

Study cites ECU high in minority grads

Schools are positive models in lessening gap

NICK HENNE
NEWS EDITOR

Both ECU and Elizabeth City State University were cited for having higher graduation rates of minority and low-income students when compared to peer institutions, according to *A Matter of Degrees: Improving Graduation Rates in Four-Year Colleges and Universities*, a report from the Education Trust.

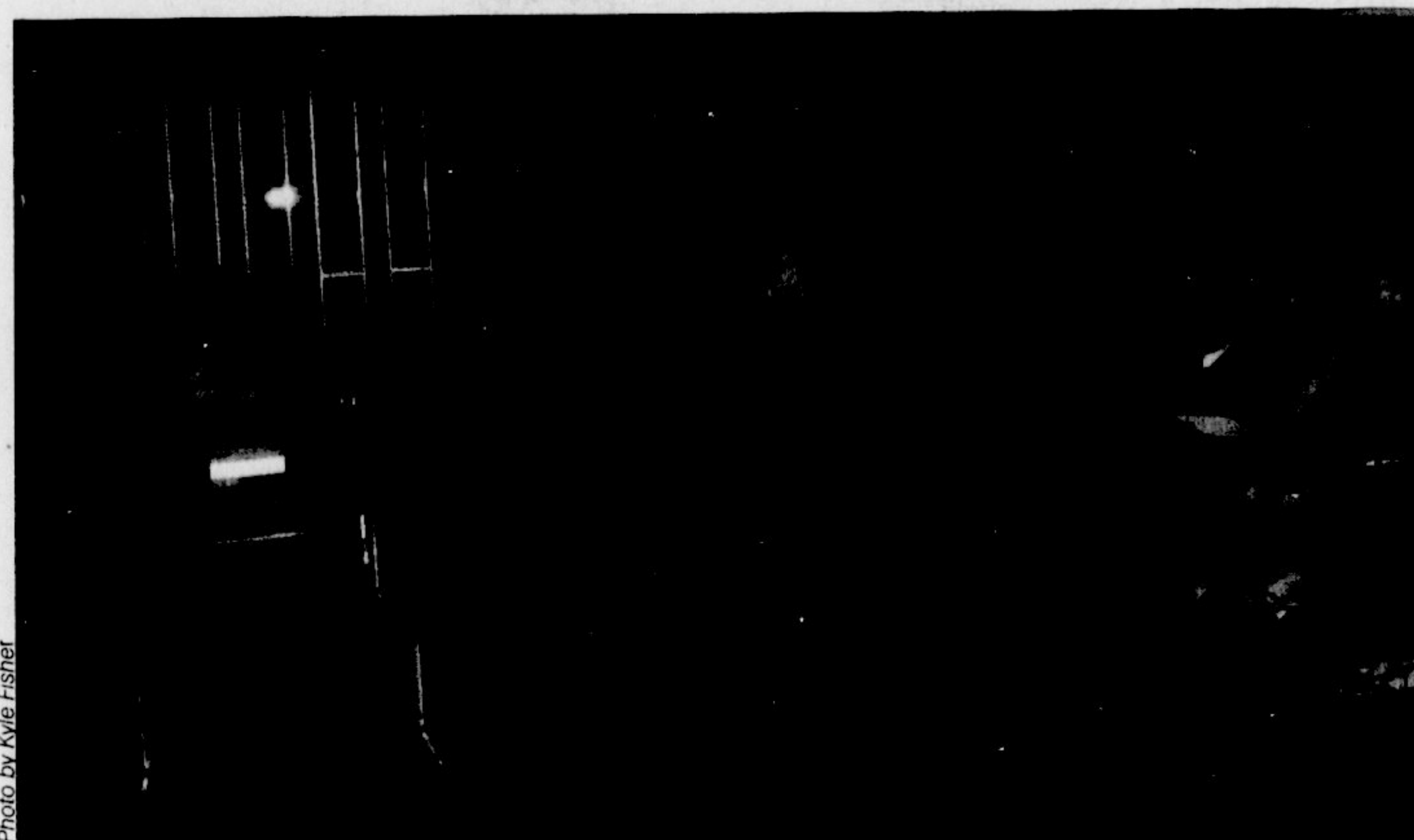
Kevin Carey, author of the report, provides a number of statistics and percentages dealing with graduation rates of different groups in colleges across America.

Carey describes America as a large, prosperous, free nation that has thrived and excelled in many areas including education. America has been one of the most highly educated nations and has been steadily investing in educational institutes across the nation.

This increase in education is still with us, as the number of students entering two or four-year educational institutes has risen from less than one half in 1975 to nearly two thirds in 2001, with the largest increases in females and minority groups.

While an increased number of students of all groups are attending college, we are faced with a problem that has become prevalent among universities across the nation. A steady and consistent gap exists across the majority of American colleges in the graduation rates between white and minority students. The report stated nationwide statistics indicating 67 percent of white students graduated within six years, compared to 46 percent in blacks and 47 percent Latino students. The study also indicates 7 percent of all lower income students get a BA by age 26, as opposed to 60 percent of upper-income students.

A major factor Carey indicated in the study is the differences in the K-12 scholastic



Rosina interim assistant for global academic initiatives speaks at an awards ceremony for minority students in association with the Ledonia Wright Cultural Center.

period between these two groups. Lower income and minority students commonly attend schools that have insufficient resources and staff and have lower expectations of their students when compared to higher income white students. This difference sets the framework for the students' academic performance in later years. Even the more academically gifted students who attend inadequate scholastic systems are not challenged enough in this period to prepare them for college.

ECU and ECSU were each cited in Carey's study as having high graduation rates among minority groups.

Carey cites ECU as having an overall graduation rate of 54 percent, compared to ECU's peer institutions at 41 percent. The graduation rate of ECU's African American student population is 60 percent, almost double ECU's peer institutions, who graduate only 32 percent. According to the study, ECU African American students have had a higher graduation rate than the white students consistently for the last four years.

ECU was cited in Carey's report as having high graduation

rates. The overall graduation rate of ECSU is 53 percent in the study, while African American students also have a 60 percent graduation rate.

The report stated ECSU and ECU as being differently structured institutions. ECU was described as a competitive doctoral degree granting institution with a 16 percent minority population, while ECSU is classified as a "less competitive" historically black institution with a 75 percent African American population.

Lathan Turner, director of Ledonia Wright Cultural Affairs, said ECU has improved on this percentage, yet we still need to strive for further improvement.

"It is important to look at the value of what got us to this point and from an accountability standpoint, we need to revisit and/or restructure the opportunities that were available then such that we are able to continue with improvement," said Turner.

While the graduation rate percentages have not changed, ECU must continue to strive to maintain and eventually exceed this high number. It is important for academic and non-academic experiences to offer services to

motivate and retain students. A recent example of that is the academic honors program, which recognizes students who have a 3.5 or higher cumulative GPA. This event recognized nearly 200 students.

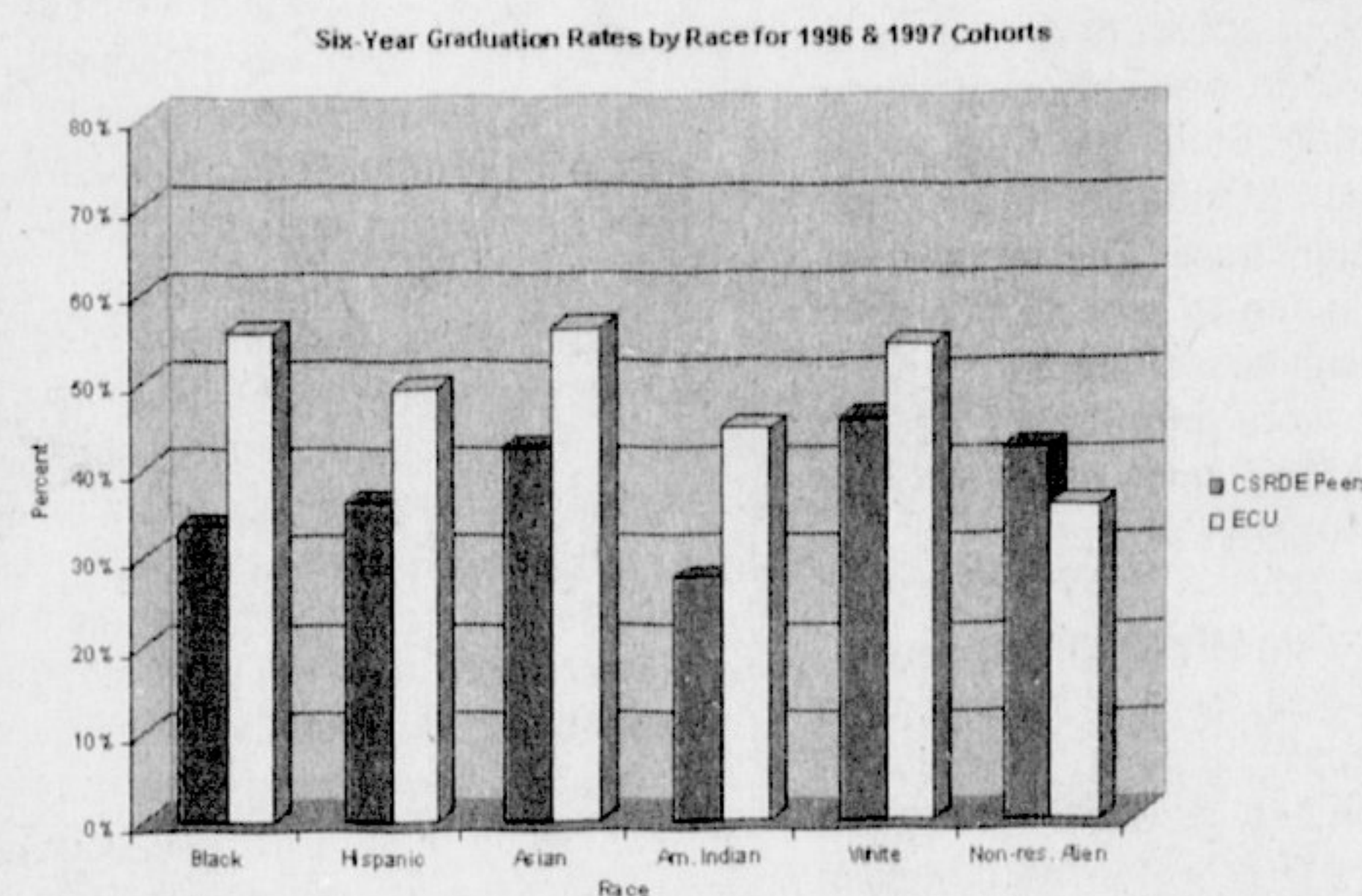
Turner said ECU has to maintain the types of services that brought it the recognition in "A Matter of Degrees" as the report challenges the universities recognized to maintain these successful graduation rates.

The economy is offering so many challenges to students staying in college, including tuition increase and the lack of financial aid. This creates the common student obligation of holding a job while in school in order to pay for the demanded expenses.

see STUDY page A2

ECU Peers

ECU peers include 85 moderately selective public institutions (2002 SAT Composite 990 - 1044 or ACT Composite 21.0 - 22.4)



ECU offers new doctorate program in physical therapy

Program meets growing needs

KRISTIN DAY
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

ECU has adopted a new three-year doctor of physical therapy program which will meet the growing educational demands for those entering into the field.

Walter Jenkins, associate professor and associate chair for the Department of Physical Therapy, said the need for this program is not due to the number of physical therapy students, but rather the amount of information they will be responsible for.

"Physical therapists' responsibilities have been expanding for some time," said Jenkins.

"Doctoral programs in physical therapy are designed to increase the student's knowledge prior to graduation."

The university has been in the process of implementing this new program for about three and a half or four years. The UNC Office of the President, Graduate Deans Committee is the group of people through the UNC system that meets to review programs.

"The Graduate Deans Committee is comprised of graduate deans from all of the universities in the UNC system. The UNC Board of Governors is a group of appointed individuals who serve the public. Both the Graduate Deans and the Board of Governors are charged with advising the UNC President regarding new academic programs," Jenkins said.

There are other universities who have similar programs, but ECU's is the only one of its kind.

"We're the first state school in NC to have an entry-level doctorate in physical therapy," Jenkins said.

"Chapel Hill is implementing a transitional doctorate in physical therapy, which is after the

students have completed their master's in physical therapy."

At ECU, students enter this program after they receive their bachelor's degree and are scheduled to finish in three years.

"Students enrolled in the DPT program take classes on campus and then go into clinical settings to work with professional physical therapists," Jenkins said.

Students must attend 32 weeks of clinical education where they work with people who practice physical therapy. Jenkins said there are areas where they can do this in virtually every state, but the majority of ECU students stay in NC.

The first semester for this program will start in May, but the department is taking applications now. They will stop taking applications in early January, but Jenkins said he expects a good number of people to apply.

The department also created a pre-physical therapy club that meets once a semester. Undergraduates can learn more about the program at these meetings.

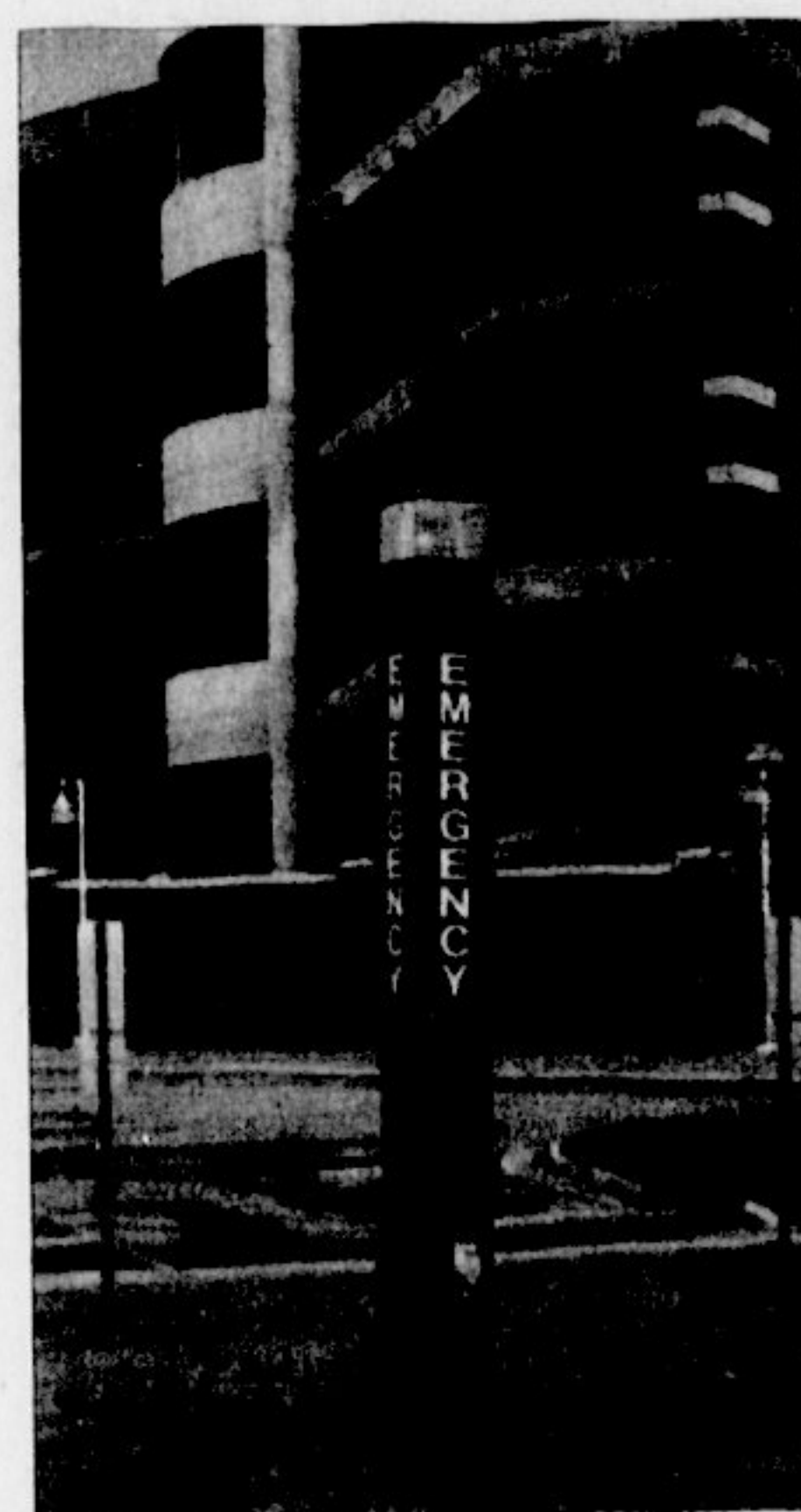
Jenkins said he thinks the future of physical therapy and the university will be improved by this program.

"What I see for the future is clinicians who are very well-prepared upon graduation from our program and an increase in our research potential," Jenkins said.

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

For More Info

To join or get more information about the pre-physical therapy club at ECU, e-mail William Jenkins at jenkinsw@mail.ecu.edu.



Blue lights are placed at various locations on campus for student protection.

Campus safety improving

ECU police urge student assistance

COLE WAHAB
STAFF WRITER

Campus police has stepped up its patrol and safety on ECU's campus, yet the issue of campus safety remains despite various security updates and new ways of reporting crimes.

Many students still wonder why robberies and assaults continue to occur when ECU has a police force on campus that is supposed to operate all day, every day.

Janel Drake, crime prevention officer with the ECU Police Department, said crime preven-

tion is a group effort that cannot be handled without the help of the students.

"Unfortunately, there's only 50 - 55 of us [police] and only six to eight on the street at a time," said Drake.

"There's 18,000 - 20,000 students that see things we don't even see. All it takes is a phone call and you don't have to tell us your name. We have an anonymous Web site. We just want the information."

Drake said some of the most common incidents occurring on campus this semester include numerous larcenies, particularly bicycle larcenies early in the semester. In addition, there have been a lot of alcohol and drug violations and a number

of reports about damaged property including vehicle breaking and entering.

Drake said when a crime is committed, the police need to be the first ones notified.

"Don't call your best friends, mother [or] father and then call us four or five hours later. If it's something like an assault, people are usually long gone," Drake said.

Drake said no matter how insignificant a crime may be, it still needs to be reported.

"They still need to call us because it could have happened to somebody else earlier or later in the night and we're missing that one little piece and you

see SAFETY page A2

Construction continues on West End Dining Hall

Facility projected to open next semester

NICK HENNE
NEWS EDITOR

The \$13 million West End Dining Hall project, originally scheduled to be opened by the beginning of the spring semester, has experienced several delays, moving the probable completion date.

Gina Shoemaker, project manager for the West End Dining Hall, said the project is nearing completion, despite the various delays. Air conditioning and water have been completed and the floors are in the process of being stained. The roof still needs additional work however.

"It's all coming together, it's just not coming together as quickly as we'd like," said Shoemaker.

The construction of the

building was originally set for completion by Sept. 27, but the current schedule shows a project completion date of Dec. 22. Additional time would still be necessary before the building could open to stock the facility with food and train the new staff.

"The contractor has had various delays and as of right now ... the current schedule shows a completion date by Dec. 22," Shoemaker said.

Shoemaker said it has not been indicated the cause of the various contractor delays.

While some of the delays can be attributed to the contractor, ECU and inclement weather are also responsible for a portion of the delays.

"This kind of thing is typical on almost every project," Shoemaker said.

"Every kind of project that is outside, there are commonly delays associated with weather,

especially larger projects such as this."

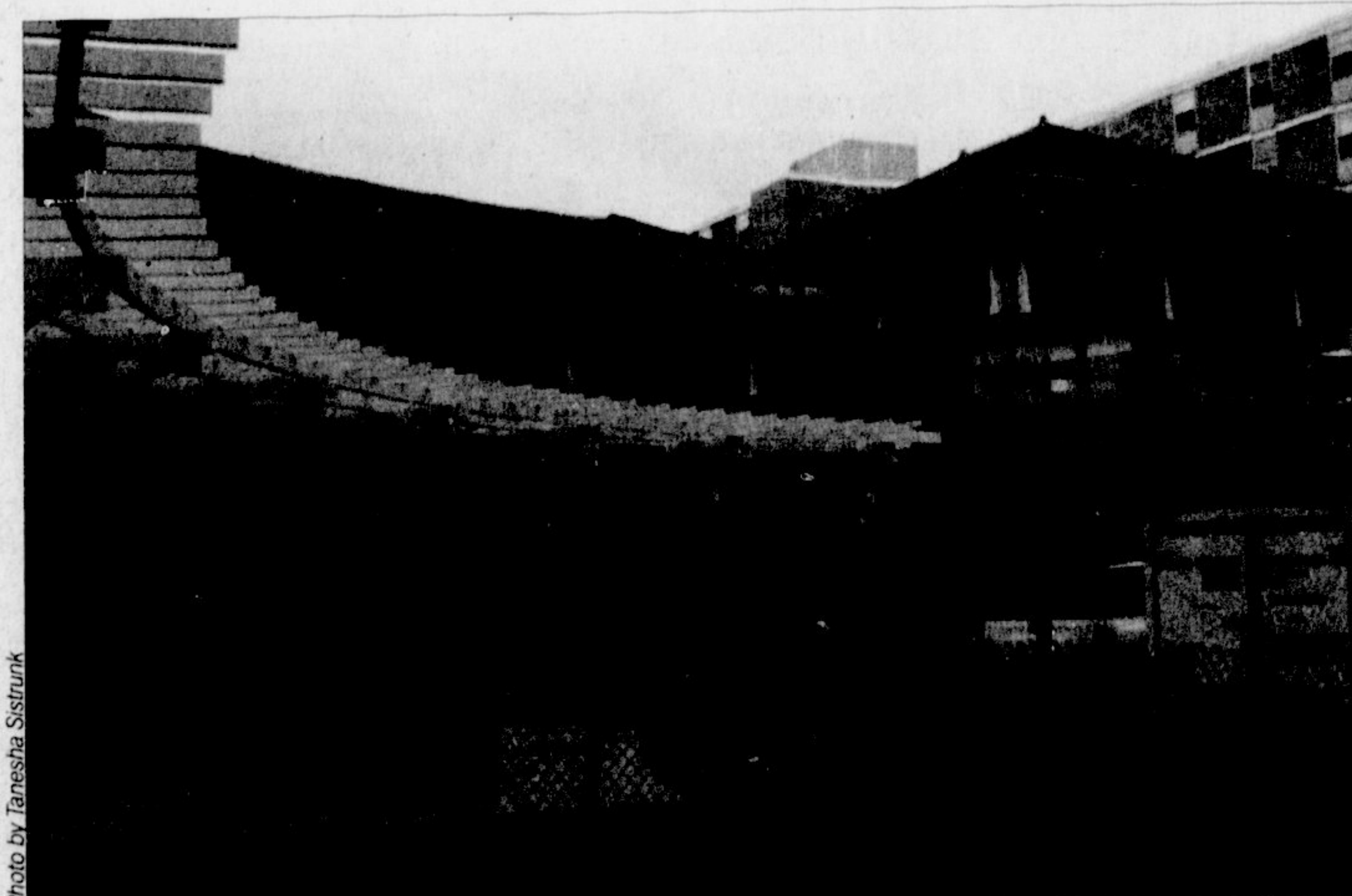
The West End Dining hall, once completed, will offer students a different style of dining hall than the current campus dining halls.

"The concept is marche cooking, meaning much of the cooking will be done in front of the people out in the open rather than in a back kitchen.

It will offer a variety of options including Chinese, Mongolian, salad bar, rotisserie, soups, breads, pizza oven and a fried chicken and burgers option. There will also be a Subway incorporated within the campus store as part of the new project.

The project is geared to help alleviate some of the heavy crowds in Mendenhall and will give ECU a chance to change the dining options that currently exist. It will seat 600

see DINING page A2



Several delays have moved the opening date of the new dining hall to the Spring semester.

Wireless from page A2

new project at ECU called RAVE CAVE, a multimedia projection system that began this month. A visitor wears special glasses in order to see the 3D image and when he tilts his head, the model of the mosquito rotates so he can see a vertical image. There is also a joystick, which the visitor uses to turn the mosquito.

"You've got a little game pad you can move the mosquito with and it responds like a joystick on a game so you can move it around," Anderson said.

Blalock said the 3D image is so real you feel like you can touch it.

Gutierrez said a new spin-off of this technology is a program called Dasher, which Scott Idem, assistive technology consultant, will present at the upcoming mobile technology fair in Greenville.

Idem said Dasher provides an alternative to inputting text

into computers and is designed for people who have limited mobility in their hands or are paralyzed from the neck down.

"Because of the way it works, you only have to move the mouse cursor a small amount to choose letters," said Idem.

"It is much different than using a keyboard but it can be almost as fast. Normally, you use the mouse with this program to select letters and words but the idea is to use it along with a device in the mouth."

Wireless technology at ECU was first designed to identify and track mosquitoes that could carry diseases in order to fight West Nile virus, malaria and other diseases.

The equipment includes a handheld device that contains maps, coordinates, two-way communication and distance and temperature measurements. They also have wearable computers

with monitor screens on the headset and a microphone for voice recognition technology or they can use the touch screen tablet that is attached to their waist.

The center has created a database that allows the researcher to clearly identify the type of mosquito they have caught by matching the specimen with detailed pictures. Once the researcher finds a match, he puts his coordinates, the date, the time and the number of mosquitoes into the database through the Internet. If there is an abnormal number of mosquitoes that could cause disease in the area, the situation is looked into more closely.

Anderson said external sources allow funding for these projects, but a specific source has not yet been found. Some research has been hindered because they need state funding and federal funding that has

not been available.

"It's hard not to move as fast as we want to go," Anderson said.

There has not been an immediate need for research locally because the West Nile virus is concentrated on the west coast this year. They are still doing experiments with their equipment and trying to fix any problems.

Although testing one mosquito does not determine the case of the population, Anderson said the potential of a disease or risk is the important part.

They are also currently developing a Web site anyone will be able to access. This Web site will make useful information including maps that show populations and habitats of mosquitoes.

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

NPC holds awards ceremony

Greeks recognized for achievements

MICHAEL HARRINGTON
STAFF WRITER

The National Panhellenic Conference held a scholarship banquet Monday at the Rock Springs Center, where multiple undergraduate sorority members were presented with achievement awards and the new 2005 NPC officers were announced.

The conference opened with a moment of silence in recognition of a long and hard year of work by the NPC led by conference member Aundrea Gardinier.

The opening remarks were followed by an improvised speech from Ion Outterbridge, director of Greek Life at ECU, who touched on all the NPC had been through during the year and stated goals for the future.

Outterbridge said this year was one of the best from a recruiting standpoint, but also one filled with many obstacles.

"This past year for the Panhellenic Conference has been an exciting year and a challenging year," said Outterbridge.

Outterbridge presented a variety of goals and future initiatives to the attendees of



NPC awarded individuals and organizations for their achievements this past semester.

the conference.

This year, the NPC is going to implement a new software package that will store all of the recruitment data for rush, a hectic period of time for the NPC where their new members are chosen.

Outterbridge said he wanted all members of the conference to uphold the standards and values of the NPC and to respect and understand the importance of their respective housemothers. He also challenged returning members to look into the past of their sororities.

"Look up your individual organizations and look

into the history of them and why they were founded," Outterbridge said.

Following Outterbridge's speech, awards were given for a variety of accomplishments in the Greek community.

Notable individual award winners were Gardinier, who won the Greek Woman of the Year award for her dedication to the NPC and her exemplary service, Jackie Lambertson, the 2004 NPC president who won the Greek Woman of the Year award for her outstanding leadership and Meredith Anderson, who received the Most Outstanding Recruitment

Director award.

Awards given to entire chapters included the Sister Sorority award and the Highest Academic Achievement award both won by Alpha Xi Delta, the Outstanding Panhellenic Service award won by Alpha Phi and the Educational Programming award won by Alpha Omicron Pi.

The ceremony also included the "passing of the gavel," the name given to the oath swearing of the new officers of 2005, who were called to stage and sworn in by Lambertson.

Andrea Blevins, a conference member who helped organize the ceremony, said she believes the NPC will continue to show positive images of Greek Life on campus in the future by getting active and continuing to participate in events like the American Heart Walk, where they raised a substantial amount of money.

"I see us doing more positive things ... growing larger," said Blevins.

The NPC, an umbrella organization for 26 women's Greek organizations located on 620 campuses across the United States and Canada, strives to promote values, education, leadership, cooperation and citizenship.

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

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Natalie Portman strips for Closer, yet maintains mystery

(KRT) — In Mike Nichols' relationship drama *Closer*, Natalie Portman — whose poise and talent often make her seem older than her years — has finally come into her own as an adult actress.

Based on the award-winning play by Patrick Marber, *Closer* revolves around the lives of four strangers who meet, love, betray and ultimately ruin each other while seeking intimacy. Despite playing a stripper in the film, the 23-year-old *Star Wars* prequel actress insists that she doesn't feel fully mature.

"I don't really feel like an adult yet myself, so I don't really think I can play adults. I think it's always a proportion, adult to

child within you, and even when you're 85 you're still going to have that proportion," explains Portman. "It changes with mood and with time. It's an arbitrary distinction between adult and child."

Director Nichols, who previously worked with Portman for a stage production of *The Seagull*, specifically wanted this curious mix of youth and sophistication for the role of Alice. "I wanted to start with a beautiful young girl, so adorable that Audrey Hepburn would worry ... And then (later in the film) Natalie comes back and she's increased," says Nichols.

Alice changes over the course of several years in the film, begin-

ning as a charismatic pixie-like waif who captures the attention of obituaries journalist Dan, played by Jude Law. After experiencing a bitter betrayal, she inevitably becomes wiser and jaded, yet still keeps an intriguing untouchable aura about her. Marber, who adapted his play for the screen, also sees this quality in Portman.

"She's extremely clever. She's got some secret about her as truly intelligent young women always do," gushes Marber. "She's enigmatic. She's absolutely in the now and she's real. She's quite a one."

Portman maintains her mystery when it comes to nudity as well. For the strip club scene, she agreed to let the film roll

while she bared herself, but later decided against using the two-second shot of her closing her top.

Nichols, who describes the film as "not about showing anything," agreed to the cut, a decision that must have pleased Marber, who deliberately kept all of his characters clothed, albeit scantily at times, for the stage version.

"It's very important to me that there's no nudity in the play because it's all about words and the words we use," he explains. "I wanted the audience to always feel like they'd seen all this sex, but they haven't seen a damn thing, if that makes any sense at all."



Contributed photo

Scrooge from page A5

plies a catharsis that never loses its power. That's the genius of Dickens in creating Scrooge.

"There's a man who has led a life virtually devoid of sentiment," says film historian David Thomson. "Grant him Christmas and that epiphany and it all can come back. It allows every one of us to hope whatever mistakes we've made, we're still in touch with that pure feeling."

When it comes to Ebenezer himself, pure hamminess is required. An actor has to be willing to put the showmanship in "Bah! Humbug."

In our season of Scrooge, we think back to the miser who touched us most.

"The one that stands out more than any other is Alastair Sim," says Robert Osborne, host of Turner Classic Movies. Sim gives a vigorous performance in the black-and-white 1951 version.

"It was done in England," Osborne says. "It's got a grittiness to it. He was a despicable, mean old guy."

Stage actor Philip Nolen talks fondly of Albert Finney's performance in the 1970 movie musical *Scrooge*. Nolen plays the skinflint in "The Trial of Ebenezer Scrooge," a production of the Orlando-UCF Shakespeare Festival.

"Finney is one of my favorite English actors," Nolen says. "There is some of that performance in what I'm doing. I can only emulate what I've seen go before. An actor is at a loss if

they try to do a new and completely different Hamlet. I'm at the mercy of a long and glorious performance tradition."

That tradition goes back to Dickens, who loved to read and perform *A Christmas Carol*. Patrick Stewart enacted the story energetically in a one-man stage show. Roger Daltrey, Tony Randall and Hal Linden were among the Scrooges at Madison Square Garden in a splashy musical that has been adapted into the new Grammer film.

Grammer cherishes *Mr. Magoo's Christmas Carol*, a 1962 production with Jim Backus supplying the animated character's voice.

"It was at a time in my life I was very young, so it made the greatest impression," Grammer says. "I can still sing most of the songs from it."

Among television versions, the most fondly remembered Scrooge is probably George C. Scott in the sumptuous *Christmas Carol* from 1984. Scott excelled at the character's regret.

In other versions, the small screen has taken way-out liberties. Jack Palance played Scrooge as a saloon owner in the 1998 Western *Ebenezer*. Susan Lucci was department store CEO Elizabeth Scrooge in *Ebbie*, a 1995 Lifetime movie.

A few other feminine "Scrooges" have graced the television screen — Cicely Tyson took the title role in "Ms. Scrooge" from 1997, and Vanessa Williams

played a dastardly pop singer in *A Diva's Christmas Carol* from 2000.

"It's quite actor-proof," Osborne says of Scrooge. "It's like *The Nutcracker*. You can see Baryshnikov or amateurs. We're quite forgiving at Christmas."

At the start, it's all about the money for Scrooge. He changes, but his greed never loses fascination in money-mad America.

"If you think of him as the rich man who has lost everything, it's an interesting type in a capitalist culture," says Thomson, author of *The New Biographical Dictionary of Film*.

"We have this very mixed feeling about great wealth," he adds. "I think we're very confused about it. A lot of our great characters are people who have been shilled by their own great wealth."

Thomson finds Scrooge-like figures in the title characters of *Citizen Kane* and *The Godfather*.

Lionel Barrymore played Scrooge as miserly Mr. Potter in *It's a Wonderful Life*. A leg injury had kept the actor from doing the actual Scrooge in the glossy 1938 *Christmas Carol* and Reginald Owen stepped in. Hard-hearted businessmen, from J.R. Ewing of "Dallas" to Donald Trump of "The Apprentice," have been good for television bottom lines. So networks keep returning to Scrooge, the granddaddy of them all.

Robert Halmi Sr. produced a TV version of *A Christmas Carol* five years ago with Patrick Ste-

art. That didn't stop Halmi from lavishing his attention on NBC's new musical.

"I think this somehow captures what Dickens meant, and it's remarkable it's a musical and still captures the richest part of the story," Halmi says. "You see this suffering in this man who just discovered all his life was wasted. He's just begging for a second chance. This thing never came across in other movies."

Fans of other versions will disagree. But Halmi's chutzpah reflects the way newer versions often build on Dickens.

In the A&E film *Karroll's Christmas*, premiering Dec. 14, the ghosts mistakenly visit a greeting-card writer (Tom Everett Scott) rather than his terrible, Scrooge-like neighbor (Wallace Shawn).

In the play *The Trial of Ebenezer Scrooge*, playwright Mark Brown lets the reformed miser sue Marley and the ghosts a year after Dickens' story ended. Scrooge says he resents being kidnapped and made to feel guilty.

"What I tried to do with this script is take one message of Dickens, keep Christmas in your heart, but try to take it a step further," Brown says. "It's a year-round thing to be caring and generous and not just at Christmas."

Even so, there's no escaping that Scrooge flourishes at the holidays. In his many incarnations, he lets fans relive their Christmas past and look to the future.



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Sports Briefs

Thompson hired

Donnie Thompson has been named assistant head coach and defensive line coach at ECU according to an announcement from newly-appointed Head Coach Skip Holtz Tuesday.

USC coach fired

Henry Bibby was fired as Southern California's basketball coach Monday, just four games into his ninth season. The Trojans, beset by some player dissension, are 2-2. Athletic director Mike Garrett said he realized the timing was unusual, but cited the Trojans' losing record in recent seasons. Assistant Jim Saia was appointed interim coach for the rest of the season. Rick Majerus is among the candidates to replace Bibby. Majerus is the longtime Utah coach who resigned midway through last season because of health concerns. Bibby had an overall record of 131-111. His 1997, 2001 and 2002 teams made it to the NCAA tournament, including a final eight appearance in 2001. Bibby is a former NBA player and the father of Sacramento Kings guard Mike Bibby.

Tigers OF steals belt

Detroit Tigers outfielder Craig Monroe was arrested for allegedly stealing a \$29.99 belt from a department store, a records clerk at Charlotte County jail said Tuesday. Monroe wrapped the belt around his waist and tried to leave the store without paying Friday, according to the arrest report. He posted \$500 bond and was released from county jail that day. Monroe is scheduled to face arraignment Dec. 15 on a second-degree misdemeanor charge of petit theft. He hit .293 with 18 home runs and 72 RBI in 128 games for the Tigers last season, when he earned \$335,000. Tigers spokesman Brian Britten said Tuesday the team would not comment.

Illinois hires Zook

Illinois is turning to Ron Zook to reinvigorate its struggling football program. The school scheduled an afternoon news conference to introduce the former Florida coach, said Kent Brown, the university's sports information director. Zook and athletic director Ron Guenther talked last Tuesday, but Illinois could not name a new coach until a two-week waiting period to meet equal employment opportunity guidelines passed. The deadline was 5 p.m. Monday. Florida fired Zook on Oct. 25, two days after the Gators lost at Mississippi State, satisfying a growing groundswell for his ouster that began two years earlier - after he replaced Steve Spurrier. But Zook coached the Gators for the rest of the season and led them to a 3-1 record in their final four games and an invitation to the Peach Bowl. In his two seasons at Florida, he went 23-14 with impressive victories over eventual national champion LSU last season and an upset of Florida State on Nov. 20, the Gators' first win in Tallahassee since 1986. Zook has 26 years of coaching experience, including six years in the NFL as an assistant for the Kansas City Chiefs, Pittsburgh Steelers and New Orleans Saints, where he was defensive coordinator for two seasons. At Illinois, Zook will replace Ron Turner, who was fired Nov. 22 - two days after finishing his third straight losing season. Turner's teams won only five Big Ten games after winning the conference championship in 2001 and going to the Sugar Bowl. Illinois won only once in 2003 and lost 14 consecutive Big Ten games between Nov. 23, 2003, and a 26-22 win over Indiana on Nov. 6. Two of the Illini's four wins in the past two seasons have been against Division I-AA opponents, Illinois State and Florida A&M.

Former Rockets star acquitted

Basketball Hall of Famer Calvin Murphy was acquitted Monday of charges he sexually abused five of his 10 daughters more than a decade ago. As soon as the verdict was read, Murphy shook hands with his attorney and wiped away tears. Murphy, 56, had long denied the allegations, saying they were based on resentment and a dispute over money.

Rouse continues to improve

When JaPhet McNeil dribbled down the court and threw the ball up from 10 feet behind the three-point line last Wednesday in the game against Toledo, I was a little confused.

ROBERT LEONARD
STAFF WRITER

"What in the world is he doing?" I thought to myself.

Corey Rouse provided the answer.

He came off of a back door screen and caught JaPhet's pass about a foot and a half over the rim and threw it down with authority.

McNeil threw that pass a lot last season when Derek Wiley was a Pirate. The alley-oop play would be done just once a game, and always to Wiley. With Wiley gone, I thought that play took a leave of absence from Herrion's playbook.

Corey was not done dunking against Toledo after the alley-oop either. With 18 points and the Pirates down one, Rouse had the ball in hand. He beat his defender off the dribble, drove down the baseline and put the Pirates up a point with a two handed slam.

Rouse would also hit a clutch free throw for his career high 21st point and sealed the game for the Pirates.

Corey has quickly become what this team has needed - a third scorer. Mike Cook and Moussa have received all the attention this year on the offensive end of the floor. Sometimes, a team's third, fourth or even worse defender on the court has been guarding Corey.

And why wouldn't they? Corey has always struggled from the free throw line and with a

midrange jump shot.

But the Corey Rouse on the court this season is different from the Corey Rouse of last season. He has scored in double figures in five of the six games this season, averaging 11.3 points on the season.

The most impressive stat is his shooting percentage so far. In the Toledo game, he was 9-11 from the floor. Against Belmont Abbey, he only missed once on eight attempts.

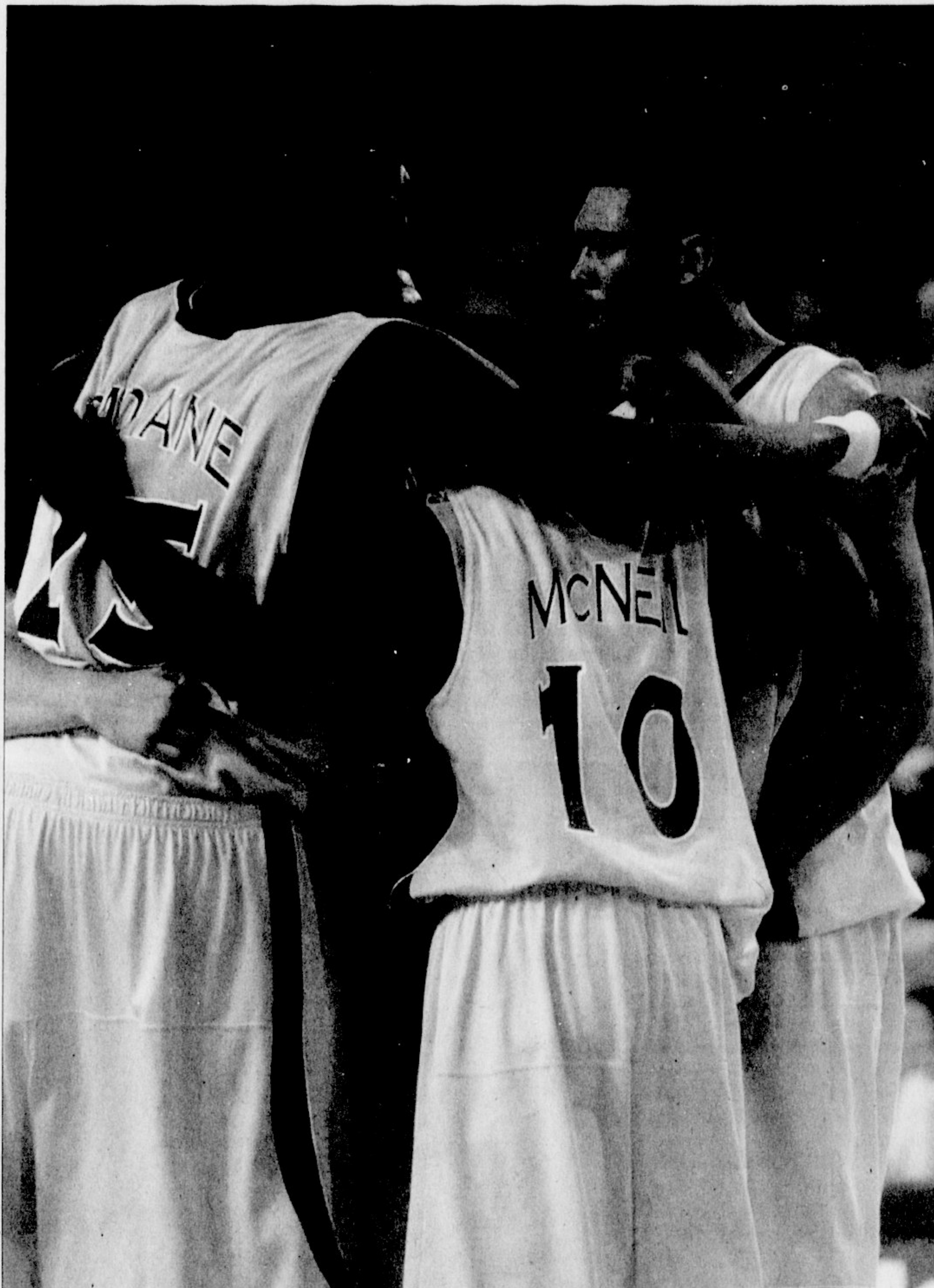
Corey has started rebounding the ball as well. He pulled down nine against Toledo and 11 against Belmont Abbey and Gardner Webb. Both of the double-digit rebounding performances came with double-digit scoring. These were the second and third double-doubles of his career, and I think he will have more before the season is over.

While I am still not overly impressed with Corey from the line, he is improving. His 3-7 effort against Toledo is still not good by any means, but he was able to hit the free throw when it counted and when his team needed it the most.

If Corey continues to play like he has the last couple of weeks, this team will be well off. I said early in the season he was the key guy who needed to step up for the Pirates and he is doing just that. I really love it when Moussa and Mike have the ball, because they are such great scorers and good free throw shooters but if Corey can become a dominant third option and pull down the rebounds like he has been, this team will be scary.

I thought Corey needed to fill Wiley's role this season, and he has done it so far. He is scoring, rebounding and playing hard. Oh yea, he's doing that alley-oop play pretty well too.

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



Rouse has been an instrumental part in ECU's recent wins over Belmont-Abbey and Toledo.

BCS ruins college football once again

True champion may never be crowned under current system

OPINION

ROBERT LEONARD
STAFF WRITER

Technically, BCS stands for Bowl Championship Series.

The BCS is a computer system that comes up with a crazy decimal number that is supposed to determine who plays in the national championship game. This is the seventh season the BCS has been used. In four of those years, including this year, there has been a controversy over the two teams playing for that national championship. This leads me to one conclusion - BCS stands for just about everything BUT Bowl Championship Series.

At first, I thought the Bowl Controversy System was a great idea. With three teams that should have a shot at the national title this season, at least two of them are going to be able to play.

Under the old system where conference champions went to the same bowl every season, Auburn, Oklahoma nor USC would be able to play one another for a shot at the title. Auburn would be battling Virginia Tech in the Orange Bowl, USC would play Michigan in the Rose and Oklahoma would probably take on Pitt. Everyone would be saying, "Why can't two of those teams play each other?"

With the Blundering Championship Sham, they get this opportunity. But that doesn't mean it's the answer.

Despite how much sense it makes and how much everyone wants it, a playoff will never happen in NCAA football without shortening the season. What I propose is tweak the way the computer works. The system of scoring as of now is just a Big Convoluted Situation.

The first thing that needs to be changed is the automatic bids. Conference champions should not receive an automatic bid into a BCS game unless every conference champion gets a BCS bid. Face it, in NCAA football,

big conferences succeed. There is no way Pittsburgh is worthy of a BCS bid. Boise State has one of the top offenses in the country and went undefeated. Pitt goes 8-3 in a Miami and Virginia Tech-less Big East and they go to the Fiesta Bowl!

I guess it just goes to show that big colleges succeed also since 12-0 Boise State gets to play in the Liberty Bowl. Michigan wins the Big 10 with an unimpressive 9-2 mark and they get a bid to the Rose Bowl. Instead, Cal should be there. They had one loss and it was to undefeated USC.

The next thing to go should be the scoring margin. If one team beats another team by 20 points, even if that win was 70-50, according to the computers, that is a more impressive win than beating the same team 19-0. The BCS is offensive-minded and plays to teams with Boys who Can Score. Defense is not rewarded at all.

Also, a team may by more inclined to run the score up

see BCS page A8



Cal junior quarterback Aaron Rodgers stares into space as he speaks with the media about missing out on the Rose Bowl.

C-USA: Charlotte Preview

BRENT WYNNE
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

This is it. The last dance, so to speak. The Conference USA as we know it will be completely overturned after this season with the departure of basketball powers Cincinnati, Louisville, Marquette and DePaul. Who's going to stake their claim to arguably a conference title that won't mean quite the same thing after the 2004-2005 season?

Why not Charlotte? Coming off of a 21-9 season, including a share of the C-USA regular season title and a NCAA tournament appearance, the 49ers return four key starters and are poised to make another run at a title and postseason play.

Head Coach Bobby Lutz, widely respected by some of the nation's greatest coaches, enters his seventh season in Charlotte. In his first six seasons, Lutz's 49ers made five postseason trips, including four to the NCAA tournament and three 20-win seasons. His clubs won three conference titles

see CHARLOTTE page A8

Blue Demons looking to replace offensive void

DePaul off to rocky start without Holland, Brown

TRENT WYNNE
STAFF WRITER

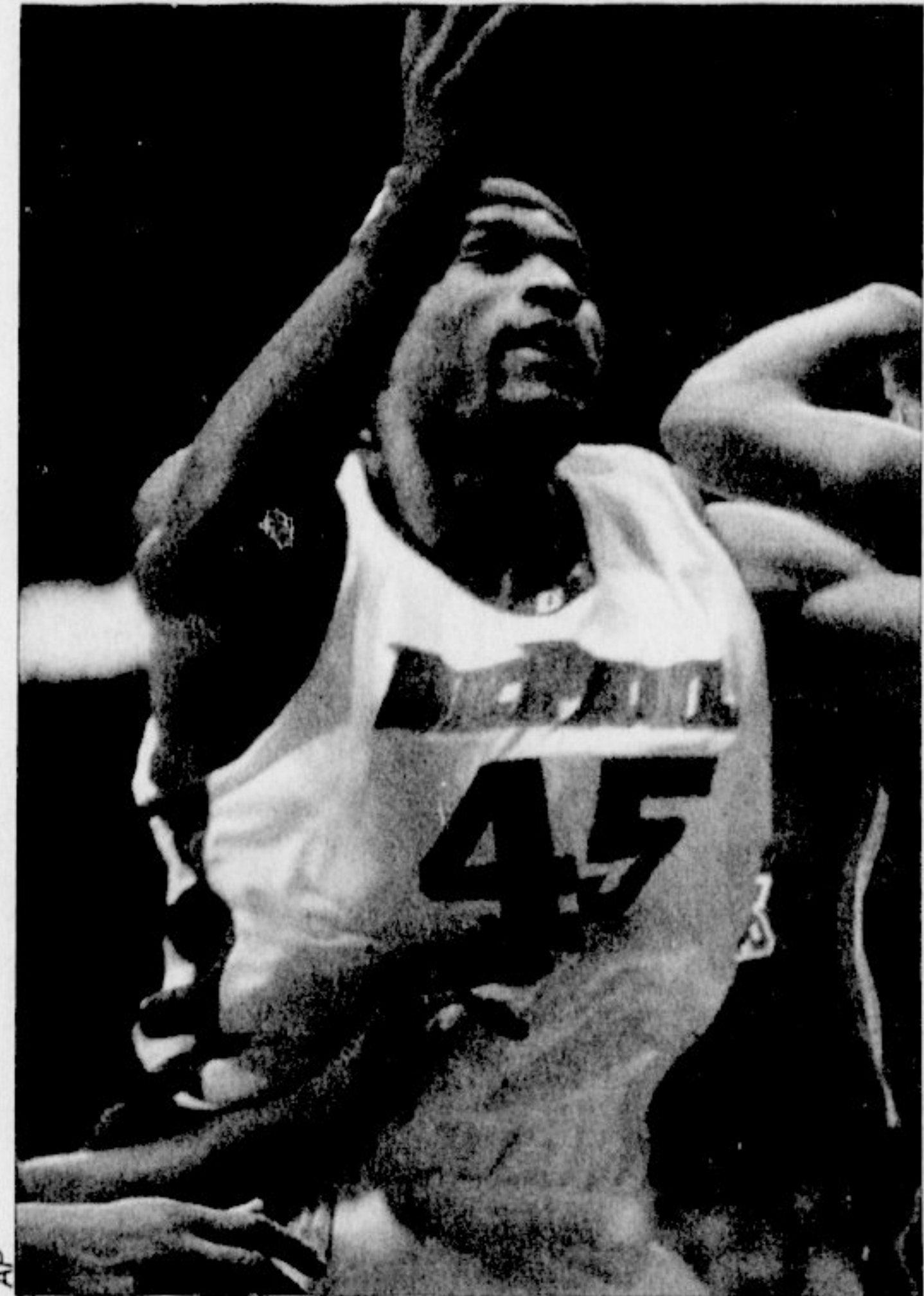
There are not many ways a coach can look at a season and declare it a success unless his team comes out the victors after all is said and done.

However, DePaul Blue Demon Head Coach Dave Leitao may have coached a team last season that could be considered an exception. Although DePaul lost in the second round of the NCAA tournament, their defeat came at the hands of the eventual champion, the Connecticut Huskies. The Blue Demons are looking to improve upon last year's successes and make a run deep into March.

The task may seem tougher, however, as the Demons lost key starters Delonte Holland and



Curtis Withers is fourth on the team in total scoring so far this year with 60 points.



Quemont Greer finished with 20 points in DePaul's victory over IUPUI this past Monday.

see DEPAUL page A8

Charlotte from page A7

during that span which consisted of two tournament titles and a regular season championship.

Lutz will have the privilege of coaching arguably his most athletic team since his hiring in the late 1990s. The anchor of the team will be forward Curtis Withers, considered by most to be one of the conference's elite performers. The devastatingly quick and agile Withers is averaging 15.0 points per game this season to go along with 5.5 rebounds per game. His ability to shoot the three-ball will keep defenders from slacking on him when he hovers around the perimeter in some of Charlotte's high post sets. The junior has knocked down five triples in eight attempts this season. If he can continue to take smart outside shots, as well as use his ox-like strength to muscle opponents, Withers will draw plenty of attention from guards on double teams, allowing senior Brendan Plavich to get open.

Plavich, not known for his ability to create off the dribble, will count on Withers to play stellar to draw extra attention. Besides getting open looks on double teams, "Play" will move without the ball just as good as anyone in the nation to get his shots. In five contests, he has already made 24 treys and his percentage is gleaming at 49 percent. The sharpshooter

has made only one other field goal that wasn't a three-pointer. His 15.4 points per game is tops on a team that has shown tremendous balance thus far.

The potent offense gets even better with Eddie Basden. The senior swing forward is averaging 14.5 points per game and is 46.2 percent from behind the arc. The crafty Basden has picked up his game on the defensive side of the ball, already collecting 22 steals in five games. Maybe a slight surprise, the guard/forward is leading the team in rebounds with 7.2 per contest. An unexpected lift like this could propel the 49ers to victory in close contests, i.e. Corey Rouse's board against Toledo.

It just keeps getting better for the 49ers when you bring up point guard Mitchell Baldwin. The junior was expected to be in a battle for his job with freshman Leemire Goldwire, but has quickly hushed talks of that with his outstanding play in the young season. Baldwin is averaging 13ppg and is rebounding well for his position at 4.2 per contest. The afore mentioned Goldwire, the only significant freshman signee, is getting about 16 minutes a game and has made the most of his opportunities by averaging 7.4 points per game and shooting 56.3 percent from the land of plenty.

Named to the all-conference freshman team a year ago, sophomore star Martin Iti decided it was time to make the jump to the NBA. Luckily for his teammates and coach Lutz, that decision proved to be a false alarm as Iti opted to return for likely his last season as a niner. The choice so far has been a smart one. His numbers are up from a year ago - 6.0 points per game to 8.6 points per game, 4.7rpg to 6.0 rpg and he is on pace to pass 35 blocks, his mark last season.

Charlotte's sixth man will be forward E.J. Drayton. The 6-foot, 8-inch junior is averaging 9.8ppg and 4.6rpg. Possibly the most surprising statistic for Drayton is his free throw percentage of 79.2, which looks perfect compared to nearly the rest of the team's marks. Only point guard Mitchell Baldwin (82.1 percent) is shooting at a better clip from the line.

If there is an achilles heel on this Charlotte team, it is most definitely going to be their sub-par free throw shooting. The team is getting to the line often, but is only converting 60 percent of the time. It's already cost them one game this year, possibly a loss that could cripple their seeding come tourney time. Against a great Alabama team, the niners were an atrocious 23-38 from the free throw line, while the

Crimson Tide were a cool 18-22. Charlotte lost the game in triple overtime, 102-101.

Losses like that, due to something as fundamental as free throw shooting, will not be acceptable down the stretch. A team with this much talent needs to find a way to use the line as a means of burying opponents.

It would be a shame to see Charlotte's season ended abruptly in the postseason by another joke of a performance at the charity stripe. For now, we'll leave that to Lutz, but as most fans and coaches of college basketball know, free throw shooting is much harder to coach than anything else in the game.

Predictions, predictions. I think this team is really talented. They will definitely be one of the hardest teams in the conference and maybe the nation to match-up with. With that said, I think if the Niners can fix the free throw problem we talked about, I really see this team competing in the conference and making a run in the NCAA. I will go with a third place finish in the conference, behind Louisville and Memphis, and I like Charlotte to surprise people on the national scene with a run to the sweet 16.

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

DePaul from page A7

Andre Brown, who combined to score nearly half of the team's offensive output.

Picked to finished sixth this year in Conference USA, DePaul has had a rocky start to their season thus far, dropping two out of six games. The losses came at the hands of Bradley University, a virtual unknown, and Northern Illinois. No, not the team that gives everyone fits in the NCAA tournament each year. That would be Southern Illinois.

DePaul's only convincing win on the season thus far came against IUPUI as the Blue Demons rolled to an 88-67 victory. It took strong second half surges for the Blue Demons to finally put away Bowling Green State, Eastern Illinois and Dayton.

DePaul will have to try and find a way to replace the likes of Holland and Brown and the man that might be just right for the job is Diener number two, Drake. Diener averaged 12.6 points on last year's campaign but will see more scoring opportunities as his role will dramatically increase if the Blue Demon's hope to have a shot of getting back to the tourney.

The specialty of the pesky guard comes from behind the arc, where he shot an even 50 percent in conference play last season. Diener needs just 33 three-point baskets to become the school's all-time leader in three-point field goals.

Power forward for the Blue Demons, Quemont Greer, will also have to step up his performances from last season, averaging the same as Diener,

12.6 points per game. Greer's strengths are in the paint, where his was a beast on the boards last season, grabbing 119 rebounds during the conference schedule.

Although DePaul defended well throughout the 2003-2004 season, they also had a bad case of the turnover bug, coughing the ball up more times than their opponents in conference play. With the lack of offensive depth, the Blue Demons will have to cut down on turnovers and turn up the defensive pressure even more if they hope to have a slight chance at competing.

One of the Blue Demons defensive specialist is sophomore guard Sammy Mejia.

Mejia was second on the team in steals behind Holland, ripping 32.

Also, Mejia's ability to lead the Blue Demons took flight last season as he became just one of four players in DePaul history to dish out at least 100 assists as a freshman.

In order for DePaul to have another successful campaign, the Blue Demons will have to be more aggressive on the offensive end in the absence of Holland and Brown, while at the same time being cautious of turning the ball over too much, something that haunted them in their losses last season.

Diener, Greer and Mejia will be the go-to guys for the Blue Demons on both ends, as they try to get back to the NCAA tourney for the second straight season.

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

BCS from page A7

instead of taking a knee because they want that BCS bid. Sportsmanship goes out the window.

I also believe the preseason rankings have to go. USC started the season number one, they go undefeated, they are still number one. Oklahoma started the season number two, they go undefeated, they are still number two. Auburn started the season No. 18, they go undefeated and finish No. 3. Auburn doesn't get a shot at the title simply because everyone thought USC and Oklahoma were better at beginning of the season.

Another thing I have never understood is the need for more than one BCS game. If the BCS was created so number one and number two can play each other every year, bowls with history, like the Rose Bowl, completely lose their prestige with the BCS. The Rose Bowl used to always be Pac 10 champ verses Big 10 champ.

This year we have Big 10 champ verses Big 12 South runner up. Scintillating.

The BCS is the worst system in sports. It's a great idea in theory, But Completely Stupid in reality and all I know is the guys who run the show Better Conceive Something and say bye to computer scoring before college football is ruined.

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




California's bowl hopes weren't so rosy the day after their win against Southern Miss.

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Failed, failed, failed.
And then...

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Crossword

ACROSS
1 Freeway fillers
5 Church assembly
10 Foundation
14 Chills and fever
15 Vex
16 Coffee servers
17 Rational
18 Sadat of Egypt
19 Sacred bird of ancient Egypt
20 Nervous quivers
22 Slanting
24 Recline
25 Offspring
27 Slow movers
30 Play parts
31 Merchandise
32 Took the plunge
33 TV reporter Koppel
36 Declare
37 Seethed
38 Salami seller
39 Green color
40 Hermit
41 Played over
42 About
43 Laying asphalt
44 Disconnect
47 One in Toledo
48 Portable cannon
49 Harmonies
53 Champagne description
54 Turn inside out
57 Capri or Man
58 Actor Jannings
59 Suitable material?
60 Tobacco kiln
61 Evaluate
62 Take the wheel
63 Rejections

DOWN
1 Actors collectively
2 Culture medium
3 Ancient alphabet character
4 More comely
5 Bowler's conversions
6 Cravings

7 Original
8 Caesar's eggs
9 Jumped the tracks
10 Erects
11 Shaded area
12 Shoot from cover
13 Ruh: Valley city
21 Artist's meagium
23 Iditarod ride
25 Black Sea region
26 Remain suspended in air
27 Quid pro quo
28 Church part
29 Neighborhood
32 Ninny
33 Actress Garr
34 Distinctive flair
35 Bell sound
37 Military stronghold
38 Piety
40 Kudrow of "Friends"
41 Indian princess

42 Cows and bulls
43 Football team member
44 Brownish hue
45 Actress Shearer
46 Type of cocktail?

49 Impulse
50 Aoki of golf
51 Otherwise
52 Tennis match parts
55 Doggie doc
56 Afore

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"ME" Part?

Hey Pook, I'll be right back I need a coke. Leave some room on the couch.

Kay.

Out of curiosity, what part of "leave some room" did you not understand?

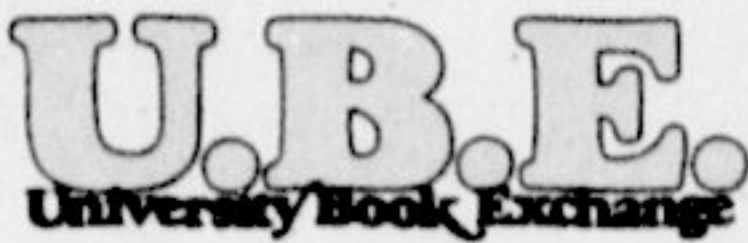
Prolly the "ME" part.

There WAS no "ME" part.

That would explain why I didn't understand.



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	Thursday, December 9	9:00 _{A.M.} to 7:00 _{P.M.}
	Friday, December 10	9:00 _{A.M.} to 6:00 _{P.M.}
	Saturday, December 11 (Commencement)	9:00 _{A.M.} to 6:00 _{P.M.}
	Monday - Thursday, December 13-16	9:00 _{A.M.} to 7:00 _{P.M.}

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	Monday - Thursday, December 13-16	9:00 _{A.M.} to 5:00 _{P.M.}

