

OPINION: Okay, I was beginning to get used to the orange girls, but the orange guys? C'mon, spray tans are NOT for you. **A4**

LIFESTYLES: Some artists just aren't what they seem. One fan relays her experience with Taylor Swift and Gloriana in Lifestyles. **A5**

SPORTS: Softball entered the Conference USA Tournament as the No. 1 seed, to read about their title win and which NCAA Regional sight they are headed to turn over to sports. **A8**

The East Carolinian

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BRIEFS

ECU student athlete dies



Paul was described by his coach as having a smile that could light up a room.

Staff Report

ECU student and athlete Terry Paul, 21, collapsed unexpectedly in front of Jones Residence Hall on Thursday.

According to WITN, after an examination by a medical examiner, the Greenville Medical Examiner's Office reported the cause of death to be cardiomyopathy, an inflammation of the heart.

At ECU, Paul was a wide receiver for the football team and a sprinter on the track and field team.

App.com reported that sprinting coach Brian Hirsblond

> **PAUL** page A2

Eleven freshmen named EC Scholars

Staff Reports

Eleven first-year ECU students have recently been named by the school as EC Scholars.

Recipients of this recognition receive a four-year merit scholarship from the university.

The scholarship covers all four years and is worth approximately \$45,000.

Each year, 10 to 12 incoming first-year students are chosen from a group of highly-qualified and competitive applicants. The applicants must demonstrate strong academic qualifications, intellectual curiosity, meaningful extracurricular involvement and a commitment to civic engagement.

Some of the students named

> **SCHOLARS** page A2



THE EAST CAROLINIAN | CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER DOUG MACKENZIE

Firetrucks, police cars and ambulances surround the perimeter of ECU's West End on campus.

Practice drill imposes on first day of classes

Cassie McLean

ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

The ECU Police Department conducted a full-scale critical incident exercise yesterday morning on the grounds in front of Mendenhall Student Center and the Campus Recreation and Wellness Center. Both facilities were closed until 1 p.m. yesterday in order to prepare for and conduct the exercise. Many dorms, including Greene, Clement, White, Fletcher and Garrett, as well as many parking areas, were closed. West End Dining Hall was also closed.

Dawn Tevepaugh, assistant chief for the ECU Police Department, said, "We had a drill on campus [Tuesday] in which the goal was to test the university and particularly the overall communication system between departments



THE EAST CAROLINIAN | CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER DOUG MACKENZIE

An unnamed individual is taken out of West End Dining Hall on a stretcher for an exercise program for the Greenville Emergency Units.

> **DRILL** page A2

ECU budget cut by \$25 million

Will Hiebert

STAFF WRITER

ECU Chancellor Steve Ballard is preparing to cut ECU's budget by another \$25 million this year in response to Gov. Bev Perdue's proposed budget released April 28 that cuts all UNC schools' budgets by 7 percent. The budget cuts, which still have to be approved by the North Carolina Senate, could mean 100 lost faculty positions, larger classrooms, a reduction in "key science, professional and business programs," and a slow in workforce training according to an April 5 press release from Ballard.

Over the past three years, ECU has faced \$90 million in total budget cuts. For the past few years, ECU's budget cuts have come in non-academic areas according to Ballard, but that isn't enough. Even though ECU only makes up 13 percent of the UNC budget, the cuts account for almost a third of the budget cuts for the entire UNC system over the last three years, which total to just over \$300 million. Ballard's press release outlines strategies to adjust for the smaller budget, which include admitting fewer students.

Ballard said in a WITN interview that the 2011 budget is not promising improvement, citing that the economic stimulus money is expected to dry up then. Ballard said to expect an additional \$93 million lost over the next three years.

A UNC systems study on the impact of these budget cuts outlined what programs would be cut; it said 204 course selections would be eliminated, counseling and psychological services would be cut, faculty positions that include "housekeepers, groundskeepers, building trades, mail services, accounting services, administrative support, environmental health and training," as well as specific reductions in the ECU Institute for Coastal Sciences and the Center for Security Studies and Research, elimination of the Dean of Students position, Vice Provost of Operations, 23 graduate assistant positions and many more, and a 49 percent reduction on the books fund for the Health Sciences library,

> **BUDGET** page A2

DRILL continued from A1

such as the police department, chancellors division and the external groups — such as the ECU police, local police and the sheriff's department."

She said, "We are making sure we can successfully handle an active shooter on campus."

Tevepaugh explained the specifics of the active-shooter event. "What we had today was a drill with two active shooters. One was neutralized in the area in front of White Hall. The second went into White Hall and took hostages on the 10th floor. This was all role playing, of course."

The drill, which began around 9:15 a.m. and concluded at 1:30 p.m., was "effective and successful and we had very good communication between officers in the field and other agencies responding to help us," Tevepaugh said.

As for the future, Tevepaugh said, "It gives us a building block to continue our training and build from this drill for future exercises so we can learn and improve even more."

According to a video posted on the police department's Web site, Scott Shelton, ECU chief of police, warned students and staff of the procedure. Shelton said, "There will be actors portraying armed gunman, hostages and victims, as well as a large amount of emergency vehicles travelling to and from campus."

Shelton said in advance, "This drill will provide all of us with a great opportunity to practice emergency preparedness."

"Sometime around 9:15 a.m., a simulated sound of shots fired will occur and the drill will begin. Emergency responders will arrive, treating this as if it were a real emergency," said Shelton.

Sirens sounded during the event and the ECU Alert Communication system delivered a text message to all listed cell phone users. The text clearly explained that the trial was just a practice-run.

As to why the event occurred on the first day of summer classes, Major Frank Night of the ECU Police Department said that was due to three major reasons. "One company, Enviro-Safe, had to schedule and fit in 17 North Carolina universities and colleges. Secondly, we wanted to make sure all the officials were on campus and had an opportunity to participate. Some staff go on a quick vacation in between spring semester and summer semester and wanted all our key players to be here. Thirdly, we had a scheduling conflict."

"We certainly would've liked to do it on a day other than today, but that's just how it happened due to the scheduling conflict," he added.

Chief of Police Scott Shelton reminded students of the very unfortunate truth the university hopes to prepare for. "ECU, nor any other college, will ever be immune to the threat of emergencies. However, training and having an effective plan is vital."

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

BUDGET continued from A1

and much more.

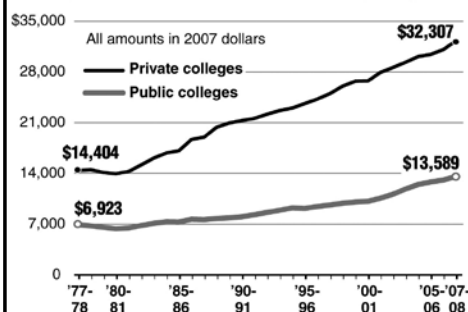
According to the 2010 UNC budget, N.C. State is expected to lose \$36 million, UNC Chapel Hill could lose \$40 million and Appalachian State could lose \$9.7 million. The final vote from the North Carolina Senate on the

budget could come as early as Thursday. More details will become clear when the final budget is approved.

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

Rising cost of tuition

The U.S. average cost of annual private and public college tuition, including fees, room and board, has risen dramatically in 30 years.



Source: The College Board
Graphic: Mike Placentra, The Philadelphia Inquirer

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PAUL continued from A1

described Paul as cool, calm and direct.

"The kids are mourning. It's been tough," he said.

Shamieka James, sophomore at ECU and a close friend of Paul's, recollected on the time she first met Paul.

"I met him this past fall. We lived in the same dorm and he'd come up to my room to borrow an iron," she laughed.

She fondly remembered, "He was over almost every day. We'd watch movies or study together. We had a lot of very intimate conversations."

As to what kind of guy the popular

athlete was, James said, "He was very funny, outgoing."

"He used to imitate Kevin Hart, the stand up comedian. His reenactments would crack us up. It was hilarious," she said.

James said that his nickname personified him. "We nicknamed him 'Terry Berry' because he was so sweet."

SCHOLARS

continued from A1

for the award are as follows: Sarah Gurganus of Blounts Creek, who plans to study engineering; Hannah Potter of Marshville, who plans to major in international studies; Rachel Pollard of Washington, D.C., who plans to major in biology; Sandra Ross of Newton Grove, who plans to study chemistry and Megan Mehaffey of Clyde, who also plans on majoring in engineering.

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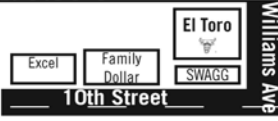
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Figure out what you want out of us because you give me so many mixed messages I don't know what to do.

Have you noticed how many text zombies are walking around campus?

Give me the stink eye one more time and I'm giving you a black eye.

I love how you think I still want to talk to you after Thursday night. You're cute, but that's pretty much all you have going for you.

To the girl wearing the wakeboard shirt on the Landing bus last week: You can ride me time.

I was just trying to help you out by eating all your food. Just think of me as your personal Weight Watchers.

Okay, I was beginning to get used to the orange girls, but the orange guys? C'mon, spray tans are NOT for you.

"Book buyback"? What a joke! In four semesters, they have refused to buy back every book I have tried to sell them.

Turning 20 is just depressing. You aren't old enough to drink but you are too old to get away with being immature. This sucks.

Is Ke\$ha spelled Ke?ha in the UK?

Isn't it funny how the terrible professors never mention the SOIS survey while the great professors beg the students to do it.

Dear retiring Head Drum Major: Your back flips will be greatly missed!!

It's been said that "Patience is a virtue." When you're trying to find a decent girl to date and not be friends with her, patience begins to feel more like pure torture.

Maybe I'm just old school to heart but I hate how a lot of people here feed into the negative rep about my school by losing their minds at the end of the year. Have some respect for yourselves, folks.

A lot of kids say ECU is their second home, but for me...it's the only place I belong. :)

If you're going to spy on me, be bold about it. Stop hiding like a little girl

To the jerk who keyed my car: Thank you for the 2009 rental I get to drive around while waiting for my NEW and FREE paintjob!

It was all played out perfect. She was coming back to my place but NO the ugly sober friend steps in.

To the girl who wrote about having sex in the library: You are dirty. Period.

OPINION

Bad publicity exists



Andrea Robertson
OPINION EDITOR

When speaking of one's alma mater, a person should exude pride – one should be able to stand in a room full of people and command respect when stating where she obtained her degree.

I recently earned my Bachelor of Arts in English with a minor in Communication Studies – sounds fancy when it's all spelled out, doesn't it? Now I'm pursuing my Master of Arts in English, and I must admit I'm rather proud of myself! However, while I beam with the pride of my accomplishments, at times I find myself dreading the question that's on everyone's mind: where do I attend college?

My dislike of this question began the summer before I started my first semester at ECU, when the manager at the store I worked at asked me where I was planning to go to college.

"E-C-U," I answered like a little kid who knew she had just won the first grade spelling bee.

"Don't you mean E-Z-U?" he said with a laugh.

Hearing my manager say this caused my heart to sink, but he prepared me for the multitude of future comments I would hear when speaking of my alma mater. It seems that no matter where you go or who you talk to, someone has heard of ECU's reputation as a party school and that someone loves to make jokes of said reputation.

It wasn't until more recently, however, that I felt that ECU's reputation as a party school was a problem. I rationalized that there was no real evidence of the Pirates being too rowdy – every college and university has parties and drinking. But now thanks to the Playboy party school list and Girls Gone Wild, the entire world will have access to reading and watching how hard the Pirates party.

Sounds cool, right? I mean, "You can't spell parties without Pirates!" We should be proud, should we not?

Let me stop with the sarcasm. Pirates – you should be appalled that the exposure many people are getting to your university is that its students know how to party. We



GIRLS GONE WILD

#1 AT SCREWING THE REPUTATION OF YOUR COLLEGE.

ILLUSTRATED BY ADRIAN PARHAMOVICH

are here for an education. We are here to bring pride to our school.

One of your greatest accomplishments while you attend ECU should not be a 60-second keg stand or going undefeated at beer pong all night, but the fact that you made the Chancellor's List or belonged to an organization that bettered ECU's campus or student body.

Too many students have lost sight of what's important while at college, and ECU suffers for it. So what happens to the Pirates who care about the reputation of their school? They have to suck it up and get over it. They have to watch their fellow Pirates destroy the credibility that they have worked so hard to achieve.

And I wish that I could blame Playboy and Girls Gone Wild for this bad publicity, but I can't. The Pirates can only thank themselves for the negative things that are said about them. Students are the reason that these media produce seemingly positive but realistically negative publicity reflecting the university.

Now that I have a degree from ECU, I would like to take this moment to thank all the countless students who have made it possible for ECU to have such a sordid

reputation. All these negative behaviors and irresponsible acts help degrade each and every one of our degrees.

So while you're congratulating each other on being number five on the Playboy party school list and talking about how many boobies you saw at The Plank while Girls Gone Wild was here – remember the cliché, You are judged by the company you keep.

Being a true Pirate means taking pride in your school and showing school spirit. Every time the Pirates are highlighted for partying, drinking or violence, the spirit of ECU is harmed a little more.

One day you're going to be applying for a job after you've left ECU, and you will want your potential employer to take you seriously. And let's face it – if the vast majority of the students continue to provide the media with the idea that most of us are working toward a Bachelor of Arts in Party-ing, it won't be hard to find someone who isn't going to take you seriously.

So instead of drinking your college careers away and bragging about it so much that the media gets involved and exposes the negative side of ECU, do something to better yourself and your university.

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



"As sick as it sounds, a reality show might help, actually. At least then people could get the truth."

LINDSAY LOHAN

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◆ Wicked: A New Musical

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Saturday 5/30

LIFESTYLES

A5

Wednesday, 5.19.10

features@theeastcarolinian.com

Backstage: All that glitters is not gold

One fan's experience of meeting some of country's most well-known stars

Jamie A. Johnson
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

It felt utterly surreal. Was this Disney World's Cinderella's Castle, or was this the parking lot of a Taylor Swift concert in Raleigh? It was hard to tell. Tween girls wearing tutus escorted by their moms were swirling about with tons of pink glitter littered the parking lot. The posters swaying through the air with "T. Swift is My Idol" gave it away. It was a Taylor Swift concert, after all.

After walking through the parking lot, the next stop was backstage to interview Gloriana, an up-and-coming country band that opened for Swift. Having been a fan of Gloriana and Swift for some time, it was undoubtedly a thrilling opportunity to meet the stars and experience their world backstage. Unfortunately, what unfolded behind the curtains was not at all expected.

Entering Gloriana's dressing room, the manager claimed Gloriana would be arriving within 10 minutes. The band is made up of four musicians: brothers Tom and Mike Gossin, Rachel Reinert and Cheyenne Kimball. All four band members sing, and the Gossins and Kimball also play guitar. Kimball plays the mandolin as well.

The dressing room was the opposite of glamorous; it was filthy. Dirty clothes were scattered about the floor, and the band members' personal belongings covered the tables. After waiting for over half an hour, three of Gloriana's band members strutted into the room. The Gossins plopped themselves on the ripped-up ugly green couch, while Reinert sandwiched herself in the middle. But where was the fourth band member?

"Cheyenne is still fixing her hair," Reinert said



JAMIE A. JOHNSON | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

Taylor Swift performs in Raleigh for excited fans.

> SWIFT page A6



THE EAST CAROLINIAN | CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER DOUG MACKENZIE

'Iron Man 2' opened May 7th at the Greenville Grande-14 on Greenville Boulevard.

'Iron Man 2' kicks off the season for major summer blockbusters



Madonna Messina
STAFF WRITER

Based on the hit series of Marvel comic books, "Iron Man 2" has finally hit theaters and is, as expected, jam-packed with thrills, excitement and plenty of action. The sequel takes place six months after Tony Stark, CEO of Stark Industries, decides he is going to strive toward world peace by halting the production of war weapons, along with revealing in a surprising announcement at a press conference that he is, in fact,

Iron Man.

In "Iron Man 2," Stark is faced with a dilemma, as Senator Stern, played by Garry Shandling, demands Stark to give Iron Man's armor to the government. However, he refuses, claiming that his competitors are years away from recreating the technology successfully. In this sure to be a hit sequel, Stark is faced with an all-new "bad guy," who is out to avenge his family for past family tensions. Meanwhile, the palladium core in Stark's arc reactor (which is ironically supposed to be keeping him alive) is slowly poisoning him.

"Iron Man 2" is a well-done sequel to the first film, which definitely contained enough action and special effects to keep audiences entertained. Unfortunately, there was a re-casting of the role of Col. James "Rhodey" Rhodes, Stark's military buddy, who was originally played by Terrance Howard and replaced by Don Cheadle. The surprising recast of this prominent character causes somewhat of a disappointment. Overall, "Iron Man 2" was

> IRON MAN page A7

SWIFT continued from A5

of Kimball. Nonetheless, the interview began with the band members that were present. Or were they? It sure didn't seem like it due to the way they portrayed themselves during the question and answer session. Nothing they had to say was particularly insightful or interesting. Kimball later pranced into the room and proceeded to wiggle her way onto the couch. She continued to fiddle with her hair as more questions were asked.

Kimball proudly talked about how she doesn't treat her fans with respect, and her disliking of taking showers. "When I'm not on tour, I rarely take showers. I basically walk around looking like a hobo ... one time, a group of fans came up to me and asked if I was Cheyenne Kimball. I said yeah, and they were like, 'We knew it!' I told them if they knew it, then why did they come up and ask me?" Kimball's comments actually seemed illuminating compared to what the other band members had to say. Fortunately, the interview, or whatever it was, came to an end.

After exiting the dressing room and roaming around backstage in search of something better, Taylor Swift appeared. Originally, there were plans to interview her as well, but that changed a few days before the concert when Swift's publicist announced that Swift was "not doing any interviews." She was now only seemingly interested in posing for magazine covers. Swift, who has always embraced the image of being one of country music's sweethearts, now disappointedly seemed to be more like a diva.

Backstage, Swift complained to a manager that her dressing room wasn't up to her standards and she was not happy that Kellie Pickler, another one of her opening acts that evening, was unable to perform that night due to ill-

ness. An insider who works all of Swift's concerts gave some insight. "She really isn't the same person backstage as she is onstage," he said. "I don't know. Maybe she is just stressed out during her shows ... if something isn't perfect, she'll freak out." When Swift was informed about the flooding crisis in her hometown of Nashville, her immediate concern was about her newly purchased jet. She confirmed her concern later that night on Twitter by saying, "Flying to Nashville - hoping it's not a water landing."

A few minutes later, a fan with a backstage pass asked Swift for a picture, and Swift quickly refused her request. Even at Swift's meet and greet, no photos with personal cameras were permitted. Instead, Swift had a professional photographer take one photo, which the fan could later purchase from a Web site.

However, Swift did put on a great show. She sang well and danced into the audience to give hugs to fans. Swift had a good rapport with her audience and constantly talked to them. She stayed energized throughout the concert and demonstrated her ability for making quick wardrobe changes. However, her choices were not always good. During her first few numbers, it was hard to tell if the set was wearing Taylor, or if Taylor was wearing her set. Her glittery dress, glittery guitar and pallid complexion blended in perfectly with her glittery set. Only Swift's teeth and hair indicated that there was a person on the stage.

While performing, Swift presented a completely different persona from the one seen backstage. On her Facebook page, she says, "I am not a big deal. At all." Swift seemingly told the truth because as a person, she's really not.

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

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CAMPUS NEWS SINCE 1925

Pirate Preview 2010

The Pirate Preview will be distributed to all incoming freshmen at the New Student Orientation Involvement Fair. At least 5,000 future Pirates and their parents will read the Pirate Preview—so make a first impression on ECU's newest students, your future consumers.

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IRON MAN continued from A5

an action-packed and exciting summer blockbuster that deserves four out of five stars.

aters and check out the highly anticipated sequel to "Iron Man," as well as one of the other sure to be blockbusters of the summer.

So if the summer heat becomes too harsh, be sure to stop by one of the local the-

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

Other movies hitting the big screen this summer:

May

- "Just Wright"
- "Letters to Juliet"
- "Robin Hood"
- "Macgruber"
- "Shrek Forever After"
- "Prince of Persia: the Sand of Time"
- "Sex and the City 2"

June

- "Killers"
- "Splice"
- "Toy Story 3D"
- "Grown Ups"
- "Knight and Day"
- "Karate Kid"
- "Eclipse"

July

- "The Last Airbender"
- "Despicable Me"
- "Predators"
- "Inception"
- "The Sorcerers Apprentice"
- "Hairspray 2"

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ECU wins final regular season road series at UCF

The ECU baseball team claimed its fourth Conference USA series over the weekend, taking two of three games from UCF at Jay Bergman Field. Zach Woods recorded his second win of the week, while fellow classmate Seth Maness posted his league-leading ninth win and Seth Simmons notched his ninth save. The Pirates are sitting in fifth place heading into the final weekend of C-USA action where they will play host to Houston, May 20-22.

Offensively, the Pirates batted .338 on the week with five home runs and 10 doubles of their 26 runs, 16 were scored with two outs and all seven runs in game two versus UCF came with two men out. As a team, the Pirates cracked into the top-10 in home runs, RBI and runs. On the season, ECU has scored 176 of its 415 runs with two outs, which accounts for 42.4 percent of its runs.

Track and Field finds success in Orlando

Tynita Butts recorded 1.74 meters in the high jump, winning the conference title in the event and earning Women's Freshman-of-the-Meet honors on the final day of the 2010 Conference USA Outdoor Championships at the UCF Track and Soccer Complex.

The Pirate men finished in fifth place with 110 points, while the women ended up eighth and scored 67 points. The ladies improved two places from last year's meet. Houston took the men's title and UCF captured the women's championship by five points over UTEP.

Nicole Tozzi and Camelia Morman took third place in the javelin (45.46 meters) and triple jump (12.58), respectively, while Brittany Copeland took fifth in the 5,000-meter run, clocking in at 16:34.16.

For the men, Mario Briscoe and Randy Bolton were third and fourth in the 110-meter hurdles with times of 14.24 and 14.28. Isiah Gyasi and Austin Lewis also went three and four in the 100-meter dash, checking in at 10.62 and 10.65. In the 400-meter hurdles, Briscoe captured fifth-place with a time of 52.80, while Dillon Hawley scored for ECU in the 5,000-meter run by running a 14:53.92.

The 4x100 men's relay team also found the podium yet again, taking third place with a time of 41.05.

SPORTS

ECU prevails in conference tournament for program's first Conference USA title

Pirates earn NCAA Regional berth to Austin, Texas

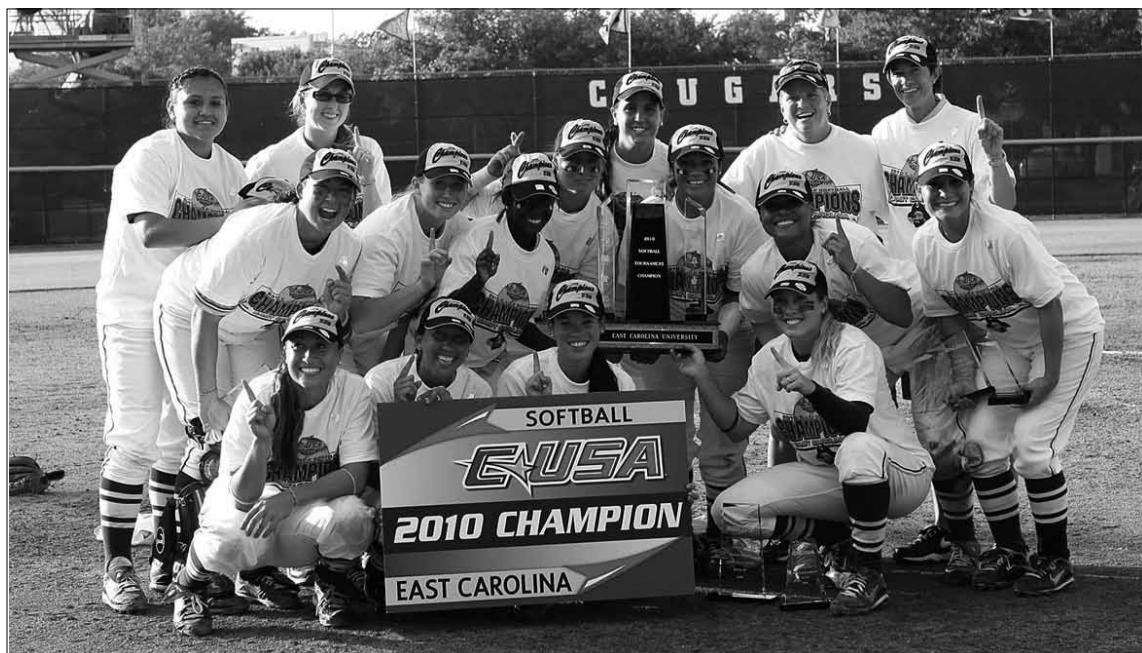
Staff Reports

The ECU softball team fell behind 1-0 in the top of the first, but came back to claim its first Conference USA Tournament championship with a 3-1 victory over UCF. Sophomore Priscilla Velasquez drove in the game-winning run in the bottom of the second inning, with a sacrifice fly that scored senior Christen Aona. C-USA Tournament Most Valuable Player Toni Paisley earned her 30th win of the season in the complete-game effort.

With the tournament title, the Pirates receive C-USA's automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament. It is ECU's third berth in the post-season tournament and second in the past three seasons. The Pirates were in the NCAA Tournament in 1999, falling to Arizona and Southeast Missouri State, and returned in 2008, defeating Mississippi Valley State and losing to Louisiana-Lafayette and LSU.

ECU will begin action in the double-elimination regional Thursday against Brigham Young University at 6 p.m. ET inside Red and Charline McCombs Field on the campus of Texas. The Austin Regional is the only one of the 16 to start on Thursday and not Friday.

In the championship contest, Paisley (30-9) scattered three hits and a pair of walks while striking out six. She surrendered an unearned run in the first inning.



ECU softball hits the road to the NCAA Regional sight in Austin, Texas. The Pirates will look to extend their 11 game win streak.

The six whiffs gave her 340 strikeouts this season, setting the ECU single-season record. Paisley also moved up to second on the C-USA all-time strikeouts list, as she has 878 in her career. For the tournament, the MVP allowed one unearned run and struck out 20.

With two outs in the bottom of the sixth, ECU added its final run of the game for the 3-1 score. Aona tripled down the right-field line with two down and came home when shortstop Tiffany Lane mis-

played Jimenez's ground ball.

Paisley gave up a one-out double to Mary Helen Tyler in the seventh inning, but retired Perez on a groundout and Bullard on a foul out to seal the victory.

The C-USA titles were the first for the Pirates after they had finished second in the league regular season twice, in 2007 and 2009, and had been the tournament runners-up once, in 2007. It was the first regular season title for the ECU program since winning three consecutive Big South

championships from 1997-99. The tournament crown was also its first since the 1999 Big South post-season title.

Regional host Texas fell 11-6 to No. 8 Missouri in the Big 12 Tournament semifinals and earned an at-large bid into the NCAA Tournament. BYU (Mountain West) and Iona (Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference) won their leagues to earn the automatic selections. The Gaels are making their first appearance in the post-season tournament.

Expansion rumors loom as Big 10 preps to increase membership

Jared Jackson
STAFF WRITER

If the Big 10 has its way, then the conference could have at least four new members, and a domino effect expansion would change college athletics in a huge way.

Early last week, news broke that the Big 10 had offered independent Notre

Dame, Big East member Rutgers and Big 12 members Nebraska and Missouri spots in its conference. Whether each accepts remains to be seen, but according to many sports experts, if the Fighting Irish takes the Big 10's offer, then the conference would look to expand

EXPANSION continued on A10



If the Big 10 has its way, Notre Dame will become a member of the conference along with Missouri, Nebraska and Rutgers.

The Rays top the MLB as the biggest surprise of the season thus far

Addison Harvey
STAFF WRITER

5. Unlikely leader leads in long balls:

When discussing who leads the American and National Leagues in home runs, it would probably take most people more than three strikes to get to the current league leader in home runs. Paul Konerko of the White Sox leads all MLB players with 13 long balls this year, while Kelly Johnson leads the National League. Perennial home run hitters such as Ryan Howard, Prince Fielder, Mark Reynolds and Albert Pujols all trail Konerko and Johnson in the flashiest of offensive statistics. If Konerko can keep this pace up, he will finish the year atop the league in home runs for the first time in his long career.

4. Red Sox slow start:

In the past few years, of the perennial powerhouses in Major League, the teams that come to mind are the Angels, Yankees, Cardinals, Phillies and Red Sox. All of these five teams are off to typical starts except for the pesky Red Sox. The Sox, as so many transplanted northerners refer to their beloved team, are off to a sluggish start, posting a 19-21

record through Tuesday morning and are burying themselves in their incredibly competitive AL East. One problem that has become the theme of the 2010 season for the Sox is their age. Stars such as David Ortiz and J.D. Drew are aging and newly acquired players like Victor Martinez and John Lackey are off to slow starts to begin the season. The Red Sox are going to have to find their rhythm quickly if they are going to continue their streak of making the playoffs.

3. Nationals:

The Nationals have been the doormat of Major League Baseball since their inaugural season in 2005. The Nationals have loaded up on young talent mixed with some veterans, and the results are showing up on the baseball diamond. The Nationals finished last season with an abysmal 59-103 record — one game worse than the 2008 season. This year, the team has been the biggest surprise of the young 2010 season, posting a 20-19 record through Monday night. The youngest franchise in baseball is in contention in their division, the National League East, for the first time this far into the season. The team that finished last season 34



Sean Rodriguez and Tampa Bay currently sport the best record in baseball.

games out of first place sits just 5.5 games back of the reigning NL champion Phillies as of Tuesday. Who would have predicted that on May 19?

2. Jason Heyward:

The Braves young phenom has broken onto the Major League Baseball scene this year in historic fashion. The talented 20-year-old Atlanta outfielder blasted his first career MLB home run in

his first career major league at bat. Heyward has not been a one hit wonder this year either, following up his first career home run with seven more, already leading his team in that offensive category. Heyward also leads all MLB rookies in home runs, but some question his overall approach at the plate with an average batting average of .276. While I am not ready to proclaim the Georgia native the next Hank Aaron as so many writers and game

commentators have, Heyward's future is bright in Atlanta.

1. The Rays:

When one thinks of the AL East, you think of World Series Championships, The Yankees, Enter Sandman and The Red Sox emergence in the 2000s — not about the young Tampa Bay Rays. The Rays shocked the professional baseball world when they made a run to the World Series in 2008. This year's team with some of the same parts is making headway at another historic run. Evan Longoria, Carl Crawford, B.J. Upton and a young pitching staff are leading this Rays team to the best start in the 2010 season with a 27-11 record. Crawford leads the team in steals with 10 and has an impressive .371 batting average thus far. Since the Rays are one of the "lower budget" organizations in Major League Baseball, they will likely lose star players such as Crawford due to free agency next year to their divisional foes Boston or New York. So, if the Rays want to win the organization's first World Series, this may have to be their year.

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

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EXPANSION continued from A8

includes Penn State, Iowa, Michigan State, Michigan, Northwestern, Ohio State, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Purdue and Minnesota. The conference is supposedly looking to expand in order to create a championship game (a league must have 12 members to hold one), and to also increase revenue created by the Big 10 Network, which pays out about \$22 million per year to each member of the conference.

While the Big 10 has denied offering the four schools mentioned inclusion into the conference, Missouri has publicly stated that it would be willing to hear possibilities of moving affiliation.

Chancellor of the Fighting Tigers, Brady Deaton, was quoted by ESPN as saying that the school would "always do what is best for the university."

"You've got every major conference looking at how they should reposition or if they should reposition," Deaton added. "I don't think all the benefits and costs are known."

What is known is that Missouri would earn about \$13 million per year if they decide to become a part of the Big 10.

Notre Dame would earn about \$7 million more per year. The Fighting Irish, which has every home game broadcast on NBC with a \$15 million per year deal, and is usually the breaking point when men-

tioned in expansion, could by all means benefit from lifting its expansion title.

But according to head coach Chip Kelly, Notre Dame is happy being without conference affiliation.

"I know you're hearing all these rumors about the Big 10 and all these other things, but let me tell you one thing, the history ... the tradition of Notre Dame football is steeped in that independence," Kelly was quoted by ESPN as saying.

The Big 10 holds the fate of college athletics in its hands. If the conference decides to expand, then the ACC, PAC 10 and SEC will all without a doubt look to expand, especially if the Big 10 looks to increase to 16 members. The Big East and Big 12 could be the odd conferences left out, as the major players will likely pull from those two to increase their membership.

What all this means for ECU is not known at this point. However, the formation of 16-team super conferences would likely increase the Pirates' chances of jumping into a BCS-affiliated league.

With new softball and soccer facilities, an expanded football stadium, a state of the art baseball stadium and a dedicated fan base, ECU will be a hot commodity for conferences looking to expand.

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

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1. Open your web browser and type **www.studentinsurance.com** in the address bar. With the Pearce & Pearce student insurance website displayed, select the UNC system logo.
2. Select ECU to navigate to the secure (https:) website for ECU students.
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