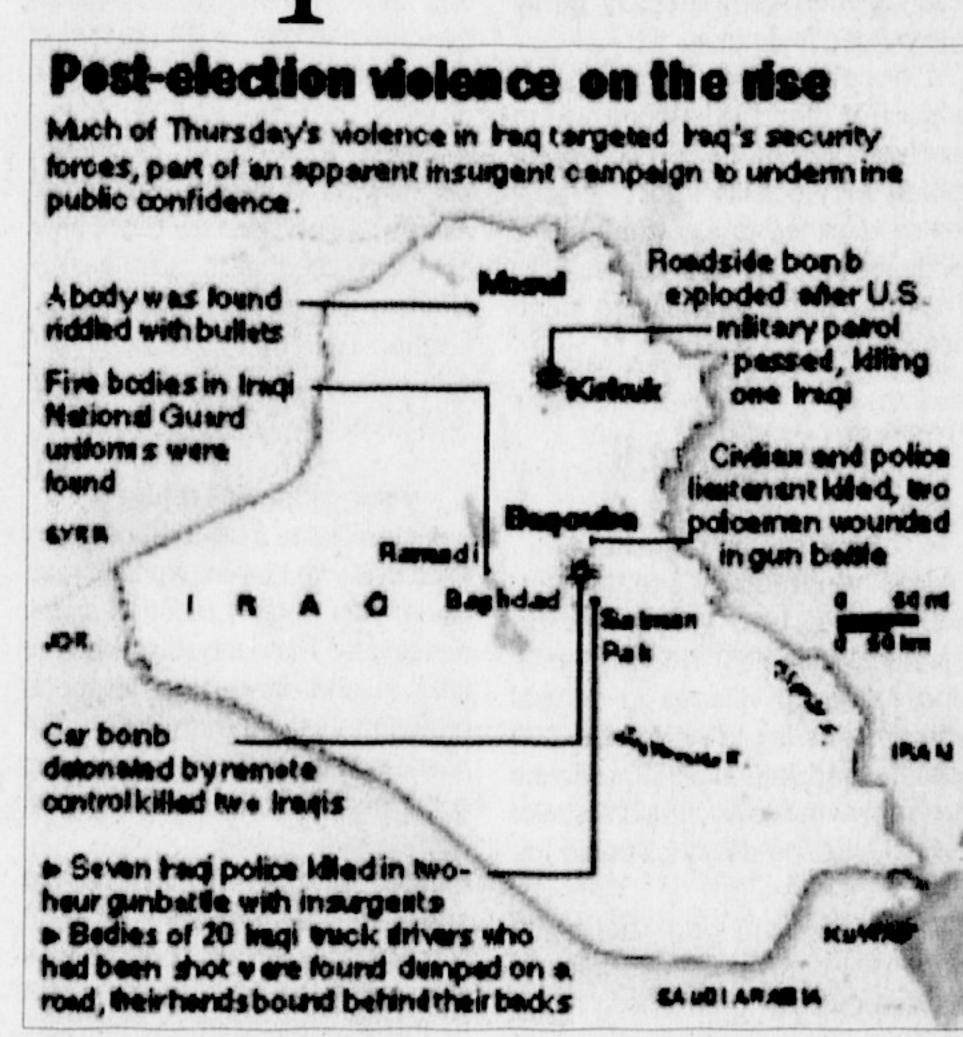
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Iraqi elections draw varying opinions



www.theeastcarolinian.com

Bush administration's impact seen

MICHAEL HARRINGTON SENIOR WRITER

The first elections of Iraq were held, drawing millions of citizens to cast their votes for the National Assembly.

For some, these elections lend credibility to the Bush administration's policies on global terrorism while others view the situation much differently.

Fred Gedrich, former U.S. Department of State and Defense official, said the recent elections may well go down in history as being a crucial blow toward global terrorism.

"I think these elections are very important," said Gedrich.

"It may be a situation where the civilized world ... looks back and says it is a turning point in & the war on terror."

The U.S. began the military invasion of Iraq in spring of 2003 and elections were held less than two years later, a fact Gedrich said reflects well on the Bush administration.

"I think we should all put things in perspective – on what was accomplished," Gedrich said. Gedrich said the reconstruc-

Gedrich said the reconstruction efforts in Japan and Germany took longer than the current one



An unidentified Kurdish supporter waves a Kurdish flag as he runs through the streets celebrating the election results.

being carried out in Iraq.

Richard Kilroy, visiting assistant professor in the department of political science, said he is optimistic for the Iraqi people and the prospects of democracy in the region, but there is no certainty that the country will embrace these new principles.

"We hope it means a new start for them ... that they will embrace the democratic principles that we have," said Kilroy.
"The question is whether that

will happen or not."

Kilroy said the administration hopes that change in Iraq will in turn bring change in the Middle East.

"They feel that Iraq is an important country that might cause change," Kilroy said.

"I think that when the Bush administration looks at their role today, they see themselves at an important point in history ... that they have to be the ones to take a

stand against global terrorism."

Kilroy said a problem with the administration's policies is they are not coming across well internationally, where in many countries the U.S. effort in Iraq

is viewed negatively by majorities of the respective populations.

"I think one of the concerns
I have to the administration's
viewpoint is they have not effectively communicated it to the
whole world," Kilroy said.

"I think that's a disappointment."

see ELECTION page A3

BSU hosts informative week on diversity

Events geared to promote cultural awareness

LINDSAY WINTHROP STAFF WRITER

As part of Black History Month, the Black Student Union is hosting events this week geared toward educating students on different diversity issues.

The BSU is an organization open to all ECU students who are interested in promoting cultural awareness.

All the events sponsored by BSU are directed at different parts of African American history that are often overlooked.

"Our history doesn't start with Rosa Parks, it goes back way further than that," said Tamika Walker, senior music education major and president of BSU.

"I hope people learn more about the African American culture ... people have to step outside of their comfort zone and take a look at the world."

She said there could be more efforts on campus to make the ECU community aware of diversity issues. While progress is being made, more work needs to be done.

"There is still more ground to be covered," Walker said.

One activity people in every culture participate in is art. The symbolism and inventiveness of art allows insight into the culture that produced it.

Paintings of African American Warrior markings were painted on people's faces Tuesday. African arts and crafts were made Tuesday evening on the lawn, allowing students to see the displays of the visual history

BSU plans to recruit members this Wednesday to give all students the opportunity to join an organization working toward enhancing the campus community. They will be passing out information to let students know about their organization in the Wright Plaza.

see STUDENT page A3

Holland asks Head Coach Bill Herrion to step down



Head Men's Basketball Coach Bill Herrion, shown in this Jan. 15 file photo, will relinquish his position at the end of this season. Athletic Director Terry Holland and Senior Associate AD Nick Floyd met with Herrion Tuesday morning to discuss the matter. While Herrion will no longer be coaching ECU basketball, he will stay in the athletics department. According to Holland, Herrion will step down in order to "work with a major fundraising initiative for ECU athletics."

Easley appoints two new deans

Horns, Johnson will use expertise to examine health issues

MICHAEL HARRINGTON SENIOR WRITER

Two deans from ECU were appointed to the North Carolina Institute of Medicine by

Governor Mike Easley.

Dr. Phyllis Horns, dean of the school of nursing, and Dr. Cynda Johnson, dean of the Brody School of Medicine, were both selected to serve five-year terms

with the NC IOM.

"It's an honor, I feel very happy to have been selected," said Horns.

"I'm very pleased to be

serving with Dr. Johnson."

Before her appointment to the NC IOM, Horns had served on a task force convened by the institute. Horns said these task forces are the primary way the



JOHNSON titute accomplishe

"The task forces study issues and send out published reports for state government and other

The task forces generally are made up of anywhere between 30 to 60 individuals who can provide expert and non-political advice on the issue at hand.

advice on the issue at hand.

Horns said some of the issues



HORNS

worked out by the institute include a study of the nursing workforce and dental care. A task force is currently being formed to address the problems of the uninsured in North Carolina.

Horns said the task forces are normally a mixture of institute members and people with exper-

see DEANS page A3

'Nuclear watchdog' surveying Iran



Mohammed ElBaradei, director-general of the IAEA, left, is pictured with Kamal Kharrazi, Iran's minister of foreign affairs.

U.S. skeptical of ElBaradei, focuses on nuclear concerns

KRISTIN DAY ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

U.S. officials have recently criticized the International Atomic Energy Agency and the director-general's work concerning Iran while Intelligence Minister Ali Yunesi reported American spy drones flying over Iranian

The IAEA is the only world organization that keeps control of nuclear issues with a couple thousand employees whose main job is to promote the safe use of nuclear energy and control weapons through the nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

Daniel Sprau, consultant for the IAEA and associate professor for the environmental health sciences and safety program, said inspectors go to nuclear facilities to make sure countries are doing everything they say they are and that they're allowed to do it. Their inspectors went into Iraq in search of weapons.

Iran has said they are using nuclear power to find another resource for energy, but the IAEA is worried they will use it for other measures, such as to fuel reactors for weapons.

"It's not always clear what direction they're going in," said Sprau.

"There are a lot of politics that go with it."

Sprau said politics are taken to an entirely different and higher level in international organizations. This, along with cultural obstacles, makes achieving goals much more difficult and time consuming. It may be better for the United States to keep an eye on Iran because America is more advanced, but they are not allowed there. Foreign countries will only allow U.N. organizations to inspect their plants.

Officials told The Associated Press last week the U.S. is currently trying to oust IAEA head Mohammed ElBaradei for being "too soft" when dealing with Iran. However, the chief of the IAEA said there is no proof Iran is developing nuclear weapons.

Last week, The Associated Press reported Iran's Intelligence Minister, Ali Yunesi, saying the U.S. has been flying spy drones over their nuclear sites and their air force was ordered to shoot down any unknown flying object in their airspace.

Richard Kilroy, visiting assistant professor in the department of political science, said these drones are remotely piloted vehicles usually used in peaceful situations. The U.S. is always collecting data on potential threats through covert collections.

Russia announced last week they would cooperate with Iran in their nuclear development.

"I think Russia's clearly raising the stakes in the Middle East," said Kilroy.

He said economics are begin-

see NUCLEAR page A3

Campus News

Cancer Prevention

Look for Pi Kappa Delta tables promoting cancer prevention outside Wright Plaza Feb. 22 - 24 from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Get informative pamphlets and enter to win a DVD player and other great prizes.

ECU Graduation Expo

ECU May graduates are invited to a special Graduation expo featuring everything students need for graduation including graduation announcements, diploma frames, class rings and other accessories. The expo will take place in the rear dining room of Wright Place Feb. 22 - 24. On Tuesday, vendors will be available from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. and 5 - 7 p.m. For more information, call 328-6731 or visit studentstores. ecu.edu.

Mac Users Meeting

The ECU Mac Users Group will have its February meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 23 at 7:15 p.m. in the Willis Building. Meetings are free and open to anyone. Agenda includes the latest Apple news update, a demonstration of new Mac software from iLife '05 and iWork. The \$1 raffle prizes include a new iPod Shuffle 1GB, I Life '05 and iWork software. For more information visit ecumug.org.

'My Three Angels'

The ECU/Loessin Playhouse is sponsoring this comedy about three convicts on a work furlough. Employed by a family they became fond of, they learn the family may lose their business and inheritance. Possessing criminal minds and hearts of gold, they set matters right and in doing so redeem themselves as real life angels to the grateful family. The performance will be Feb. 24 - 28 at 8 p.m. with a 2 p.m. matinee on Sunday in the McGinnis Theatre. Call 328-6829 for more information.

Contra Dance

The ECU Folk and Country Dancers are sponsoring a contra dance Feb. 25 at the Willis Building. Beginners lesson is at 7:30 p.m. and the dance is from 8 - 10:30 p.m. A string band will perform live, old-time and Celtic music. Costs for admission is \$3 for students, \$5 for FASG members and \$8 for the general public. For more information, call 752-7350.

Love is in the Air The Woman's Choral and

University Chorus will present this show Feb. 25 at 8 p.m. in Wright Auditorium. Conductors for the evening will be Daniel Bara and Janna Brendell. For more information call 1-800-ECU-ARTS.

'Love Letters'

The S. Rudolph Alexander Performing Arts Series will hold this event Feb. 26 at 8 p.m. in Wright Auditorium. Starring Academy Award-winning stage and screen veteran Eva Marie Saint and acclaimed film, television and theatre producer and director Jeffrey Hayden, the play traces 50 years of confidential correspondence covering first loves, lost loves and constantly changing times. For details, please call 328-6851 or1-800-ECU-ARTS.

Ballroom Dancing

The United States Amateur Ballroom Dancers Association is hosting a dance Feb. 26 from 7:30 - 11 p.m. in the Willis Building. Begin the evening with a free Samba and Merengue lesson followed by dancing and refreshments. Call 355-5847 for further details.

Home Builders Expo

The Home Builders Association is holding an expo in the Greenville Convention Center Feb. 26 - 27. This expo will showcase the many different products to complete and remodel your dream house. Call 756-7915 for more information.

News Briefs

Local

School, cigarettes, lottery

on Easley's legislative agenda RALEIGH, NC - Stung by budget crises during his first term, Gov. Mike Easley is preaching pragmatism with progress to the General Assembly at the start of his second term.

In Monday night's State of the State address to a joint legislative session in the House chamber, Easley asked for more money and accountability to help poor school districts and create high schools where students can earn associate degrees.

But the Democratic incumbent said he wouldn't sacrifice fiscal responsibility in the process.

"Let us continue our progress aggressively, but within a new era that guarantees the promise we make today will not be broken tomorrow," Easley said in a statewidetelevised address. "Because real vision demands that we make tough choices. But real vision is responsible and it is paid for."

The tough choice for lawmakers may include two items he cited in his biennial speech.

Easley said it's time to "significantly" raise the state cigarette tax from the current 5 cents per pack. And he again pushed an education lottery, the one he's sought unsuccessfully since his first gubernatorial campaign in 2000.

Teacher pleads guilty to indecent liberties with student

CHARLOTTE, NC - A former high school English teacher has pleaded guilty to taking indecent liberties with a 16-year-old student, but avoided going to prison because she had no previous criminal record.

Mecklenburg Superior Court Judge Gentry Caudill on Monday placed Nicole Pomerleau, a former teacher at Olympic High School, on probation

for two years and ordered her to perform 60 hours of community service and turn in her teaching certificate.

The judge also told Pomerleau, 32, that she could not have sexual contact with, or teach, anyone under 18 during her probation.

The crime doesn't require that Pomerleau register as a sex offender.

Attorney Barry Cook told the judge that Pomerleau had admitted having sexual intercourse with the 16-yearold student on two occasions - in January 2004 and February 2004. The prosecutor said the teenager's

mother found e-mail between her son and Pomerleau that led her to think something was going on between the two. The mother contacted school

The sex took place, Cook said, once at Pomerleau's home and another time at a friend's home.

Defense attorney Robert DeCurtins said Pomerleau, who is married and has two young children, had been involved in what he described as "an ill-advised relationship."

National

California storms leave five dead

LOS ANGELES - A deadly series of storms across California spawned tornadoes, landslides and avalanches as persistent rain flooded freeways and sent mud roaring into homes. At least five people were killed, including a Nevada woman caught in an avalanche north of Lake Tahoe

and a 24-year-old man who lost control of his car in San Bernardino. Forecasters said Tuesday that the strong storm system would bring at least another inch of rain to Southern California but was losing strength and could move out of the region by

Wednesday afternoon. A flash flood watch remained in effect Tuesday for much of Southern California.

"I think we've probably seen the worst of the storm," said Ted MacKenchnie, a National Weather Service meteorologist. "We should start seeing a decrease in the activity."

Dozens of homes were evacuated or red-tagged because they threatened to collapse from sliding hillsides, Mecklenburg Assistant District authorities said.

teenage girl and 61-year-old man were killed in separate landslides and three women were temporarily trapped in about 10 feet of mud that spilled into a town house in the Los Angeles suburb of Hacienda Heights. A Los Angeles civil engineer, Rory Shaw, 47, died after being swept into a 30-foot sinkhole he was assessing.

Missing Texas woman

and son's vehicle found in creek DENTON, Texas (AP) - Concern over the whereabouts of a pregnant woman and her 7-year-old son escalated when authorities recovered her abandoned sport utility vehicle in a creek.

Fort Worth police Lt. Gene Jones insisted Monday's discovery of the SUV was a major step forward in the investigation. Authorities, however had few new details to share and planned to resume their search near the creek Tuesday.

"There are a lot of questions we have," Jones said. "We haven't answered all those questions and that's why we're being very careful about what we tell the public."

A statewide Amber Alert was issued for Lisa Underwood, who is seven months pregnant, and her son, Jayden, after Underwood failed to show up for her baby shower Saturday. The alert was expanded to New Mexico, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Louisiana.

Officers on horseback and using

dogs concentrated the search in a rural area of Denton, about 30 miles northeast of Fort Worth, after a landowner found the SUV partly submerged in a creek.

The discovery came two days after a pool of blood was found in the family's home. There was no sign of forced entry, officials said.

Police declined to say what, if any, evidence was found inside the SUV.

International

Powerful earthquake kills hundreds in central Iran

SARBAGH, Iran - A powerful earthquake toppled mud-built homes and flattened villages in central Iran on Tuesday, killing at least 270 people and injuring 950, officials and state-run television said. A senior official said the death toll could top

TV footage showed residents frantically digging through piles of debris looking for loved ones following the 6.4-magnitude earthquake, which struck at 5:55 a.m. While homes made of mud collapsed, buildings of cement appeared not to sustain heavy damage. Survivors pleaded for help finding

the buried - "What a catastrophe. Please help us," one said. Rain was hampering rescue efforts.

The quake's epicenter was on the outskirts of Zarand, a town of about 15,000 people located 35 miles northwest of Kerman, the capital of Kerman province, said the seismological unit of Tehran University's Geophysics Institute. The mountainous area is in the same province but northwest of Bam, where a quake killed 26,000 people in 2003.

"All hospitals in Zarand are filled to capacity with the injured. Hospitals in

the town cannot receive any more of the injured," the broadcast said. Sarbagh, a village near Zarand,

was one of the villages affected by the quake. Close to 80 percent of its buildings were destroyed by the

Kerman provincial governor Mohammad Ali Karimi was quoted as saying that "several villages have been destroyed" by the earthquake. The keys to the vehicle were found Mostafa Soltani, a spokesman at Kerman Governor General Office, said officials expect the final death toll to surpass 350.

Pyongyang will return to nuclear talks if conditions met

SEOUL, South Korea - North Korean leader Kim Jong II rebuffed a U.S. demand for immediate disarmament talks to end his nuclear weapons programs, saying that Washington needs to show sincerity and meet his conditions, his country's official news agency said Tuesday.

But in a rare comment on the nuclear standoff, the reclusive Stalinist leader also said his government's commitment to a peaceful solution to the nuclear dispute remains unchanged, raising hopes that Kim would eventually go for a deal.

Both China and South Korea urged the United States and North Korea on Tuesday for more flexibility in the two-year-old confrontation.

"We will go to the negotiating table anytime if there are mature conditions for the six-party talks thanks to the concerted efforts of the parties concerned in the future." Kim told a visiting Chinese envoy, expressing the hope that the United States would show "trustworthy sincerity," according to the Korean Central News Agency.

Kim's comments came less than two weeks after Kim flouted Washington and its allies by claiming that it had nuclear weapons and would boycott the talks.

Crime Scene

Feb. 20

ammunition.

Possessing weapons An unknown subject possessed a firearm on a campus parking lot. The weapon was a Hi-Point and the subject also possessed

Feb. 21

8:50 a.m. Larceny from building An unknown person removed a laptop from an unlocked office in Jenkins.

1:30 p.m. Larceny

Person(s) took book bag from the Student Recreation Center without permission.

2:35 p.m. Bomb threat

The suspect called police and threatened to plant a bomb and blow up Joyner Library.

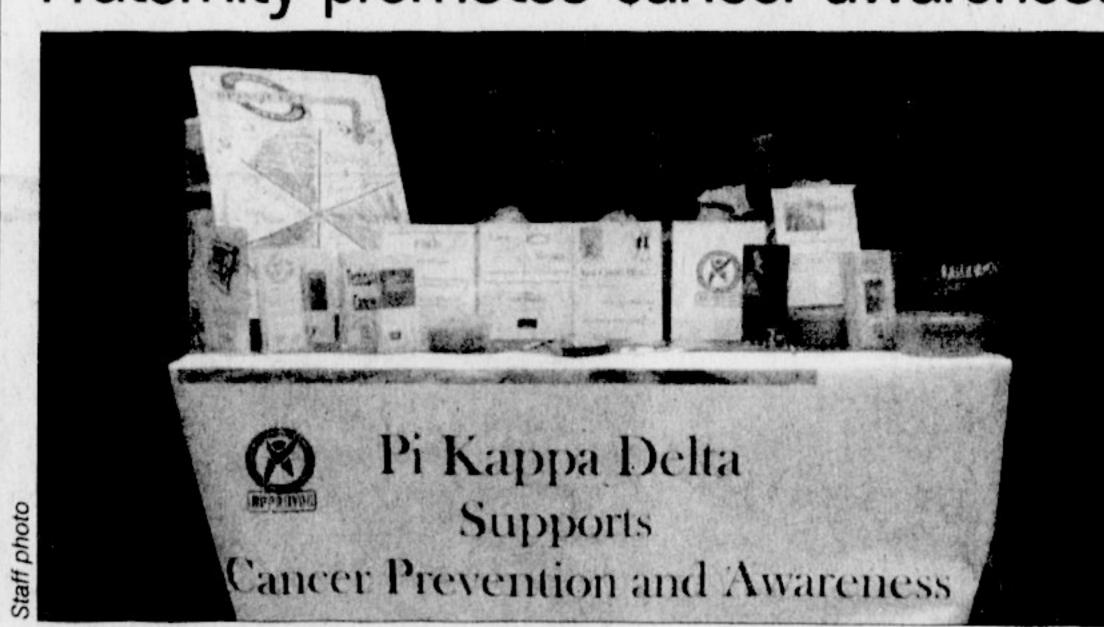
4 p.m.

Larceny from building Asuspect entered an unsecured room in Fletcher and removed a set of dorm keys.



If you see any suspicious baggage or back packs, do not touch it. Call the police so they can contact the bomb squad if needed. Also, report any suspicious persons with packages that look like they could be a bomb. Remember It is a felony to call in a bomb threat.

Fraternity promotes cancer awareness



Pi Kappa Delta works with the Wellness Education department of ECU in educating students on issues surrounding cancer. Participants are eligible to win a DVD player and other prizes.

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Applications are due by March 11, 2005 by 5 p.m.

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Student from page A1

Students are encouraged to join as early as possible in their college years.

"I had meant to join freshman year, but I didn't commit until this year," said Maurice Griffin, sophomore communication major and treasurer for

"It feels good to be part of an organization."

Students of all cultures and backgrounds are encouraged to attend BSU meetings. A fee of \$5 is required to be a member of BSU for the year.

BSU members at Wright Plaza and around campus on Friday will promote the Heritage Fest, sponsored by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People from 4 - 7 p.m. at Thomas Foreman Park on Fifth Street.

On Saturday, Hendrix Theatre will resonate with rhythm while a middle school and high

Nuclear from page A1

ning to manipulate countries'

actions more than anything

else, and this is what is driving

a topic for discussion concern-

ing nuclear development. The

IAEA keeps potentially danger-

inspecting nuclear facilities, but

Sprau said he does not think

North Korea is part of the nuclear

non-proliferation agreement, so

North Korea two years ago when

they were investigating their

country is working with nuclear

material does not mean they will

of nuclear development, they

immediately think of weapons.

However, using nuclear power

as an energy source may be an

However, just because a

Sprau said when people think

The IAEA was kicked out of

the IAEA cannot do much.

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ous situations under control by

North Korea has also been

school step show will take place at 2 p.m., ending Black Student Union Week. These events are for students to socialize, learn and interact with all the sub-communities that exist in the ECU community.

"ECU has a lot of work to do," Walker said.

"People need to be reeducated on what diversity truly is. The world isn't just black and

Members of BSU plan to attend every activity, but the important part is for the nonmembers to come out and see what BSU is all about. The goal of the BSU is to make a difference in the ECU community every new face that shows up at an event will bring them one step closer to making that difference.

This writer can be contacted at news@theeastcarolinian.com.

ideal concept. It would cost less

than current power sources and

as long as the plant is of good

standard of design, the commu-

could be a benefit ... and we asso-

ciate it with nuclear weapons,"

willing to take the small risk,

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last semester. He said there

is also a threat with terrorists

obtaining these kinds of materi-

als to make conventional bombs,

for Peace, which uses harmful

This writer can be contacted at

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which would spread radiation.

material for positive projects.

"We take something that

He said if they would be

Sprau worked with find-

nities would be safe.

health would increase.

Sprau said.

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NOW LEASING

Deans from page A1

tise on the issue being worked out, estimating about a third of the task force is composed of institute members.

During her previous experience on a task force, Horns said they convened about once monthly and at times more frequently, while also staying in touch through e-mail communication.

Dr. Johnson was unable to be contacted for this article, but sent comment through executive assistant to the dean's office, Jo Ellen Reel.

"She was very excited to be appointed by the governor and assist in this endeavor," said Reel. "She is looking forward to working with this group."

Brian Briley, sophomore architectural design major, said the appointment of two deans to the NC IOM could only be a positive thing for ECU.

"We have a great medical school and to have two deans selected ... can only reflect positively on the university,"

said Briley.

The mission of the NC IOM is to seek solutions to statewide health issues and serve as an advisory group to help form policy on issues concerning health care for the people of North Carolina.

The institute achieves these goals through coordinating and sponsoring research efforts, collecting information on issues, analyzing viable opinions and developing a consensus with the membership on solutions that best serve the public.

The NC IOM was chartered by the NC General Assembly in 1983 and draws its members from a wide variety of places including education, the health and legal professions and the volunteer sector. This membership policy tries to ensure that the public's interests are represented objectively.

This writer can be contacted at new@theeastcarolinian.com.

Election from page A1

Kilroy said the U.S. should attempt to reach out to the next generation in these foreign countries, suggesting the use of the classroom as a means of familiarizing our cultures.

Jessica Flynn, first-year medical student, said the elections are a step in the right direction.

"I consider it an accomplishment that we even got them to happen," said Flynn.

As for the Bush administration's role in Iraq, Flynn said the overall project was a positive but she had some negative feelings toward the way it was handled.

"I don't particularly like the way it went about ... no one likes to be deceived, but I think it was a good thing," Flynn said.

This writer can be contacted at news@theeastcarolinian.com.

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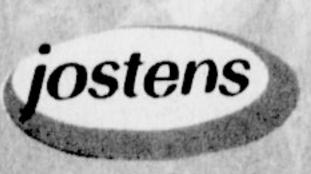
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Pick up a "punch card" when you arrive. Visit the tables and have vendors punch your card. Then redeem it for a FREE GIFT and a chance to win one of many door prizes! (May 2005 graduates only please! While supplies last.)

Wednesday, February 23: 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. & 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Thursday, February 24: 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Rear area of The Wright Place Dining Room - Wright Building

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Our View

Tuition decision pleases students, raises questions

The Board of Governors of North Carolina recently rejected the proposed tuition increases among all of the UNC System schools, stating the reasons behind the need for the tuition increases were the same reasons they have been hearing for the past several years.

The board had approved tuition increases over the past five years, and the problems still exist, making it certain means need to be considered to alleviate these existing problems other than tuition increases.

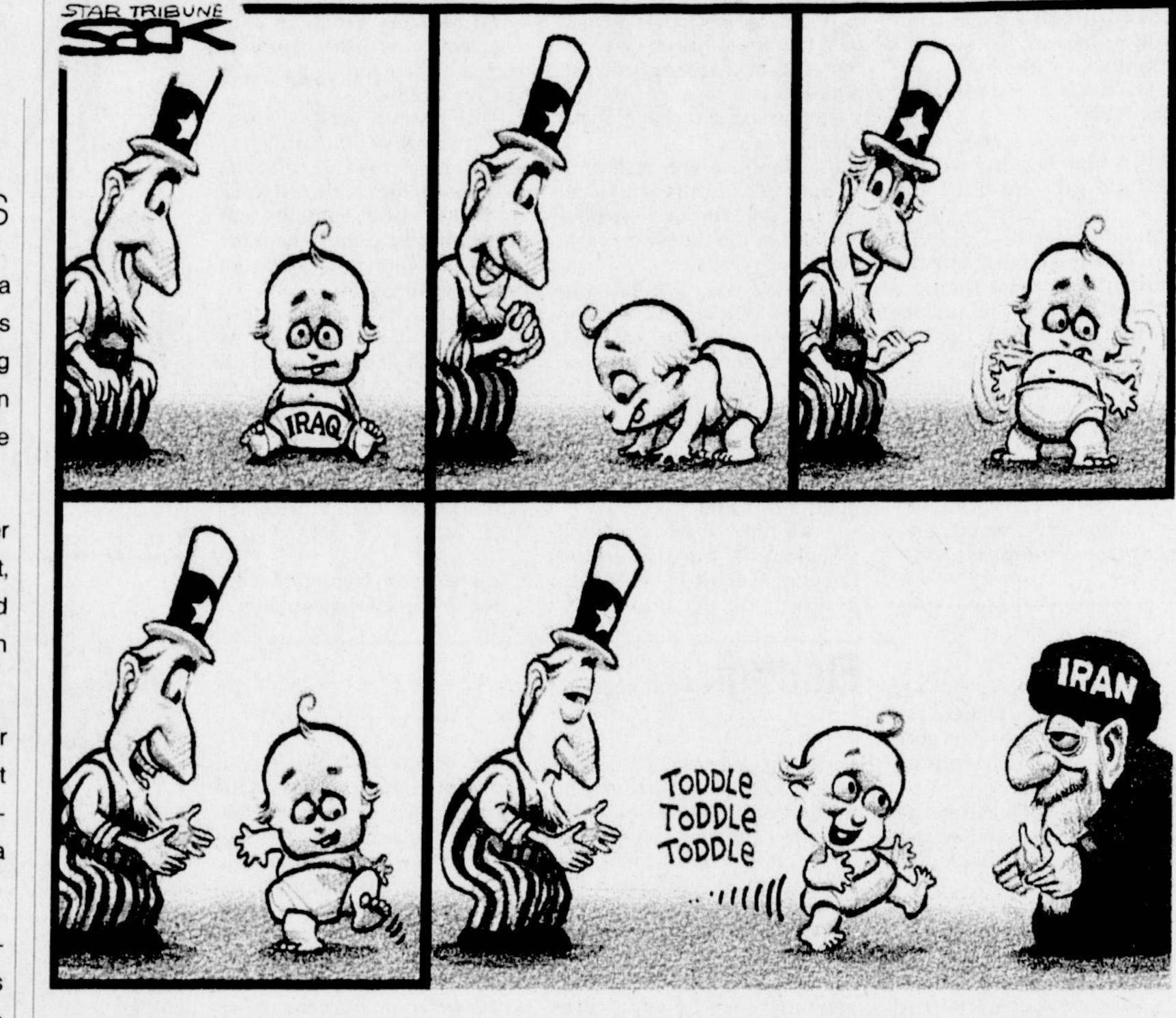
Students, including the staff of TEC, were rather pleased to see the tuition increases were not passed. However, we feel we need to remember tuition for public schools in North Carolina is cheap when compared to other states.

We are below the 50th percentile in comparison with in-state tuition for undergraduates throughout the nation. It is safe to say, due to this cheap tuition and the strong desire of admittance for schools in the UNC System, we have something good going on in North Carolina and if we want to maintain this good educational experience, there is going to be a need for extra funding and it has to come from somewhere.

A main concern within ECU was if we did not raise faculty salaries, we would lose many of our qualified faculty, requiring us to recruit more faculty members, which would have an adverse impact on the educational quality at ECU.

While this is a valid concern, we can't help but think ECU hasn't made some of the smartest decisions regarding money.

With all of the buying out of contracts within administrative officials and coaches we have had over the past few years, we are spending very large sums of money on virtually nothing at all. That is a problem. That is a problem we feel needs to be fixed before attempting to raise tuition for ECU students.



Opinion Columnist

Iuition treeze may cost us more

What are we losing by saving money?

RACHEL LANDEN STAFF WRITER

I didn't hear any cheers, see any streamers or witness any kind of parade last week. Yet ECU students, as well as college students all across our state, had more reason than usual to celebrate - more than 200 reasons, in

After considering tuition increases of \$200 - 300 at NC public universities, the UNC Board of Governors decided not to raise costs for the 2005-06 school year. Their decision came just a year after they hiked tuition at all schools by \$225 - 450.

This year, however, the BOG froze tuition rates for in-state undergrads in an effort to keep the local colleges and universities affordable.

Maybe the students who lobbied in Raleigh against the increase convinced the board. Or maybe the board thinks the General Assembly will raise rates anyway, so they should just as well step aside and let them do the dirty work.



Whatever their motivation, those of us who are in-state undergraduates now have several hundred reasons to let go a sigh of relief, at least until the GA produces its budget.

I know I'm happy that I might not have to shell out additional money next year to cover tuition. Certainly many students and their families can agree with that sentiment. Still, I wonder what other costs we are paying by not paying as much money.

You see, the added revenue would be used to recruit and retain quality professors, increase course offerings

and decrease the size of classes, among other things. The relatively small tuition hike would be like a pebble tossed into a pond. Just the simple act of the stone hitting the water produces a rippling effect that reaches a much greater circumference.

Similarly, more first-rate professors who can provide greater student-faculty contact in a wider variety of courses would benefit us now and well into the future. Even as I look ahead to my senior year, I know that the improvements and progress to come at ECU will be of help to me even if I am not here to experience them as a student.

If ECU continues to develop a stronger and more respected reputation, I won't have to worry as much about carrying with me a stigma that has been (mostly) unfairly placed on ECU. Future employers will know of my alma mater and value the degree that I will receive here.

But if our university lags behind because we don't have the funding to support an intellectual environment of high quality teaching and research, then we will suffer as students and alumni. Our future salaries may even be affected as a result, and suddenly \$300 doesn't seem like so much.

Pirate Rant

How come you ladies can wear \$170 jeans, a \$95 Lily Pulitzer polo, black stilettos and have a Coach bag hanging from your shoulder, but you still want me to buy you a shot? Give me a break. You should be the one buying me the buttery nipple.

As bad as parking already is on campus, why are there so many "Reserved" signs popping up? Furthermore, why are there no cars in these spaces most days? These spaces are obviously for staff or faculty, so why aren't they at work? If all you need to do to get a reserved space is not come to campus, sign me up.

Hey ECU, I would love to take a summer course. Too bad I don't feel like spending \$600 for three credit hours.

Bring back the weird news section in TEC.

There are recycling bins for newspapers all over campus. Please recycle your papers and don't leave them sitting around, or worse, throw them in the trash.

To the guy complaining about miracle and water bras in last week's rant - Girl's wouldn't feel the need to uplift our endowment if guys like you wouldn't be so obsessed about them being big anyway. If you care that much about the size of girls' boobs then you don't deserve to have the real thing. Next time you complain about our too small breasts, don't be surprised if we come back complaining about something on you that's not quite up to par.

Let's remember that we are in college. All this high-school drama crap has to quit. Being mad with someone because you heard they talked about you is just ridiculous. Grow up.

Has anyone seen the terrible excuse for the new jungle? I don't think a row of saplings about six feet apart on top of a dirt pile is hardly on the level of our beloved jungle. I went to my first baseball game last year in the jungle and I loved it. Sadly, it's gone. We have to stand up to the administration, otherwise we're going to lose the tailgate field and disc golf field so they can build a parking lot for their brand new baseball stadium.

I'm sitting here almost going broke to make it through college. Why can't the university spend money on something we will see the use of? Like more computers, better advisers or cheaper books? No, we need a new, multi-million dollar baseball stadium so that the athletic department can make more money and pump it into our "mediocre-at-best" biggest sports. Why not improve upon the pool in Minges? The swim team outperforms football and basketball combined each time they compete, so why not reward teams that are accomplishing something?

If you are in a cover band and charge people to come in to a place that usually doesn't have a door charge, make sure you know all the words to the songs you are singing. Until then, please don't cover Pearl Jam, Live, Alice in Chains, U2 or other rock bands, unless you change your band name to Machete for hacking

Don't tell me how hard your long distance relationship is when your significant other is only an hour or two away. You're pretty lucky compared to the rest of us who have boyfriends/girlfriends living back at home, hundreds or thousands of miles away and it takes either a plane flight or a very long drive

Stop staring at my boobs. I actually have a personality, in case you haven't noticed.

Congratulations to the ECU Women's Rugby team for their shutout of UNC Greensboro this weekend. Next up, regionals in

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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

You would think that journalistic integrity would exist in the academic setting, but [Feb. 9's] front-page story shows otherwise. The first sentence states the Row vs. Wade was an "infamous decision." This shows a value judgment on the part of the author Kristin Day. She is the assistant news editor and as such she should know better than to use value judgments when reporting the news. Since this is the first sentence on the front page of the paper, I don't' see how it got past the editors. Perhaps this paper has become propaganda for the right wing and as such should be boycotted by all students and faculty members who believe in a fair, unbiased exchange of views. Nelson Mandela would be considered infamous by white rulers who supported apartheid, but not by his followers. To say decision puts our paper at the same level of journalistic integrity as Rush Limbaugh or Bill O'Riley. No respectable journalist would want to be considered in the same company as these entertainers.

Ken Butler Lecturer and graduate student

Dear Editor,

It seems to me that as Americans, we have been extending the hand of charity to others throughout recent history as if we have infinite resources. As a blessed nation should we not give back to others as is humane, kind, and generous? I have seen Americans cry for their own loved ones, and I have seen Americans cry for people they do not know thousands of miles away. We have issued charity to the ends of the earth with haste, to help our brothers and our sisters cope with the struggles that this world presents, only to be

eschewed by the world at large for being robustly modern. And now, I read in the newspaper that the world is growing tired of America's foreign trade debt. Where is charity? Has she succumbed to the bequest of power and influence to the extent that she will be our ultimate downfall?

Mark Brandon Tripp

Second Degree Nursing Student

Dear Editor, Peter Kalijian's piece on marijuana prohibition [in Feb. 17's edition of TEC] left out one huge unintended consequence of the policy namely the reduction in public safety. As a police officer, I observed my colleagues spend their entire shifts trying to find a baggie of grass, while DUIs were killing 17,000 Americans. Detectives are flying around in helicopters trying to spot that Roe vs. Wade was an infamous a pot garden, instead of catching the war on some drugs, should contact animals who rape our women and children. Marijuana should become legal, regulated, taxed and given the same controls as whiskey. Your safety depends on it.

> Officer Howard J. Wooldridge (retired)

Media Director, Law Enforcement Against Prohibition (www.leap.cc) Dallas, Texas

Dear Editor,

Kudos to Peter Kalajian for an excellent Feb. 17 op-ed on marijuana. If health outcomes determined drug laws instead of cultural norms, marijuana would be legal. Unlike alcohol, marijuana has never been shown to cause an overdose death, nor does it share the addictive properties of tobacco. Like any drug, marijuana can be harmful if abused, but jail cells are inappropriate as health interventions and ineffective as deterrents.

The first marijuana laws were enacted in response to Mexican migration during the early 1900s, despite opposition from the American Medical Association. Dire warnings that marijuana inspires homicidal rages have been counterproductive at best. White Americans did not even begin to smoke pot until a soon-to-be entrenched government bureaucracy began funding reefer madness propaganda.

By raiding voter-approved medical marijuana providers in California, the very same U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration that claims illicit drug use funds terrorism is forcing cancer and AIDS patients into the hands of street dealers. Apparently marijuana prohibition is more important than protecting the country from terrorism. Students who want to help end the intergenerational culture war, otherwise known as the Students for Sensible Drug Policy at www.ssdp.org. Robert Sharpe, MPA

Policy Analyst Common Sense for Drug Policy Washington, DC

Dear Editor,

I would just like to say thank you for the Our View column in Feb. 17's TEC. As one of the organizers of the Take Back the Night March for sexual assault awareness I appreciated the recognition that a great amount of time and energy goes into the planning of events such as these, and I would like to see less apathy and more action from ECU students. It was a shame to have to cancel last year due to low attendance - however, we will continue to hold such events and try to motivate students to learn the facts to make a difference for ECU.

Karen S. Warren Director of Wellness Education Top 5's Hitch

2. Ray

to see them.

Atlanta. Good luck, girls.

Editor's Note: The Pirate Rant is an anonymous way for students and staff in the ECU community to voice their opinions. Submissions can be submitted anonymously online at www.theeastcarolinian.com, or emailed to editor@theeastcarolinian. com. The editor reserves the right to edit opinions for content and brevity.

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Mendenha

Wednesday: 9

Thursday: 7 p.

Friday: 9:30 p.

Saturday: 7 p.

Sunday: 7 p.m

Ladder 49

Top 5 Movies: Boogeyma Are We The

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Mendenhall Movies:

Ladder 49 Wednesday: 9:30 p.m. Thursday: 7 p.m. Friday: 9:30 p.m. Saturday: 7 p.m. and Midnight Sunday: 7 p.m.

Top 5's

Top 5 Movies:

- Hitch Boogeyman
- Are We There Yet?
- Million Dollar Baby Pooh's Heffalump Movie

Top 5 DVDs:

- The Grudge
- 2. Ray
- Shall We Dance?
- AVP: Alien vs. Predator 5. Friday Night Lights
- Top 5 TV Shows: "American Idol"
- "CSI" "American Idol"
- "Desperate Housewives" "Without a Trace"
- Top 5 CDs:
- The Game
- Green Day
- Eminem 4. Lil Jon and Eastside Boys
- John Legend

Top 5 Books:

- The Broker
- 2. The Da Vinci Code
- 3. The Five People You Meet in
- Heaven State of Fear
- 5. Chainfire

Horoscopes:

Aries - A moment of perfect bliss is marred by a choice you have to make. Will it be caffeinated or decaf? Mocha or latte? You can do this. Just think your decision through logically and weigh your options.

Taurus - Once you get the deal settled, you'll have more time to relax. Don't do that before the check clears, however. There will be last-minute complications if you are not careful.

Gemini - While you're in the mood, learn how to be more practical. You can fix up your place yourself, and save a lot of money in the process. Focus.

Cancer - It's good to get yourself a treat every once in a while, but don't spend so much money that you have to take an extra job to pay for it. Not unless, of course, it's something you really want and it is worth it.

Leo - You'll have to focus more attention on work for a while. The more you do, the more you make, and that is a good plan. Put your heart into it and the money will

Virgo - You'll be on a neatness rampage for the next couple of days. Be careful not to make a bigger mess than you had when you started. Mind your manners and be polite while running around like a neat-freak.

Libra - The main way to get your creative muse to show up is to tell a joke. Your sense of humor helps you find the answer to a tough question. Just be sure to use your humor carefully.

Scorpio - Conditions are not easy for romance, but it does seem to be that you could get a job that pays more. Is a move required? Only go if you must.

Sagittarius - You're about to be held accountable for every little thing you've said or done in the past few weeks. Stand up for the truth, and you're fine.

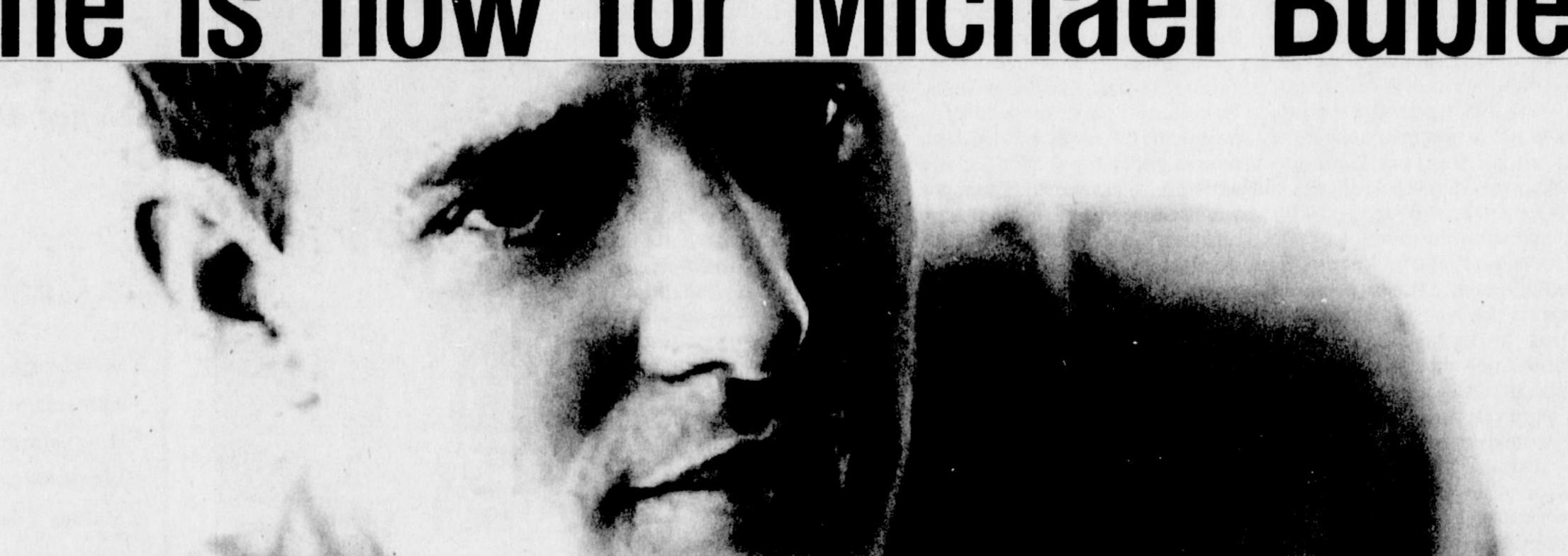
Capricorn - Indulge in something to help you get more exercise while you're in your own home. You'll get a good deal, or maybe find it in your own attic or garage.

Aquarius - A brilliant insight propels you and your team in the right direction. Take it and run with it. You may not have had the original idea, but you're the one who makes it happen.

Pisces - Accept the applause for a job well done, and then learn to delegate. A chore you find extremely tedious will be fun for someone else.

Time is now for Michael Bublé

Arts & Emicertainmen



Michael Bublé has a fresh sound that utilizes his travel experiences with singing talent while captivating audiences with his boyish good looks.

New album is released for music's cover boy

KYLE BILLINGS STAFF WRITER

It's time, and Michael Bublé is here to emcee. Bublé has traveled the world with his music and now released his new album, aptly titled It's Time on 143 Records/ Reprise.

Vancouver native Bublé was introduced at an early age, explaining that his grandfather "who was a plumber, offered to do free work for local musicians in exchange for letting me per-

form a few numbers with them on stage" on his Web site. Part of his musical training has included roles in the musical Swing, and Red Rock Diner. His talent was recognized early, winning first prize at the Canadian Youth Talent Search. After debuting his highly successful self-titled album in 2003, he set off on a worldwide tour, producing a second album Come Fly with Me, and now is back

with the follow up. The LP transitions easily from each song, ranging through different modes, styles and genres while maintaining the core essence that differentiates Michael Bublé from any other

modern artist. Bublé has made covering songs a science, building upon them to retain their success within a new funnel of

Bublé's expertise. The first song of the album emphatically announces his arrival, expanding on the album's title. This steady percussion permeates memories of a James Bond opening sequence, or even the Pink Panther. He exclaims, "it's a new dawn, it's a new day, it's a new life ... and I'm feeling good." Bublé undoubtedly sings with an air of past and future, his voice unique yet almost familiar. This exemplifies the feel of the entire album, and for once this is an album rather than a collection

of tracks. Many of the songs have the feel of the old Rat Pack, influences coming from Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin. This is present in songs such as "A Foggy Day in London Town" and "Try a Little Tenderness," which could have easily been inserted into an album of the past without hesitation by the listener. Bublé even pays tribute in a cover of Sinatra's song "I've Got You Under My Skin." The song works, as Bublé doesn't stray too much from the elements that made it a success for Sinatra, yet he undeniably makes it his own.

Nice and easy does it every time for Bublé, who incorporates many elements into his album with a slow, steady tempo that creates a perfect atmosphere for wining and dining with that special someone. In his song "The More I See You," the horn section is prominent, with the constant bass backbeat so common in the jazz field. Bublé's vocal talents and range are eloquently displayed in this song. He even starts scatting in the song's finale sequence, a musical device most often used by jazz musicians. In the track "Song for You," world

see BUBLÉ page A6

Get ready for Australia's latest export

The John Butler Trio hits the United States

KATHERINE DAY STAFF WRITER

For those looking for an eclectic, offbeat import, look no further than Australia's John Butler Trio. The blues/folk band is kicking off a tour in the United States, hitting Santa Monica, San Francisco, Boston and New York through February and March. The mini-tour offers America a taste of one of Australia's most popular bands, just in time for the March 15 release of their debut album Sunrise Over Sea.

The winner of three ARIA Awards (Australian Grammy's) for Best Male Vocalist, Best Roots and Blues Album and Best Independent Artist, the John Butler Trio has won over audiences down under. The independent rockers have gone platinum four times in Australia and New Zealand.

Shannon Birchall on bass and Michael Barker, join the talented guitarist and lyricist, John Butler, on the drums. The trio blends blues, roots, rock, reggae and hip-hop together for a sound genuinely unique. The up tempo beats on tracks such as "Hello," "Mist" and "There'll

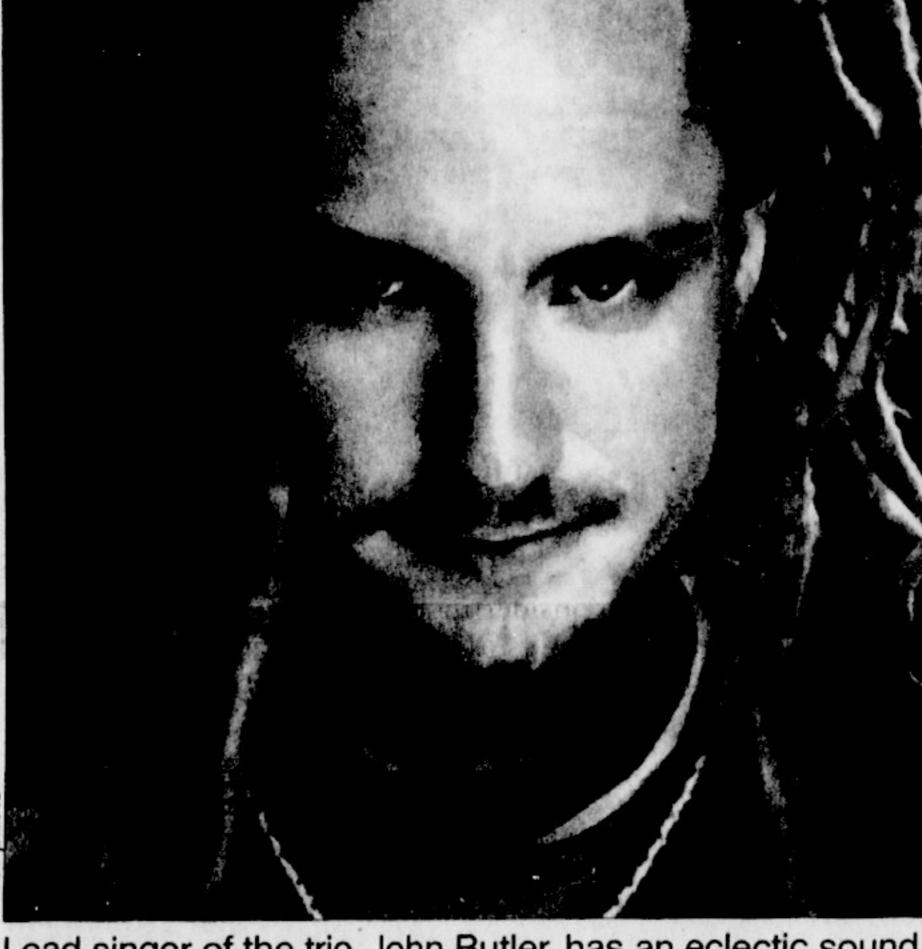
Come a Time" show tribute to the band's love of Appalachian folk and blues.

The album is a showcase for Butler's incredible talent on the guitar. The tracks reveal his gift for rhythm and the remarkable ease he has playing the slide guitar. The band's musical talent is undisputed.

"From the delirious funk of 'Zebra' to the delicacy of 'Peaches and Cream,' the strength of Butler's lyrics is well and truly matched by some of the most interesting new music you'll hear this year. Tighter, brighter and much more fun than anything Butler's previously committed to vinyl - well, plastic and aluminum - Sunrise Over Sea is sure to be the album that brings mainstream success to The John Butler Trio ... but do they want it?" said Tim Cox of ABC Tasmania.

While the sound is interesting and Butler's talent is undeniable, the album isn't for everyone. The lyrics, often sounding muddled, are cliché and overreach for depth and meaning.

"It's his song writing that's lagging behind. At five songs, the What You Want EP is more focused yet ruined by 'Betterman,' a 12-minute live workout that leans toward Zeppelin-esque excess, and a totally unnecessary acoustic cover of the Beatles'



Lead singer of the trio, John Butler, has an eclectic sound.

'Across the Universe.' There are a couple of bright moments. 'What You Want,' found on both discs, is filled with dark shadows and a soaring string section, while the finger picking on 'Treat Yo Mama' is a prime example of his considerable guitar talents," said Jim Caligiuri of the Austin Chronicle about Sunrise Over Sea.

The interesting finger picking by Butler comes from the fact that instead of using a guitar pick, he uses his fingers. Using synthetic nails and a strengthener, Butler picks the strings of his guitar individually to compose a sound much different from that of other guitar players.

Since 1998, Butler has lead his

band, alternating the bass and percussion players since then. The current lineup - Butler, Birchall and Barker - have been performing together since summer of

Sunrise Over Sea is composed of very personal songs. Lyrics paying tribute to Butler's daughter, Banjo, such as those in "Peaches and Cream" and stories such as how he met his wife in "Seeing Angels" reveal the heart that went into writing the songs. Even the hackneyed lyrics on tracks such as "Treat Yo Mama," about the way the earth and parents should be respected, could be overlooked due to the hypnotic beat of the percussion and guitar.

Debuting at No. 1 on the Australian charts, the John Butler Trio has the distinct honor of being the only independent band with its own label to accomplish such a feat. The Aussies have sure taken a liking to the band, with sold out concerts and thousands of albums sold as proof.

Going double platinum in two weeks, the band's current lineup has achieved a great deal in its one and a half years of existence. Sunrise Over Sea is the perfect album to get acquainted with the John Butler

see TRIO page A6



winning Genius musical hero

JOANNA WALDHOUR STAFF WRITER

What an awe-inspiring movie. Actor Jamie Foxx takes on the role of a lifetime, portraying the life of singer Ray Charles.

The movie opens to the childhood of Ray Charles Robinson, growing up in a small Georgia Southern town. It further shows how Charles starts to learn the piano and how he becomes blind. As the movie progresses and he becomes older, Charles becomes independent and has the determination and dream to play music in front of audiences.

As a young man, he takes a bus ride by himself to Seattle to

see RAY page A6

Eisley releases 'Room Noises'

Songs of innocence and experience

KACY THOMPSON STAFF WRITER

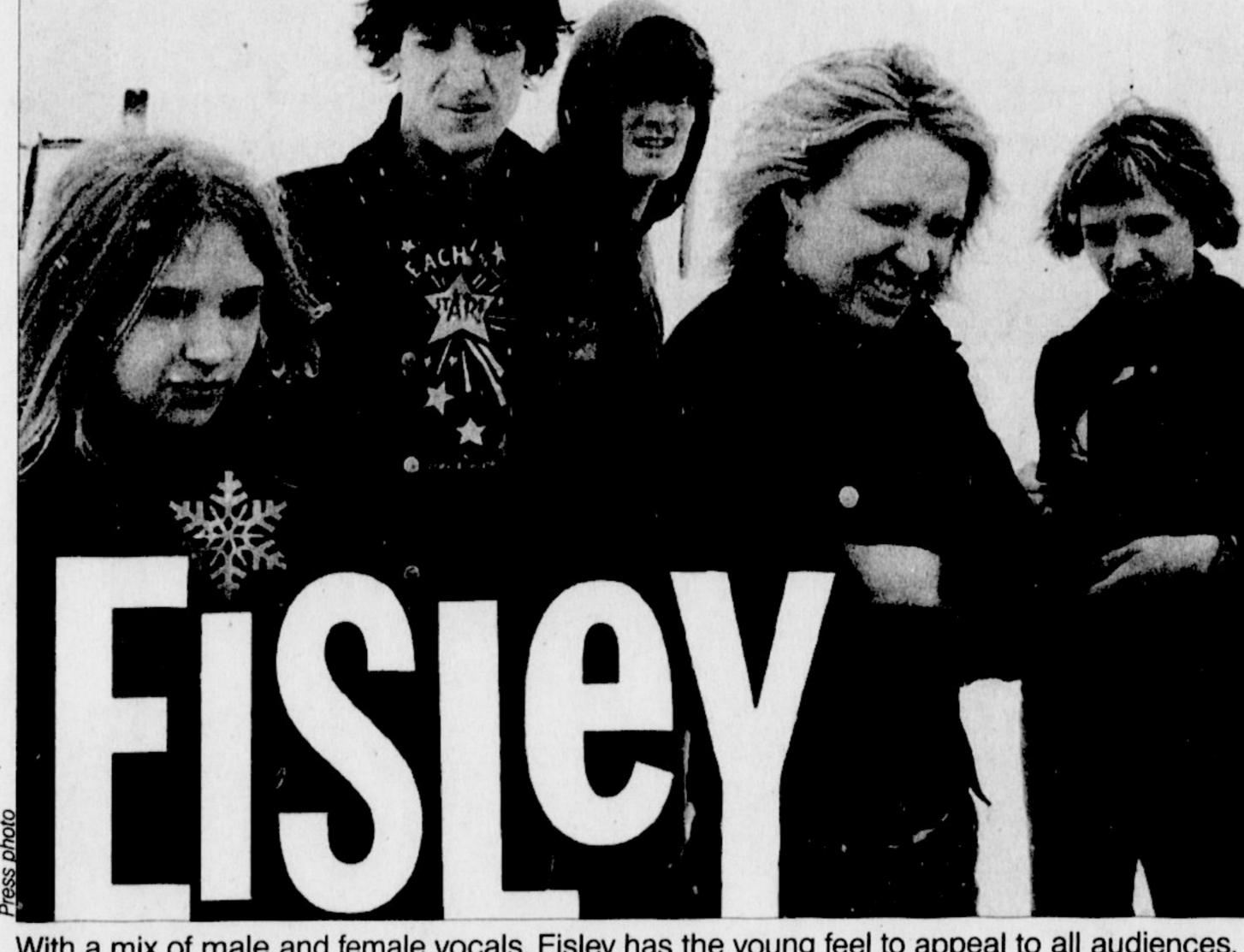
Eerie. Rousing. Playful. Whimsical. Bittersweet. These are some of the moods you'll experience while listening to Eisley's debut album, Room Noises.

When you first pop in the album, it starts off with "Memories," which is about a woman mourning her husband's suicide. Then it goes on to tracks about a girl in love with a robot and rabbits running through shrubbery.

With four home schooled siblings and a family friend, Eisley is a breath of fresh air in today's music scene. The oldest member is 22 years old, and the youngest is 15. Their father is the band's road manager. They started putting music together seven years ago around the house and moved up to performing at their family's coffee shop.

Granted, the band is young, but that doesn't mean they don't know what they're doing. The Texas-based quintet writes all of their own music and lyrics, and plays their own instruments. They even helped out during the production of Room Noises.

Before this album, Eisley put out two EP's in 2003, Laughing City and Marvelous Things. Now, it's Room Noises, the debut Reprise Records release that has 12 tracks. Four of the older songs from the EP's were remastered and added to the track



With a mix of male and female vocals, Eisley has the young feel to appeal to all audiences.

listing for Room Noises, including "Marvelous Things" and "Telescope Eyes."

After dropping the twin EP's, Coldplay found Eisley. Then, Eisley was one of the opening bands for part of Coldplay's 2003 U.S. Tour. They have also toured with Brand New and Snow Patrol.

Blender Magazine dubbed Eisley "The Next Big Thing." Entertainment Weekly labeled them "The Band on the Brink."

You can imagine hearing Eisley's Room Noises as the score in modern day versions of Peter Pan or Alice in Wonderland. Especially the song "Brightly Wound" with the lyrics, "I shall never grow up / Make believe is much too fun."

When trying to compare Eisley to other bands in today's music scene, it's almost impossible, but if you're a fan of The Stills, Snow Patrol, Bright Eyes, Rilo Kiley, The Arcade

Fire or Metric, you might enjoy Room Noises. Their sound is unlike any other group out there which makes them enjoyable.

Eisley's lyrics can say it all. "You and I / You and Me / Congratulations because we've made it." Yes, Eisley has made it, and this record can only lead to bigger and better albums to

This writer can be contacted at features@theeastcarolinian.com.

Bublé from page A5

renowned trumpeter Chris Botti aids Bublé for one of the highlights of the album. The song automatically captures a certain aura that immediately draws your attention and liking. Definitely a song for that special someone, the combination of Botti's trumpet and Bublé's unique voice makes for a special package in this song. The track "Quando quando," introduces a slow Latin jazz beat, as Nelly Furtado and Michael Bublé's voices blend beautifully. The saxophone gets into the mix, taking off with the feel of an intimate setting, as the instrument has a smooth melodic solo. Another highlight of the album, this song fits perfectly into a smoky jazz bar room setting.

"If you're going to do a cover of a song that has a great melody, don't change the melody, for Christ's sake," said Ozzy Osbourne

base in the United States. With

its catchy tracks and sensational

sound, it might just be the next

one to listen to with a group of

This writer can be contacted at

features@theeastcarolinian.com.

This CD would be a good.

TriO from page A5

fmsound.net.

big thing.

friends.

recently in Esquire magazine.

Apparently the prince of darkness hasn't heard this new album. Bublé combines elements of blues and jazz with his cover of the Marvin Gaye classic "How Sweet It Is." The opening guitar riffs sound like something The Allman Brothers would be proud of. The guitar and harmonica remain prevalent, along with the accompaniment of the jazzy trumpets in this up tempo number. Bublé also covers a classic of the Fab Four with their early song "Can't Buy Me Love."

The hallmark of the album comes in the package of a little song called "Home." The one it is. Learn more about him on song of the album written by its his Web site, MichaelBublé.com, vocalist is the most heartfelt. The slow melody is soothing, straying from the others in style, with a more familiar pop arrangement. This song is the one that will catch your attention most out of

any on the album. Any college student can relate to his emotion when he proclaims, "May be surrounded by a million people, I still feel all alone, I just wanna go home. Oh I miss you, you

The time has come as the title of his album indicates, for a wider audience to undergo the Michael Bublé experience. His music is reminiscent of past genres, yet applicable and valid in the modern music scene. He is a refreshing voice to the common pattern that dominates popular music these days. And for Michael Bublé, how sweet or perhaps you might find it's time to pick up his album, out in stores now.

This writer can be reached at features@theeastcarolinian.com

Five or more sunburns of developing



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Ray from page A5

play in a dive and joins the real world. The film expresses the "The album is a very positive journey that Charles takes as a and upbeat offering and showblind African American man cases a variety of musical styles during the 1950s and 1960s and genres," said Harjit Bains of and his eventual rise to fame. It highlights what he goes through If it's a new and interesting as he plays for audiences. Either sound you're looking for, the his manager or friends constantly John Butler Trio may be just take advantage of him in the what you're looking for. Having financial department. His drug already taken Australia by storm, addiction and the affairs he had the band is looking for a fan

> a toll on his life. For people who don't know a lot about Charles' life, this film is one to see. There may be shocking moments about his life because he has been considered a genius hero when it comes to music, but his personal life also plays a big role in this film.

behind his wife's back also take

"The movie would be worth seeing simply for the sound of the music and the sight of performing it. That it looks deeper and gives us a sense of the man himself is what makes it special," said Roger Ebert.

The great cast of characters make the movie even more real. Jamie Foxx does an excellent job of the physical movement and characteristics of Ray Charles.

Taylor Hackford directed this Universal Pictures Release with the screenplay by James L. White. This 155-minute film is rated PG-13 for depiction of drug addiction, sexuality and some thematic elements.

This writer can be contacted at features@theeastcarolinian.com.



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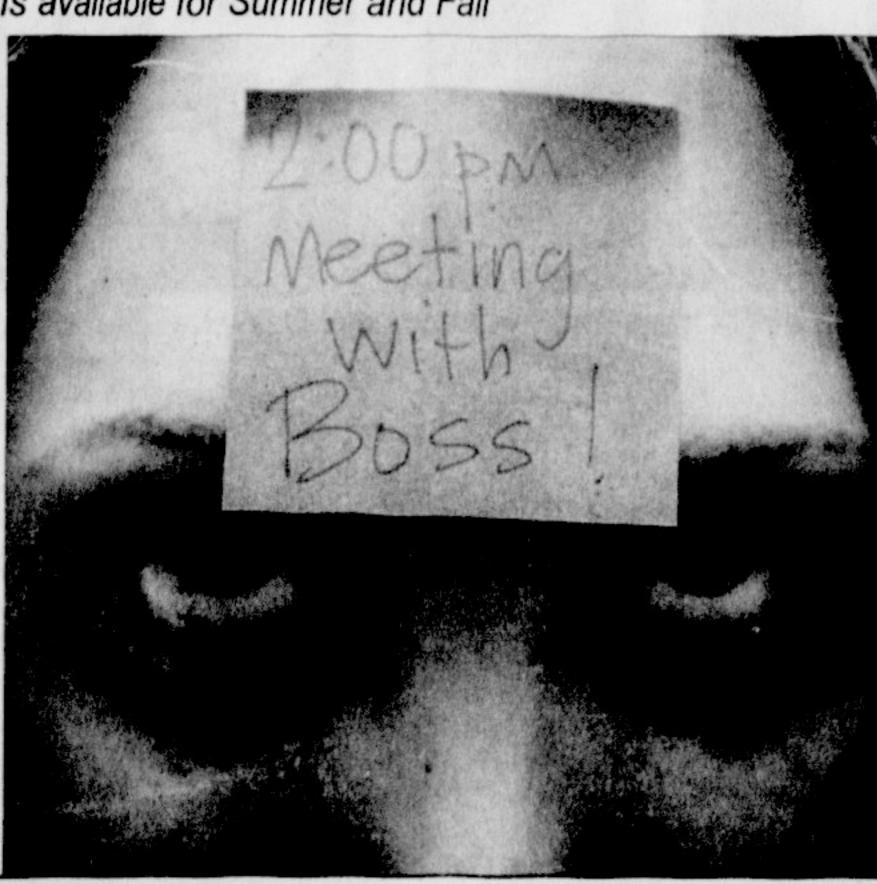
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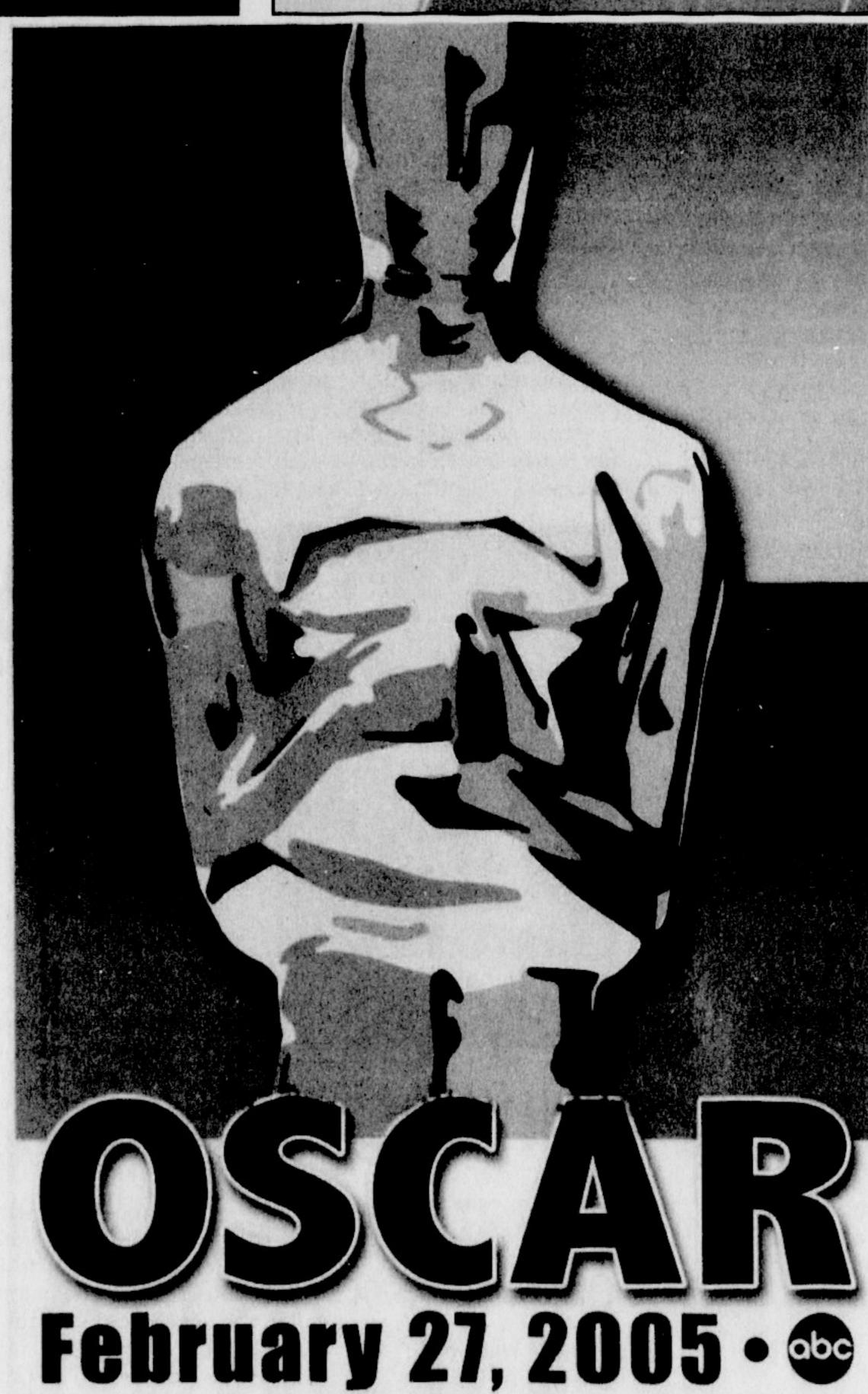
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Page A7

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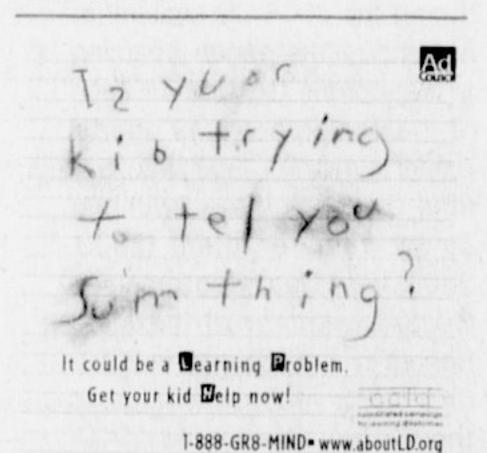
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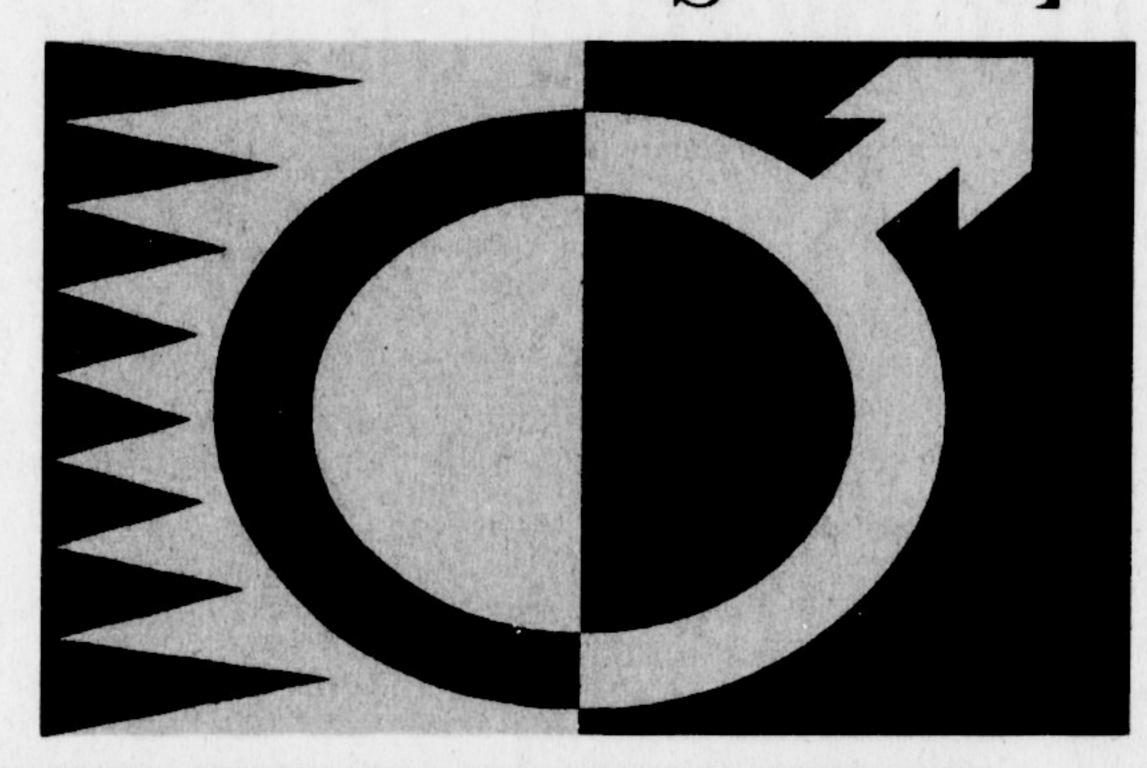


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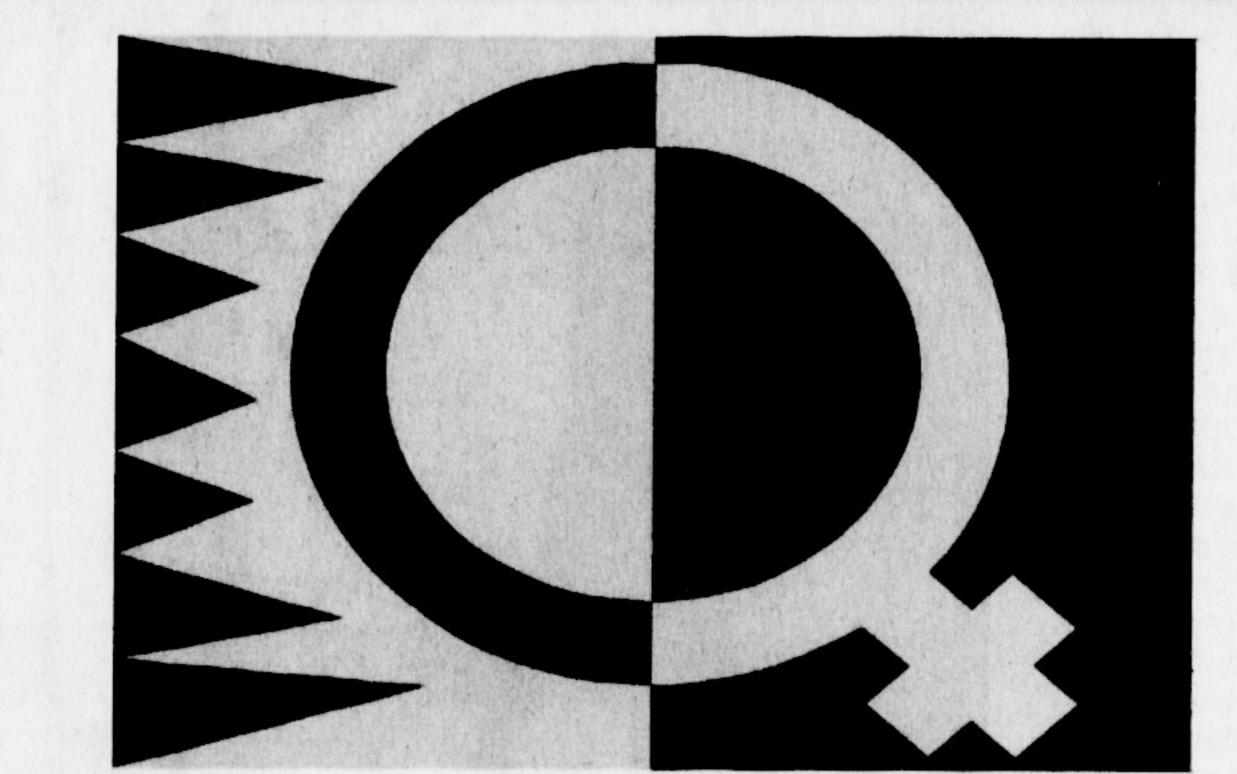
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Sports Briefs



Parker named to All-Decade team

ECU senior Diane Parker has been named to the Conference USA Women's Swimming and Diving All-Decade team announced league officials Tuesday. C-USA is celebrating its 10th anniversary during the 2004-05 season. In conjunction, the league is naming a Team of the Decade for each of the conference's 19 sports. Parker (Snellville, Ga.) is a twotime C-USA Female Swimmer of the Year recipient (2003, 2004). She has also received C-USA Swimmer of the Meet honors in 2002-03 and in 2003-04. Parker led the Pirates to the C-USA title in the 2002-2003 season and was named conference Swimmer of the Week seven times throughout her career. As a freshman, Parker garnered C-USA Rookie of the Year honors in 2001-02. She has been named ECU's Most Outstanding Swimmer for three consecutive years (2001-04). During her collegiate career, Parker has captured six individual conference championships, holds six ECU varsity swimming records (200 free, 100 and 200 breast, 100 and 200 fly and the 200 IM) and two C-USA records in the 100 breast and the 200 IM. In addition to individual records she also holds ECU varsity records as a member of four relay teams, in the 400 free, 800 free, 200 medley and the 400 medley.

Seahawks poised to tag Alexander

Faced with the challenge of two high-profile players on the verge of free agency, the Seattle Seahawks appeared to solve part of the equation, agreeing to a long-term deal with quarterback Matt Hasselbeck, the Seattle Times reported Tuesday. The deal, agreed to Monday night but not yet official, would allow the Seahawks to place the franchise tag on running back Shaun Alexander. The newspaper, citing sources close to negotiations, reported the team will hold a press conference Tuesday to announce the signing. Hasselbeck, a Pro Bowler in 2003. reportedly was seeking a deal similar to Chad Pennington's. The Jets' quarterback signed a seven-year extension for \$64 million. The deal included combined bonus money of \$23 million, all guaranteed. With an 83.1 rating last season, Hasselbeck was the league's 17th-rated passer. He completed 58.9 percent of his passes for 3,382 yards, with 22 touchdowns and 15 interceptions. He is also the highest-rated passer in team history, ahead of Dave Krieg. In an earlier report on Monday, the Tacoma, Wash., News Tribune's Web site reported the Seahawks had informed Hasselbeck of their decision to designate him as their franchise player if the sides couldn't reach a contract agreement by the 4 p.m. ET Tuesday deadline. Naming Hasselbeck the franchise player would have meant a one-year contract worth \$8.078 million, the average of the five highest quarterback salaries for 2004. A deal that size would wipe out roughly one-third of Seattle's existing salary cap space - which in turn is about twice what a longterm deal might wipe out in 2005, an incentive for the Seahawks to get a deal done - according to the News Tribune. With Hasselbeck apparently signed, the Seahawks can tag Alexander, giving him a one-year, \$6.3 million deal. Seattle could also trade the running back, who's flirted with the idea of playing elsewhere.

Merritt deserves celebrity billing

Freshman serves as outstanding ambassador for the university

ERIC GILMORE SENIOR WRITER

If you see LaShawn Merritt on campus, roll out the red carpet. Hand him free shoes. Give him your food. Do his homework for him. Do whatever it

takes to make him happy. Heck, in a couple of years, there will be a bronze statue at a newly funded track complex of him. Not too many freshmen can boast that.

Track coach Bill Carson has coached at ECU for 37 years and he's seen nothing like it. Carson has coached the likes of Julien Dunkley, Charles Miles and Lee Vernon McNeill. That's pretty good company for Merritt to squash in a matter of weeks.

If you don't know who LaShawn Merritt is, you need to come out of your hermit hole. Just two weekends ago, he ran the third fastest indoor 400meter time ever. Yes, ever. Merritt was clocked at 44.93 seconds at the Powered by Tyson Invitational Feb. 11.

The only person in the world to beat Merritt's indoor time was this guy named Michael Johnson. Johnson owns the world record of 44.63, set in 1995, and Johnson's 1996 time of 44.66 are the only two performances that are faster.

Try to fathom this. That's the equivalent of ECU point guard Mike Cook dribbling circles around Allen Iverson or Kobe Bryant. Johnson was a professional, sponsored by Nike, and training year round. Merritt, a complete amateur, is on his footsteps still having to take English 1100.

The scary part is that Merritt still has a chance to get better. He's only been competing in indoor track for two years. Carson thinks that with the proper training Merritt could break the 44-second barrier. That's absolutely unheard of.

Think what Michael Vick did for Virginia Tech football. Although he did visit ECU, he ended up elevating Virginia Tech to a national championship game. That national championship game had a trickle down effect to Virginia Tech becoming a football powerhouse while still propelling them into the ACC.

What about Johnny Dawkins and Jay Bilas for Duke basketball? Coach K got a recruiting class that struggled at first, but eventually rose to Final Four status. Duke now reloads in basketball year in and year out.

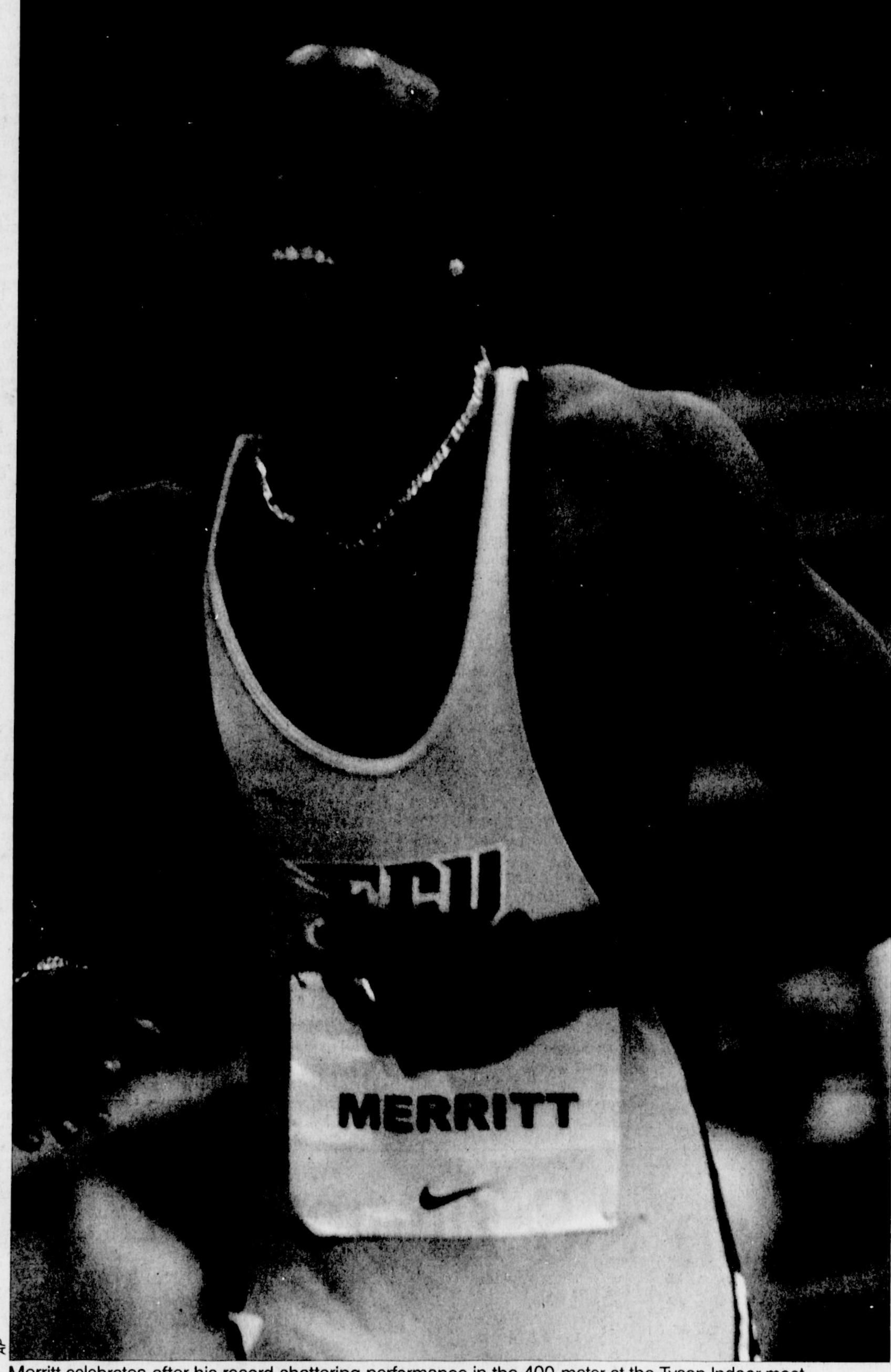
LaShawn Merritt is that certain type of special athlete who could propel ECU track and field to a consistent national power. Not to take away from Carson's efforts because ECU already has been a consistently strong squad, but now, we're talking powerhouse.

Merritt has already gained exposure for ECU on ESPN 2 in the Powered by Tyson Invitational tournament. Watching Merritt run in the purple and gold should exude pride throughout the Pirate Nation.

Merritt has handled everything via the media with grace. He appears to be confident, yet humbled in his effort to win the Conference USA 400 meter race this weekend and the 2005 NCAA Indoor Championship March 11 - 12.

Oh yeah, get his autograph too. It will be something to show the kids in front of that statue.

> This writer can be contacted at sports@theeastcarolinian.com.



Merritt celebrates after his record-shattering performance in the 400-meter at the Tyson Indoor meet.

Pirates do the unthinkable on road at UAB



McNeil hit two game-sealing free throws against UAB last week.



ROBERT LEONARD SENIOR WRITER

I was sitting at my computer last Wednesday night just relaxing. I knew ECU was playing at UAB at the time, but as I said last week, we really didn't have a chance to pull this game out.

About 8:45 p.m., fellow writer Brent Wynne sent me an instant message.

"Are you listening to this? We are up two with three minutes left."

You have to be kidding me. I'm a big fan of this program, but come on. If there are two things this team isn't known for it's winning close games and winning on the road, and Brent was trying to tell me we were doing both.

I stood up and went over to my radio. Were we beating UAB on the road? I excitedly turned on the radio and twisted the dial until I finally found Pirate Radio 1250, hoping to hear the familiar voice of Jeff Charles giving me the good news. Instead of hearing Jeff Charles, all I got was a commercial.

went back to my desk and just started thinking how

awesome this would be if it were true. People who don't follow college basketball may think UAB is an average team just because of their name. I mean, how many teams with hyphenated names do you know are good? But in all honestly, nothing could be further from the truth. Let's not forget this is a team that went to the Sweet 16 last year after beating Kentucky, who many college basketball writers, including myself, had picked to

advance to the Final Four. Finally, Jeff Charles came over the airways with the truth. We were beating UAB.

The next few minutes seemed like an eternity. With not much time left on the clock, we got a big stop and JaPhet McNeil was put on the line with two free throws and a chance to go up three points.

For me, that wasn't good news. On the free throw line, where ECU has struggled, the Pirates had a chance to force a team to hit a three pointer to send the game to overtime.

This team really amazes me. one came on the road. Sometimes in this situation, like last season against Charlotte, we miss those free throws. Sometimes in this situation, like this season against Charlotte, we make those free throws. Either way I knew it was all or nothing once McNeil got to the line, he was hitting both or missing both.

As soon as he hit the first one, I knew the second one was good. With hardly any time left on the clock, UAB needed a miracle.

I sat at my desk and thought about what Bill Herrion must have been screaming at his five players that moment. I imagined him screaming,

"Don't foul."

If he was, JaPhet didn't hear him. I really don't remember much about what Jeff Charles said, but I do remember him saying, "UAB now has a chance to tie the game with no time left at the free throw line. Why would you foul there?"

Why am I not surprised? Jeff Charles, like good broadcasters do, made things rather simple. "If he misses any of these, the Pirates are going to win this game. (Pause) And he misses the first. The Pirates have won this

In my opinion, this is the biggest win in the Bill Herrion era. He has had some very big wins in his career here, but none compare with this one. Beating Louisville for our first conference win ever was big. Beating Dwayne Wade and Marquette twice in back-to-back seasons was huge. Beating Charlotte this season was another memorable win for Herrion. But the latest notch on Herrion's belt has one thing not in common with the rest - this

It's actually pretty funny. Last Wednesday in this column, said we had no chance to win this game and yet, we won it. Earlier in the season bashed the team for not showing effort and then they came out 110 percent against Cincinnati. Maybe I should just write negative things about them every week.

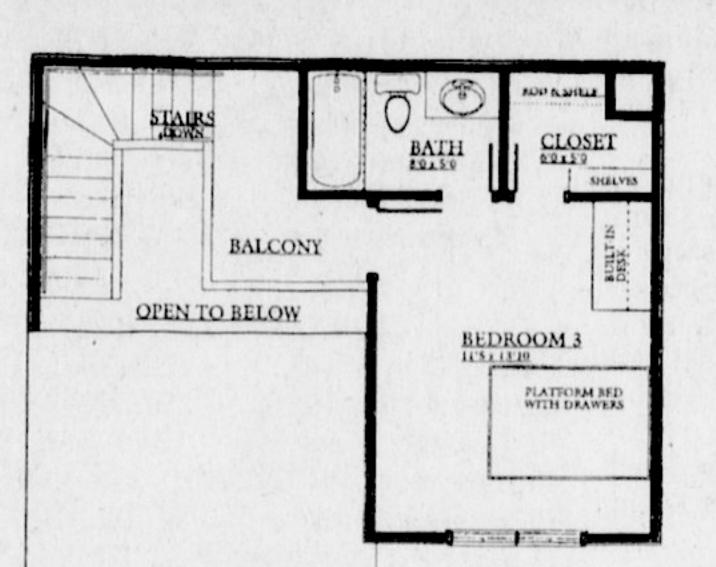
With that in mind, we play Southern Mississippi at home tonight and Houston in Minges Saturday. I don't think we have a chance against either team.

The writer can be contacted at sports@theeastcarolinian.com.

23, 2005

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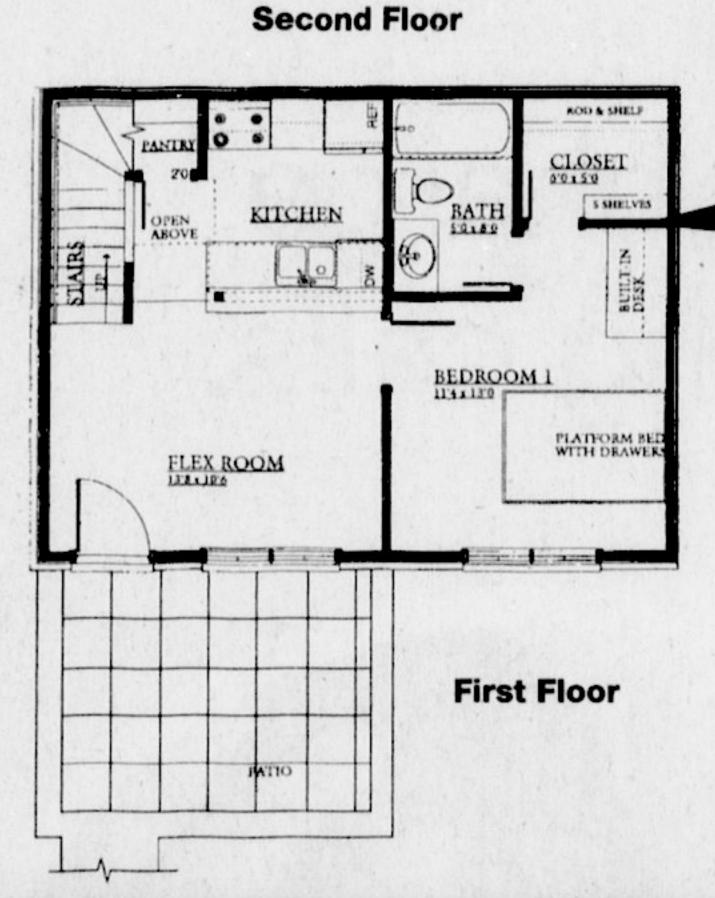
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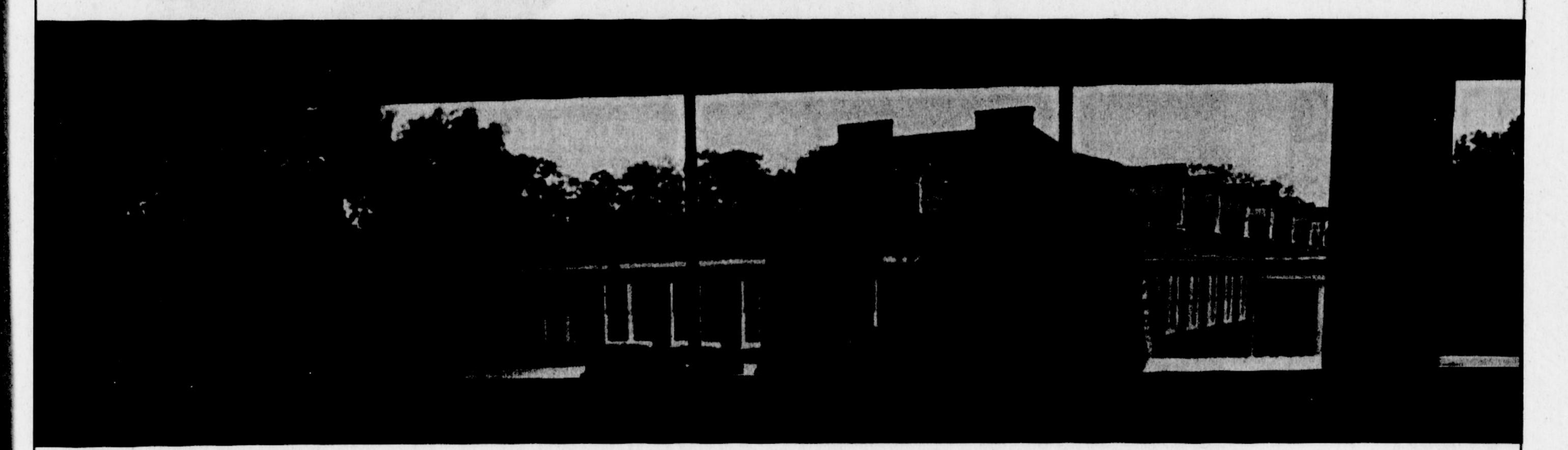


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Cats back on radar

(KRT) — Timing can be everything, and quite frankly, fourth-year Villanova coach Jay Wright has picked the perfect time to get his Wildcats back on the national scene.

It's not fair to say that this season would have been 'Nova's last chance to re-establish itself as a perennial NCAA Tournament program, the kind that top recruits would again put on their consideration list. But considering what's coming next in the Big East Conference, this was probably going to be its best.

Despite all the talk about the power of the Atlantic Coast Conference, the last two NCAA champions, Connecticut and Syracuse, are Big East teams.

And while, the Big East lost Miami and Virginia Tech to the ACC and will lose Boston College to it next season, the teams joining the conference next year, Cincinnati, DePaul, Louisville, Marquette and South Florida, will more than compensate.

The bottom line is the Big East has always been a league that's been tough to get up in once you've fallen down, and now it's going to be even tougher.

Villanova hasn't been in the NCAA Tournament since the 1998-99 season. The fiveyear drought is its longest since it missed the field from 1972 through 1978.

Syracuse and UConn are established national powers. Louisville, Cincinnati, Pitt and De Paul are big time players on the national scene.

Georgetown, Notre Dame and St. John's are name brands that can easily become household names again.

In a conference like that, Villanova can't afford to be out of the spotlight any longer because it's just going to get harder and harder to find.

"You know, I can't concern myself with that, but I realize that what you are saying is correct. Think about how tough this league is now. We've got five teams in the Top 25 and West Virginia was undefeated until it started playing in the league," Wright said after the 25th-ranked Wildcats came up with a huge 80-72 victory over No. 17 Pittsburgh Sunday at the Pavilion. A taste of the NCAA Tournament this year would do wonders for next season and beyond.

"My commitment is to these kids," Wright said.

"I have faith in them, and I just believe that if we can get them to be the best they can be, that other stuff, which is very important, will take care of itself.

"Now the next step is that they have to actually take themselves as far as they can go. And then they teach the younger guys, and that's how you get a program going."

It looks as if Villanova has turned the corner. It couldn't have happened at a better time.



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(SID)— The ECU women's golf team fired the second lowest team total (294) of the tournament Tuesday afternoon to claim second place honors at the Papa John's Collegiate. The tournament was being held at the par-72, 6,190-yard Don Shula Golf Club.

The Pirates (62-28-1) placed four golfers in the top-23, with freshman Emelie Lind finishing in seventh place after a 54-hole total of 222. Senior Adrienne Millican claimed her fifth top-10 finish of the season with a tie for eighth place after carding a 224.

Sophomore Michelle Williams recorded her first ever top-10 placement at ECU after posting a tournament score of 225 finishing in a tie for tenth, while Heidi Helliesen finished tied for 23rd (77-79-75=231). Host school Miami (Fla.) took

home the team title with a 54-hole score of 883, followed by ECU (902), No. 39 Virginia (907), USF (909) and No. 28 Mississippi State (911).

In the individual portion of the event, Miami's Josie Shinn claimed first place honors with a score of 213 (73-73-67), followed by Mississippi State's Beth Irwin (220). Four golfers finished tied for third at 222 and ECU's Lind came in seventh (224).

"We came out and played well today," said Head Coach Kevin Williams.

"We were able to get some good quality wins this week and our team showed that we can stay calm and play from behind."

The Lady Pirates will be back on the course March 6-8 when they participate in the Pinehurst Challenge in Pinehurst, NC.

Top Pirate Finishes
7. Emelle Lind 70-78-74=222
8. Adrienne Millican 74-78-72=224
T10. Michelle Williams 75-77-73=225
23. Heidi Helliesen 77-79-75=231
T45. Jessica Hauser 80-80-79=239

Top Individual Finishes

1. Josie Shinn (Miami) 73-73-67-213
2. Beth Irwin (Miss. State) 75-70-75-220
T3. Tina Miller (Miami) 75-76-70-221
T3. Becky Berzonski (UNCW) 73-75-73-221
T3. Leah Wigger (UVA) 77-72-72-221
T3. Michelle Jarman (UNCW) 73-73-75-221

Top Team Finishes

1. University of Miami (Fla.) 296-299-288=883
2. ECU 296-312-294=902
3. University of Virginia 301-301-305=907
4. University of South Florida 304-309-296=909



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