

the sunblazer



■ Student Lissette Campos and Miami News Editor Howard Kleinberg on the set of "After Deadline"

Photo: Jose Lopez/FIU Sunblazer

Classes prepare students for TV

TERRY PENARANDA
Sunblazer Staff Writer

For the next six weeks, two classes from the Communication department at Florida International University will be working together on a show called "After Deadline."

Perspectives in Mass Media and Studio Production II are classes which give journalism and telecommunication students a "hands on" experience with the work they will be doing once they graduate.

The Perspectives class is responsible for the content of "After Deadline": Studio II takes care of the shooting and directing.

The show is taped in the studio at channel 17 [WLRN]. "After Deadline" covers a number of issues which concern not only journalists, but also the community. Kevin Hall, professor of journalism at FIU, hosts the show in which professionals from the media share their expertise with several students in a panel discussion. The other students sit in the audience and learn from the panelists also.

"Students get to work in public, and that's what a journalist does," said Hall. This is the second spring semester Perspectives has been offered, and Hall, who team-teaches this class with J. Arthur Heise, Chairman of the Communications Department, said he was really pleased with the course.

"I'm used to hiding behind the typewriter," said Hall. However, although he said he would give anything to get out of the hosting business, the fact that the class is "for the students" encourages him to do his part.

Cliff Werner, a print journalism major who is in the Perspectives class, said, "I think that overall, it's excellent in giving the people a brief working look at the operation of T.V. and print journalism."

"You get out of this class what you put into it--and you need time to put into it," Werner said.

A broadcast journalism student working with the group who did the show last Wednesday, Yvonne Coley, said, "It's a self-taught class." Her group's topic was "Editorials-Who Cares?" Coley said the research and the awareness of the issue gave her a different perspective about editorials.

Heise also said he is pleased with the class. There have been a few changes this semester because in spring of 1987 everything was new, and the students, as well as the professors, are experimenting with different topics and formats for the new show now.

It's a very different course than the normal course offered at FIU," said Heise. "It's a little different than preparing an essay for class where your only audience is the professor."

Heise said, "It [the format of the course] adds realism to the learning process" because the student is actually researching and preparing a show for the community.

The course is beneficial to the students educationally as well as financially because of the money which is involved in this type of program. Heise said that FIU pays the Society of Professional Journalists [SPJ] \$1,500 for providing adjunct professors. For this class, SPJ is payed to provide guests for "After Deadline." The guests volunteer, so in turn, the \$1,500 goes back to FIU students in the form of scholarships.

Apart from the benefits for the Perspectives students, Production II students are also able to work directly with professionals from the studio at channel 17 themselves.

Bob Lopez works at channel 17 and is also an adjunct professor at FIU. He teaches the Studio Production II class and oversees the students as they direct the show. Lopez said he enjoys teaching and the students say he is very encouraging.

Michael Amaya, a telecommunications major, said it was important for the students to work at channel 17 because in every show of "After Deadline," Production students get to do something different in the studio. "Students are rotated so they can actually work behind the camera, work as stage managers and direct a show," he said.

Amaya was in the control room observing everything the director was doing so that he can direct the next show.

"It's the best class offered at FIU [for telecommunication students]," said Mike Conroy.

Conroy was camera man for one of the shows. "It's the best because you can get behind a camera and play," he said.

FIU's Production II students are allowed to participate not

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Hennington Island houses rare plants

MATTHEW PENZER
Sunblazer Features co-Editor

Early this fall, at Florida International University's University Park campus, construction will be completed on Henington Island, an architectural and botanical project that will be home to an assortment of rare and exotic plants.

The island was the brainstorm of Charlie Hennington, who was the grounds superintendent of FIU for thirteen years before losing a battle with cancer in 1987. Hennington loved plants, particularly rare plants such as bromeliads and orchids, but each of his efforts to grow exotic plants at various locations on campus failed due to vandalism or theft. He then envisioned an island on which he could grow rare plants in a controlled environment, similar to that of a rain forest. Sadly, though, Hennington passed away before his dream was realized.

Today, due to the combined efforts of several university departments, Hennington Island is becoming a reality.

Greg Burdine-Coakley, a landscape architectural student and university employee on educational leave this semester, is project coordinator of the construction of the island. "When the island is finished," said Burdine-Coakley, "it will become an educational tool to benefit the students of the university."

The Henington Island project is a collective effort of the biology and natural studies department, landscape architecture, and FIU's physical plant.

Alan Fernandez designed the shape of the island and the lake surrounding it. He, along with biologist David Lee, chose the planting materials for the island. These materials include one thousand cubic yards of mulch, donated by Florida Power and Light, which will cover the entire island. It will keep the ground cool and eventually, after breaking down, serve as a fertilizer.

Other FIU community members contributing to the project are Tom Cooper, the university architect, and Carol Bailey, the present grounds superintendent.

The island will be located at

the center of the lake being created by FIU to obtain land-fill for the foundation of the new engineering building. "All planting and other major work on the island must be completed before the dredging begins," said Burdine-Coakley. "The island will be inaccessible to heavy machinery afterward."

So far, the planting operation, which is being performed almost entirely by student volunteers, is running smoothly. In fact, it is nearly completed.

Some of the plants have been donated by Fairchild Tropical Gardens, a sanctuary in South Miami for rare plants, but the bulk of the fauna comes from FIU's own nursery. Four large oak trees have been planted to provide a canopy for most of the island, thus creating the moist and dense rain forest atmosphere necessary for the survival of the exotic plants.

After completion, Henington Island will be managed by the biology department. The island will be an ideal habitat for wildlife and the department now has plants to create a turtle beach there, as well as several nesting areas for exotic species of birds.

Burdine-Coakley said dedication ceremonies for Henington Island are scheduled for the fall. "This is a one-of-a-kind project," he added. "There are so many people from academic, as well as administrative, departments who are working together to create something special for FIU. The benefits will be tremendous."

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■ The Burger King Express, a familiar sight to FIU students, will be closing down February 26.

Photo: Jose Lopez/FIU Sunblazer

Burger King Express closes up

ILSE PALENZUELA
Sunblazer News Editor

Students who dream of escaping their classrooms to eat a Whopper may experience withdrawal symptoms after February 26.

That's the last day the Mobile Restaurant Unit, also known as the Burger King Express, will be at Florida Inter-

national University, as well as at other locations, according to Allegra Ann Owens, Burger King Corporation Manager of Region Franchising.

It seems that Burger King Corporation was not pleased with the way the Mobile Units were working out, not only at FIU but elsewhere around Miami, said Juan Argudin, assistant vice-president of administrative affairs at FIU,

"It [the Mobile Restaurant Unit] started out very well at FIU, but sales went down steadily," said Argudin.

The trucks that house the burgers, fries, and shakes are now five years old and they were occasionally breaking down, said Argudin. He said that Burger King was not making much of a profit and requested permission to end its contract with the university at

the end of February, although the contract didn't expire for two more years.

In fact, Burger King Corporation has decided to go out of the Mobile Restaurant Unit business entirely, according to Ron Arrowsmith, vice president of administrative affairs at FIU.

"When we have an agreement with a company, it's just that--an agreement," said

Argudin. "If they are experiencing financial problems, we don't hold them down to their contract."

FIU students who are looking for an alternative to Burger King on campus can find hamburgers and fries, as well as other foods, at the FIU cafeteria, the Rathskeller, and Gracie's.

International students must pay income tax

REY QUINTANA
Sunblazer Editor

International students take note: if you have obtained authorized employment on or off campus, you must file a Form 1040-NR Tax Return with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Form 1040-NR is the federal income tax form for non-resident aliens working in the United States.

"Students holding F-1 and J-1 visas are permitted to work a maximum of 20 hours per

week during classes and 40 hours per week on their breaks," said Linda Miskovic of FIU's International Student Office. "And if they're employed, they have to pay income tax just like the rest of us. Unfortunately, many of our kids don't realize this."

Students wishing further information should contact the International Student Office at 554-2421. A copy of Form 1040-NR can be obtained by calling the Internal Revenue Service at 1-800-424-1040.

-TV show, from page 1

only during class time, but also in any show at channel 17, said Amaya.

The director of the last show, Dennis Halka, said he was taking Production II as a special student. He's just taking classes in telecommunication as a mid-life career change, and he said he loves every minute of it. "Having the hands-on experience is great for a student," he said.

"When you're back there directing a show, it's either ultimate pleasure or a terrifying experience--but it's worth it," said Halka.

So far the classes have taped two shows: "Whatever happened to Investigative Reporting" and "Editorials-Who Cares?"

There are three more shows on the agenda: "The Quality of Local Television News Coverage," "Covering the Presidential Campaign," and "Role of the Local News Media-Cheerleader or Watchdog."

In the beginning of March, the shows will be aired on channel 17 and also on cable.

Martin Yoffe, cable coordinator, said "After Deadline" is what the community needs in order to find out about issues they don't have time to do research on.

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■ One of the "wilder" creations featured at last week's Black History Month Fashion Show. Photo: Maria Padron/FIU Sunblazer

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Profile: Fred Jorgenson, SGA President

ILSE PALENZUELA
Sunblazer News Editor

"He's a nice kid, Fred," said Ronnie Mittleman, Graphics Illustrator for the Student Government Association.

"He's a solid, responsible, personable student that I'd like to have not only as a friend, but also as a co-worker," said Modesto "Mitch" Maidique, president of Florida International University.

They are, of course, talking about Fred Jorgenson, the sandy-haired SGA president and chairman of the Florida Student Association for 1987-1988.

A senior at FIU, this Electrical Engineering major has presided over SGA's \$1.48 million budget, lobbied for student's rights in Tallahassee, chaired FIU's Media and Services Committee and the Radio Station Subcommittee, presided over the FIU Interschool Christian Fellowship, and worked at a catering service to help pay his way through school.

With a schedule like that, it's no wonder Jorgenson believes that "college is not so much learning things as it is learning to deal with crises."

Jorgenson says he went into politics in order to address student issues on a state level that "Joe Student" wouldn't have been able to, such as lob-

bying for state dollars that are given over to private schools like the University of Miami.

Closer to home, Jorgenson wanted to finish up FIU's student-run radio station project that had been in the works for three years. Sometime in March, his goal will be realized when KFIU airs its first broadcast.

Jorgenson also liked the political aspect of the presidency "I've been encouraged by a lot of people to go into politics after graduation," he said, "but I'm keeping all my options open for the future and applying to Motorola and Southern Bell.

When asked who was the most interesting person he has met during his term, Jorgenson answered, "I'd like to be able to say, 'When I met Bob Graham; he was the most phenomenal,' but that's just not true."

He flashed a quick grin and went on, "Actually, Colonel Bernard Hendricks of Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University was the most interesting. He had a sense of humor and was able to get things done in the most productive way and still make everybody feel good."

Humor and a strong sense of dedication are what make Jorgenson a successful president in the eyes of his best friend and SGA Lobby Annex Director, Adam Underwood.

Underwood, who subscribes to the philosophy, "If you take anything too seriously, you go crazy," described a recent inci-

dent during which Jorgenson acted out of character in his role as SGA president.

"I had a real important interview with Motorola, and there was a glass partition behind the lady who was interviewing me. Fred, who was in the next room, began leaping through the air like a ballerina," Underwood chuckled.

"I was trying hard not to laugh, but when he pressed his face close to the glass and pretended he was picking his nose--I just cracked up in the middle of the interview. Luckily, the lady knew Fred, and once I had explained the situation she was not upset," he said.

Natalie Butto, the vice-president of SGA, admitted that Jorgenson's character is very similar to Underwood's, and that is one reason they get along so well.

However, she added, "Our characters are very different; so sometimes we don't agree on certain things. But I still respect Fred because he's always looking out for the well-being of the students.

"Fred's the kind of guy that if he hears about something bad for students, he'll immediately say, 'That's not right!,' and pick up the phone to do something about it," she said.



■ Fred Jorgenson, SGA President

Photo: Jose Lopez/FIU Sunblazer

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Editorial

Rey Quintana, Sunblazer Editor

This man really cares...

The presidency of a major university brings with it a certain degree of "celebrity" status. As FIU's chief representative, President Mitch Maidique is expected to preside over all important meetings, ceremonies, and celebrations involving this institution.

To most students, President Maidique is just that - a distant "celebrity" of sorts whose picture pops up in the newspapers once in a while. It is not at all inconceivable to go through four years of study at FIU and never see the man in person until graduation. Several students I spoke with see Maidique as a figurehead who surfaces to greet dignitaries while the rest of the administration handles FIU's problems. This is not meant as a criticism - it is simply their perception of his role as President.

If this perception were true, Maidique would be nothing more than a pompous fool who wants his every move covered by the media. I knew such a man once, when I worked as a news reporter for the Georgetown "Hoya." Father Timothy Healy, the President of Georgetown University, was all smiles when Bill Cosby came to his campus and collected an honorary degree. He was all smiles when the basketball team won the national championship. I tried to talk to him on several occa-

sions to discuss important issues concerning the students at Georgetown. He never gave me the time of day.

I must confess that I, too, viewed Maidique (and all university presidents, for that matter) as the hand-shaking pompous type. When I first attempted to arrange an interview with him to discuss the lack of adequate facilities for FIU's fine arts programs last January, I expected his secretary to set up a meeting sometime in the near future that would eventually be postponed or cancelled. Instead, she went into his office, told him what I wanted, and he immediately picked up the phone and spoke to me. I was so surprised that my mind went blank and I had to stop and remember why I was calling.

At the Hispanic Scholarship Fund's Radio Marathon earlier this month I had the opportunity to witness this remarkable man in action. Maidique was there from start to finish. He did what was expected of him as a celebrity - he shook the hands of Mayor Xavier Suarez and Bishop Agustin Roman as they went on the air and asked for contributions. But he also sat at the switchboard and answered telephone calls, just like the rest of us. He made sure that students were allowed as much time on the radio as possible. When he finally took a break

to eat dinner, he came into the radio station's kitchen and discussed the school newspaper with me over a bowl of soup. No pomp. No ceremony.

Last week, following my election as Sunblazer Editor, we met in his office to discuss the future of the school paper. I walked into a magnificent suite richly decorated with expensive furniture. I expected that. I saw a huge mahogany desk and leather chair. I expected that, too. What I didn't expect was that Maidique would pull up a chair and sit right across from me and treat me as if I were a guest in his living room. No pomp. No ceremony.

Maidique has never refused to talk to anyone on the Sunblazer staff. He has returned every single phone call we have ever made to his office. He has come down from that "celebrity" pedestal and has shown an eagerness to communicate not only with the dignitaries, but with the REAL people that make up FIU - the students, teachers, and university employees.

Sure, our school has problems-what university doesn't? But in President Maidique we have someone who is willing to listen and help solve those problems; someone who goes to basketball games and cheers for the Golden Panthers even though the bleachers are empty; someone who takes pride in FIU and looks to future growth and prestige; someone who really cares. I for one am proud that he's our President.

Legal corner

The United States Supreme Court's decision concerning the censorship of a high school newspaper in St. Louis only emphasizes the decline of individual rights in modern American society. In a 5-3 vote, the Justices held that the editor of the Spectrum, the school newspaper, could delete two articles about teenage pregnancy and divorce. In *Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier*, the majority opinion decided that the Spectrum was not a public forum, and therefore under the authority of the school administration.

The Supreme Court arose at this decision by claiming that "school facilities may be deemed to be public forums only if school authorities have by policy or by practice opened the facilities for indiscriminate use by the general public, or by some segment of the public, such as student organizations." *Perry Education Association v. Perry Local Educators Association (1983)*. With this definition, the Supreme Court reversed the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeal's decision, and opened the floodgates to further censorship.

The previous precedent had been *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District (1969)* in which school officials were precluded from "material and substantial interference with school work or discipline...or the rights of others." By narrowing the scope of *Tinker* to exclude facilities not considered "public forum," the highest court has simply, and arbitrarily given themselves carte blanche to censor newspapers in public schools.

Furthermore, the Supreme Court held in *Hazelwood* that "...the educators do not offend the First Amendment by exercising editorial control over the style and content of student speech and school-sponsored expressive activities so long as our actions are reasonably related to legitimate pedagogical concerns..." In other words, a free hand for school administrators to censor under the aegis of "pedagogical concerns."

Incredulously, the school board of *Hazelwood* had in their policy that "school-sponsored student publications will not restrict free expression or diverse view points within the rules of responsible journalism" (Subsection 348.51).

So we have a decision that allows for censorship of counter-educational opinions, if they are so defined by the group that's attempting to censor them. Justice Brennan, in his dissent, countered with the following: "'socialism is good' subverts the school's inculcation of the message that capitalism is better... (therefore) school officials could censor... the students... converting our public schools into 'enclaves of totalitarianism... that strangle the free mind of its source...' " Elsewhere in his dissent, Brennan quoted again from the *Tinker* decision: official censorship of school expression, unless the material "disrupts classwork or involves substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others..." is unconstitutional. Nowhere is there a requirement that the method of expression must be defined as a "public forum." Also, how could a school newspaper, read on a person's free time, substantially disrupt class work?

James Long, Administrative Director of the Miami chapter of the ACLU, voiced

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Staff Photographers: Gus Garcia-Montes, Jose Lopez, Maria Padron

his disagreement with the *Hazelwood* decision. "We are against censorship in any form," states the director. "The First Amendment is intended for all." In addition, Mr. Long mentioned a recent Florida decision in which *Hazelwood* was used as precedent in Lake City to censor books such as "Canterbury Tales" by Chaucer. The ACLU may challenge that decision. Already the ramifications of *Hazelwood* are becoming evident. By defining censorship as related to "legitimate pedagogical concerns" the Supreme Court has further retrenched our constitutional rights. Under *Hazelwood*, any material viewed as "non-educational" may be censored. This severely freezes freedom of expression in public schools, and plants the seed for greater censorship in society.

The *Hazelwood* decision was wrong, but it serves to illustrate the arbitrary manner in which the Supreme Court decides its cases. The Spectrum was conveniently judged not to be a public forum, and therefore exempt from First Amendment protection. What

else can a school newspaper be if not a public facility to discuss issues? While the Sunblazer is an independent newspaper, could the day arise when the Supreme Court, now stocked with Reagan appointees, decides to exclude this paper from its generalized definition of a public forum? As the rights of the individual are further paired away by such decisions, will the *Tinker* decision's worst scenario, public schools becoming "enclaves of totalitarianism," become reality? The decisions of the Supreme Court are out of the public's reach, but the election of the person who appoints the Justices is not. Above all, students must become aware of the dangerous undercurrent that is eroding constitutional rights. The Justices are appointed for life. Justice Kennedy, nominated by President Reagan, was just confirmed. He'll be making decisions that affect all of us well into the 21st century. *Hazelwood* was not the first decision to retrench constitutional guarantees. There will be others.

- ALBERT TORRES

Review: Nicholson & Streep tops in "Ironweed"



■ Academy Award nominees Meryl Streep and Jack Nicholson shine in "Ironweed"

CHRIS PROIETTI
Sunblazer Staff Writer

"A man at the bottom of the world is still a man," says Hector Babenco, director of "Ironweed." The film, starring Jack Nicholson and Meryl Streep, explores the bleak, cold world of the homeless and their deep, complex emotions.

Set in Albany, New York, in the late 1930's, "Ironweed" is the story of bums pressed by the needs of home and alcohol and by the weight of memories of happier times. Nicholson plays Francis Phelan, a man who abandoned his family after the accidental death of his infant son and has been drifting the streets for 22 years. He delivers an excellent performance as the dirty, un-

shaven, rag-wearing Francis - a role light years away from the black Ray-Bans and arrogance of characters past. Nicholson sinks himself into the character of Francis Phelan as he drunkenly stumbles and mutters through the alleys and cardboard hobo villages. He may be a man who is down, but he is never out. Nicholson instills Francis with a fire and toughness that keeps

him going place to place in spite of his hopeless situation.

Streep is Helen Archer, a former singer who wanders the streets and is girlfriend to Francis. Like Nicholson, she looks physically deteriorated. Her face is deathly pale with red, bleary eyes and sunken bags. She has blackened, crooked teeth and ratty hair stuffed under an old hat. It is a sight watching her try to walk straight in her shoddy, broken heels.

Streep is remarkable yet again but her screentime in a starring role is somewhat less than expected. One of her most memorable scenes is when she sings "He's My Pal" to Francis in front of a crowd at a bar. The scene showcases her vocal ability and range, talents rarely seen in her previous roles.

The screen chemistry between Nicholson and Streep works more naturally than their previous pairing in "Heartburn." As Francis and Helen, theirs is a relationship of care and sharing. They are constantly on the lookout for each other and whenever one has any money they are quick to spend it on the other. One scene which shows the concern and protectiveness they have for each other is when Francis finds a warm place for Helen to stay overnight. They had

gotten into a huge screaming match in which Francis hurls his dinner at Helen - a cheese sandwich that falls apart on her head. Francis calms down, comforts the crying Helen and takes her to a warm spot in an abandoned car.

The relationship between Francis and Helen is vital, but it is not the main emphasis of the film. Babenco concentrates on the character of Francis as he is haunted by death, guilt, and memories of the past. Francis encounters the ghosts of people in his past and present which were involved in significant parts of his life. We see in flashback some of the complicated events that led to turning points. Francis eventually returns to the family he abandoned and encounters both hostility and acceptance. He becomes overwhelmed by the ghosts and memories of happier times and wonders if he can ever go home again and what's in store for him in the future.

"Ironweed" is a bleakly beautiful portrait of the beings and spirits of street people who aren't always recognized as having emotions. Strong performances and an excellent screenplay make it a film to be seen.

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Profile: Golden Panther Baseball Team

JAVIER MARISCAL
Sunblazer sports writer

Golden Panther baseball has gotten off to an 8 and 4 start this season. The following is a breakdown of this year's Panther baseball team.

Denny Wiseman is the key to this year's pitching staff. He leads off the starting rotation which includes sophomore left-handers Leroy Ball (Monaca, Pa.) and Steve McDowell (New Port Richie, Fl.), junior right-hander Aaron Vasquez (Albuquerque, N.M.), and senior righties Jeff Krueger (San Diego, Ca.) and Joe Negron (Miami, Fl.). Coach Price will use junior right-hander Mike Grayson (Tampa, Fl.), sophomore right-hander Armando Bertematti (Miami, Fl.), junior Jose Calveiro (Hialeah, Fl.) and David Horgan (Rockledge, Fl.) as his relievers.

Junior Jose Vasquez (Miami, Fl.) was brought in from a junior college to fill the second base spot vacated by Hector Fernandez. Senior Zac

Valade (San Diego, Ca.) will come back to play shortstop making the Panther defense up the middle quite strong. Newcomer Peter Lopez, junior, also shows a lot of promise in the shortstop position where he will be playing a back-up role. The third base position is up for grabs between incumbent junior Steve Edwards (St. Cloud, Fl.) and transfer student Joe Gonella (Willingboro, N.J.)

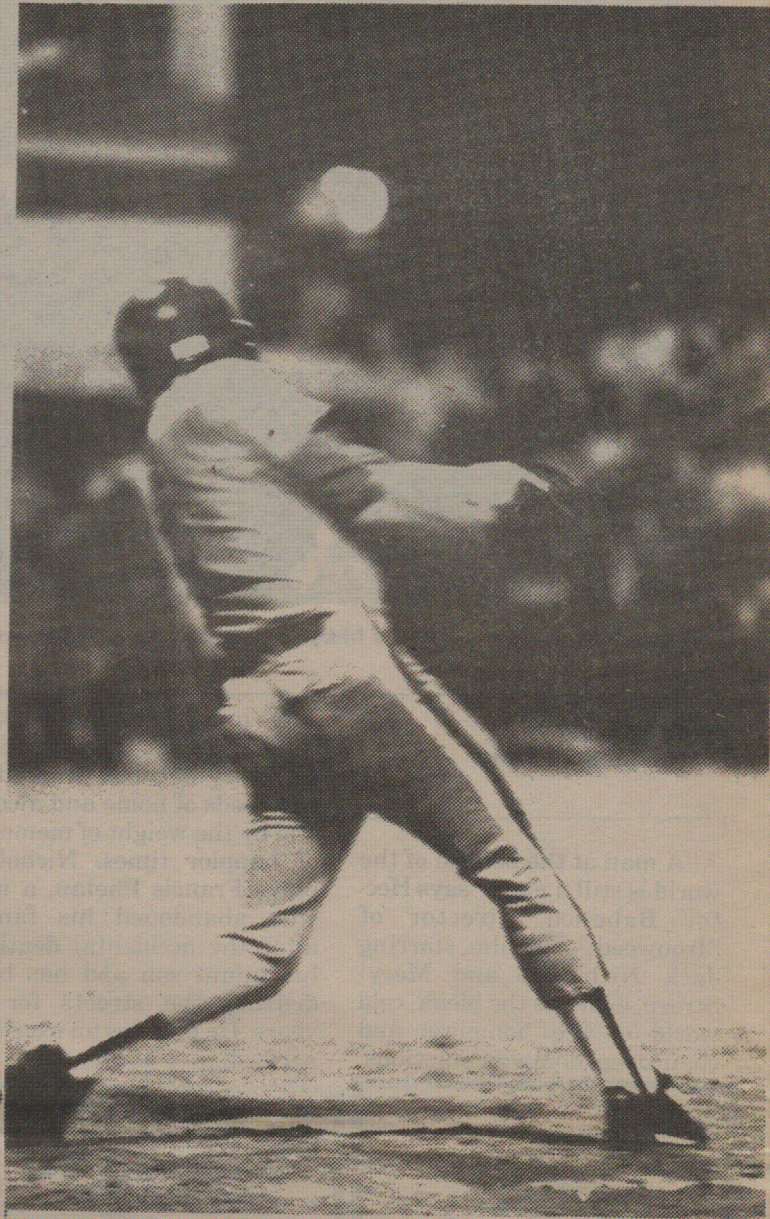
The first base position will be disputed among juniors Freddy Varela (Key West, Fl.) and Ken Villanova (Gibbstown, N.J.), and senior Mark Krzeminski (Spring Hill, Fl.). These three might also share the designated hitter position.

Senior Jorge Laguardia (Hialeah, Fl.) was very impressive at left field last season, but he is being challenged by Freshman Ed Cruz (Miami, Fl.) who was outstanding in his senior year, and was voted All-Dade First

Team. Center field is a toss up between senior Rich Radford (East Moline, Il.) and newcomer Ron Flury (Hollywood, Fl.). Rick Johnson (Hollywood, Fl.) has already won the right field position because of his outstanding hitting. Sophomore Anthony Nicks will be a roll player in the outfield.

Junior Nelson Caraballo (Miami, Fl.) is expected to handle the catching position, while senior Bob Heck (Hollywood, Fl.) and freshman Ted Spore (Hoffman Estates, Il.) are second and third choices behind him.

So far the team has lost four of its twelve games. The Panthers are currently on a three game losing streak after traveling to Deland and losing their last two. They will meet Florida Atlantic on Wednesday, the 24, and the University of Central Florida on Saturday, the 27. Both games will be at FIU at 7:00 pm.



■ Panthers hope to end three-game losing streak

Three FIU students triumph in games

PORTER DAVIS
Sunblazer contributor/Monte Carlo Game Room

The Association of College Unions International 1988 Region 6 Indoor Sports Recreation Tournament met February 5-7, at the University of Miami. More than 250 students representing colleges and universities from Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi

and Florida met to compete in pocket billiards, bowling, backgammon, table tennis, darts and chess.

Seventeen FIU students, members of the University Park Monte Carlo Club, participated in the three day event. These students had qualified to represent FIU by having won either first or second place in the local campus tournaments.

Toni Elalm, a senior majoring in accounting, won first place in backgammon, while Victor Cajina won first place in

chess. Cajina later joined Paul Porta to win first place in the team competition in chess. Other winners from FIU include Raffy Yaghdjian, who won second place in backgammon, and Julia Webber and Raquel Bernar who won second place in women's doubles table tennis. Paul Joseph and Alberto Domingues also joined forces to win second place in the team competition in chess.

The 1989 competition will take place at Florida State University.



■ FIU Bat girl Nicole Tai

Photo: Maria Padron/FIU Sunblazer

FIU Bat girls in action

MATTHEW PENZER
Sunblazer Features Editor

The recent start of the Panther baseball season marks the return of the FIU bat girls. They can be seen retrieving bats for the team during each home game.

Sophomore Nicole Tai is returning this year to begin her second season as a bat girl. Tai is one of the ten girls who responded to posters hung around campus by the athletics department, calling for bat girls to assist the baseball team. All the girls who responded made the squad.

Tai, who plans to major in either fashion merchandising or sports medicine, became a bat girl because of her love of baseball, and is learning a great deal about the game from being in the dugout. Although she usually knows what's happening on the field, the players are always willing to fill her in when she is confused.

Tai and some of the other batgirls would like to travel with the team on a regular

basis, although there is no program set up for this as of yet. Funding for travel has been a major problem the bat girls have had to face. Last year, Tai travelled with the team to North and South Carolina during the season-ending road trip. She stayed in the team trainer's room, who fortunately for her, was female.

Obviously, being a girl in a dugout full of men can be a difficult situation at times, but the team treats Tai, and the other girls, well. The players usually apologize for any abusive language that might slip out.

There are some difficulties, however, that go along with the job. "The most difficult part [of the job] is staying out of the way of the bats," remarked Tai. "This is my second year as a bat girl and I still have some near misses."

The girls are paid twenty dollars per game. That money is equally divided between the girls, usually two, who are working the game. But Tai has a special reason, other than a monetary one, to be on the field, day after day, dodging and retrieving baseball bats. "I love baseball. That's why I do it."