

TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME

Previewing Panthers' favorite past time (not eating 'crack' cookies)

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Time to take the tarp off the diamond as baseball season is back at it in FIU.

As we are approaching the season opener on Friday, Feb. 13 against Tennessee, there are many new faces on this squad that fans will need to get accustomed to. There are exactly 19 new players on the roster that need to fill up some important shoes, especially in the pitching department.

The team lost without a doubt their best pitcher and staff ace Mike Franco. He was drafted in the seventh round by the Tampa Bay Rays in the MLB draft.

Another crucial piece to the pitching staff that was lost to the MLB draft was closer Mike Gomez who was drafted by the Chicago White Sox.

What doesn't help the team either is that their last season Conference USA Freshman of the Year, Chris Mourelle, is recovering from an elbow injury but is expected to be ready for the season opener.



PHOTO BY MARIA SOLEDAD LORENZINO/THE BEACON

Senior right hand pitcher Robby Kalaf appears to be surfacing as the new closer. Last year Kalaf was a starter for the team.

With Franco no longer on the team, somebody on this pitching staff needs to step up and take the lead. Repeating Franco's last season performance seems

unlikely since he posted a 1.09 ERA which was second best in the nation to compliment his impressive 9-3 record.

The pitcher that came after

Franco's spot in the rotation was Cody Crouse, who Head Coach Turtle Thomas already announced will still be the second starter in the rotation and

Mourelle will be the third.

At the moment, Coach Thomas hasn't specifically chosen any pitcher to be at the top of the rotation yet. Some candidates for the job that Coach Thomas has mentioned are junior right-hander Maleko Galusha, JUCO right-hander Gianni Zayas, freshman right-hander Andres Nunez and freshman Garrett Cave. All these pitchers are in the mix to be part of this young but talented starting rotation.

The bullpen is another situation that needs to be solved because as mentioned earlier, closer Mike Gomez is gone. One name that appears to be surfacing as the new closer is Robby Kalaf. Last year Kalaf was a starter for the team but Pitching Coach Sam Peraza likes the move of Kalaf closing out games if all is settled in the starting pitching department.

Just like in the pitching rotation, there are still gaps that need to be sealed up when it comes to the position players on the field.

SEE BASEBALL, PAGE 7

University community mourns passing of 'thought-provoking' English professor

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A University English professor passed away over the weekend. Dr. Phillip Marcus, professor of English, died on Saturday, Jan. 10, according to an email sent by the University's English Department to its students and faculty.

Following a career at Cornell University, Dr. Marcus joined the FIU community in 1995, teaching a variety of courses such as Approaches to Literature and British Modernism.

"He touched the lives of hundreds of students, many of whom took several classes from him and attended his 'coffee hours' at Starbucks and at the Barnes and Noble Cafe," read the email.

Although no funeral services will be held, as was Dr. Marcus'

“He was a really thoughtful and thought-provoking professor, and he ran his class almost like a graduate class, setting very high expectations for his students.”

Larissa Ramos
Professor
English Department

wish, the English Department will be holding a memorial to honor the life and work of Dr. Marcus later in the semester.

In the meantime, students and faculty members are welcome

to submit posts honoring the memory of Dr. Marcus, according to the email.

Posts may be submitted electronically to the FIU English Department's Facebook page, or physically at the Department office in Deuxieme Maison Room 453, on the Graduate English Association or Sigma Tau Delta bulletin boards beneath the heading, "it's great to be here!"

Larissa Ramos, a previous student of Dr. Marcus who is now an instructor in the English Department, expressed her sadness over the news.

She also highlighted the respect many students had for him, judging by how highly students spoke of him.

"He was a really thoughtful and thought-provoking professor, and he ran his class almost like a graduate class, setting very high expectations for his students," said Ramos.

Obama pitches free tuition proposal

TNS STAFF

President Barack Obama traveled to this Southern city Friday to sell his new proposal for making community college as widely available as high school, the culmination of a tour outside Washington to promote policy initiatives aimed at the middle class.

In unveiling the proposal, Obama promised to "bring down to zero" the cost of tuition at community colleges and technical schools around the country.

"Two years of college will become as free

and universal as high school is today," Obama pledged.

The president laid out his vision at the Pellissippi State Community College here, a venue chosen as part of a familiar - if not entirely successful - White House playbook.

Obama is using a strategy he has employed on issues including raising the minimum wage and broadening pre-kindergarten education: talking about the subject in front of a friendly audience, and building on local initiatives already in place.

The community college plan has a template in Chicago and Tennessee programs that

basically cover the cost of tuition for any eligible student who wants to attend a two-year college or technical school.

As the White House sees it, its two-pronged approach has been successful in the past, albeit not by the traditional metrics of the legislative process.

In 2013, Obama announced a similarly ambitious proposal in his State of the Union address to make preschool available to nearly all 4-year-olds. Then he traveled to a red state, in that case Georgia, to highlight a similar state effort already under way. When he put the plan

in his budget, he proposed to pay for it with a 94-cent tobacco tax.

While Obama touted the idea in many of his speeches on middle-class initiatives as well as his midterm election stump speech, the proposal faced a slow and rough path in Congress. Even with Democrats in control of the Senate, it took months to write legislation and roughly a year before a hearing was held on the bill. The cigarette tax was left behind. There was scarce bipartisan support, as Republicans argued that

SEE TUITION, PAGE 2

NATION & WORLD BRIEFS

Twitter, YouTube accounts of Pentagon command in Florida are hacked

Twitter and YouTube accounts belonging to Central Command, headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Fla., were “compromised” Monday at around 12:30 p.m. EST, the Pentagon confirmed.

The account featured a black background stating “I love you isis,” along with a jihadi militant wearing a checkered scarf and a black flag used by militants in Syria and Iraq. The flag is inscribed with the shahada, or Islamic declaration of faith.

The tweets posted on the account included an apparently legitimate internal Defense Department list of retired generals that included personal emails accounts and home addresses for former senior officers.

The posts also contained what appeared to be documents from a military exercise involving U.S. forces in Korea and one labeled “China Scenario ISR Collection Needs” from MIT Lincoln Laboratory, a federally funded think tank at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

None of the documents appear to contain highly classified information.

World leaders join huge rally in Paris to mourn attack victims

As many as two million people - including 50 world leaders - marched through the streets of Paris in an enormous outpouring of grief and defiance Sunday, sparked by three days of violence last week that claimed the lives of 17 people.

But as Europeans once again gathered to mourn those killed by terrorism, there were growing concerns that not only would there be more attacks, but also that Europe's mood may be headed toward a backlash against its burgeoning Muslim population.

French President Francois Hollande, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, British Prime Minister David Cameron, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas led a parade of thousands who marched from the Place de la Republic, blocks from the offices of the satiric newspaper Charlie Hebdo where last week's carnage began, through the Paris streets.

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CORRECTIONS

In Vol. 26, Issue 49, the image on the first page incorrectly labeled FIU alum Andrea Vigil and her spouse Rebekah Monson.

The Beacon will gladly change any errors. Call our MMC office at 305-348-2709 or BBC at 305-919-4722.

Former FAMU student sentenced for hazing death

TNS STAFF

A judge on Friday sentenced Dante Martin to 77 months - more than six years - in prison for the 2011 hazing death of FAMU drum major Robert Champion.

Before her ruling Circuit Judge Renee Roche called Martin a “remarkable young man” with “limitless potential” and a strong support system, based on testimony. She added, “On the other hand, the circumstances of this death were so profoundly disturbing.

“Forgiveness doesn't have a role in the legal system,” she said. The goal of sentencing, she said, is “punishment. ... All other things are secondary.”

Lawyers for former Florida A&M University percussionist Dante Martin had asked Roche to spare him a prison sentence in Champion's death.

Martin, 27, faced up to 22 years in prison for his role in the killing.

In October, an Orange County jury found Martin guilty of manslaughter and other charges in the hazings of Champion and two other band members.

In testimony Friday morning a number of character witnesses, including Martin's sister and mother, vouched for him, saying Martin was a dependable, loving person and noting his lack of a criminal history.

Martin himself took the stand, saying he prays for the Champion family and vowing to speak out against hazing.

“Sometimes we just go with what is tradition,” Martin said of the incident that killed

Champion. “We don't second guess it, we don't doubt it.”

Champion's father, Robert Sr., then took the stand, saying his son didn't believe in violence.

“My son was against hazing,” the senior Champion said. “Not one time in court have you heard that my son put his hand on anybody.”

Champion says that he feels for Martin's family, but “today we've got to set an example that this has got to stop now.”

Champion's mother also spoke, saying, “Mr. Martin, you have no idea what my days and my nights are like. You have no idea what they have become.”

Later, Dino Michaels, Martin's attorney, tried to turn the blame on FAMU, saying, “Florida A&M University has no business fielding a band.”

He asked the judge to give Martin house arrest and community service, but no prison.

The hazings occurred Nov. 19, 2011, on a band bus after the famed Marching 100 had performed at the Citrus Bowl during halftime of an annual football game between FAMU and traditional rival Bethune-Cookman University. The bus was parked at the Rosen Plaza hotel, where the marching band was staying.

Tampa defense lawyers Richard Escobar and Michaels submitted a sentencing memorandum earlier this week, urging Judge Roche to hand down a lesser sentence than state guidelines recommend because Champion was “an initiator, willing participant” in

the ritual that killed him.

They pointed out that witnesses in Martin's trial insisted no one was ever forced to participate in hazings. The lawyers also said in court documents that Lissette Sanchez, a graduate of Oak Ridge High School who was hazed the same night as Champion, allowed band members to beat on her to earn “bragging rights.”

Escobar said Martin should get punishment similar to other band members who participated in the hazings known as “Crossing Bus C.”

Nine ex-band members have been sentenced for their roles in Champion's death and nearly all were given community-service sanctions and probation.

Not one has been sent to prison. Ex-band member Jessie Baskin of Miami, facing nine years in prison, was ordered to serve 51 weeks in jail.

Trials are set for later this year for three other band members.

Martin's lawyers contend he was no more culpable for Champion's death than other participants, though he was regarded unofficially as the “Bus C President” who organized hazings during the marching band's junkets.

“There was not a scintilla of evidence that (Martin) encouraged anyone to hit or kick Mr. Champion or anyone else,” Escobar said in the documents.

The hazing required Champion to make his way shirtless from the front of the parked bus to the back, bulling through a gantlet of

band members blocking the aisle. The band members punched and kicked the drum major and clubbed him with a drum mallet and other objects, including an orange traffic cone.

A medical examiner concluded Champion died of soft tissue bleeding caused by the flurry of blows he absorbed.

Martin's lawyers provided the judge with letters, hoping to paint a more sympathetic portrait of Martin. Some were written by former FAMU band members who remembered Martin not as a hazing ringleader, but as a musician who encouraged others in the ensemble to improve themselves and the band.

“I truly hope this sentence does not ruin Dante's (life) and that he is given a second chance to redeem himself for taking part in a situation that everyone regrets,” said Jofree Joseph, a former section leader in the Marching 100.

The lawyers also have asked the judge to let Martin out on bond while they appeal the jury verdict.

The hazing scandal led to the suspension of the band, the unexpected retirement of its director and the ouster of the university's president.

Champion's parents, who deny their son voluntarily participated in the hazing, have sued FAMU, alleging the historically black school allowed a culture of hazing to fester in its famous marching band. The band has performed at presidential inaugurations, the Grammy Awards and the Super Bowl.

President proposes free tuition for two-year colleges

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current efforts should be improved before a new, \$76-billion federal program was created.

Two years later, there's little expectation that Obama will see his vision of “high-quality, universal” pre-kindergarten in his tenure.

Obama's push to raise the minimum wage to \$10 per hour was more swiftly embraced by Democrats, though saw no more success in Congress. His “Buffett rule,” a minimum tax on millionaires, was another State of the Union-friendly notion that has not been turned into law.

The White House, however, argues that the proposals have been successes. In the face of Republican opposition to any proposal that involves a major expansion of government programs or mandates, White House officials acknowledge that certain plans fit into their long-term outlook.

Both minimum wage and universal preschool have seen progress on the state

and local level, building pressure toward eventual congressional action, officials argue. The White House maintains that by elevating the issues, Obama helped build that momentum - even if only to ensure a future president picks up where he left off.

“The president's goal is for these to become national programs,” spokesman Eric Schultz said of the preschool and minimum wage initiatives. “All Americans should be eligible. But the progress we've seen is definitely heartening.”

The strategy demonstrates the limits of Obama's ability to propose big new ideas at this stage in his presidency. With just two years left in office and a shrinking bully pulpit, Obama's biggest moves are more likely to be ones he can accomplish without Congress, perhaps on foreign policy or through executive actions.

Republican lawmakers who accompanied the president to Knoxville offered no hope that they would back the plan.

“Oh, no, no, no,” Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn., said when asked Friday whether he would support the creation of a new federal program like the one Obama wants.

“You're always better off letting states mimic each other,” he said as he stood in the audience for Obama's announcement after traveling with the president on Air Force One.

Aides to Obama say he will propose a way to pay for the program when he unveils it in his budget this year, but they have not made the case for it in this week's announcements on the community college proposal.

Still, the president's team is careful not to write off the possibility of legislative victory.

Republican lawmakers say publicly that they want to see a better trained and educated American workforce, Schultz said.

“We take them at their word,” he said

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Millennials use technology to enhance camping and time spent in nature

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While some might automatically relate millennials with hipsters, Facebook and oversized eyeglasses, the truth is that our generation is about so much more. Millennials like to enjoy the simpler things in life as much as any generation before them; with the added benefit that we can become instant experts through the internet. While Google won't necessarily turn a city boy into Bear Grylls, it will explain how to set up a tent, build a fire and how much water one should take on a hike. When it truly comes down to it, we are the first generation of Americans who can truly do whatever we want because we have access to so much information about everything there is to do in life.

When you go camping as a millennial there are a few things that you cannot forget to bring along on a camping trip. There are the obvious things such as tents, water, food, bug spray etc., but millennials have to bring other things such as a cell phone, chargers and speakers. While it might seem like spending a weekend in the woods with a cell phone defeats the purpose of camping, in reality technology is such a part of our life that millennials have come to see it as a tool that we

can use to make camping more enjoyable.

The old school way of camping in which one is completely disconnected is a dying beast, and with good reason. It makes no sense to struggle with building a fire when good instructions can be found in 5 minutes using a smartphone. This lets one

“ We millennials might sometimes get caught up on whatever is trending on Twitter and miss the world passing us by; but we also know how to do the opposite.

spend more time relaxing, and less time fanning a dying fire. It also seems cruel to disconnect completely when a simple text message can calm worried parents and loved ones. As a matter of fact, trail maps available online have saved my life the few times that I have gotten lost while hiking.

It seems counter-intuitive to say that it is fine to use technology while camping, but technology is only a part of

our lives for the sole purpose of making them easier. Camping isn't about struggling against nature, it is about enjoying it and relaxing in it. Surely, using a phone is no more cheating than using an RV which has electricity, sewage and television. Not that there is a competition as to who is the most hard-core camper generation, but this does follow the theme of using technology to be more comfortable outside.

The stereotypical millennial would spend a weekend of camping staring at their phone, but the real millennial understands that this is not what camping is all about. The person who will spend their entire time looking at their phone is also the same person that would find an excuse not to go camping. We millennials might sometimes get caught up in whatever is trending on Twitter and miss the world passing us by, but we also know how to do the opposite. While camping, technology doesn't compete with nature, but work with it to make it more enjoyable. Besides, if there was ever a competition between nature and technology, nature would win every time, because I have never seen the stereotypical millennial walking through a beautiful trail with earphones on staring at a screen.

Court cases illustrate flaws in society

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If Michael Brown and Eric Garner's deaths and the failure to indict the officers who killed them serve to be a legacy for one thing, it must be that they were the catalyst to an awakening of the reprehensible racism in the United States. We do not live in a post-racial society, and the mistaken notion that we do leads to the frustrating tendency to have to prove otherwise, especially in the wake of tragic injustices such as these.

There is no denying that these tragedies are multi-faceted and contain many shades of transgressions, such as police brutality, the need for law enforcement reform and lack of minority representation in many areas across the board, all of which point to a legislative and judicial infrastructure that contributes to systemic

oppression. These are all important issues which we, as a society, must address and include in our dialogue when discussing Mike Brown and Eric Garner's deaths.

For those who claim that the United States is a society where racism is the exception and not the rule, consider the following statistics: The Bureau of Labor Statistics cites that as of December 2014 10.9 percent of blacks were unemployed, the highest out of any ethnic

group. Poverty rates for African Americans are the second highest out of any ethnic group (25.8 percent) after American Indians, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. A study by Johns Hopkins sociologist Karl Alexander further reveals the economic immobility that accompanies poverty. Alexander's study found definitive differences when it came to race and economic mobility such as 89 percent of white high school dropouts having a job by age 22, compared to 40

percent of their black counterparts. Black male prisoners account for 37 percent of the male prison population in the United States, a disproportionate number considering blacks make up only 13 percent of the population. In her book, "The New Jim Crow," Michelle Alexander points out that the high rates of black men in the prison population coupled with the laws enacted against convicted felons (losing the right to vote, to public housing, to welfare, and access to education) are merely another form of institutional racism.

Michael Brown and Eric Garner are more than just anecdotal examples that mean little about racism in the United States. There is a reason why a black man in Walmart toting a BB gun around the store is viewed as a threat and shot and killed by police, while a group of white men heavily armed with rifles at a Chipotle are considered humorous and somewhat outrageous, however, not dangerous.

This is not to say that race relations have not improved throughout the past few decades since the Civil Rights movement. They have. Nevertheless, improvement does not mean total resolution. Racism today means more than individual prejudice. A more accurate definition of racism in the United States today encompasses and identifies the residual effects of the historical oppression of minority groups which are so ingrained into our institutions that they manifest themselves on an individual level, such as the Michael Brown murder and lack of indictment of the officer who shot him.

Any attempts to view racism in the United States through an inaccurate lens means stagnation and failure for further progress in order to achieve complete success with regards to improving race relations altogether. Recognizing there is a problem is the first step towards correcting it. Michael Brown and Eric Garner, as well as their families, deserve it.

“ Black male prisoners account for 37 percent of the male prison population in the United States, a disproportionate number considering blacks make up only 13 percent of the population.

PANDA-MONIUM



SAMUEL PRITCHARD-TORRES/THE BEACON

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Art Basel inspires students to pursue passions, teaches business side of art

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Art Basel is one of the biggest events in Miami, along with Ultra music festival and the Miami International Film Festival.

It brings forth creativity and talent from all over the United States, as well as an exciting and entrancing ambiance.

A lot of the galleries celebrate and exhibit pieces and installations of modern art, film, photography, and traditional and experimental paintings.

It is a meeting place for

artists from all around the world, like Gertrude Stein's salon in Paris and Andy Warhol's factory in New York City.

Art Basel took place in Miami Beach between Dec. 3-6. Pieces were shown in Collins Park, Soundscape Park, Miami's design district and Wynwood area.

Roughly 70,000 visitors took a look at over 250 galleries.

The event also inspired FIU art students Natalie Pacheco and Juan Neira. These students took advantage of this opportunity to learn more about the art

world and get real world



VINCENT RIVES/THE BEACON

Juan Neira, senior art major, worked at SCOPE art fair during Art Basel



PHOTO COURTESY NATALIE PACHECO

Natalie Pacheco, senior art major, helped host Alchemist event on Lincoln Road.

experience by working in art galleries during Art Basel.

Pacheco, a senior majoring in art worked at a gallery titled "Air Ball" which featured a minimalistic approach. "Our uniform was black and white to match the theme," said Pacheco.

There is also an athletic theme demonstrated by the lined snap-backs in one corner and the 3D printed basketballs that sit on a shelf. The event was hosted by Alchemist, a luxury store on Lincoln road, and Snarkitecture, an art and architecture collaborative founded by Alex Mustonen and Daniel Arsham.

"Overall it was an amazing experience," said Pacheco. "It inspired me to make my own type of designs, like printed shirts, a combination of fashion and art; and to learn how to make

high resolution images with Adobe Illustrator."

The exposure to different artists and different forms of creative expression made her professional future seem more attainable. "After college I'd like to have my own gallery, or work in one, or be a graphic or fashion designer."

Neira, an art major and a mixed media artist, had a similar experience but was a bit more disillusioned by the commercial aspect of the art world.

"I worked at the SCOPE Art Fair. Beautiful location on Miami Beach. The art was mostly aimed to the commercial market but I was able to find some interesting pieces. The working team was really nice and mostly young adults who were seeking a career in the art world," said Neira.

He was also around the work of Gerhard Richter, someone whom Neira admires, especially Richter's "exploration of various painting techniques from photo realism to abstract art."

These types of work experiences allow students to be exposed to the practical side of their field and not just the theoretical.

In his position Neira was exposed to the commercial art world, which he described as "something you often see as trending. Art pieces that galleries know that the art market is looking for."

A lot of artists do not like the business side of the art world, which is governed by fads and crazes, as well as profits and return on investments-- ideas that are not the most conducive to genuine and honest artwork.

Despite the negative

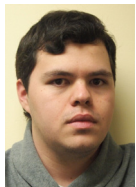
aspects of the event, the experience was still an educational and interesting experience, "Seeing the commercial part of the art world gave me some bad vibes as an artist but it was a great experience." Neira is currently finishing his senior thesis and planning his second exhibit.

Art Basel gave two FIU art students opportunities to work with artists in their field, meet upcoming artists, learn the technical and business sides of the art world, and exposed them to various and different works of art.

These students showed initiative by searching for opportunities in their community and getting involved, characteristics and endeavors, which FIU promotes and that are greatly admirable.

Taken 3 'works' but is 'headache inducing'

REEL TO REEL



RAFAEL ABREU

Liam Neeson is, if nothing else, a good actor who can deliver good performances. He's acted in both action films and dramas, and has recently become somewhat of a big action star thanks to a variety of films, most notably "Taken". The first "Taken" is an enjoyable enough film with a simple enough premise; it has good action sequences, but isn't anything too special. The sequel, "Taken 2", at least for me, was about as okay as the first, with a story that actually connected to the first; good action, good pacing, but again, nothing special.

Then comes "Taken 3" (or should I say, "Tak3n"), another sequel no one asked for, and, according to the film's tagline, should be the final film in the "Taken" series. To

be completely honest, I wouldn't care if there actually was a fourth "Taken", but that's a topic for another article. "Taken 3" has Neeson returning to the role of Bryan Mills, just doing his best to live comfortably in Los Angeles, making sure his daughter Kim (Maggie Grace) is doing well, and so forth. Then bad things start to happen, and before you know it, Bryan is running away from the LAPD and an occasional group of mobster bad guys.

Now, to be fair, "Taken 3" has a better plot than the first two; a variety of things important to the plot happen, multiple characters are actually utilized, and there's even some twists. Bryan's buddies actually help out this time, and Forest Whitaker does a good job as a police inspector. So, as far as characters and an actual story go, I think "Taken 3" does a better job than the first, and especially the second.

Then I start to wish that "Taken" had stayed a standalone movie, because then I wouldn't have to talk about how the third film in the series has the worst action sequences. It's too tragic: a better story, more enjoyable events, but the action, the most important part of an action movie, ends up being the worst part of the whole thing. How does that happen? Also, how does an action movie not have that much action, at least compared to the first two? What makes this really problematic for me is that, other than the action sequences, the rest of the film isn't all that bad. The more "thriller" moments of Bryan sneaking around or doing something else while being chased by the cops are good, and even some of the more drama-focused scenes are done well. But why, Oliver Megaton, why do you insist on shaky cam, jittery camerawork, and so many close-ups? Why make me disoriented

during an LA car chase? Why bore me during a gun fight? Why do so few people actually get shot in this movie, let alone attacked? And why are there so many cuts, even during a quiet drama scene? Do you think your audience is so stupid and with such short attention spans?

In the less chaotic moments, "Taken 3" works, but aside from that, it just comes off as headache inducing. This would have been my favorite of the three, if it weren't for the horrible action scenes. The gun fights (what few there are) come off as embarrassing, making it seem like everyone is shooting blanks and pretending to fall over at some point. I will give "Taken 3" props for its story and acting, which kept me interested and somewhat invested in what was going on. But as far as action is concerned, I couldn't be more disappointed. Watch at your own risk.

King Tuff's Miami 'full on, buck wild' debut, another testament to rock and roll's South Florida presence

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Perhaps it was the long hours spent touring down the California coast with Gabriel Alcala, Danny Gonzales and Diego Monasteri of the Jacuzzi Boys the summer of 2013 that made Kyle Thomas—the frontman for King Tuff—a believer in the three-piece Miami based band, and, moreover, the city that fostered their inception.

That summer, King Tuff and the Jacuzzi Boys were opening shows for the San Diego based punk-surf-rock band Wavves, who was touring under the success of their fourth studio album, *Afraid of Heights*, which peaked at number 81 the Billboard 200—the band's highest charting album to date.

Thomas says his bandmates and the Jacuzzi Boys got very close during those weeks together.

"There was a lot of deep bonding during that tour," Thomas said. That August, band members were swapped around and a Hall and Oates tape, for Thomas, was considered the retaliatory weapon of choice during any on-the-road disputes—he once threw it at the band after they "stole his drummer" for a day. Thomas calls the boys "sweethearts," none the less. "It was pretty much the best tour any of us have been on."

Thomas, who has been touring on and off since September, has yet to play a show in South Florida under the name King Tuff; Thomas' garage-rock, power pop band based in Los Angeles is still enjoying the chart topping performance of their third and most recent album, "Black Moon Spell."

On Saturday, Jan. 17, King Tuff will take on the Churchill's stage for the first time.

"It's going to be full on, buck-wild," said Thomas, while navigating his tour van through the Texan desert en route to South Florida.

The show will feature the Jacuzzi Boys and D.C.-based band Ex Hex, lead by front-woman and songwriting veteran Mary Timony, whose past projects include Wild Flag, Helium and Autoclave.

King Tuff's South

Florida debut is welcomed by many—KT has earned quite the reputation in Miami's garage and punk rock community.

With three albums under his belt, Thomas has seen King Tuff take off. Shortly after its Wednesday, Sept. 24 release, "Black Moon Spell," was CMJ's "most added" album on college radio the week of Sept. 23. Later, it debuted at number one on Billboard Heatseeker's "Hot Shot Debut" chart the week of Oct. 11. It also took the number one spot on CMJ's College Radioplay chart for the week of Oct. 14.

"It seems like every record we put out gets a little bit more attention," Thomas said. "Over the years it's just been, you know, snowballing—which is nice."

With bands like King Tuff deciding to visit South Florida, Rob Budowsky, the owner of Strutter USA Productions, says Miami is experiencing its own snowball effect—it's finally getting the attention it deserves.

Strutter USA, the booking agency that put the King Tuff and Ex Hex show together, was conceived in October of 2013, and since then, has worked to dispel the idea that rock and roll music doesn't have a place in South Florida.

"I think agents and bands are reluctant to come down here because it's the first time for a lot of them and they don't know what to expect," Budowsky said. Budowsky managed the Jacuzzi Boys' 2013 California tour where he was introduced to Magic Jake, the bass player for King Tuff. On that same trip, Budowsky spent a few days at Old Gary's San Francisco home. Old Gary is King Tuff's drummer.

Budowsky says, despite the city's reputation, momentum has been building in the city. Future projects for Strutter USA include La Luz and The Shivas, two veteran bands hailing from the Pacific Northwest.

"Every show helps the next show," Budowsky said. "It's all a network of friends. When King Tuff and those guys go back to California, and they talk to their friends about what a great time they had in Miami and how well they were taken care of,

those bands will start to say, 'Hey we want to go to Miami. Book us show down there.'"

Budowsky says that

local word-of-mouth element is what makes both his job and the music great.

"These guys that I can

call my friends are creating this wonderful music. Its like another level of fandom when its your friends making the music,"

said Budowsky, who declares that King Tuff's "So Desperate" song to possibly be "the greatest pop song of all time."



JEFFREY PIERRE / THE BEACON



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FOOTBALL

Defensive Coaches Conklin, Harley joining staff at University of Pittsburgh

JACOB SPIWAK
Contributing Writer
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After leading the FIU defense to a historically great season in 2014, Defensive Coordinator Josh Conklin has agreed to take the same position at University of Pittsburgh under new Head Coach Pat Narduzzi.

Narduzzi, formerly the defensive coordinator at Michigan State University, is

widely regarded as one of the best defensive minds in college football.

The Panthers finished last season No. 4 in the country in takeaways, No. 35 in total defense, and led Conference USA in red zone defense. Head Coach Ron Turner brought Conklin in as the FIU Panthers' defensive coordinator in 2013, who in turn quickly made FIU one of the premiere defenses in the country.

FIU Linebackers' coach Rob Harley will be departing the program and joining Conklin's

defensive staff in Pittsburgh as well. Harley also played a key role in FIU's defensive success last year, taking a young group of linebackers and turning them into successful Division-I football players.

These moves will leave Ron Turner with multiple holes to fill on the defensive coaching staff, and it will be extremely difficult to replicate the performance of Conklin and Harley last season. However, with a roster that has CB Richard Leonard returning for his final

year of eligibility, as well as defensive standouts including LB Davison Colimon and DE Michael Wakefield, whoever takes over the defensive coordinator job will have key returning talent to work with.



JOSH CONKLIN

MENS BASKETBALL

Panthers drop second straight conference game

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The Panthers capped off an eight-game road trip with a 70-53 loss against the University of Birmingham at Alabama. The loss drops the Panthers' record to 8-9 overall and 1-2 in Conference USA.

The Panthers went into the half with a 31-28 lead, but were unable to hold off scoring runs by the Blazers in the

second half. The Blazers went on separate 10-2 and 12-0 runs in the second half. They eventually outscored the Panthers 42-22 in the second half.

The Panthers were led by senior guard Dennis Mavin who had 12 points on 4-of-16 shooting. Mavin was coming off a 31-point performance at Middle Tennessee. Adrian Diaz, the Panthers' second leading scorer, had only five points on 2-of-2 shooting in his 30 minutes of action. Diaz leads the Panthers in efficiency this season, shooting over 65% from the floor. The Panthers turned the

ball over 21 times and were out-rebounded 28 to 21.

Freshman forward Chris Cokley and guard Robert Brown, a redshirt junior, led the Blazers with 12 points each. The Blazers have now won four-straight games to improve their record to 7-9 overall and 3-0 in conference play.

The Panthers finally return home on Thursday, Jan. 15 as they welcome the Marshall University Thundering Herd. Tipoff is set for 7:30 pm from the US Century Bank Arena.

BASKETBALL

Basketball looking to get first win in Conference USA play tomorrow against Marshall University

REBECCA CHARUR
Staff Writer
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For the third time this season, FIU went head-to-head against a Conference USA opponent. And for the third time this season the Panthers fell to a C-USA opponent by double digits.

On Sunday, Jan. 11, the Panthers hosted the University of Alabama at Birmingham Blazers.

Despite a slow start from both teams, the three pointers eventually began to fall for the Blazers. This sparked a 15-4 run with about twelve minutes left in the first half.

By the end of the half UAB had taken a 39-21 lead, shooting 50 percent from long-range and going 16-29 from the field.

Coming out of the half, the Blazers continued their dominant offensive performance. FIU fought back early on, however, their run was short-lived as UAB pulled ahead to take their largest lead of the game at 25 points with about 6 minutes left in the game.

The Panthers pulled off one last run to cut the Blazer lead to 14 but by then it was too late. Even with this final run, the

Panthers finished the game shooting 31.7 percent from the field, a percentage with which victories are difficult to come by.

FIU fell to UAB with a final score of 68-45. With the loss, FIU's overall record this season dropped to 3-11 and further extended their losing streak to three games.

Destini Feagin lead the way with 12 points and 8 rebounds and Marita Davydova was not too far behind with 11 points. Davydova notched her fifth double-double of the season, recording 12 rebounds.

Season stand-out Kiandre'a Pound finished the game with 8 points, shooting 4-12 from the field, and 4 steals. On the other hand, guard Taylor Shade finished with 6 points.

The Panthers struggled shooting the three ball, going 0-5 in the first half and finishing the game shooting 13.3 percent from distance. Feagin hit FIU's only three point baskets.

With only three players coming off the bench, the Panther's bench was outscored 18-8. All eight bench points came from senior Tynia McKinzie. In addition, FIU was out scored in the paint 32-24.

The first time FIU played a C-USA team

was against Florida Atlantic University, where they were defeated 63-79.

Four days later, the Panthers took on Conference rival Middle Tennessee State University and were once again defeated with a final score of 60-75.

The Panthers will travel to Huntington, WV to take on Marshall University in their next C-USA matchup. There they will look to win their first game against a Conference opponent and record their fourth win of the season.



KRONO LESCANO/THE BEACON

Junior guard Destini Feagin stands on the court after the Panthers lost 45-68 to University of Alabama at Birmingham on Sunday, Jan. 11.

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BASEBALL

Panthers look to bounce back from disappointing end

BASEBALL, PAGE 1

The team has some returning infield starters back from last season in third baseman Josh Anderson, shortstop Julius Gaines and Edwin Rios, who is expected to move from second base to first base as he recovers from a shoulder injury. Last season the offense was headlined day in and day out by catcher Aramis Garcia. He was drafted by the San Francisco Giants in the second round. He

was the offensive leader for the team, which is rare for a catcher, and was also a tremendous backstop behind the plate when it came to his defensive game. The player that will have to take Garcia's role on the team is J.C. Escarra. As Garcia's back-up, Escarra showed he was capable of one day becoming the starting catcher as he grabbed the coaching staff's attention when he was behind the plate and in the batter's box.

With the catching situation figured out, there are still some position battles that need to be settled.

The first position that is still up for grabs is second base. With Rios moving to first base Coach Thomas mentioned three players who are front runners for the spot: Austin Rodriguez, Eddie Silva and Ray Perez. Rodriguez is a California JUCO transfer, who brings a lot offensively, can swing the bat very well but on the other hand Silva and Perez bring a strong game to the

field defensively. The battle in the outfield has even more intensity. One of the players in the outfield with a fantastic fall ball is Brian Portelli. He was primarily the designated hitter last season but now will be playing either left field or right field this season. The other players that are dueling for the corner outfield spots are sophomore Brandon Gomez and Brandon Cody. Cody is a JUCO transfer from California. Coach Thomas likes how Gomez improved his swing and has gotten better in the outfield. Cody has the potential to be a major power threat in the lineup as he displayed that power by hitting many home runs in fall ball.

The final spot that is still up in the air is center field. Three players are battling it out for the starting job. They are returning sophomore Kolby Follis, freshmen Jack Schaaf and Evan Holland.

The coaching staff is really impressed with Follis' speed as they see him in the leadoff spot. Schaaf runs well and can be a left-handed hitting threat in the lineup. Holland also displays good speed but is still developing at the plate.

With a little less than



MARIA SOLEDAD LORENZINO/THE BEACON

Senior third baseman Josh Anderson returns as an infield starter from last season.



MARIA SOLEDAD LORENZINO/THE BEACON

Junior infielder Edwin Rios is expected to move from second base to first base as he recovers from a shoulder injury this season.

two months to go until opening day, there is still plenty of deciding for the coaching staff to do. It looks like there will be a few younger and new faces stepping onto the field this season.

This team displays a lot of depth in many positions as the coaches have noticed

due to the amount of position battles there are.

Head Coach Thomas looks to change the dynamic outlook for this team as they push to be a top team in Conference USA and go deeper into the playoff tournament due to being eliminated in the first round last season.

WINTER ATHLETICS January Athletic Events

WEEK OF JAN. 11 TO JAN. 17

**WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
AT MARSHALL UNIV.**

WHEN: Thursday, Jan. 15 - 6 p.m.
WHERE: Away

**MEN'S BASKETBALL
VS MARSHALL UNIV.**

WHEN: Thursday, Jan. 15 - 7:30 p.m.
WHERE: Home

**WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
AT WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIV.**

WHEN: Saturday, Jan. 17 - 3 p.m.
WHERE: Away

**MEN'S BASKETBALL
VS WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIV.**

WHEN: Saturday, Jan. 17 - 6 p.m.
WHERE: Away

**MEN'S TRACK & FIELD
AT UNC INVITE**

WHEN: Saturday, Jan. 17 - All Day.
WHERE: Away

**WOMEN'S TRACK & FIELD
AT UNC INVITE**

WHEN: Saturday, Jan. 17 - All Day.
WHERE: Away

**WOMEN'S TENNIS
AT UCF QUAD TOURNAMENT II**

WHEN: Saturday, Jan. 17 - TBA
WHERE: Away

WEEK OF JAN. 18 TO JAN. 24

**WOMEN'S TENNIS
AT UCF QUAD TOURNAMENT II**

WHEN: Sunday, Jan. 18 - TBA
WHERE: Away

**MEN'S TRACK & FIELD
AT WINSTON-SALEM STATE OPEN**

WHEN: Sunday, Jan. 18 - All Day.
WHERE: Away

**WOMEN'S TRACK & FIELD
AT WINSTON-SALEM STATE OPEN**

WHEN: Sunday, Jan. 18 - All Day.
WHERE: Away

**WOMEN'S TENNIS
AT UCF QUAD TOURNAMENT II**

WHEN: Monday, Jan. 19 - TBA
WHERE: Away

**MEN'S TRACK & FIELD
AT WINSTON-SALEM STATE OPEN**

WHEN: Monday, Jan. 19 - All Day.
WHERE: Away

**WOMEN'S TRACK & FIELD
AT WINSTON-SALEM STATE OPEN**

WHEN: Monday, Jan. 19 - All Day.
WHERE: Away

**WOMEN'S SWIMMING & DIVING
VS FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIV.**

WHEN: Saturday, Jan. 24 - 11 a.m.
WHERE: Home

**WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
AT FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIV.**

WHEN: Saturday, Jan. 24 - 5 p.m.
WHERE: Away

Contestants prepare for Mr. and Miss FIU

CAMILA FERNANDEZ
BBC Managing Editor
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Beauty pageants are often looked down upon, but for FIU pageant contestants Marcos Garcia and Carolina Bussé, the competition is a life opportunity.

sorority family, have helped her to overcome struggles of being a shy and fearful person. Last year, she won the title of Ms. Dance Marathon at the Mr. and Miss Dance Marathon Pageant.

“I was intimidated by the [Miss FIU] competition and I realized [that] in life, you have

to give back and represent the University.

“[In Mexico], we don’t have these kind of pageants and opportunities,” Garcia said. “It would be great for me if I could represent my university by being [an] image and [a] face of FIU.”

According to Koren Illa, a senior communication arts major and executive director of the Miss FIU Pageant Committee, this year marks the 11th anniversary of Miss FIU, and the fifth for Mr. FIU. Unlike the men’s division, Miss FIU is an official preliminary for the Miss Florida Scholarship Pageant.

Illa said that for the first time, Mr. FIU will also have the opportunity to win a scholarship prize whereas in the past, winners only received small prizes and gift baskets.

“We’re awarding the Mr. FIU title-holder with an actual scholarship which, in the past, has never been done before—It’s a big deal this year,” Illa said.

To compete in the pageant, competitors must prepare a platform that represents a philanthropic organization or project.

Bussé has chosen to work with FIU student and TEDxFIU speaker, Alexa Chavarry. Bussé said she has

wanted to work with Chavarry after hearing about her “The Butterfly Project.”

The project asks those who deal with depression to draw a butterfly on their arm whenever they feel the need to self-harm, name it after a loved one and keep it alive by not cutting.

“Sometimes you can’t do it for yourself, you have to remember there’s other people out there that love you and will be devastated if something happens to you,” said Bussé.

Andrea Mirabal, a junior biology major and Miss FIU 2014, said that even if pageant contestants don’t win, they should continue to support their platforms, develop their talents and be informed about social issues.

“It’s more about what you do with the title and what you do,” said Mirabal. “Even if you don’t win Miss [or Mr.] FIU, it’s what you do with the pageant.”

Mirabal said that as Miss FIU, she felt the University has given her many opportunities.

“I feel like FIU has given me a lot... I feel it’s a very family-friendly community... we build bonds,” she said.

The Mr. and Miss FIU pageant will be held at the Mary Ann Wolfe Theater at the Biscayne Bay Campus on Jan.



MARIA SOLEDAD LORENZINO/THE BEACON

Junior biology major Andrea Mirabal, was crowned Miss FIU 2014 at last year’s pageant. She and Mr. FIU Omar Laachrate will be hosting Mr. and Miss FIU this year.

24. Doors for Mr. FIU open at 1:30 p.m. followed by Miss FIU at 5 p.m. There will be a Mad Hatters Ball at 4 p.m. in between both pageant hours.

student ID. General admissions for one pageant is \$20 while admission for both is \$30. Paid admission gives points to viewer’s candidate choice. FIU students enter free with

“ I always tell people I don’t want to just be ordinary, and I don’t want ‘being scared’ to stop me... this is why I have to do it.

Carolina Bussé
Sophomore
Elementary Education Major

Both will participate in this year’s Mr. and Miss FIU Scholarship Pageant of which title-holders receive hundreds of dollars in cash prize. However, participants look forward to becoming well-rounded individuals through pageant process.

“I always tell people I don’t want to just be ordinary, and I don’t want ‘being scared’ to stop me... this is why I have to do it.” said Bussé, a sophomore elementary education major.

Bussé said that the pageant process and support from her

to go for it. It doesn’t mean you’re gonna win, but you can’t be scared because there’s competition,” she said.

Coming from Mexico, Garcia, a junior international relations major, worked in the spanish broadcasting network Telemundo as part of the TV production team for Caso Cerrado.

He said that after a year of pushing to pass the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and the SAT, he finally got accepted to FIU. Now he wants the opportunity

LGBTQA family hosts annual welcome reception

CAMILA FERNANDEZ
BBC Managing Editor
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As University students are welcomed into the spring semester, they are invited by student clubs and organizations to participate in on-campus activities.

“ A lot of what we do is geared towards students who are simply seeking for somewhere to go, and feel safe and our event is a place all are welcome at.

Edwin Serrano
Graduate Assistant
LGBTQA Initiatives

For Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer Questioning and Allies students, faculty and staff, a welcome reception will be held at the Biscayne Bay Campus Thursday, Jan. 15.

The annual event is hosted by LGBTQA clubs and organizations such as the Gay-Straight Alliance, SAVE Dade, Equality Florida

and Pridelines Youth Services, according to Gisela Vega, associate director of the LGBTQA Initiatives in the Office of Multicultural Programs and Services.

All offer opportunities for personal growth, networking, becoming politically involved and engaging in LGBTQA issues.

SAVE Dade, for example, is Miami-Dade County’s leading organization devoted to protecting LGBTQA people against discrimination.

Vega said the reception is also a way for students to network and inquire what different events will run this spring for LGBTQA students.

“The event is basically a social reception, a networker for people to meet one another, to find out about the events...to sort of introduce students to different groups that we have that serve the LGBTQA community,” Vega said.

This month, for example, the LGBTQA family will host their 3D Series where students discuss gender identities, gender issues and social rights as LGBTQA individuals.

Edwin Serrano, a graduate assistant for LGBTQA Initiatives, said in a previous interview with Student Media that events like the 3D Series, are where LGBTQA

people can find support and comfort.

“A lot of what we do is geared towards students who are simply seeking for somewhere to go, and feel safe and our event is a place all are welcome at,” Serrano said.

“When we [are] planning for

this semester’s 3D events, we [want] to cover topics and issues that could reach out to any college student’s experience,” he said.

According to LGBTQA Initiatives, the organization strives to reduce homophobia and heterosexism on both campuses

through education, advocacy and awareness.

Over 50 students are expected to participate at the BBC reception from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. at the Wolfe University Center, Room 157. Free food and refreshments will be provided.

WOW WITH ROARY



NATALIE REYES/THE BEACON

Above: Students line up for food at the BBC Welcome BBQ as part of Week of Welcome.

Right: A balloon decoration of Roary stands in Panther Square as students participate in Week of Welcome activities.



NATALIE REYES/THE BEACON