that he sprung out of. The opening track, “World Outside,” explains, presumably to his mates back in the L.D.N. (London to outsiders), why he hasn’t been seen in the streets of East London lately, but it also serves as a mea culpa of why he is branching outside of the constraints of grime.

From there, the album goes on a roller coaster ride of emotions which see a young black Londoner experiencing the highs of commercial success (“Bubbles”), all the while questioning the trappings that come with it (“Hardback (Industry)”) and the ever present problems of the world outside (“Excuse Me Please”).

Although *Maths + English* is a highly enjoyable album with copious amounts of club bangers and solid singles (“P*ssyole (Old Skool),” the excellent “Sirens,” a British reply to Jay-Z’s “99 Problems,” complete with rollicking guitar samples), there is still the problem of Dizzee’s underground status here in the U.S.

Additionally, Dizzee’s rhymes are full of British slang and words that might also serve as an impediment to expanding his American fan base.

But “Yanks” adventurous enough will be rewarded with a wholly enjoyable experience.

Week’s news includes ghost hunt, freak shooting

MEXICAN WRESTLER PUCKERS UP TO FIGHT

MEXICO CITY (AP) – In a hot-pink Mohawk haircut and leotard to match, he pirouettes before taking down his muscle-bound enemies with a swift kick to the groin.

Maximo, Mexican professional wrestling’s latest sensation, then delivers a crowning blow – a kiss on the lips of his macho opponent to the delight of a roaring crowd.

WOMAN FOUND LIVING WITH RATS AND SNAKES

ROCHESTER, Wash. (AP) – Authorities say a woman has been found living with hundreds of rats and four malnourished snakes in a home outside Rochester.

Thurston County Animal Services Director Susanne Beauregard says an official from the Area Agency on Aging alerted authorities about a month ago, but the woman has been uncooperative. Beauregard says the woman calls the rats her friends.

WOMAN DISRUPTS BINGO AT MCDONALD’S

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) – A 90-year-old woman accidentally backed into a McDonald’s restaurant, disrupting a bingo game and sending a couple to the hospital with minor injuries.

Lois Weber told police one of her tennis shoes became stuck under the gas

pedal on her 2004 Cadillac, causing her to lose control and back into the restaurant Wednesday.

She said she recently changed shoe brands and was not used to the wider fit.

BULLET GOES THROUGH MAN’S HEADBOARD

CEDAR CITY, Utah (AP) – Dan Kidder doesn’t go to bed early. Maybe that’s why he’s still alive.

A .38-caliber bullet went through a wall of his Cedar City house and through the headboard on his bed at about 8 p.m. Tuesday. Kidder, a firearms instructor, says the “what-ifs are staggering.”

INDONESIAN MASSEUSES LOCK THEIR PANTS

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) – Massage parlors in an Indonesian town are asking their female masseuses to padlock their skirts and pants to make it clear that sex is not on offer.

But the move has been protested by the women’s affairs minister of Indonesia, where massage parlors are often a front for prostitution.

“It is not the right way to prevent promiscuity,” Meutia Swasono was quoted as saying in Thursday’s Jakarta Post. “It insults women ... as if they are the ones in the wrong.”

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Outstanding Service- Individual

David Foinseca

Outstanding Service- Organization

Dance Marathon

Modesto A. Maidique Visionary Award

Jean Roseme

Leadership- Freshman

Ana Maria and Laura Torres

Leadership- Sophomore

Dori-Ann Fernandes and Sheska Ocasio

Leadership- Senior

Cassandra Andrade, Leah Dunleavy, Brad Low, Katiana Saintable

Leadership- Graduate

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Cat (keyboard) and Tyler (guitar) of Biatti



Drew Brown of OneRepublic



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Felipe Biatti of Biatti



Pop/Rock group Biatti opened for One Republic

PHOTOS BY: FERNANDO GARCIA



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REVIEWS (YOU CAN USE)

MUSIC

Colin Meloy

Solo attempt sees Meloy performing his best, worst

CHRIS TOWERS
Asst. News Director

About 20 minutes into his first full-length solo release, “Colin Meloy Sings Live!,” Meloy, the lead singer of the Decemberists, launched into an unreleased song called “Dracula’s Daughter,” which he considers the worst song he’s ever written.

Taken from a solo tour he did in 2006, “Live!” is 17 of Meloy’s songs with nothing but an acoustic guitar on stage. For some, this format would be difficult to shine in, but Meloy’s distinctive voice in both his singing and writing, carry the songs and in some ways improve upon the originals.

The sound is extremely crisp and clear, and the crowd is for the most part silent, though whether this is out of reverence and respect for Meloy, or due to some especially precise mixing, it is hard to tell.

Meloy also takes the opportunity to loosen up, as shown in “Dracula’s Daughter,” and in “Here I Dreamt I Was an Architect,” already one of the Decemberists’ best songs, which also becomes the highlight of the album.

“Here I Dreamt I Was an Architect” is based on two chords and lyrics that feature words that you might need a dictionary to understand.

It is this simplicity of music and complexity of lyrics that creates a very enjoyable tension in the song, which makes it all the more surprising when Meloy segues into the 1977 Fleetwood Mac hit “Dreams.”

The banter between the songs is witty and candid, and gives you a better glimpse of an artist who has a tendency to hide behind



PHOTO COURTESY

JAMMIN’: Colin Meloy Performs in Atlanta on Dec. 27, 2006.

an English scholar’s vocabulary and wild stories.

Of course, it is also precisely these qualities that make the songs so unique and refreshing.

Meloy seems to be, first and foremost, a story teller with his music, and the stories range from a Romeo & Juliet-esque romance – complete with a suicide pact at the end – to a tale of a mother who acts as a prostitute in order to provide for her family.

This last song, “A Cautionary Tale,” is an encapsulation of everything else in the show, showcasing his voice, storytelling, way with words, as well as his humor, albeit some of the darkest I’ve heard in a long time.

GAME

Compulse

Game of patience appeals to those fond of tile work



With so many words in the English language, it’s easy to mistake a non-word for an actual word.

Many of these non-words, like funniness and awesomer, really seem to make sense sometimes.

Even though they’re not real words, you definitely know what they mean.

“Compulse” is one of these deceptive little non-words that may take you by surprise.

Though it may not be a real word, it is the real title of a really fun game from developer Armor Games.

“Compulse,” like many non-words, is not for everyone.

It may seem a bit boring to gamers looking for something a bit faster and slightly more energetic, but if you enjoy a slow, methodical and surprisingly rewarding game of strategy and, more often than not, trial and error this may just be the game for you.

The object of the game is to direct a very stubborn little ball to a goal using compulse tiles – small blocks bursting with kinetic energy that send your ball in one of four directions.

Get to the goal using as few of the tiles as possible.

It sounds pretty easy and at first it is. As the levels get harder, the game’s physics becomes your arch enemy and new obstacles are added.

Walls, switches, bombs and teleporters will all add to your frustration, but will make victory that much sweeter in the end.

As the ball travels about the screen, its movement is depicted with white lines to help you decide what your next move should be. It can be a real lifesaver at times.

There are 25 levels, each with its own par score and pro score.

You should try to at least match the par score but if you want a bit more of a challenge, you can shoot for the pro score.

Your scores for each level are added up and any level can be revisited.

All levels are available from the start so if the first few are too easy, you can skip ahead to some of the more difficult ones.

As long as you don’t delete the cookie and always access the game from the same URL, your progress will be saved.

You might be asking, “Why make up a word just to seem cool and different?” Well, the Beatles did it.

So, take your grammar-loving badunkadunk to <http://armorgames.com/play/1150/compulse> and be cool too.

Ashlyn Toledo can be reached at Ashlyn.Toledo@fiusm.com

RESTAURANT

The Bar

Gables bar features large beer selection, cheap fries

GEOFFREY ANDERSON JR.
Life! Editor

“Dark” is a word that appropriately describes The Bar, a non-descript watering hole just north of Miracle Mile in the heart of Coral Gables. Located on Giralda Ave., The Bar sports a full bar in the center flanked by a number of tables and booths that are usually packed with customers during the place’s nightly specials.

Nestled in one corner is a digital jukebox where \$1 can net you two tunes from a selection featuring hits from Sublime and The White Stripes; a variety of board games are also available for patrons to satisfy their Battleship and chess hunger pangs.

The Bar’s claim to fame, however, is its assortment of beers, which range in price from \$3.75 to \$12. In the mood for a raspberry beer? Well, you can find it here, but it isn’t cheap. For those a little less adventurous, Bud Light and

Heineken have a place on the varied bar guide, which features more than 20 bottled and draft beers from as far as Germany and Holland.

Although the beer selection is diverse, the bar menu is serviceable. Wings, wedge fries and loaded nachos are standard fare on this typical menu – you can find the same items at any other bar in the city. Still, the fries do stand out for three reasons: they’re cheap (under \$4), good and big enough to share with a large group.

One menu item that didn’t stand out was the chicken fingers, which were much too flavorless to be enjoyed. If you happen to find yourself at the Bar any night of the week, you’ll find all sorts of alcohol specials. Tuesday and Thursday nights are ladies night, where females drink free and, on Wednesday night, one can expect \$2 shots of Cuervo, Jagermeister and kamikazes until close at 2 a.m.

Overall, The Bar is a place for drinking, not for eating. Although the food and drinks seem pricey, a nightly visit won’t put a hole in your wallet and you’ll experience some tasty brewskis. Just make sure you bring money for parking – there’s no free lots nearby.



PHOTO COURTESY

HELPING HANDS



VICTORIA LYNCH/THE BEACON

WELL POLISHED: Kathy Saint-Lois, an occupational therapy graduate student, is one of the many FIU students who take advantage of Santi’s Hair Salon in Graham Center.



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COURTESY PHOTO/FIU ATHLETICS

STRETCHING: Junior infielder Carolina Rojas extends her glove attempting to get a runner out on first base.

Seventh inning double play kills Golden Panther rally

SOFTBALL, page 11

Gressly, who immediately showed greater control than Barton. Barrett remained on the mound for the Golden Panthers seemingly on her way to her 23rd complete game.

She recovered nicely in the sixth with a 1-2-3 inning, including a strike out on FAU outfielder Christine Houghtaling. Even with experience in close games, coming back proved to be a challenge for the Golden Panthers.

Down 5-4 and with runners on second and third in the top of the seventh, Barrett was officially in a jam.

Barton then exchanged her glove for a bat and returned to the game as a pinch hitter.

She sent a bases-clearing double down

the left field line, bringing in two more runs and extending the FAU lead to 7-4. Unfortunately for the Golden Panthers, this ended Barrett's night.

Reliever Holly Satterfield was able to stop the bleeding and give the top of the order the chance to make things right.

Fink singled to lead off but was picked off as Bell's offering was caught.

White was walked, but Rodriguez grounded out to end the game.

The Golden Panthers proved against FAU that they can produce outs and hold a team at bay. The Owls were scoreless in four out of seven innings, but FIU was not able to distance itself offensively.

After traveling to face conference foe Middle Tennessee April 12-13, FIU will continue on the road to face another Sun Belt team, South Alabama, April 19-20.

SPORTS REPLAY

Strong starting pitching breaths life into team

JONATHAN RAMOS
Asst. Sports Editor

The FIU Golden Panthers baseball team snapped their five-game losing streak against the Florida Gulf Coast University on April 9.

BASEBALL

FIU (12-23) defeated FGCU 4-3 at Swanson Stadium on April 9 thanks to a quality start by Jorge Ramos and another great game by infielder Jorge Castillo.

Ramos had arguably his best game of the season as he slithered his way through seven-plus innings allowing just four hits. The sophomore hurler added four strikeouts in a game that ended a five-game losing streak.

The Golden Panthers performance against the Eagles came after getting thumped for 26 runs in their two previous meetings with them.

Corey Lozano sparked the offense with a home run, two stolen bases and two runs scored.

The Golden Panthers took a 3-0 lead before FGCU scored a run, but FIU held them off until the end. Eagles pitcher Pat Nathanson allowed the Golden Panthers to take the early lead to the game by allowing four hits in the first inning alone.

Castillo extended his hitting streak to 30 games on a 3-for-4 day at the plate.

GOLF

Before the upcoming Sun Belt Conference championships, the FIU women's golf team used the 54-hole Canes and Cardinal classic at the Don Shula Golf resort in Miami Lakes to warm up.

With a 13th place finish, the team finished behind Louisville by 40 strokes. The Cardinals were ranked No. 30 in the country coming into the event.

Freshman Paula Hurtado used a pair of 1-over rounds to finish the event at 7-over, 223, which tied for 18th place overall. Another freshman, Cristina Marin, ended 12-

over, 228, as she tied with senior Maria Hernandez for 37th place. Louisville, however, took the meeting by storm as Cindy LaCrosse led the event from start to finish, as she was the only sub-par golfer in the field.

TENNIS

The FIU women's tennis team used a 6-1 victory over FAU at University Park on Friday, April 11 to keep its home record perfect on the season.

The Golden Panthers (10-8) are now ranked No. 55 in the nation. The Golden Panthers completed their seventh victory in as many home games. Despite a late run by the Owls, FIU was able to hold them off thanks to a strong start. While head coach Carlos Casely shook up the doubles pairs, FIU was able to succeed regardless.

Besides the teams No. 1 doubles pairing of Liset Brito and Priscilla Castillo, Casely used a different pair for his No. 2 and 3 doubles.

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TEAM	CONF	OVERALL	PCT
Florida Atlantic	10-3	28-19	.596
Louisian-Lafayette	6-2	28-10	.737
Troy	9-6	24-17	.585
Florida International	6-6	22-27	.449
North Texas	8-7	22-23	.489
Middle Tennessee	7-7	14-18	.438
South Alabama	4-8	18-21	.462
ULM	4-8	12-26	.316
Western Kentucky	2-9	14-20	.412

*All records up to date as of April 11, 2008

SUN BELT LEADERS

INDIVIDUAL BATTING

Min	2.0	AB	G	Avg	AB	R	H	RBI	2B	3B	HR	BB
Tankersley ULL	37	.454	119	32	54	49	6	3	14	18		
Cantler NT	43	.401	137	21	55	36	13	0	4	13		
Waters NT	35	.391	92	23	36	18	3	0	6	14		
Smith ULL	35	.391	87	26	34	4	1	0	0	10		
White FIU	48	.389	149	40	58	37	13	2	12	21		
Antone WKU	34	.379	103	22	39	21	5	0	10	6		
Pare USA	39	.362	130	26	47	9	0	2	1	17		
Abel MT	32	.359	103	19	37	18	4	2	3	7		
Soto ULL	37	.358	120	18	43	36	15	1	4	10		
Rodriguez FIU	48	.355	152	32	54	42	9	3	14	19		

SOFTBALL: FAU 7, FIU 4

Home run hitters contained, fail to complete comeback trail

RYAN ABBEY
Staff Writer

In a perfect world, the softball team (22-27, 6-6 Sun Belt) would have a full week to recuperate for its upcoming six-game Sun Belt Conference road trip.

"We can still be in a position to grab second place if we play well," said coach Beth McClendon.

Unfortunately, the season can be unkind at times and the Golden Panthers had to face the defending conference champions Florida Atlantic (28-19, 10-3 Sun Belt) on April 9 at University Park, losing 7-4.

After trailing 2-0 in the first inning, FIU came roaring out of the gate, and junior infielder Desiree Fink sent the first pitch by Owls

starter Amber Barton into the left field gap for a double.

Then, junior third baseman Katie Bell drew a walk and set up the first opportunity of the game for FIU.

Junior outfielder Kim Rodriguez delivered with runners on base, hitting a double that sent Fink home.

With two outs, catcher Jessica Landau found a hole in the infield and batted in two runs with her single to capture a 3-2 lead.

Offensive spurts are commonplace with the Golden Panthers, and they are a serious concern for opposing coaches when they get on a roll.

"We had to keep it in the park, [because] they hit a lot of home runs," FAU coach Joan Joyce said.

With the lead and the help of

her teammates, FIU starter Kasey Barrett started to make life difficult for the FAU hitters by owning the strike zone.

FAU hitters popped out, struck out or continuously fouled off pitches only to fall prey to Barrett's deceptive offerings.

Having the speedy Rodriguez diving for and catching long fly balls in center field in the top of the third inning didn't hurt either.

By the top of the fifth inning, the Owls were getting their third and fourth at-bats against Barrett, and they broke through with three runs, retaking the lead at 5-3.

Electing for a fresh arm, the Owls brought on reliever Rose

SOFTBALL, page 10

Star athlete on the verge of qualifying for Olympics

FORBES, page 12

second among student-athletes in the 110-meter hurdles at the Pepsi Florida Relays in Gainesville.

His second place finish in the 110-meter hurdles broke the school record in the event with a time of 13.67, just five-hundredths behind top finisher, John Yarbrough of Ole Miss.

Forbes' time qualified him for the 2008 Olympics in Beijing; however, legitimacy of the time arose because the wind gauges before and after registered wind speed over the legal limit of Olympic stipulations.

"When you are running outdoors, you have to account for the favorable and unfavorable conditions, but I have no doubt in my mind that Ronald will run the qualifying time and travel to the Olympics," Campbell said.

Forbes will have another opportunity to clinch his spot in Beijing on April 12 at the Miami Elite Invitational at the University of Miami.

"The success that Ronald is having this year is unbelievable, because Ronald came to FIU running the 400 hurdles with no

“**Ronald Forbes**, Senior track and field runner

Hurdles represent life to me. They taught me that in order to move forward in life, I will have to get over some stuff and no matter what happens, I have to finish what is ahead of me.

true experience running the sprint hurdles, and now he is ranked in the world," Campbell said. As for the remainder of the 2008 season, both Campbell and Forbes have set a goal for him to win the NCAA Outdoor National Championships on June 11.

"Everything that Forbes does is done with a purpose, and he is one of the most hardworking athletes I have ever had the pleasure of coaching," Campbell said.

As a child, Forbes can remember lining up and racing his classmates during recess in elementary school. Years later, he

began catching a bus that took him over 20 miles from his home in the Cayman Islands to condition himself for track. What was once a pastime and a dream is now a reality.

"I have been running for as long as I can remember, but I did not take it as a

serious sport until 1999 when I realized that I needed to start making sacrifices if I wanted an opportunity to continue my education beyond high school," Forbes said.

Whether the sacrifices he's made allows him to compete in the Olympics or clinch a national championship, Forbes will be graduating this Spring.

Injuries and his family's circumstances presented Forbes with obstacles he had to overcome if he wanted an opportunity to compete alongside the world's best athletes.

Forbes understands he has to reach the finish line regardless of how many hurdles he has to jump.

"Hurdles represent life to me," he said. "They taught me that in order to move forward in life, I will have to get over some stuff and no matter what happens, I have to finish what is ahead of me."

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OLYMPIC HOPES

All-american track star shines at FIU after coming from Division II school

AUDRINA BIGOS
Contributing Writer

Former FIU track coach Steve Rubin scouted a highly touted recruit from the Cayman Islands in 2004.

Four years later, senior Ronald Forbes is on the verge of heading to the 2008 Olympics in Beijing.

"My greatest joy is going to be seeing him participate in the opening ceremonies at the Olympics, because if anyone should have the opportunity to know what it feels like to become an elite athlete, it is Ronald," said current track and field coach Eric Campbell.

Before his tenure as a Golden Panther, the 2008 Olympic games were an afterthought for Forbes as he was running track for Division II Bacone College in Muskogee, Okla.

"There was really no coach and no team at the college," Forbes said. "Running track there was a way to get my foot in the door, but I knew I had to get out of there."

After one semester, Forbes met Rubin in Mexico while participating in the CAC Junior Championships in June of 2004. Forbes was offered a full

athletic scholarship and began attending FIU just one semester later.

"I am the only person in my family to go to college and, unfortunately, no one had the ability to help me financially so I didn't even hesitate signing on to FIU with a full-ride," Forbes said.

Forbes' first years at FIU were plagued by injuries, and he only ran in two races during the 2007 season.

"I battled a lot of injuries in 2006 and 2007 with my hamstrings and groin," he said. "It hurt mentally to know that I had the potential to run good times, but my body just wouldn't let me."

He fought through injuries with the constant reminder he was not competing at the collegiate level just for a scholarship but for his native country as well.

Forbes is the only athlete from the Cayman Islands to ever receive NCAA honors.

"A lot of people in my country look up to me, and sometimes I realize that I have to succeed not only for myself but for the people in my country that look to me as inspiration in their lives," he said.



COURTESY PHOTO/FIU ATHLETICS

HURLING: Senior Ronald Forbes has broken several records during his first full season at FIU.

During the 2008 season, the Cayman Islands native has devoted his senior year to setting precedents for future FIU athletes.

Forbes was honored as FIU's only NCAA All-

American by running the 60-meter hurdles in 7.74 seconds on March 14 in Fayetteville, Ark. Then on April 4, Forbes placed

FORBES, page 11

SPRING FOOTBALL

Defense showcased to coaches

SERGIO BONILLA
Sports Editor

The football team's spring practice resumed on April 10 at the University Park recreation field with about 30 high school coaches from South Florida partaking in the Golden Panthers' second-annual Coaches Clinic.

Coach Mario Cristobal said the coaches were invited to watch the two-and-a-half hour practice in order to showcase the intricacies of the team's practices.

The purpose of the clinic was also to show the high school coaches that the FIU program is a program their players should attend the future.

"We are opening our doors to these coaches and want to show them what we do, how we do it and why," Cristobal said.

The practice ended with a two-minute drill, which the defense dominated from the opening series.

The first team offense connected on a long pass to wide receiver Jeremy Dickens. After that long pass, the defense shut down the offense and did not allow a score.

The second-team offense as much as the first team, if not more, as the second-team defense applied constant pressure and recorded several sacks on the quarterbacks.

"The defense has a better understanding of the scheme," Cristobal said. "And they are playing more physical. They initiated collisions today and were hitting people real hard."



GIO GUADARRAMA/THE BEACON

ELITE: The women's tennis team is 10-8 this season and the only ranked team at FIU.

Young players head into tournament

TENNIS, page 1

compares to the tennis team's ability to compete with some of the best teams in the nation.

Leading the way for the tennis team is Petrauskaite, who came into the season ranked No. 2 in the South Region.

Both Petrauskaite and Marijana Cutuk, the only seniors on the 2008 team, will have a chance to become all-time record holders at FIU when the season ends.

Petrauskaite has a chance to set the record for most career singles wins in school history.

"I never thought I could do that in singles," Petrauskaite said. "I thought I could in doubles, but I think I can do it. I need five matches, and we have four more plus [the Sun Belt Tournament]."

This season started out with a 6-1 loss versus No. 10 Miami; however, FIU's lone win came when freshman

Liset Brito defeated UM's Laura Vallverdu who was ranked No. 29 in the nation at the time of the match.

"I knew her from before when we played junior tournaments together," Brito said. "I thought it was going to be a tough match, and beating her would be hard, but it went good."

Brito is a formidable player and the brightest of the many young stars on FIU's roster.

The Golden Panthers' only other freshman is Maria Spenceley, and the team also has three sophomores: Priscilla Castillo, Maria Dolores Pazo and Maria Jose Vallasciani.

Alyona Tsutskova is the team's only junior.

Brito has made a name for herself by teaming with Petrauskaite numerous times this season to form a doubles team that was at one point ranked No. 17 in the nation and is 7-1 when playing together this season.

"It is an accomplishment to have one of our doubles teams ranked high

nationally," said coach Carlos Casely. "They are a good combination."

Combining a right-hander and a left-hander gives the duo an advantage over other doubles teams.

They can cover the court from more angles than two right-handed players.

"We complement each other in the games," Petrauskaite said. "She is good in the back and she sets me up."

With title hopes looming, FIU is ranked No. 53 the country and has lost two straight matches.

Nationally ranked players include Brito, who is ranked No. 91, and No. 112 Petrauskaite.

The team's 3-0 record versus Sun Belt Conference teams holds well for the Golden Panthers as they head into the conference tournament on April 18.

The team will likely need to get past No. 26 ranked Denver to capture a fourth consecutive conference championship and continue to build a legacy at FIU.