

Students chronicle minority experience

By **NICOLE MICHELS**
News Writer

Editor's note: This is the final installment in a three-part series about the Call to Action movement and the experiences of minority students within the Notre Dame campus community.

For sophomore Demetrius Murphy, the 20-minute drive separating his home in Granger, Ind., from Notre Dame's campus meant much more than a short time behind the wheel.

The transition to college was relatively smooth, Murphy said, but the range of questions friends in Keenan

Hall and at Notre Dame asked about his African-American identity quickly made him realize most of his peers did not come from diverse backgrounds.

Murphy said he found the explaining the customs of African-American communities to his peers to be challenging.

"That can be a heavy burden to bear because whenever you say something you have to be very conscious about what you're going to say," Murphy said. "You are representing the whole race with that one comment you're about to make."

see CALL **PAGE 7**



SUZANNA PRATT | The Observer

Sophomore Amanda Peña reflects upon her years at Notre Dame and the unique challenges faced by minority students on campus, beginning with the freshman orientation experience.

Seniors react to commencement speaker

By **ANN MARIE JAKUBOWSKI**
News Writer

Cardinal Timothy Dolan will deliver the Commencement address to the class of 2013, and the selection has prompted seniors to reflect on Dolan's relevance to the student body and his ability to successfully connect with them.

Dolan, the Archbishop of New York and the president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic

Bishops, will receive an honorary degree from the University at the May 19 ceremony in Notre Dame Stadium.

Senior Jason Kippenbock said he is thrilled by the selection because Dolan's charismatic personality and intellectual background make him an ideal fit for the event.

"When [Dolan] speaks, he has always emphasized how important it is to live out your faith fearlessly and not

back down, like the way he lead the bishops' opposition to the health care mandate," Kippenbock said. "I'd expect his message to us as graduates of America's greatest Catholic institution would be to not back down, and to use our gifts and our strengths to live out the gospel."

Senior Camille Suarez said she initially reacted negatively

see REACTION **PAGE 6**

Professor reflects on Chavez's death

By **JOHN CAMERON**
News Editor

The death of Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez on Tuesday leaves a number of questions for the South American nation, which now adds a presidential election to the list of complex challenges it already faces.

Professor Michael Coppedge, a political science professor specializing in Latin-American politics and global democratization,

**Michael
Coppedge**
political science professor



said the future of the regime – at least in the short term – will be determined by Interim President and Chavez's chosen successor,

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Private College 529 Plan offers prepaid tuition option

PRIVATE COLLEGE 529 PLAN

- 271 PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS
- FAMILIES PURCHASE TUITION CERTIFICATES AT CURRENT PRICES AND REDEEM THEM TO PAY FUTURE TUITION BILLS
- INSTITUTIONS ASSUME RISK

BRANDON KEELEAN | The Observer

By **ANN MARIE JAKUBOWSKI**
News Writer

Many students take years to pay off their loans after earning degrees, but Notre Dame offers families a way to preemptively finance their children's higher education by pre-paying future tuition bills through the Private College 529 Plan.

Notre Dame is one of 271 institutions that participate in the plan, which sets up a risk-free method for families to anticipate college costs and finance tuition payments,

according to executive director of student financial strategies Thomas Bear. Families can purchase tuition certificates at current prices that are redeemable at any of the participating institutions after three years.

"This plan is great for a family because you assume no risk. Once you lock into that price and pay tuition for future years, it's guaranteed," Bear said. "As a family who is going to invest, when you buy tuition [through the plan] you're buying it at all 271 schools."

Bear said

OppenheimerFunds, Inc., manages money put into the plan and the anticipation is that Oppenheimer's investments will make up the dollar difference in tuition between the time of the original payment and the point where the family is ready to redeem their tuition certificates.

"If they don't make up the difference [with the investments], here's where it's really good for families: The institution assumes the risk, so we,

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IRISH HERITAGE **PAGE 5**

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THE INBETWEEN**

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P.O. Box 779, Notre Dame, IN 46556
024 South Dining Hall, Notre Dame, IN 46556

Editor-in-Chief
Andrew Gastelum
Managing Editor
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Systems Administrator: William Heineman

Office Manager & General Info
Ph: (574) 631-7471
Fax: (574) 631-6927

Advertising
(574) 631-6900 ads@ndsmcobserver.com

Editor-in-Chief
(574) 631-4542 agastell1@nd.edu

Managing Editor
(574) 631-4542 mdoyle11@nd.edu

Assistant Managing Editors
(574) 631-4541 aowens2@nd.edu
sstrikel@nd.edu

Business Office
(574) 631-5313

News Desk
(574) 631-5323 obsnews.nd@gmail.com

Viewpoint Desk
(574) 631-5303 obsviewpoint@gmail.com

Sports Desk
(574) 631-4543 observersports@gmail.com

Scene Desk
(574) 631-4540 Observer.Scene.Editor@gmail.com

Saint Mary's Desk
jbarwi01@saintmarys.edu

Photo Desk
(574) 631-8767 obsphoto@gmail.com

Systems & Web Administrators
(574) 631-8839

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Today's Staff

News

Ann Marie Jakubowski
Rebecca O'Neil
Charitha Isanaka

Graphics

Brandon Keelean

Photo

Mackenzie Sain

Sports

Cory Bernard
Alex Wilcox
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Miko Malabute

Viewpoint

Dan Brombach

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The Observer regards itself as a professional publication and strives for the highest standards of journalism at all times. We do, however, recognize that we will make mistakes. If we have made a mistake, please contact us at (574) 631-4541 so we can correct our error.

QUESTION OF THE DAY:

What is the most creative dessert you've eaten at the dining hall?

Have a question you want answered?

Email obsphoto@gmail.com



Brian Carrion

junior
Duncan Hall

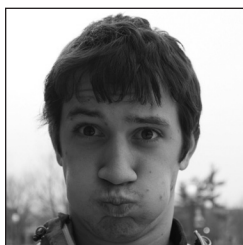
"Mixture of orange, blue and red jello."



Catherine Benson

junior
McGlinn Hall

"A waffle with sprinkles on top."



Connor Tice

junior
Keough Hall

"I made myself a mocha with chocolate froyo and coffee."



Lou Ganser

senior
Dillion Hall

"Froyo with potato chips and chocolate syrup."



Tara Crown

junior
McGlinn Hall

"Pudding cup: whipped cream, pudding and froyo, with the option of more whipped cream."



Tommasina Domel

senior
Badin Hall

"Oreo crumbles and milk: 'Oreo paste.'"



MACKENZIE SAIN | The Observer

Members of the Special Olympics Notre Dame hold up a banner in South Dining Hall on Wednesday. Students signed the banner as part of the Spread the Word to End the Word to pledge to end the use of the word "retard(ed)."

THE NEXT FIVE DAYS:

Want your event included here?

Email obsnews.nd@gmail.com

Thursday

Mammograms on Campus

Hesburgh Library
8 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Free for Notre Dame faculty.

Zen Meditation

Coleman-Morse Center
5:15 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.
All faiths are welcome.

Friday

Even Fridays Family Swim

Rockne Memorial
5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Register online via RecRegister.

"The Master (2012)"

DeBartolo Performing Arts Center
6:30 p.m. - 8:54 p.m.
Film.

Saturday

Men's and Women's Fencing

Joyce Center
All day
NCAA Regional Championships

Women's Lacrosse

Arlotta Stadium
3 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Notre Dame vs. Boston University.

Sunday

"Chamber III: Slavic Heritage."

DeBartolo Performing Arts Center
3 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Concert.

Sunday Mass

Basilica of the Sacred Heart
10 a.m. - 11 a.m.
Mass.

Monday

Midterm break

Through March 17.

Board promotes diversity through conference

By JILLIAN BARWICK
Saint Mary's Editor

The Saint Mary's Student Diversity Board (SDB) will host its biggest event of the year after spring break when it sponsors the eighth annual Diverse Students' Leadership Conference (DSLCL) on March 19 and 20.

Senior Maddie Meckes, chair of DSLCL and vice president of SDB, said the event intends to motivate participants to spark social change.

"The goal of the conference is to allow participants to enrich their perspectives of the adversities and benefits within diverse academic, social and professional settings," Meckes said. "Our theme this year is 'From Awareness to Action: Change Your Mind, Ways & World.' We want participants to be inspired to become catalysts for change in their communities."

Meckes has worked with senior co-chair and SDB secretary Jean Osberger to publicize the event, and several hundred students have already signed up to attend.

"We worked with the Career Crossings Office to plan this, and we have five alumnae panelists from the South Bend area attending," Meckes said.

The keynote addresses will come from a wide range of

speakers, Meckes said, each with a different perspective on diversity. The opening speaker, Daisy Hernandez, is co-editor of 'Colonize This!: Young Women of Color on Today's Feminism.' She will speak at 12 p.m. March 19 in Carroll Auditorium.

"[Hernandez] speaks on equality, feminism, race and politics," Meckes said. "Derreck Kayongo is our closing keynote speaker on March 20 at 6 p.m. in Carroll Auditorium. He is a refugee from Uganda and founded the Global Soap Project, which recycles used soap from hotels for new soap in third-world countries."

Kayongo, who was a Top 10 CNN Hero in 2011, will speak about his experiences and how he became a catalyst for change, Meckes said. The keynote speaker for the high school track is Elliott Lewis, a news reporter and law student at the University of Akron. He will discuss biracialism in America and his book "Fade."

Meckes said the speakers were chosen for this year's conference because of their backgrounds in social justice and their proven ability to influence change in their communities.

"The goal of DSLCL is for participants to recognize the need for change in society and desire to create that change," she said. "All

three keynotes have recognized the need for change and worked, either through their writing or their careers, to make a positive change in the world."

Osberger said she is especially excited about the speakers because of their ability to connect with the audience.

"I look forward to Daisy Hernandez's keynote address because ... she is charismatic and funny, but her message for feminism and equality is particularly pertinent to our student body," Osberger said. "We are also honored to host Kayongo who speaks directly to our theme as a key international figure who has innovated positive change in developing countries."

The live salsa band "La Republica" will provide entertainment for the conference, Osberger said, and there will also be salsa lessons in Dalloway's Coffeehouse at 7 p.m. on March 20. There also will be an alumnae lunch March 20.

All workshops will be in the conference rooms of the Saint Mary's Student Center. Registration for DSLCL is available on OrgSync and is open to the public. For more information about registration, visit <https://orgsync.com/56318/forms/6541>

Contact Jillian Barwick at jbarwi01@saintmarys.edu

Author explores Arab-Israeli ties

By CHRISTIAN MYERS
News Writer

Israeli author Sayed Kashua spoke about the Arab-Israeli dynamic and his latest novel "Second Person Singular" in a presentation at the Hesburgh Center for International Studies on Wednesday.

Theology professor Michael Tzvi Novick introduced Kashua and read two selections from

Sayed Kashua
author



the novel, while Kashua discussed the book's context. Novick said Kashua's novel provides a valuable Arab perspective on the problems of modern Israel and includes "snippets of hope for his country."

Kashua said the novel centers on the first-person narratives of two characters. One is an unnamed Arab lawyer living in Jerusalem, and the other is a young Arab social worker/art student named Amir. Both characters are Arabs living in East Jerusalem and both stories include detailed references to locations in the city, Kashua said.

"The book is a lot about Jerusalem; it has specific stores, cafes, streets in Jerusalem. It is a very Jerusalem book in that sense," he said.

Kashua said he did not give the lawyer a name because he could not find one the fully captured his character. The lawyer is successful, has a wife and kids and is part of a group that works with Israeli authorities on behalf of East Jerusalem Arabs.

He said the lawyer's journey begins when he finds a love note in a used copy of Tolstoy's "The Kreutzer Sonata" which appears to be written by his wife for another man.

Amir's journey begins when he takes a night job watching over a rich Ashkenazi Jewish man who is in a coma. Amir gradually begins to read the comatose young man's books, listen to his music and wear his clothes. Eventually, Amir applies to art school using the young Jewish man's name and identification.

Kashua said both protagonists explore ideas of culture and identity and meet at one point in the novel.

In addition to talking about his novel, Kashua shared his personal experiences about living as an Arab and a citizen in Israel.

Kashua said Arab-Israeli novelists are rare because it is often easier for Arabs to be accepted

into Israeli culture as lawyers, doctors and laborers than in the arts or academia.

"Even though I am now a successful novelist, my parents still say writing is for Jews and Arabs should have a profession," he said. "My father will read my novel and say, 'That is a very good piece of work. Someone who can write so well in Hebrew should be a lawyer.'"

Kashua said the first real novel he ever read, which was "Catcher in the Rye," he read in Hebrew at age 15 while at a boarding school in Jerusalem.

"When you read that book at 15, it can really affect you," he said. "I learned that I can have doubts."

Although he is ethnically Arab, Kashua writes his novels in Hebrew because that is the language in which he was first exposed to literature and he can better utilize it to tell stories. Kashua said he has a complicated opinion of the language, which he calls his "step-mother tongue."

More Arabs have access to his books because they are written in Hebrew, since there is no way to market books in Arabic in Israel and very few Arabic booksellers, according to Kashua.

Kashua said he writes in Arabic for television and film because he recognizes the struggle to preserve Arab identity through the use of Arabic.

"Arabic has political and national meaning. We're in a huge struggle to protect the Arab language," he said.

Kashua writes a popular prime-time Israeli television show called "Arab Labor" that is primarily in Arabic rather than Hebrew, Novick said. Kashua said he also has done some

"Even though I am now a successful novelist, my parents still say writing is for Jews and Arabs should have a profession."

Sayed Kashua
author

writing for film and writes a column for the Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz.

"Second Person Singular" is Kashua's third novel and he has already begun work on his fourth, he said. His first two novels are "Dancing Arabs and Let it Be Morning," according to the Kroc Institute's website.

The lecture was co-sponsored by the department of theology, Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts and Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies.

Contact Christian Myers at cmyers8@nd.edu

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ND celebrates Irish heritage

By KATIE McCARTHY
News Writer

The Irish identity of Notre Dame inspires campus-wide St. Patrick's Day festivities each year, and preparations are already underway to pay tribute to the school's cultural connections March 17.

In commemoration of the holiday, the Department of Irish

culture and attracting visitors to Ireland.

"It is also Irish-language week where everyone is encouraged to use as much Irish as possible in daily transactions."

Over the years, the American celebration of St. Patrick's Day has become less about the Irish culture and more about celebrating all cultures, O'Conchubhair said.

"Now it is as much a multicultural, multiracial celebration of Americanism," he said. "Historically, it [was] celebrated as a triumph of Irish into American culture, and now that triumph narrative has been adopted by other different ethnic groups."

Together with the Keough-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies, the Department of Irish Language and Literature helps tie the University to its

"Now it is as much a multicultural, multiracial celebration of Americanism."

Brian O'Conchubhair
Irish Studies
professor

Language and the Institute of Irish of Studies are sponsoring a lecture about the history of St. Patrick's Day in Ireland and North America today at 2 p.m. in Hayes-Healy Hall.

Irish Language and Literature professor Brian O'Conchubhair said American St. Patrick's Day celebrations are different from traditional Irish ones. The festivities in Ireland were expanded after the Celtic Tiger, a period of great economic growth in Ireland in the late 1990s, he said.

"It used to be the case that the American celebrations were much larger events than the typical Mass, parade, dinner in Ireland, but that changed during the Celtic Tiger," O'Conchubhair said. "After the Celtic Tiger, St. Patrick's Day became a weeklong festival aimed at celebrating Irish

"[Notre Dame] is in many ways, the pulse of Irish America."

Brian O'Conchubhair
Irish Studies
professor

Irish identity, O'Conchubhair said.

"Just look at the interest in the ND-Navy game in Dublin last September and captured in [the] coffee-table book 'Notre Dame's Happy Returns: Dublin, the Experience, the Game,'" O'Conchubhair said. "[Notre Dame] is in many ways the pulse of Irish America."

Contact Katie McCarthy at kmccar16@nd.edu

Pen-pal program flourishes

By MEG HANDELMAN
News Writer

Students craving handwritten correspondence in the age of digital communication can join the Literacy Awareness Club of Notre Dame (LAND) and exchange personal letters with middle-school children in South Bend.

Senior Emily Yates, president of LAND, said the program began in 2011 to reach out to children in the community.

"Our goal is to help improve the rate of literacy in South Bend and in the United States by spreading awareness about low literacy rates," Yates said. "We focus on programs for children, since they impact future literacy rates."

Yates said the pen-pal program currently pairs about 40 Notre Dame students with pen pals from the sixth grade class of Brown Intermediate Center.

"As this is one of our most popular programs, we hope to expand it to more children here

in South Bend, and perhaps even neighboring communities," Yates said.

Notre Dame students write pen-pal letters every other week, which gives the middle-school students a week to respond, Yates said.

"Many letters include pictures, drawings, stickers and even small gifts," Yates said. "We have a location in LaFortune where LAND members drop off the letters, and our club delivers them to a contact with the school."

Yates said the pen-pal program is just one of the four main volunteering activities LAND sponsors. Members also volunteer at the Robinson Community Learning Center, the Boys and Girls Club, the St. Joseph County Public Library and the Hesburgh Library.

"As president of LAND, I get in contact with local libraries and places that work with children and coordinate ways for people in LAND to volunteer," Yates said. "Members of LAND sign up for whatever events they can attend

as they become available."

The largest volunteering opportunities are the Open Book Festival in the fall and One Book, One Michiana in the spring, Yates said. The Hesburgh Library and the St. Joseph's County Library host these events together.

"I hope to get plenty of volunteers to sign up for our events with One Book, One Michiana that will be happening in April," Yates said. "I also hope to begin to organize the election process for choosing a new cabinet for next year and to continue to expand the club to get even more people to sign up for events."

Yates said the club hopes to offer more volunteering opportunities to better serve the community.

"We can try to make a difference in St. Joseph County by promoting literacy awareness and working with children to change the future of our local community," she said.

Contact Meg Handelman at mhandelm@nd.edu

Chavez

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and Chavez's chosen successor, Nicolas Maduro.

"A lot of it depends on what Maduro will do now that he's not in Chavez's shadow, because he's been very loyal to Chavez and has hidden his own tendencies to demonstrate absolute loyalty," Coppedge said. "Now that he doesn't have to do that, we'll see what kind of person he is. I expect he's not a liberal democrat, but whether he'll be more open [to opposition] ... remains to be seen."

Coppedge said Maduro's initial statements after the president's death suggest he intends to keep a short leash on opposition, at least in the weeks leading up to the election.

"There was a subtext that the opposition better behave itself, that this is not a time to cheer or call for radical change, it's a time to remember our fallen leader," Coppedge said. "I think there's a fear the opposition will try to capitalize on the moment."

The Venezuelan government announced an election will be called within 30 days, and Coppedge said he believes Maduro, the candidate for Chavez's socialist party, will likely be the winner.

"If I were to place a bet right now, I'd say Maduro will probably win, in part with the election coming so close after the death, he'll get the vote," Coppedge said. "A lot of Chavistas are out to prove their movement will not fall apart. ... I think they'll be motivated to campaign hard and win."

While Maduro is the likely victor, Coppedge believes the opposition could have a substantial presence in the election.



AP

The family of Hugo Chaves stands by his casket in Carcaras, Venezuela, on March 6. The country declared seven days of mourning.

"There are a lot of things for people to be unhappy about, and without Chavez to hold his group together, some of these complaints may lead to divisions," he said. "Purchasing power has been declining, public services have been declining. ... People are not happy with the extremely high crime rate."

Although the opposition stands to benefit from economic conditions, its most prominent leader does not appear to be mounting a power grab.

"The opposition will probably be behind Henrique Capriles Radonski, but he has exercised some calming leadership," Coppedge said. "He hasn't been a polarizing leader and after Chavez's death he expressed solidarity with Chavez's family."

While much is uncertain for the political future of Venezuela, Coppedge said the change in leadership could present new opportunities for the country's relationship with the United States, which was strained under the Chavez regime.

"The Obama administration can act as though this can be a new opportunity to do things

differently," he said. "Obama's statement was expressing hope for better democracy and stability in Venezuela, so I think the [United States] is going to be happy to talk and send out feelers to see whether relations can be better."

The supply of oil from Venezuela to the United States is unlikely to be disrupted during the transition, Coppedge said.

"Venezuela is not in a good economic situation," he said. "It can't afford to stop selling oil to the [United States]. It makes economic sense to sell to us because we're so close and have established relationships."

If Maduro wins the election, Coppedge said he is doubtful relations will improve.

"I think it depends on whether Maduro, or whoever the president [will be], is going to use the same tactics as Chavez, which is to demonize the [United States] to build support at home," he said. "I think Maduro is cut from that mold."

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Tuition

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

University of Notre Dame, would pay that difference,” Bear said.

To illustrate this point, Bear said if a family bought tuition at \$10,000 and the school increased it to \$15,000 over time while the investments only grew to \$11,000, the University would assume the \$4,000 difference.

“Hopefully, as Notre Dame, we want to see that investment grow to \$15,000 as well so it’s a win-win-win for everybody,” Bear said. “There are years when we’ve had growth and we’ve come out even, but there are some years where we had to absorb that risk.”

Bear said Notre Dame participates in the plan despite the financial risks to encourage families to be proactive in their efforts to pay for college.

“Saving for college gives you a resource as a family so when your son or daughter is accepted, you already have options available for that child,” Bear said. “It’s not just where your child is admitted but also where you can afford to send him or her.

“We’d rather see you save preemptively, upfront, instead of trying to manage loans on the back end,” he said.

Notre Dame was one of the original schools that signed on to the plan when it began in 2006, and it has more

redemptions to date than any other institution, Bear said. This means more families use their prepaid tuition certificates at Notre Dame than at any other institution included in the plan.

“Among the private colleges [in the plan], we’ve had about 99 students who have turned in their certificates,” Bear said. “Over these seven years [since 2006], that’s about 14 or 15 families per year who have taken advantage of this benefit.”

Bear attributes this success partially to the financial aid office’s work to publicize the opportunity to alumni and other affiliated families, but also to the strong sense of community around Notre Dame.

“There’s that affinity to Notre

Dame from generation to generation in many families, and within that context there’s the sense that this is a great plan, so let’s go ahead and invest in it so our sons and daughters can also have that opportunity,” Bear said.

The real value of the plan comes from the fact that the investment is completely guaranteed, Bear said.

“If our tuition goes up two, three, four, five percent every year, and you have a guaranteed investment like this, you can look at that and say ‘Well, my investment is going up two, three, four, five percent every year,’” he said. “There’s no other guarantee like that out there, so it’s a very safe investment.”

Bear said the guarantee makes this investment a wise move for any family in a position to prepay tuition in this way.

“Tuition here is about \$42,000 a year, and most families don’t have that to just shell out,” Bear said. “What you can do here is put down say, \$5,000 this year, so you would be buying 12 percent of tuition, redeemable in the future.

“Even if you’re just putting in \$200 now, maybe you’re giving up that brand new color TV, but it’s better to do that than to pay the loans off in the future,” he said.

Contact Ann Marie Jakubowski at ajakubol@nd.edu



AP

Cardinal Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of New York and President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, will deliver the 2013 commencement address at Notre Dame. Seniors have varying opinions on the selection of Dolan.

Reaction

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

she initially reacted negatively to the announcement because she doesn’t believe Dolan is the most relevant selection for the class.

“I feel like this choice isn’t perfect for this moment,” Suarez said. “I was hoping Notre Dame would use this opportunity to kind of move the University forward, and I think this might be setting us back a couple steps.”

Suarez said she hopes Dolan will present an image of the Church that is relevant and accessible to her and her classmates.

“I hope he talks about Catholic Social Teaching because I think that’s one image of the Catholic Church that needs to be promoted,” Suarez said. “I hope he makes a call to the graduating student body and encourages

us to use our [Notre Dame] degrees to promote Catholic Social Teaching and help the poor and suffering.”

Senior Katie Pryor said she is excited to hear Dolan’s speech because he is a prominent figure in both the Catholic Church and the world, as demonstrated by his mention in Time Magazine’s list of the 100 Most Influential People of the World in 2012.

“When I heard Cardinal Dolan would be the commencement speaker, I was very pleased with the decision,” Pryor said. “He is not just another Cardinal but a Cardinal that actually has a lot of substance in his views and beliefs and a lot of wonderful things to say.”

With the ongoing discussions about the next Pope, Pryor said Dolan is an “especially exciting” choice because he is a member of the Church hierarchy.

“Cardinal Dolan is even one of the people being talked about for Pope, showing the great importance he has worldwide in the Catholic Church,” she said.

Seniors Julia Kohn and Rachel Chisausky said while Dolan is a prominent leader, they are concerned the speech would be relevant only to students that identify as conservative Catholics, leaving others disappointed.

“I took a moment to look him up before I formed an opinion ... and everything I’ve read seems to indicate that he appears to have a political agenda rather than just being a religious figure, and I don’t agree with any of the views that his agenda suggests,” Kohn said. “I just don’t know what he’s going to talk about that’s going to be that relevant to my beliefs and opinions.”

Chisausky said she hopes Dolan’s speech is not “homily

style” and that it doesn’t alienate non-religious students.

“I was disappointed, because I don’t really know much about him but I’m not Catholic or really religious at all,” she said. “I just hope [his speech] is very open

and applies to every student in the graduating body and not just to religious people.”

Kohn said if the University wanted a “famous” speaker, they should have sought a more relatable figure.

“For a school the caliber of Notre Dame, that has the name recognition of Notre Dame, I feel like we could have gotten someone really exciting,” Kohn said. “I don’t know that Cardinal Dolan is as relevant to everyone as a different famous person would be.”

Senior Colin Campbell said he understands there isn’t a speaker who can please everyone, but he is personally excited by the University’s decision to give Dolan a platform from which many will hear him.

“I hope Cardinal Dolan helps us to understand the gifts that we have been given through our four years at Notre Dame and then provides motivation and support as we carry those blessings with us and walk out of that football tunnel for the last time,” Campbell said.

Contact Ann Marie Jakubowski at ajakubol@nd.edu

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Murphy, a native of Gary, Ind., spent two years at the Indiana Academy, a boarding school on Ball State University's campus in Muncie, Ind. His encounters there with students of many different backgrounds enabled him to better answer his friends' questions, Murphy said.

"If I came to Notre Dame straight from Gary, [Ind.], this would have been a completely different experience," Murphy said. "I don't know that Notre Dame would've been the place for me."

Singled out

Some moments in Murphy's college career have been stark reminders of racial prejudice, he said. When a friend discovered some of his food was missing and decided to find out who had taken it, Murphy remembered his shock at another student's response.

"When he asked who ate his stuff, I said I didn't do it," Murphy said. "Then he asked the kid who actually ate it, and he said, 'I didn't do it, I'm not the black kid in the room.' I looked around thinking there had to be another black kid in the room, he can't be talking about me because I wouldn't take anything, I always ask first."

"This wasn't [because I went] in there and took stuff all the time. This was 'Oh, Demetrius is the only black kid in the room so he has to

always becomes racialized when I walk in."

Sophomore Amanda Peña [Editor's note: Peña is a columnist for *The Observer*] had also experienced a wider range of diversity in the community around her home in Los Angeles. She had never felt like a minority until arriving on campus for freshman orientation, she said, and then she became very aware that her Mexican heritage made her different.

"I got here, and I felt like a minority," Peña said. "I can't really describe how that feels, you really just feel like you stick out. From a racial standpoint, [during freshman orientation] you notice when the guys go to sing to the girls, they don't serenade the minority girls."

"At first I wondered if it was my weight, if it was because I'm brown or if it was because I'm not outgoing enough — you get really self-conscious and try to assess why people view you a certain way and why other people are indifferent [to you] because they don't know how to interact with you."

While walking to the College HAS Issues presentation with some friends she met during Spring Visitation Weekend who were also minorities, Peña said she was shocked by a passing remark directed her way.

"One of my black friends was walking with a white girl, and they came up to us and as I said hi to them, the [white] girl just stared at us," Peña said. "Then she just stared at us and in this sarcastic tone looked at us, kind of smiled and said, 'Oh you guys are minorities, right?' ... My [black] friend sarcastically replied, 'No we're Caucasian.' And she said, 'Oh, I'm a sophomore and I can say these things.'"

"That was my first impression of people [at Notre Dame.]"

A new culture, a new conversation

Junior Denver Lobo joked with his roommates upon arriving to Notre Dame that his first impression of the campus and freshman orientation was distinctly similar to the world portrayed in "American Pie," he said. But as the antics of Frosh-O subsided, Lobo said he was excited by the chance to immerse himself in a culture less restrictive than in his home, Kuwait.

"Kuwait was a lot more conservative ... The real reason for shifting from Kuwait to the freedom of America was the glass ceiling you hit when you're in a business," Lobo said. "You can only go up to a certain point and then you have to be Arab or Kuwaiti to move forward, but [in America] if you're good you go forward."



SUZANNA PRATT | The Observer

Junior Denver Lobo said he is very aware of the cultural differences between the Notre Dame community and his home in Kuwait, but he enjoys the unique dynamic the situation creates.

Lobo said he loved meeting people at Notre Dame from different cultures and sharing information about his home.

"When I meet a person from a different culture, I love to learn more about their culture [and] I love allowing people to ask questions about my own," Lobo said. "I love it and completely eat it up."

"I know I'm a minority here but there's not one time I felt that was a downside to me," Lobo said. "I always felt it was an upside because people were more interested and inquisitive about my different culture and I'm more than willing to tell them about it."

Though she wanted to engage her peers in conversation, sophomore Secelia Jia said she struggled to find common threads connecting her Chinese home to the lives of her American peers.

"I didn't know what to talk about with the girls in my dorm [during freshman orientation]," Jia said. "They would start a conversation and when I say I'm from China the conversation just stopped. They didn't relate themselves to a country far away, they don't know much about it or how to continue the conversation. That's the biggest problem I faced when I came here, because I didn't know too much about this country and its different regions and places."

Jia said she found Notre Dame's Catholic character an added challenge in a new place.

"I knew I was going to have a culture shock," Jia said. "I am an international student from China and I'm not Catholic, I don't have any religion. It was definitely frustrating at the beginning, but it got better as I learned more about [American] culture. I feel like I tried to learn more about the culture here, and that [while I] did that [my hall mates] learned about what I did as I grew up too."

Sharing her life with her hall mates and learning more

about their lives helped her to begin to settle in at Notre Dame, Jia said.

"I tried to watch more TV with them so I would know what their daily lives are like and what they did in their spare time, so we had more talking points and something to share," Jia said. "There are more Chinese Festivals that they don't have, and I will explain to them what a spring festival is and what we eat for that — I feel like it's a two-way experience."

Lobo said continually engaging in these conversations helps to bring the focus deeper than racial differences.

"When you keep a conversation going, it [shows] two levels of diversity," Lobo said. "One is the racial, ethnic level and then there is the deeper level of diversity where you're thinking at different capacities and that's when I think people could care less

"I know that if I talk to someone I can touch them personally, but I don't know if these people at the top levels can be effective at making changes unless they personally talk to students — changing it at the ground level first is the most important thing."

Amanda Peña
sophomore

about your ethnicity, your color, your race — it's about the thought process."

Finding a home

Peña said she also believes encouraging personal conversation between students will help to institute a change in racial attitudes at Notre Dame.

"I would tell my [freshman self] to stand up, to say something, because those things aren't okay," Peña said. "I know that if I talk to someone I can touch them personally, but I don't know if these people at the top levels can be effective at making changes unless they personally talk to students — changing it at the ground level first is the most important thing."

Empowering minority students from Day One to address discrimination will allow them to alleviate the pressure on themselves to educate their peers about their culture, Peña said.

"If we were told the first week of school that race is an issue here, that these are things students feel but we want you to know that you can talk to any person about these things even if it's not racial discrimination, even if it's just because someone looked at you a certain way and you wonder, 'Was it because I'm brown?,' even if it's not to get someone in trouble — say something."

If his Keenan Hall peers had spoken on his behalf in uncomfortable situations, Murphy said he would have felt more at home in this community.

"It would have completely changed the dynamics of the situation if someone had come to my defense or even just asked him if that was really how he felt," Murphy said.

As a minority student, Murphy and others face challenges at Notre Dame — from unknowing and unconscious prejudice to stereotyping. But he still said he is grateful to attend Notre Dame.

"I can paint this picture [of Notre Dame] very positively, and not be lying," Murphy said. "But I can also tell you it was a struggle and it's a struggle to go to Notre Dame and be a diverse student."

Contact Nicole Michels at nmichels@nd.edu

"It's almost like they practice their black jokes on me to see if they can say them in mixed company ... the conversation always becomes racialized when I walk in."

Demetrius Murphy
sophomore

be the thief."

Murphy said he responded by telling that student exactly why his accusation was groundless and why he found it offensive to be singled out.

"I also told him that another thing I don't like is that every time I'm around, the conversation has to be about black people," Murphy said. "It's almost like they practice their black jokes on me to see if they can say them in mixed company, like they save up all the weird questions [about black culture] they've ever wanted to ask in life for when I walk into the room — the conversation

INSIDE COLUMN

Jersey disaster



Jack Hefferon
Sports Writer

It's been a tough year to be a Notre Dame fan, let me tell you.

We've been complaining about our sports teams since nearly their inception, dating back to the days of Knute Rockne — who did way too much of that newfangled forward-passing business.

I don't even know why we hired that foreigner in the first place — I heard Jebediah Saban and Ezekiel Gruden were both available.

But this year, there just hasn't been much material to feast on. Our football team went 12-0. Hockey, women's basketball, men's lacrosse, men's soccer and fencing are all top-10 squads, and countless other awards, rankings and titles have rolled in.

It's disgusting.

As of last week, all we had left was Manti Te'o's 40-time and the egregious removal of flank steak night from the dining hall — which is another column for another day. Times were desperate.

But then, Adidas unveiled its new designs for Notre Dame basketball uniforms, and I know they were made with us in mind. They're so easy to hate that there's no way they were actually trying.

The tops are some kind of soft, radioactive pastel color that resembles mint green — which is really an insult to mints and green things everywhere. The shoulders have some kind of sparkly, fluorescent straps over them that can't quite decide if they're wrapping paper or aluminum foil.

And if there weren't enough green craziness going on, the jerseys are made of 60 percent recycled materials — which, I suppose, explains the wrapping paper/foil. I just feel bad for the Adidas intern who had to dive through a dumpster to get the materials.

The shorts, to their credit, find a way to be even worse. They combine the mint from the jersey top with various other shades of vomit-colored — and vomit-inducing — green to form some kind of zebra-print camouflage (in case the Big East Tournament is moved from Madison Square Garden to the Amazon.)

The socks and shoes carry out the same look, except they then seem like they were attacked by highlighter-wielding kindergarteners.

Sure, Digger Phelps did something similar with his teams in the seventies, but I believe even he wouldn't ever go for the "Shamrock Shakes" the teams will be wearing next week.

The letters are too small and too high. They might even come with sleeves, which is no way to gain respect on a basketball court. You can bet Ara Parseghian never would have let this happen.

Sorry, I've got more, but it's past my bedtime. So thanks, Adidas, a hater has gotta hate.

If you need me, I'll be back at NDNation.

Contact Jack Hefferon at wheffero@nd.edu

The views expressed in the Inside Column are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer.

Spirituality in the in-between

Bianca Almada

The In-Between Time

As most people involved with this Catholic university know, the Catholic Church is currently in the liturgical season of Lent. This fact is impossible to miss on this campus, as the combination of ashes displayed on student's foreheads Feb. 13, the dining halls' not serving meat on Fridays and the commonly-heard phrase, "I can't eat that, I gave it up for Lent," make it pretty obvious.

Like many Notre Dame students, I have been Catholic for my entire life. I was baptized at my local church as a baby, taken to Mass with my family every Sunday and enrolled in Catholic school since kindergarten. My parents taught me the Ten Commandments, read to me from a children's Bible and made sure I went to catechism. Therefore, this season of fasting, almsgiving and repentance is nothing new or unfamiliar. Growing up, I never questioned any of it. For a very long time, I just assumed everyone was Catholic and it was the only logical lifestyle choice. Religion was just something I always did. I didn't know of any other way.

Of course, this little bubble of ignorance did not stay intact forever. I was exposed to reality in high school — a reality in which people practice many different religions and in which

some people practice no religion at all. People asked me about my religion for the first time and I had to figure out how to answer them. After all, how meaningful can life be if you cannot even explain your own actions? You cannot go through life simply going through the motions because you become empty and purposeless.

I did not come out of this experience as a hard-core Bible-thumper. In fact, I discovered multiple Church positions with which I disagreed. Why are homosexuals denied marriage rights? Why are devoted, capable women prohibited from leadership roles as priests? Why are teachings regarding birth control so old-fashionably strict? However, I also discovered the things about the faith that I greatly appreciated. I came to truly value the existence of God, the importance of spirituality and the necessity of simple practices such as prayer and confession. I am still working to figure out the absolute best way to incorporate spirituality into my everyday life, and it is often difficult to do so.

Children often just accept at face value the beliefs of their parents and communities. College, however, is the time to look critically at those beliefs and then decide for oneself what one genuinely believes. It is the in-between time — a period of shifting from an outwardly structured lifestyle to an independently decided one. The beliefs and values of college students

should still be growing and changing. They should keep in mind their upbringings and previous influences, drawing on them and identifying their truths. However, they should also be open to new opinions, ideas and points of view. This is the time to explore spirituality and to discover what works on the individual level. There is so much more to it than teaching from parents, individual experiences and strict dogma. There is much to learn from people of different backgrounds and from new life experiences.

I admit to being far from the perfect Catholic. I go to Mass when I am not bogged down with homework, I do not agree with every Church position and I accidentally ate popcorn even though I gave it up for Lent. However, I also admit that this is my in-between time and that I am still trying to figure out what works for me.

The challenge for this Lent and for always is to keep an open mind when it comes to spirituality. It is realizing its importance in college life and remaining receptive to the many different ways it can find a place in our lives.

Bianca Almada is a freshman residing in Cavanaugh Hall. She is studying English, Spanish and journalism. She can be contacted at balmada@nd.edu

The views expressed in this column are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer.

EDITORIAL CARTOON



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"The wisest mind has something yet to learn."

George Santayana
Philosopher

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Nice to ‘meet’ you

Amanda Pena

The Bubble

It is human nature to make immediate judgments about the people you first meet. You draw from their exterior makeup to quickly decide what kind of person you are interacting with and whether your interaction should cease or continue. Are they smiling? “Yes, so they’re probably friendly.” Are they talkative? “Not really, so they might just be shy.” However, for minority students there can sometimes be a level of uncertainty and heightened awareness during these introductions. This is especially true at Notre Dame.

To clarify, I am not suggesting all minority students always have uncomfortable encounters; many have formed diverse friend groups and relationships in the Notre Dame community, including myself. But minus the brown sugar, my churro-colored skin tone (no Mexican pun intended), curves and thick black hair make it challenging to blend in among most of my peers. Surprisingly, though, that isn’t what makes me feel like a minority sometimes.

My upbringing in southeastern Los Angeles exposed me to a world of gangs, drugs and low-skilled, low-wage jobs. Yet here I am, a member of the Fighting Irish at the prestigious University of Notre Dame. Back home they’re cheering for me; they’re living vicariously through me and placing the pressures of paving the way for Latinos on me. But I don’t think there are many students here who know that about me, largely because few people have taken the time to get to know me and understand the challenges and pressures that have shaped my identity.

Two weekends ago at a party, I was approached by a male Caucasian student and asked, “Are you Asian?” Asian? I never heard that one before. He justified his question by pointing out how my eyeliner made my eyes appear “squinted.”

After telling him “no,” he said, “Well you must be Thai, right?” Again I told him “no.”

“Then what are you?” he inquired. I am numb to that question now — I am asked this often — so it wasn’t difficult to respond, “I’m Mexican.”

“Really,” he excitedly announced. “So what part of Mexico are you from? You speak Spanish, right?”

“No, I don’t, actually.”

He proceeded by saying, “Well, that’s weird. Are your parents immigrants? Or how did you get here?” I then explained to him my grandparents immigrated here and my parents were the first of their siblings to be born in the United States.

“Are they still illegal then?” he asked.

“No, they earned their citizenship shortly after immigrating.” I replied.

“Oh, cool. Well it was nice to meet you, Amanda” he replied before leaving to join a circle of other students.

Nice to meet me? How did he meet me? He knows nothing about me. He doesn’t know I wasn’t taught Spanish because my oldest sister’s learning disability prevented her from learning both English and Spanish. He didn’t know I don’t identify heavily with my Mexican heritage because my family is very Americanized. He never asked what my major was, what I like to do in my spare time or what dorm I live in. He made ethnic assumptions about me after I explained where the brown tint of my skin color came from, and sadly he isn’t the first person to have asked

me, my friends or other students questions like these. Frequent conversations with students of color have proven this.

For what it’s worth, I know this guy did not have any ill intentions about this conversation. Most people might not even think it was that big of a deal. In fact, I didn’t think it was at first until I had a chance to reflect on it. It’s just such an awkward and unexpected thing; you choose to just roll with the punches instead of assessing the ignorance of the situation. The aftermath of a conversation like this, though, can usually evoke a series of introspective questions and feelings of self-consciousness about why you can’t seem to make genuine connections with your peers. My first thought has never been, “Maybe it’s because I’m Mexican.” It’s usually, “Do I talk too much? Am I that boring? Maybe I should have gone with the heels.”

It’s really hard to understand why I can’t fit in with the rest of this “family” Notre Dame is glorified as being, but when people ask me for guacamole recipes or make jokes about why I pick up the litter someone else left behind, it’s easier to blame this discomfort on ignorance and cultural insensitivity. Most people here have seldom taken the time to learn more about me, so I tend to embrace the role as their token Mexican friend. I am hopeful, however, that the Notre Dame community will come to appreciate the individuality of each of its students — minority or not.

Amanda Pena is a sophomore sustainable development studies major with a poverty studies minor. She can be contacted at apena4@nd.edu

The views expressed in this column are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer.

Mr. Crummett’s cookies

Christopher Damian

Ideas of a University

Socrates was killed on charges of corrupting the youth. Dustin Crummett’s recent letter to the editor (“Appreciating philosophy,” Mar. 3) reminds us of the dangers of being a philosopher in the past. He suggests “things haven’t changed.” Perhaps not.

I’d like to charge him with corrupting my words. Mr. Crummett claims my idea of an introductory philosophy class is a kind of “souped-up Catechism” class. But I have little patience for those who would substitute the Catechism for philosophy or even theology. Philosophy is not the same thing as the teachings of the Catholic Church, though the two have a rather interesting

relationship. As I actually state, philosophy is concerned with the “meaning and ultimate foundation of human, personal and social existence.” This is one reason why non-Catholics are so important to the University. In our search for meaning, they keep us Catholics from taking for granted what we sometimes presume to be self-evident truths.

I do criticize many philosophy courses for being boring. Mr. Crummett suggests perhaps this is just the selection of subject matter, that people have “different tastes” in philosophy. People may have different tastes, but most students have little taste for the bland. I once made sugar cookies for some students and forgot the sugar. They decided they’d rather skip dessert.

Philosophy professors could try to teach students to do otherwise, but their students would

have to be paying attention in class. Socrates never had a problem with this. One might argue this was part of what made him a philosopher. It is said Plato’s Academy had a sign over the door. Perhaps we should get one of these for Malloy Hall. It read, “Let no one ignorant of sugar enter here.”

Further, Mr. Crummett fails to take note of one significant difference between his situation and that of Socrates. When Socrates died, his teachings were remembered. For many students, after they pass, what their professors had to say will be tossed out like sugarless sugar cookies.

Christopher Damian is a senior studying philosophy. He can be contacted at cdamian1@nd.edu

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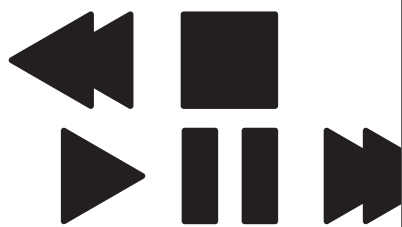
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SWEDISH HOUSE MAFIA PLAYLIST



As you head out to the beach for a sunny spring break, take this playlist with you from Swedish House Mafia's set at the United Center on Feb. 20, 2013. It'll be sure to get you pumped and ready for all your warm-weather partying.

01

"Greyhound"
Swedish House Mafia

02

"Ran Tam Tam"
Alex Guesta vs Stefano Pain

03

"Teasing Mr. Charlie/Nothing But Love/Lights"
Swedish House Mafia

04

"Wakanda"
Dimitri Vegas & Like Mike

05

"Harder, Better, Faster, Stronger/Leave The World Behind"
Swedish House Mafia

06

"Clash"
Alesso

07

"Antidote"
Knife Party

08

"Here We Go"
Swedish House Mafia

09

"Calling (Losing My Mind)"
Sebastian Ingrosso & Alesso

10

"Epic"
Sandro Silva & Quintino

11

"In My Mind (Axwell Remix)"
Ivan Gough & Feenixpawl

12

"In the Air (Axwell Remix)"
TV Rock ft. Rudy

THE OBSERVER

Listen to the playlist online at
ndsmcobserver.com/scene



By **EMILIE TERHAAR**
Scene Writer

Get to the Snite as soon as you can. March 10 will signal the closing of the museum's exhibit "Touching Ground: Finding the American South."

Attending high school in an upper-middle-class suburb of New York City has taught me that the hipster kind loves polaroids. This exhibit is literally a whole two rooms of gigantic, mournful, heartbreakingly honest polaroids. They are the size of posters — 20 x 24 inches — each artful, iconic and one of a kind.

Photographer Jennifer Trausch used one of Polaroid's five hand-built 1970s monster 240-pound cameras and spent five years trucking it around the rural south, snapping photos of Southern people doing Southern things. Some of the photos are still shots of a dilapidated home, hidden swamp, listless child, or sad old man; others are quite moving — swooshes of motion, ritual and habit. People are working at a diner, eating at a fair and watching wrestling matches. They're all incredibly stark, bare-bones shots.

The collection showed Southern life like a Carson McCullers' novel set in the modern day. Looking at "Virginia 2006" was when the

connection to McCullers really hit me. The photo is the closest to happiness the collection gets. It has a girl, caught in the midst of puberty, as a focal point amongst blurry surroundings. She stares into the camera and into the eyes of anyone viewing the photo. Her skinny body is held taut, as if only for a moment before she turns around or walks off. Her mouth is closed, but her lips are pressed up just the tiniest bit in the corners into a smirk, as if she's holding onto a smile and refusing it time or space on her face.

Virginia's unending gaze struck me down and I could not help but see McCullers' Mick from her first novel "The Heart is a Lonely Hunter." Re-examining Trausch's collection in the light of a McCullers' novel expressed in photographs opened my eyes to the temporal face of the South being displayed. It was clear Trausch was avoiding showing some more modern additions to Southern culture and was instead trying to highlight the still existent, but perhaps slowly dying, blue-collar culture. She has photographs from dances, fairs, auctions, bars, diners and junk shops but avoids other perhaps equally intrinsically Southern images that might involve fast food, or NASCAR or Walmart.

Trausch's portraits are mainly of children, teens or the elderly. In "Jose Brothers 2009," Trausch reflects a changing South in what I interpreted as an attempt to capture migrant workers.

Other images are slightly terrifying. The little bits of terror that sneak in and subside into melancholy fit with a reading of Trausch's McCullers-esque style. In "Bailey's" and "Maxine" we get hints of deviance. "Maxine" almost seemed to not belong in the collection; it's an image of a woman's lap with a gun resting in her hand on top of her naked, brown thigh. The picture looked right out of a Coen brothers' movie.

"Bailey's" was terrifying in a different way. It was one of the few nighttime pictures and seemed to show a gangster, but the only sign he was a gangster was the ill-fitting flash of the car he was driving and the beyond-ominous glint in his eye.

I've only mentioned a few of the 40-something photos in the exhibit. It is definitely worth a visit, even if you are not into photography, Carson McCullers or the South. If you have 10 minutes to wait around in O'Shag, stop in and take a look. The pictures will stay with you. But be quick, the exhibit ends Sunday!

Contact Emilie Terhaar at
eterhaar@nd.edu



BREAKING SPRING BREAK



By **WILLIAM NEAL**
Scene Writer

I don't know about you, but I have been waiting years for a quality spring-break movie adventure. I've also been waiting for a select few Disney Channel stars to finally take on a role to prove themselves as legitimate actors. But more importantly, I've been waiting for James Franco to take on an acting gig that would turn him into a wannabe, low-life gangster/rapper (silver grill and cornrows included, of course). After witnessing the international red-band trailer for "Spring Breakers," I immediately realized my prayers were answered. So, what is "Spring Breakers" and why should you care? To put it simply, it will clearly be the greatest spring-break-themed movie of all time (a tough competition).

From the start of the trailer, we find four quality-named girls, Candy (Vanessa Hudgens), Faith (Selena Gomez), Cotty (Rachel Korine) and Brit (Ashley Benson), who are tired of their "boring" college lives and want nothing more than the ultimate spring-break adventure. That's a storyline we can all relate to, right? Well, sadly, these girls don't have the money to go down to Florida, so they resort

to the only logical next step: They commit a series of convenience store robberies to pay for their trip. The plan goes off without a hitch, of course, and now the girls are ready for the time of their lives down in Miami. Here, the four girls spend the remainder of the trailer (and probably the film) in their neon bikinis and proceed to party like there's no tomorrow. We soon meet a rapper named Alien (James Franco) who announces to the massive crowds of drunken teens how "spring break can change you" and, my personal favorite line of his, "bikinis and big booties, y'all, that's what life is all about," a truly inspiring moral for the film from Mr. Alien. After this wild montage of smoking, swimming and jumping in slow motion to dubstep, the girls get themselves into trouble as we cut to the four girls arrested and then in front of a judge (still in bikinis).

Well, that's it for their spring-break adventure, right? Wrong. For some reason, Alien has taken a liking to these girls and bails them out of jail. You would think a creepy guy, who the girls have never been introduced to, with terrible cornrows, a Hawaiian shirt and a gun would scare them off. But James Franco comforts them by saying, "Come on, y'all, don't be 'spicious." Clearly, the

girls thought, "Well, I'm sold on this guy!" after that well-structured statement because they proceed to join his crew and take their spring-break adventure to the next level. James Franco clearly makes an impact on the girls when he says "I knew y'all was special from the first time I seen you. Now let's make some trouble now," because the second half of the trailer focuses on all five of them getting involved with drugs, theft, guns and more slow-motion dancing to dubstep. (Also, someone keeps whispering "spring break" repeatedly through the trailer.)

I couldn't tell what was happening towards the end, but clearly, these girls turn into legitimate criminals who enjoy frequenting black-light clubs and traveling by speedboat. Sounds like the typical lineup of traditional spring-break activities. So let's run through the many amazing aspects of this upcoming film: We have former Disney Channel stars shooting guns in bikinis, James Franco in the role he was born to play and, most importantly, it's scored by Skrillex. What more could a sane person ask for? "Spring Breakers" opens everywhere March 2. Spring break forever, y'all.

Contact William Neal at wneal@nd.edu

21 AND OVERDONE

By **WILLIAM NEAL**
Scene Writer

Coming from the directorial debut of duo Jon Lucas and Scott Moore, the writers behind "The Hangover" (Parts I and II) and "The Change-Up," "21 and Over" delivers exactly what many of you were expecting: a college version of "The Hangover." But this is not necessarily a negative. What I found from this film was a story that, while certainly familiar and overdone, delivers solid moments of character development among a frequent string of laughs. While this "wild night" movie doesn't come close to topping some others in the category, like "Superbad," it certainly succeeds over the likes of "Project X."

When I say this film is the college version of "The Hangover," that is by no means an exaggeration. Both films begin with the main characters in a moment of crisis followed by a flashback story to explain how they ended up in this predicament (whether it's our leading characters stuck in the Nevada desert or strolling a college campus wearing nothing but socks). This leads to the main story involving a guy with a major life decision in his near future (whether it's Doug getting married or Jeff Chang being interviewed for medical school). Despite their responsibilities, both characters will be convinced to join their friends for one wild evening (whether it's for a bachelor party or a 21st birthday). Soon, the night takes a drastic turn and

leads to a series of progressively shocking and unrealistic events that put our main characters in danger. Yeah, it's the same formula, but you can't accuse writers of ripping off their own work, especially when it's not a bad movie.

Look at Judd Apatow. Have you noticed all his films revolve around adults that need to grow up and accept their responsibilities ("Knocked Up," "40-Year-Old Virgin," "Funny People," "This is 40")? When a writer finds a concept that works, they're going to find ways to continue to roll with it, and that's not always a bad thing. "21 and Over" may be familiar and barely qualify as a realistic look into college life, but audiences will attend this film for the laughs and not for a quality story. While the movie consistently delivers shock value for the sake of shock value and features every expected cliché from ludicrous inebriation levels, foul language, car chases and gunplay, this film will make you laugh.

The main cast of characters, including Casey (Skylar Astin from "Pitch Perfect"), Miller (Miles Teller from "Footloose") and Jeff Chang (Justin Chon from "Twilight"), are as obnoxious and ridiculous as you'd expect from a modern-day college comedy, but they deliver successfully-comedic performances and play well off one another. Their fast-paced banter results in some of the funniest moments of the film. While you get what you expect from a binge comedy like "21 and Over," what's surprising are the moments when the characters

reflect on their lives and how they've changed since the good ol' days of high school, leading to some moments of vulnerability and growth. The issues with this film don't come from the wild, unrealistic antics (releasing a wild buffalo, repeatedly throwing Jeff Chang off buildings), but from the forced romance arc. It becomes painfully obvious that Lucas and Moore don't know how to write dialogue for women, not to mention that the romantic interest Nicole (Sarah Wright) delivers a stale and annoying performance that results in a pairing we just don't care about.

"21 and Over" isn't a fantastic film and won't be for everyone, but it delivers in what it's supposed to do: make you laugh. This is a film that doesn't take itself seriously. If you're a fan of the "wild night" genre, I'm sure you'll find the ride enjoyable.

Contact William Neal at wneal@nd.edu

"21 and Over"

Directed by Jon Lucas and Scott Moore

If you like: Superbad, The Hangover



SPORTS AUTHORITY

Peyton shines on and off the field



Brian Hartnett
Sports Writer

Editor's note: This is the 10th in a 12-part series discussing the defining sportsman (or woman) of this century. In this installment, Brian Hartnett argues for Peyton Manning. Join the discussion on Twitter by using #DefiningSportsman.

He was born into football royalty, the son of a prominent quarterback. He grew up tossing the pigskin in the backyard with his younger brother, now a two-time Super Bowl-winning quarterback.

But it's what Peyton Manning has done on his own accord that truly sets him apart from the all-time great quarterbacks and best players to ever suit up in the NFL.

From the beginning, Manning seemed destined to be a quarterback. He grew up in New Orleans under the watchful eye of his father Archie, a former star for Ole Miss and the Saints. Although he rebelled against his pop by choosing to attend Tennessee, he had a stellar college career and followed it up by being selected first in the 1998 NFL draft by the Indianapolis Colts.

Few teams have ever made a better pick. In just a few years, Manning transformed the Colts, a team best known for sneaking away from Baltimore, into one of the NFL's powerhouses.

He did it through his explosive arm and his precise command of the team's no-huddle offense. He did it by forming a strong rapport with receivers like Marvin Harrison and Reggie Wayne, who he helped make into household names. He did it by being an ironman and starting his first 227 career games, which puts him behind only Brett Favre's incredible streak of 321 consecutive starts.

While helping transform the Colts, Manning put up stats most NFL quarterbacks could only dream of. He's thrown for more than 4,000 yards in all but two of his 14 seasons, never thrown fewer than 26 touchdowns in a season, passed for a then-record 49 touchdown passes in 2004 and has a career completion percentage of 65.2 percent. He has plenty of hardware to show for these efforts — he's won four MVPs, more than any other player in NFL history.

Yes, critics will gripe about Manning's lack of other hardware, most notably multiple Super Bowl rings. Despite playing for several excellent Indianapolis teams, he's only won one Super Bowl and has struggled in several important

playoff games over the years.

But people tend to forget that without Manning, the Colts would probably be about as relevant as, say, the Jaguars. In 2006, he won the Super Bowl despite playing on a team that allowed 5.33 rushing yards per attempt, the seventh-worst figure in NFL history.

For further evidence, look at how drastically Indy's fortunes turned when Manning sat out the 2011 season with a severe neck injury. The Colts went from a 10-6 playoff squad the year before to a 2-14 team that finished with the worst record in the league.

Although Manning departed Indianapolis after that season, he moved out to Denver and helped lift the Broncos to the top spot in the AFC, silencing any doubts about his potentially career-threatening neck injury with a campaign that earned him the title of Comeback Player of the Year. Even at the age of 36, Manning still has enough infectious enthusiasm and energy to convince everyone he is nowhere close to finished.

But, as good as Manning is on the field, it is his actions off the field that help earn him the title of a true "sportsman."

He has set the bar for other athletes in terms of marketing and promotion. Manning is one of the few athletes who could just as easily find a home on the big screen and actually seems to enjoy being a pitchman — he's been in some memorable spots for DirecTV, MasterCard and Buick, among others.

Equally important, he's also managed to remain scandal-free in an era during which nearly all the top athletes seem to make the tabloid pages as often as the sports pages. Married to his college sweetheart since the early days of his career, he's gained notice for his classy gestures. Manning supported his younger brother Eli as the Giants won two Super Bowls and he congratulated Ray Lewis after the Ravens topped the Broncos in last season's NFL playoffs.

Whether you support him or not, it's hard not to admire how Manning goes about his business and achieves success while still remaining down-to-earth. With his combination of immense skill and endearing personality, he's exemplified the best sports has to offer. For that, he is worthy of the title "defining sportsman."

Contact Brian Hartnett at bhartnet@nd.edu

The views expressed in this Sports Authority are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer.

ND SOFTBALL

By LAURA COLETTI
Sports Writer

The Irish carry an eight-game win streak into spring break as they prepare to travel to Arizona and California.

Notre Dame (12-5) will first head to Tempe, Ariz. for the Arizona State Diamond Devil Invitational beginning Saturday. The squad will face UC Davis, New Mexico State and No. 3 Arizona State.

The Irish will then travel to Fullerton, Calif., for the Judi Garman Classic where they will face Cal State Fullerton and No. 16 Arizona on March 13 and 14, respectively. The team will conclude the break at the UC Riverside Tournament in Riverside, Calif., on March 15 and 16 when they will take on Northern Illinois and Iona.

Senior catcher and captain Amy Buntin said Notre Dame hopes its streak will continue during the break.

"Going undefeated last weekend was huge for our momentum rolling into spring break," she said. "We will be playing some good competition [over the break]."

Since the team has been solid lately, Buntin said the Irish have not been concentrating on anything too specific at practice but rather are aiming to maintain their consistently high level of play.

"We're just focusing on the



SARAH O'CONNOR | The Observer

Irish sophomore infielder Jenna Simon swings at a pitch during Notre Dame's 9-3 victory over St. John's on May 11, 2012.

fundamentals and getting a little better each practice," she said.

Timely hitting has been important for the Irish and helped garner sophomore outfielder Emilee Koerner her second-straight Big East honor of the season. After being named to the Big East Honor Roll last week, Koerner earned Big East Player of the Week for her performance at last weekend's Diamond 9 Citrus Classic in Kissimmee, Fla.

Koerner batted .500 over the weekend, going 6-for-12 during four Irish victories. She kicked off the weekend by going 3-for-3 with a double, triple and grand slam in Notre Dame's 14-3 win over Boston College on March 2.

"Last weekend we hit especially

well," Buntin said. "One through nine in the lineup did their job at the plate."

Although the Irish have enjoyed recent success, Buntin said the squad has stayed level-headed and concentrated on keeping their play consistent.

"Our mentality for this week hasn't changed," she said. "We are taking one game at a time this week and focusing on one opponent at a time. If we stay focused on playing Notre Dame softball, the rest will take care of itself."

The Irish will open their West Coast trip against UC Davis on Saturday at 9 a.m. in Tempe, Ariz.

Contact Laura Coletti at lcoletti@nd.edu

TRACK AND FIELD

Irish head to championships

By COLE SCHIETINGER
Sports Writer

To wrap up an outstanding year, Notre Dame will head to Fayetteville, Ark. this weekend for the NCAA Indoor Track and Field championships. After three-peats by the Florida men's team and the Oregon women's team, Notre Dame will try to break out as an underdog and get their first indoor track and field championship.

Over the past month, the Notre Dame women's team has been great, winning the Big East championships and even setting three school records in the 60-meter hurdles, mile, and 4x400-meter relay at last weekend's Alex Wilson Invitational. After these two strong showings, the Irish girls have cracked the top 25, coming in at 17 this week.

Not to be outdone, the Irish men have also had strong showings, as they finished second in the Big East championships. Sophomore Chris Geisting had an especially strong meet at the Notre Dame-hosted Alex Wilson Invitational, as he set a school record of his own in the men's 400-meter.

In Fayetteville, Giesting will be one of several Irish stars competing. Junior Parick Feeny will be competing alongside Giesting. Like Giesting, Feeny will face off in a field of 16 for the men's 400-meter championship.

Only Florida and Pittsburgh have two runners in this event, with each of their slower runners turning in slower times than both Giesting and Feeny, who have run the event in 46.05 and 46.12 seconds, or sixth and ninth in the field, respectively.

For the women, senior Rebecca Tracy will look to build on her school record of 4:33.53 in the mile, which ranks sixth nationally. Sophomore Jade Barber also won her event last week, finishing the 60-meter hurdles in only 8.13 seconds, for another school record.

In addition to those runners, women's teams for the 4x400-meter relay and the women distance medley will run. In the distance medley, look out for sisters, junior Alexa and freshman Danielle Aragon, who are part of a fifth-ranked team for the event.

The NCAA Indoor Track and Field championships will take place this Friday and Saturday, March 8 and 9, in Fayetteville, Ark.

Contact Cole Schietinger at cschieti@nd.edu

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ND WOMEN'S TENNIS

Irish travel south for matches

By **VICKY JACOBSEN**
Sports Writer

The No. 15 Irish are heading south for spring break, to take on No. 9 Georgia, UAB and Georgia Tech during their trip to warmer climates.

"We're using it for the opportunity to get outdoors, to be able to do practice and start the transition from in to out," Irish coach Jay Louderback said. "Hopefully the weather will be fine and we get eight days of playing and practicing outside."

Notre Dame's road trip begins Saturday morning, giving the Irish three days of practice on outdoor courts before facing Georgia (7-1) on Tuesday.

"They're always a very tough team, and it's good for us to go down there because the NAAs are at Georgia a lot," Louderback said. "A year from this spring they're back at Georgia, so it's always good for us to go down there and play as often as we can."

The Bulldogs' only loss so far this season has come at the hands of No. 3 UCLA in the ITA National Indoor championship semifinals last month. They will host both Ole Miss and Mississippi State before the Irish come to call.

Notre Dame will play UAB

(8-3) in Birmingham, Ala., two days later. Louderback said the Blazers are still something of a mystery to the Irish as this will be the teams' first meeting. UAB opened the season with four-straight wins and have now won two in a row. They will visit Tulane and Louisiana-Monroe before returning home to play Notre Dame on March 14.

The Irish finish their south-

"We're using it for the opportunity to get outdoors, to be able to do practice and start the transition from in to out."

Jay Louderback
Irish coach

ern swing at Georgia Tech (5-4) on March 16. Notre Dame has already beaten the Yellow Jackets once this season, winning 4-3 at the ITA Kick-Off Weekend tournament in Lincoln, Neb., in January.

"I'm sure it'll be another tight one there; they've had a good year since we played them, so we're looking forward to seeing us play them again," Louderback said. "When we go into the ACC we'll be playing them every

year, so it'll be a match that will end up a rivalry."

Georgia Tech has gone 4-3 since losing to the Irish, and they haven't dropped a match point in its last two matches against North Texas and Miami (Ohio), winning both 4-0.

The Irish, who have not played since losing to Duke 5-2 at home Sunday, will have a nine-day break from competition before they play the Bulldogs. Louderback said it couldn't come at a better time.

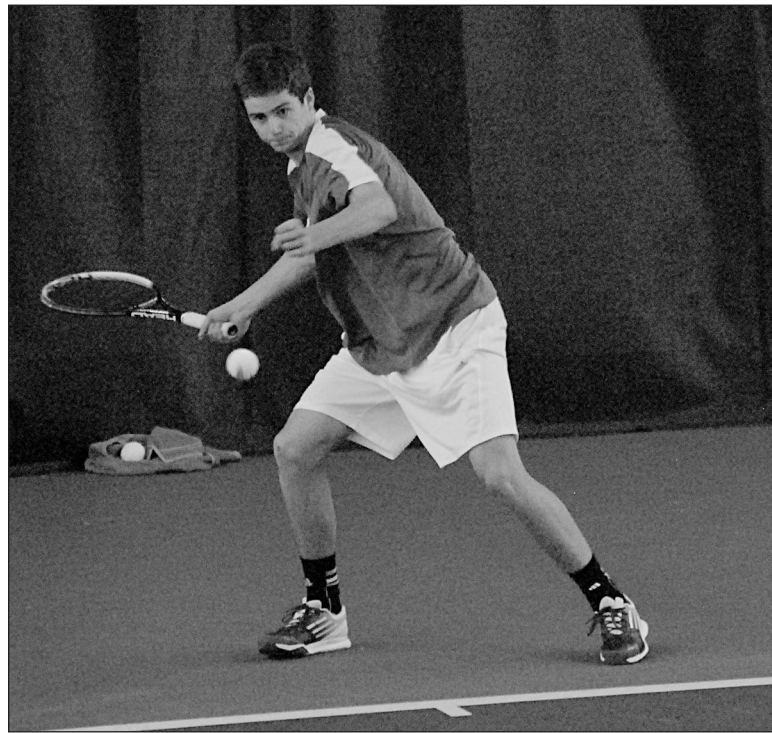
"We've played a lot. As of Sunday we'd played three matches in four days. We really hadn't had a break," Louderback said. "We've got some kids who are banged up a little, and it gives them the chance to rest."

The Irish begin spring break action against the Bulldogs on the outdoor courts at the Dan Magill Tennis Complex in Athens, Ga., at 1 p.m. on Tuesday. They'll be in action again against the Blazers at the UAB Tennis Courts at 2 p.m. on Thursday. Notre Dame finishes its road trip with a noon tilt against the Yellow Jackets at Byers Tennis Complex in Atlanta, Ga., on March 16.

Contact Vicky Jacobsen at vjacobse@nd.edu

MEN'S TENNIS

ND prepares for outdoor play



JULIE HERDER | The Observer

Irish freshman Quentin Monaghan prepares to hit a forehand during Notre Dame's 4-3 victory over Michigan on Feb. 16.

By **PETER STEINER**
Sports Writer

Fresh off a 4-1 home victory over No. 13 Illinois, the Irish will head to Alabama for spring break to practice outdoors and play in the Blue Gray National Tennis Classic starting March 15.

Notre Dame (8-5) has won three of its last four matches, including wins over familiar rivals in then-No. 21 Michigan and Illinois. Although the team will face unfamiliar opponents in the Blue Gray National Tennis Classic, the Irish have extensive experience at the event taking place in Montgomery, Ala.

"It's one of the really special events in college tennis and this is our 21st appearance in 22 years in that event," Irish coach Bobby Bayliss said. "We are excited about being down there."

"We don't know a lot of the other teams. We haven't seen them and there isn't anybody from the Midwest and so we just want to play well."

The Irish will fly to Birmingham, Ala., on Friday and make their way to Tuscaloosa, Ala., to practice for five days on outdoor courts. The team will then compete in the eight-team bracket tournament Friday, March 15 through Sunday, March 17.

Notre Dame has played every one of its spring season matches indoors so playing outdoors will be a welcome change, Bayliss said.

"Any spring sport participant or coach is excited for the warm weather that a spring break trip brings and we're no exception," Bayliss said. "I know our guys will be looking forward to getting outside and playing in warm weather and seeing what the rest of the tennis world

experiences everyday."

But while the team is looking forward to the nice weather and opportunity to compete outdoors, it will also need to adapt to the different playing conditions, Bayliss said.

"[Playing outdoors] is a tremendous adjustment, much more than you would think," Bayliss said. "One of the things that you have to adjust to is sound. ... A player doesn't realize how much he depends on his sense of sound to know how hard the ball is hit and where it's going."

"The second factor would be wind. Even if it's not very windy, indoors the ball is pretty much always going to land where you think it will. Outdoors, you're dealing with different conditions, wind being the most stringent one."

The Irish have won the event several times, with their most recent championship coming in 2007. However, Bayliss said the team is keeping its focus on improving everyday instead of on focusing on taking home the championship.

"The expectation would be to continue to win and build our résumé," Bayliss said. "The goal from here forward is to continue to improve individually and collectively. Each of our players has some things they need to do to become better and our team needs to do a few things as well. I think continuing to improve our doubles is one of the goals and learning to serve out and finish matches would be another."

The Irish will begin competition Friday, March 15 when the Blue Gray National Tennis Classic begins in Montgomery, Ala.

Contact Peter Steiner at psteiner@nd.edu

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MEN'S LACROSSE

Team prepares for two more top-15 opponents

By **MIKE MONACO**
Sports Writer

At first glance, it would seem to be another non-conference challenge, another ranked opponent for Notre Dame. But looks can be deceiving.

The No. 2 Irish (3-0) have played three top-10 teams heading into Saturday's clash with No. 15 Hofstra at Arlotta Stadium. Notre Dame defeated then-No. 4 Duke 13-5 to begin the season before downing then-No. 8 Penn State 10-9 in overtime and then-No. 9 North Carolina on Saturday in triple overtime. But the Irish have yet to face an opponent like the Pride (3-1).

"We've got a lot of respect for [Hofstra]," Irish coach Kevin Corrigan said. "They've got a really good team. But they're a lot different than what we've been playing against. Unlike the three teams we just played, they'll try to hold the ball on us a little bit and slow the game down and really control the tempo and make it a limited-possession game."

In three fast-paced games, the Irish and their opponents have averaged nearly 19 goals combined per contest. The Pride, meanwhile, have combined for just 16.5 goals per game against Sacred Heart, Princeton, Fairfield and Harvard thus far.

Corrigan said his team will have to strike a balance between cherishing each possession and not getting too defensive.

"That's a different kind of game," Corrigan said. "It puts different kinds of pressure on you. You value your possessions without getting caught up in playing too slow. But you've got to be careful to not end up playing too much defense over the course of the day, too. It's a little bit of a different challenge."

A stretch of three games — two of which were away and two of which went into overtime — coupled with midterms week will present another challenge for Notre Dame heading into Saturday, Corrigan said.

"Certainly, coming out of the last few weeks, midterms [week] is always a hard time for our guys," Corrigan said. "You have to pay real attention to how much energy your guys have and what your schedule is and everything."

But another balancing act awaits Corrigan and the Irish on the other side of Saturday's matchup with Hofstra. Notre Dame will remain on campus for much of spring break before traveling to Colorado to face off with yet another top-ranked opponent, No. 7 Denver. Corrigan will again juggle resting and

recovering with avoiding lethargy against the Pioneers.

"[During spring break] they have too much time on their hands," Corrigan said. "You've got to be careful they don't get lethargic from just kind of sitting around waiting for practice every day. Finding that right balance is always something you've got to pay attention to."

The Irish will leave South Bend on March 15, the day before the game, in order to avoid an awkward acclimation to the increased altitude at the Sports Authority Field at Mile High in Denver.

"It's definitely something they notice," Corrigan said of the altitude. "But you kind of get used to what it is. But, again, that's one of the reasons we're going out late. With the altitude, you either want to get out there eight days ahead of time or you want to go out right before the game. So we're going to go right before the game."

"But the first couple of times you get tired, you feel like, 'Oh my gosh I can't breathe, I can't catch my breath.' It's just something you have to adjust to, that feeling. Once you kind of get past that feeling that you're not going to catch your breath and realize that you are, then it's not as big of a challenge as they'd make it out to be."



GRANT TOBIN | The Observer

Irish freshman attack Matt Kavanagh looks to pass during Notre Dame's 3-2 triple-overtime victory over North Carolina on Saturday.

What will be challenging, Corrigan said, is taking on a high-powered squad like Denver that is averaging 14 goals per game.

"They can score goals in bunches," Corrigan said. "You really kind of have to be careful with them that you don't give up any big runs, that you kind of make them earn every goal. If you let your guard down for a second, they'll run numbers up on you. Offensively, they may be as challenging a team as we

play."

The marquee matchups continue as the Irish face Hofstra on Saturday at noon in Arlotta Stadium. Notre Dame is back in action March 16 against the Pioneers at Sports Authority Field at Mile High in Denver at 6:30 p.m. ET.

Sports writer Matthew Robison contributed to this story.

Contact Mike Monaco at jmonaco@nd.edu

BASEBALL

Notre Dame heads west for Dodgertown Classic



GRANT TOBIN | The Observer

Irish senior outfielder Charlie Markson connects with a pitch during Notre Dame's 3-1 loss to St. John's on April 29, 2012.

By **JOHN SANDBERG**
Sports Writer

No. 22 Notre Dame travels to the West Coast this weekend looking to improve on their 8-2 record and climb higher in the rankings as they compete in the Dodgertown Classic in Los Angeles.

The Irish will face their toughest tests to date over the weekend, starting with Friday's

opening game against No. 12 UCLA. Notre Dame will take on USC on Saturday before closing out the tournament Sunday against No. 17 Oklahoma. The Dodgertown Classic, which has previously been held at Dodger Stadium, will alternate between UCLA's Jackie Robinson Stadium and USC's Dedeaux Field due to Dodger Stadium's ongoing off-season renovations.

Irish senior outfielder Charlie

Markson said this weekend's competition brings Notre Dame a welcome challenge.

"We've experienced some success early and now we're going in and facing some good teams," Markson said. "This will be a real test to see where we stand."

Sophomore outfielder Ryan Bull agreed the Irish will look to build upon their early season success.

"I think we're playing very good baseball, we just need to stay clean defensively," Bull said. "Our pitching is outstanding right now. We just need to keep having some good at bats and I think we'll have a very good showing out in California."

Notre Dame has swung the bat well as a team and no one has been more consistent than Bull, who leads the team with a .395 batting average through the first 10 games.

Friday's game pits the Irish offense against UCLA's experienced pitching staff, which is one of the deepest and most talented in the nation. "We've seen some good arms with Virginia Tech and Tennessee," Bull said. "We know that we're going to go up there and see some good competition ... but I think we have to just go up there and

keep battling. I'm sure we'll find success as long as we play our game."

On Saturday, Notre Dame will see a young USC lineup that has struggled at times to put runs on the board during the early part of this season. Many of those games came against strong opponents, though. While the Trojans (6-5) may lack some of the star power of UCLA (9-2), the Irish won't be taking them lightly.

"Especially after last weekend, losing to a team we think we should have beat, we're going into [this weekend] with the mentality that we think we're capable of beating anybody, but also anybody is capable of beating us," Markson said. "We're not taking anything for granted, but we're also going in with the confidence that we think we can beat anybody."

In Sunday's finale, the Irish will see a well-rounded Oklahoma team that is third in the Big 12 with a team batting average of .299 and fifth in team ERA at 3.46. Over spring break, the Irish will continue their swing through California by traveling up the coast for a Tuesday afternoon matchup against UC Santa Barbara on

Tuesday followed by a three-game series at Cal Poly starting Thursday. The California trip will be the longest road trip for the Irish this regular season.

"Obviously, it will be tiring, but everybody else has to play basically the same amount of games we do [because] it's their spring break trip," Bull said. "It can be a grind at times, but if we keep our nose to the grindstone and keep on going we'll be fine."

Markson said the eight-day California swing will be a time for the Irish to count on the veterans who have been through long road trips before.

"For the older guys, we've done these seven- and eight-day trips last spring break in San Antonio and Louisiana," Markson said. "It is definitely a mental challenge, but aside from the freshmen, everybody has been through it before. That's the job of the upperclassmen is to help the freshmen and sophomores and make it a little easier for them because we've done it before."

The action kicks off Friday at 9 p.m. ESPT between the Irish and Bruins at Jackie Robinson Stadium in Los Angeles.

Contact John Sandberg at jsandbe1@nd.edu

WOMEN'S ROWING

Irish travel for their first race

By **BRENDAN BELL**
Sports Writer

The women's rowing team will compete in its first race of the spring season over break, as the Irish will travel to Oak Ridge, Tenn. for the Oak Ridge/Cardinal Invitational on March 16 and 17.

Sophomore Stella Willoughby said the team's springbreak trip to Tennessee will provide an opportunity for the team to improve early in the season. "Spring break is our big week to race against each other," Willoughby said. "There are formal races, but in a more informal setting and so it has a more relaxed feel."

Notre Dame will send between 35 and 40 women out of the team's approximately 80 rowers.

"The selection for the race was pretty rigorous and it is pretty exciting for all the girls racing," Willoughby said. "We will be training about three times per day

and it is usually a good time to bond and grow closer and synchronize in the boat."

Willoughby said the team is highly motivated this season and geared to perform well this weekend.

"We were ranked as 19th in the country preseason, and we finished 15th last year, and so it is motivation for us," Willoughby said. "That is our ultimate goal to win Big Easts and get to the NCAA tournament."

Part of this determination has shown itself in the workouts the Irish rowers have completed over the past few months.

"Training has been awesome, it has been really tough and according to the upper classmen it has been one of the hardest seasons," Willoughby said. "That being said, it has remained as such a big team with around 80 girls and that means walk-ons are not quitting and are really enjoying it."

According to Willoughby, the training will not only

benefit the Irish during their trip to Tennessee but also throughout the season.

"We have had a big cardio buildup and that will be beneficial as the season goes on and we know that we have the training needed at the end of the season during the conference and national season," she said.

Willoughby said the invitational will provide the Irish an opportunity to measure themselves against other schools. "These races give us an opportunity to size up the other teams and see how the other teams are looking early on," Willoughby said.

On March 16, Notre Dame will have its first race against Duke and Kansas followed by a race against Virginia and Georgetown. Virginia was ranked No. 1 in the preseason and also won the national championship last year. On March 17, the Irish will race Louisville and Miami.

Contact Brendan Bell at bbell2@nd.edu

FENCING

Notre Dame hosts regionals



WEI LIN | The Observer

Irish sophomore epee Ashley Severson lunges for her opponent during the Midwest Conference championships on Saturday.

By **A.J. GODEAUX**
Sports Writer

Coming off a dominating performance last week to capture the Midwest Fencing Conference title, the Irish now look to carry that momentum into the NCAA Midwest Regional meet this weekend held at Notre Dame.

The two-day event has the Irish going up against many familiar foes for coveted spots in the NCAA championships, held in San Antonio on March 21-24. With only five spots up for grabs in foil and epee and four in sabre, it could

make for a very competitive meet, especially with fellow top-10 teams Ohio State and Northwestern involved.

Despite the strong competition, the Irish have to be confident after their performance last weekend in the Midwest Fencing Conference championship, riding four gold medal wins and appearances in all six weapon finals to capture the team's third conference title in four years.

The women's foil squad was particularly impressive for the Irish, as the Lady Irish shutout their first two opponents. The two points

given up in their victory over Wayne State were the sole blemishes on an impeccable meet, as they went on to shut out Ohio State to win gold.

Not to be outdone, the men's squad defeated the top seeded Buckeyes to win a gold of its own, with the men's sabre squad and women's epee capturing the other two golds for the Irish.

It's strong performances like these which have sophomore foilist Madison Zeiss optimistic for this weekend's meet.

"This meet is much more individual. ... You're going up against members of your own team just as much as fencers from other teams," Zeiss said. "But [the conference tournament] definitely gave everyone on the team a big confidence boost."

The Irish have a track record of sending twelve fencers to the NCAA championship – the maximum number possible – and Zeiss doesn't see any reason why this year would be different, pointing out that as the top-ranked team in the region, even if someone has a bad meet the squad is likely to pick up one of wildcard spot.

The meet kicks off Saturday and continues Sunday at the Castellan Family Fencing Center in the Joyce Center.

Contact A.J. Godeaux at agodeaux@nd.edu

ND WOMEN'S SWIMMING AND DIVING

Event marks last chance to qualify



GRANT TOBIN | The Observer

Irish senior diver Jenny Chiang dives during the Shamrock Invite on Jan. 25 at the Rolfs Aquatic Center. The Irish won the event.

By **MATT UNGER**
Sports Writer

Following a second-place finish in the Big East championships, the Irish will focus its attention on qualifying for the NCAA championships. They return to action from March 14-16 when they compete in the NCAA Zone Diving Qualifier in West Lafayette, Ind.

Five Irish divers, including senior Jenny Chiang and sophomore Allison Casareto, will compete against other divers from the Midwest region for one of eight spots in the NCAA Diving championships. They will represent the Irish in the 1-meter, 3-meter and platform diving events.

"There's not as much turnaround time as usual between the Big East championships and this meet," Chiang said. "So we need to focus on keeping momentum from the Big East going and not looking at that event as the end of our season."

Chiang looks to qualify for the second year in a row for the NCAA championships. Last season, she finished 17th at the pinnacle event of the season and narrowly missed earning All-American honors by one place.

Chiang and Casareto both performed well at the Big East championships in Indianapolis last weekend as they claimed titles in the 3-meter and 1-meter dives, respectively.

Chiang became the first diver in Big East history to win championships in the same event four years in a row. But

her fourth title in the 3-meter dive did not lack drama as she earned 329.85 points to beat the second-place competitor by just 0.85 points. Casareto finished third in the 3-meter dive.

The two divers swapped places in the 1-meter event as Casareto captured her first career Big East championship with a score of 311.30. Meanwhile, Chiang placed third with 297.60 points.

"[Casareto] is one of the best

"There's not as much turnaround time as usual between the Big East championships and this meet"

Jenny Chiang
senior diver

competitors I've ever seen," Chiang said. "She performs at her peak at a meet and does something you've never seen her do, and she's got great things in her future as a sophomore."

In the platform dive at the Big East championships, freshman Lindsey Streepey placed highest amongst Irish divers with a third-place finish, and she will join her teammates this weekend at QNCAA qualifying meet.

The Irish divers will travel to West Lafayette, Ind., to compete in the NCAA Zone Diving Qualifier on March 14-16

Contact Matt Unger at munger@nd.edu

WOMEN'S LACROSSE

Irish take focus into spring break



JULIE HERDER | The Observer

Irish junior attack Kaitlyn Brosco looks to pass during Notre Dame's 13-8 victory over Ohio State on Feb. 27.

By CORY BERNARD
Sports Writer

No. 10/6 Notre Dame will look to continue its momentum over spring break after routing Detroit 22-1 on Tuesday. The Irish (4-0) host Boston on Saturday before traveling to Nashville, Tenn., to face Vanderbilt on March 13.

Against the Titans at the Loftus Center, 12 different Notre Dame players scored. Irish coach Christine Halfpenny said her team will utilize its deep roster to continue producing offensively against the Terriers (1-1) and Commodores (1-6).

"I think when you use our depth the way we use it and we find the chemistry, sometimes it's not the best seven out there, it's the best seven together," she said. "I think that the beauty is the healthy competition on this team and everyone is starting to understand their roles."

Though two games, Boston has already played two ranked teams. It beat No. 17/14 Massachusetts on Feb. 27 before falling to No. 13/13 Dartmouth on Wednesday. The Terriers finished 11-6 last season, including a perfect 6-0 in the American East conference. Senior attack Danielle Etrasco led Boston with 58 goals last season and leads the team again with five goals so far this season.

"They're very well coached, they're tough, they're physical," Halfpenny said of the Terriers. "I think that they utilize their personnel, they have a very high IQ. They know what they're doing, they know why, they stick to the game plan and

make great adjustments."

Last season, Notre Dame held off a second-half charge to beat the Terriers 14-11 in Boston. Halfpenny said her familiarity with Terriers coach Liz Robertshaw in addition to last season's history will make for another tough contest.

"Last year we had a really strong start against them and they never gave up," Halfpenny said. "We're ready for a 60-minute fight with them, this is going to be a slugfest. I know the head coach really well, as a matter of fact we started our coaching careers together as assistant coaches at Brown, so it's always a fun game when you have a positive rivalry, a friendly rivalry there. But we want this game."

Vanderbilt has struggled this year after finishing last season 8-8. Despite the discrepancy in team records, Halfpenny said the Irish are excited to focus solely on lacrosse in preparing for the Commodores.

"Our team has really good structure, we have great leadership so I think our girls know exactly what we need to do to come out and be ready for [Vanderbilt]," she said. "We're all set to prepare hard ... Thursday, have a great pre-game practice on Friday, and kick off an awesome spring break where we get to almost act like professional lacrosse players for a week, so we're actually really excited."

Notre Dame hosts Boston at 3 p.m. on Saturday before facing Vanderbilt in Nashville, Tenn., at 4 p.m. on March 13.

Contact Cory Bernard at
cbernard@nd.edu

MEN'S SWIMMING & DIVING

Divers travel to last qualifier

By MARY GREEN
Sports Writer

While their swimming teammates will have to play the waiting game to see whether they will advance to the NCAA championships, members of the Notre Dame diving team will have one final opportunity to earn a spot during next week's NCAA Zone Diving Qualifier. The meet will take place March 14-16 at the Boilermaker Aquatic Center in West Lafayette, Ind.

The Irish will compete in Zone C, meaning they will dive against Big Ten powerhouses Indiana, Purdue and Ohio State, along with a strong Kentucky squad. Irish diving coach Caiming Xie said that quartet will present the strongest competition from the regional schools at the meet.

"That's the top four," Caiming said. "Those are the strongest four teams on the men's side. Others like us, Michigan, Michigan State, Eastern Michigan and Miami (Ohio) are probably on a secondary step."

The Irish will not send anyone to dive off the platform, one of three diving events. Because the Rolfs Aquatic Center does not have

a platform, the team is unable to practice the event. The absence of participation in this event will make scoring points more difficult for the Irish. The Irish will instead focus their efforts on the two remaining events, the one-meter and three-meter springboards. Per NCAA rules, if a diver achieves a

"I think maybe two or three people will make the final."

Caiming Xie
Irish diving coach

qualifying score in one of the three events, he may also enter the other two events. Divers need to score a 300 to qualify for the NCAA championships in the one-meter dive and a 320 to qualify for the three-meter dive.

Senior Ryan Koter and sophomores Michael Kreft, Nick Nemetz, Ted Wagner and John Andrade all reached a qualifying score in at least one of the three events, so they will dive off both springboards at the meet. Qualifying scores can be accomplished at any of the team's official meets, including last weekend's

Big East championships in Indianapolis where the Irish captured the conference title.

Kreft earned the award for Men's Big East Co-Diver of the Meet at the conference championships after finishing in the top six in all three diving events. To reach the NCAA Championships, though, divers must attain more than a set score. They need to finish within a certain place in each event to advance, and Zone C will only send seven divers this year to NAAs. The number of invitations from each zone depends on how well that zone did at NAAs the year before.

With the shortage of spots and the excess of competition, Caiming said achieving a qualifying spot in the NCAA Championships will be no easy task for Irish divers.

"I think maybe two or three people will make the final," he said. "I think it will be hard for us...because our zone is a tough zone. But I hope they have a good meet next week."

Notre Dame will begin the NCAA Zone Diving Qualifier in West Lafayette, Ind., on March 14 with the one-meter springboard prelims.

Contact Mary Green at
mgreen8@nd.edu.

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ND WOMEN'S GOLF

ND hosts tourney in Arizona

By **KIT LOUGHRAN**
Sports Writer

Now three weeks since their last tournament, the Irish gear up for their second appearance this spring in Mesa, Ariz. at the Clover Cup.

After finishing seventh at the Seminole Mash-Up Invitational in Tallahassee, Fla. on March 17, the No. 25 Irish had the past few weeks to focus on preparing for their next tournament of their season.

"Basically, we just came back from the first tournament and began working on how the girls played individually," Irish head coach Susan Holt said.

Overall, Holt said that the team did not play its best at the Mash-Up, but she said she is proud of the progress the team has made.

"We were ready for that tournament, but we didn't execute," Holt said. "With that being said, we are ready to get back at it."

Holt said that practice has been key over the past few weeks.

"We all have had things to work on," Holt said. "We've practiced well every day and worked hard."

At this point in the season, the team's mindset and progress has come to develop, Holt said.

"The girls know individually that they are all good players, but they also know that collectively when they are playing well we can compete with the better teams in the country," Holt said.

The Irish will go up against some of the top teams in the country this weekend, including No. 11 Texas Tech and No. 27 Northwestern. Holt believes this is a great opportunity for her team to prove itself competitively.

"It's a matter of really showing up and playing this time," Holt said. "When it's time to play, we have to perform."

With Notre Dame as the host of the Clover Cup, the Irish have even more of a reason to step up and perform. Holt said the course selection will be advantageous to the team's performance.

"A lot of the girls are familiar with the course," Holt said. "Going to a course that is familiar is very helpful."

From the Mesa area herself, freshman Lindsay Weaver will look to pave a path toward victory for the Irish this time around after a successful eighth-place individual finish in Tallahassee.

Lindsay and the rest of the team are ready and eager to get back on the course, Holt said.

"They are excited and ready to redeem themselves," Holt said.

The Irish continue their spring season Friday through Sunday at the Clover Cup hosted by Notre Dame at the Longbow Golf Club in Mesa, Ariz.

Contact Kit Loughran at
kloughr1@nd.edu

MEN'S GOLF

Irish return to Schenkel Invite



ASHLEY DACY | The Observer

Irish junior Niall Platt approaches his tee shot during the Fighting Irish Gridiron Golf Classic on Oct. 9 at the Warren Golf Course.

By **D.H. KIM**
Sports Writer

Earlier in the fall, the Irish had come off a superb finish at the Georgetown Invitational where they finished second overall, boosting their rankings which climbed just outside the top 100 mark.

The Irish would need to make the top 81 to make the NCAA finals. The team had great depth and experience going into Georgetown with leadership from senior Paul McNamara, junior Andrew Lane and junior Niall Platt. At the Georgetown Invitational, McNamara had a phenomenal run to tie for sixth place (214) and get the Irish going. McNamara led the entire tournament with 14 birdies during the event.

Andrew Lane played his season-best 71 strokes (even) to take a share of 11th place, the best finish of his Notre Dame career

(217). The Irish will resume their spring season carrying the positive feel and momentum from Georgetown to the Schenkel E-Z-Go Invitational in Statesboro, Ga. at the Forest Heights Country Club International. They are scheduled to face three of the toughest opponents in the country including defending national champions Texas, defending Schenkel Invitational champion Alabama and a top-five Florida team.

McNamara, Lane and Platt all have experience playing in the Schenkel Invitational. This will be the fifth year that the Irish will be playing in the event, and head coach Jim Kubinski is confident that they will improve from their last year's 12th-place finish.

"This is one of the oldest events in collegiate golf and Notre Dame has been playing there since '05 which makes it very special and important for us to do well," coach Kubinski said.

The Irish look to improve their history at Schenkel which has a reputation for being tricky on the green. The bent Georgian grass is typically known to be slick, which makes putting and placement shots difficult.

"I would call it the mini-Masters. It's not as big as Augusta National Golf Club but the grass is really smooth and fast making it similar and challenging," coach Kubinski said.

The Schenkel Invitational will be a test for the Irish they look to improve their rankings and make it to the top 81 to qualify for finals.

"There will be a good number of highly ranked teams giving us a good feel of what the playoffs will be like," Kubinski said. "Right now we want to carry positive momentum from our 2nd place at Georgetown and keep getting better."

The Irish certainly look to continue the strong run and dominate at the three-day Schenkel E-Z-Go Invitational from March 15 to March 17 in Statesboro, Ga.

Contact D.H. Kim
dkim16@nd.edu

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JOHN NING | The Observer

Irish senior guard Skylar Diggins dribbles the ball during Notre Dame's triple-overtime 96-87 win over Connecticut on Monday.

Tournament

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

Dame has never won a Big East tournament title.

McGraw said one major key to Notre Dame's success at the tournament will be its bench play. The Irish bench contributed just nine of the team's 96 points Monday night.

"We really need the bench," McGraw said. "I think our bench has been really good all year, and different people have stepped up at different times. I think it's going to be important that we really use them in this tournament."

Notre Dame's path to a conference championship will most likely involve another date with Connecticut (27-3, 14-2), as the Huskies have won seven of the last eight Big East tournaments and 18 overall since the tournament began in 1983. Although Connecticut has a 29-10 edge in the series between the two teams, the Irish have won six of the last seven matchups, including both of this season's matchups.

McGraw said the recent

success against the Huskies has greatly helped Notre Dame's national perception.

"I think we have had a lot more confidence the last three years, having beaten them in the Final Four," McGraw said. "I think, when you can compete at that level, it really gives your team the status of an elite program, and we're excited that we have a chance to play such a great team in our conference."

McGraw said the Irish know the main keys to matching up with the Huskies because Connecticut is such a familiar foe.

"Generally, it's one of those games where it's just a rebounding battle and a question of who's going to make the most shots, a lot of little things," she said. "We've played them so many times I think we know them well personnel-wise, so I think it's just a matter of stepping up and competing."

The top-seeded Irish will face South Florida or Rutgers on Sunday at 2 p.m. at the XL Center.

Contact Brian Hartnett at
bhartnet@nd.edu

Louisville

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

Atkins and Jerian Grant, were critical in that win. Brey said he is pleased with his team's familiarity with Louisville's home court.

"It's going to be a great atmosphere down there," Brey said. "Obviously, we were fortunate enough to steal a win down there last time, so this group has played well there. But we know we're going to get the shot of a real good team Saturday."

After the final whistle against the Cardinals on Saturday, the veteran Irish will enter postseason play with a berth in the Big East tournament at Madison Square Garden in New York before hoping to secure a selection in the NCAA tournament.

With a squad featuring many of the same players from last year's group that fell to Louisville in the Big East semifinals and Xavier in the NCAA first round, Brey said he is confident this team is ready for

postseason play.

"It's a confident group that's excited about playing in the postseason together," Brey said. "And you know what? They should be. They really should be. We've got a heck of a group. I love my team, and I love the fact that they are really excited about doing this thing in March."

Notre Dame, No. 20 Pittsburgh and No. 17 Syracuse are all in contention for the No. 4 seed in the Big East tournament and the accompanying double bye. In the event of ties in conference record, Notre Dame holds a head-to-head tiebreaker over Pittsburgh while Syracuse holds a tiebreaker over the Irish. The Orange would hold the tiebreaker and earn the double bye in the event of a three-way tie.

Notre Dame and Louisville will tip off Saturday at 4 p.m. at the KFC Yum! Center. The game will be broadcast nationally on CBS.

Contact Chris Allen at
callen10@nd.edu

CCHA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

would play the winner of the Falcons and Lakers. Notre Dame has had success against both this year. The Irish swept both Bowling Green and Lake Superior State in the Compton Family Ice Arena, including victories over the falcons just last weekend and the Lakers before winter break. Notre Dame also split a pair of games at Bowling Green earlier in the year for a 3-1 season record against the Falcons.

However, the opponent that could potentially help Notre Dame's NCAA tournament chances the most is the team the Irish are least likely to play: Northern Michigan. Not only would the Wildcats have to win at Michigan to face Notre Dame but the Spartans would also have to upset Alaska.

Despite being the lowest seed of the four possible Irish opponents, Northern Michigan has the best overall record and, more importantly, an RPI above .500. This makes them a "Team Under Consideration" (TUC) in the Pairwise Rankings, in which the Irish are currently tied for 14th.

The Pairwise determines the 11 at-large teams who make the NCAA tournament, along with the five conference champions. It is a complex system with too many parts to explain fully in the space provided for this article, but one of the factors in determining how well a team fares in the Pairwise is its record



MICHAEL KRAMM | The Observer

Irish junior right wing Bryan Rust takes a shot during Notre Dame's 4-1 victory over Bowling Green on Saturday.

against TUC schools. By facing the Wildcats in the second round, Notre Dame could add two more wins to its total to bump its TUC record to 9-9-3.

To fully understand how bizarre the Pairwise can be, the 2008 Irish provide a good example. Either an Irish win or an Irish loss in the CCHA consolation game against Northern Michigan would have seen Notre Dame win enough comparisons to make the NCAA tournament. Had the Irish tied, they would have been out. No, you did not misread that.

Interestingly enough, should the Wildcats lose the series to the Wolverines, their RPI would most likely drop below .500 and they would no longer be a TUC. And because the Irish went 2-0

against the Wildcats in the regular season, Notre Dame's TUC record would move from 7-9-3 to 5-9-3, potentially hurting its Pairwise ranking.

Ultimately, the potential series that would be the most fun would be Michigan, but the potential series that would likely help Notre Dame's NCAA tournament chances the most, if the Irish win, would be Northern Michigan. As a result, the probable opponent will be either Bowling Green or Lake Superior. Hockey, after all, is a funny game.

Contact Sam Gans at
sgans@nd.edu

The views expressed in this column are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer.

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Fairy Tales Do Come True



Photo by Matthew Whitlock Photography



Photo by Vicky Darnell

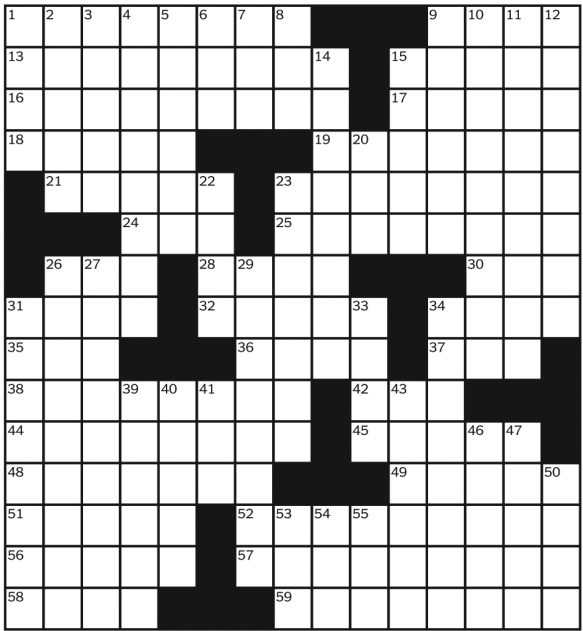
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PUZZLE BY MIKE BUCKLEY

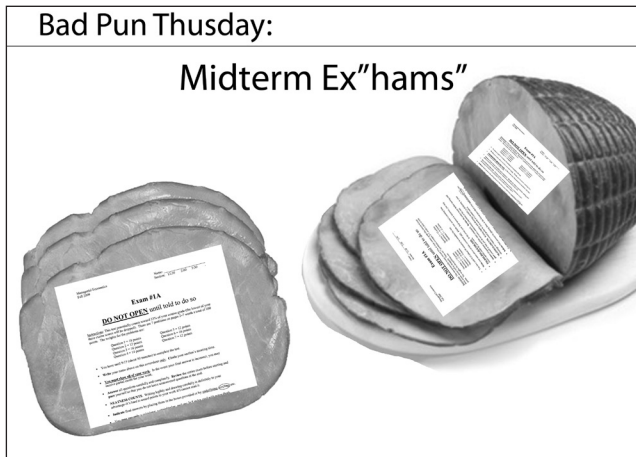
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33 Tunnel effect
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- 41 "That's terrible!"
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ARIES (March 21-April 19): Research will pay off. Ease your stress by putting a plan into motion. Don't let your emotions lead you into a no-win situation with someone you work with. Rely on past experience to help you avoid making a mistake. ★★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Plan to excel. Interact with people that have something to contribute. The more information you obtain, the easier it will be secure your position or find a way to advance. A serious partnership will develop. ★★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Make your own deals. You cannot trust anyone to do what's best for you. Asking for a favor is likely to end up costing you. Keep your private life a secret. Sharing too much information with colleagues or peers will cause setbacks. ★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You have more clout than you realize. Call the shots and set the standard. Ask for what you want and offer what you feel is fair. Romance is on the rise and celebrating should be planned. Opportunities are apparent. ★★★★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): A change of heart is apparent, but don't let that affect the way you do your job. You'll realize you are further ahead than you think, and there is no need to jump into something prematurely. You need new surroundings. ★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Enjoy friends and take part in activities that build your enthusiasm and make you think. Romance is heading your way, and decisions that influence your future are about to unfold. A promise made will help seal a deal. ★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Consider your original plan and what your goals were when you were growing up. Focus on what you have to do to alter your life and turn your dream into a reality. Change is heading your way. ★★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Get involved in something creative and challenging, and you will face a fascinating test of your ability. You will not only be pleased with your accomplishments, but you will impress someone and secure a position for future projects. ★★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Take a back seat and gauge what everyone else does or says. You will get the best results by sticking close to home and making the most of your living space. Keep your thoughts about others to yourself. Avoid overindulgence. ★★★

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Reflect on past relationships and you will know exactly what to say to someone you love. A simple and affordable approach will bring the best results. Romance is in the stars and can be achieved on a budget. ★★★★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): What you do for others will in turn allow you to do something that will make you happy as well. Favors will be repaid, enabling you to make a change that will allow you greater freedom to follow your goals. ★★

PISCES (Feb. 19- March 20): You'll have a choice. Wager the pros and cons and you'll find a way to get what you want without going overboard physically, financially or emotionally. Your talent and skill will help you win a spot in the limelight. ★★★★★

Birthday Baby: You are sensitive, impulsive and dedicated. You are clever and entertaining.

JUMBLE | DAVID HOYT AND JEFF KNUREK

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

FARWD

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BOATO

DRETN

SUDSIC

Print answer here:

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: QUILT CLOUT PROVEN DONKEY
Answer: If a penny came to life, it would become — "CENT-IENT"



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MEN'S BASKETBALL

Louisville slugfest

*Notre Dame travels to Louisville to play last Big East regular season game*By **CHRIS ALLEN**
Sports Editor

After the Notre Dame senior class ended its home career with a win Tuesday night, the No. 24 Irish will try to end their regular season with a win over No. 8 Louisville on the road.

Irish coach Mike Brey's squad will take the court in Louisville with a chance to earn a double bye in next week's Big East tournament. But the Irish (23-7, 11-6 Big East) must take down the top-10 Cardinals (25-5, 13-4) without freshman forward Cam Biedscheid. Brey confirmed Wednesday that Biedscheid will serve a one-game suspension for his role in a fight during Tuesday's win over St. John's.

With or without Biedscheid, Brey's focus is squarely on Louisville. Notre Dame defeated the Cardinals 104-101 on Feb. 9 in a five-overtime thriller.

"Maybe we'll say, what about three [overtimes], let's go three," Brey said. "To [Director of Athletics Jack Swarbrick] I said, well, ESPN got the show and now CBS wants the show. It's awesome, though. There's so much anticipation. I think our guys

are excited, I think Louisville is [excited.]"

The two marquee programs have a remarkable recent history of overtime contests peaking with February's instant-classic contest at Purcell Pavilion. Five of the last six games between the two teams have gone to overtime. The Cardinals have also eliminated the Irish from the Big East tournament the last two seasons. The postseason implications on the line Saturday will give the contest added importance.

"They've just been dramatic games. There's certainly a great storyline off the last one," Brey said. "I think it's a 'red-out,' so we're going to have to wear our gold down there. Do you think [Louisville coach Rick] Pitino will have a red suit? Because he wears a white suit when they have a 'white-out.' Maybe I should wear a gold suit to match our uniforms."

The Irish were able to get a win at the hostile KFC Yum! Center in Louisville last season — but not before playing two hard-fought overtimes in a 67-65 win. Current Irish starters, senior forward Jack Cooley and junior guards Eric

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JOHN NING | The Observer

Irish junior guard Eric Atkins looks to pass the ball during Notre Dame's 104-100 five-overtime victory on Feb. 9. The Irish will face the Cardinals on Saturday at the KFC Yum! Center to end their regular season.

HOCKEY

Irish await CCHA opponent



MICHAEL KRAMM | The Observer

Irish senior right wing Kevin Nugent controls the puck during Notre Dame's 4-1 victory over Bowling Green on Saturday.

**Sam Gans**
Sports Writer

No. 9 Notre Dame will be comfortably at home while the best-of-three, first-round series of the CCHA tournament take place Friday through Sunday. No. 6 seed Alaska hosts No. 11 seed Michigan State, No. 10 seed Northern Michigan travels to

No. 7 seed Michigan and No. 9 seed Bowling Green travels to No. 8 seed Lake Superior State.

But just because the Irish (21-12-3, 17-8-3-2 CCHA) aren't competing doesn't mean they won't be interested in the results of this weekend's matchups.

The Irish, by virtue of finishing second in the conference in the regular season, will host the second-lowest seed that

advances past the best-of-three, second-round series March 15-17. This means the Irish could face the Wolverines (13-18-3, 9-15-3), Lakers (16-19-1, 11-16-1), Falcons (13-18-5, 10-15-3) or Wildcats (15-17-4, 9-15-4).

Notre Dame is most likely to play Michigan based on the seeding — should no upsets occur in the first round the Irish would play the Wolverines — which is probably the matchup Irish fans would most like to see.

The rival Wolverines always make for an entertaining and intense series and the Irish have had remarkable success against the maize and blue this season, sweeping all four regular-season games. Plus, an Irish series victory would halt the Wolverines' run of 22 straight NCAA tournament appearances and be some nice payback after Michigan ended Notre Dame's season in the second round of the CCHA tournament just a season ago.

If either the Wildcats upset the Wolverines or the Spartans upset the Nanooks, the Irish

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ND WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Team tries for first Big East tourney title

By **BRIAN HARTNETT**
Sports Writer

After defeating No. 3 Connecticut in a triple-overtime thriller Monday night, No. 2 Notre Dame will travel to the Huskies' home court to play in the Big East tournament. The tournament begins Friday at the XL Center in Hartford, Conn.

Monday's victory gave the Irish (28-1, 16-0 Big East) the outright Big East regular-season title, marking the second straight year the team has claimed the regular-season conference crown.

"[The regular-season title] is a great accomplishment for our team," Irish coach Muffet McGraw said. "I thought we overachieved all season and I was especially pleased with the win [Monday], with all that was on the line for us."

As the No. 1 seed in the Big East tournament, the Irish have a double bye and do not play until Sunday's quarterfinal round. McGraw said the long layoff

between games will allow the Irish to rest before beginning postseason play.

"I think the first thing we need is a little rest, but I think [the break] is a good chance for us to work on some general things," she said. "On defense, there are some things we need to do and offensively, we need to tighten some things up, put some new wrinkles in. But it will be good for us to be fresh because you might have to play three games in three days."

The Irish will face either No. 8 seed South Florida or No. 9 seed Rutgers in its tournament quarterfinal matchup. Notre Dame narrowly beat South Florida (20-9, 9-7) in Tampa, Fla., on Jan. 8, winning 75-71 in overtime. But the Irish rolled to a 71-46 victory over the Scarlet Knights (16-13, 7-9) on Jan. 13 at Purcell Pavilion.

The Irish will have to win three games in three days in order to win the tournament, which concludes Tuesday night. Notre

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