

THE OBSERVER

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NDSMCOBSERVER.COM

Unusual exam schedule planned

Divided study days accommodate latest possible semester start; no complaints reported

By KAITLYNN RIELY
Assistant News Editor

For upperclassmen at Notre Dame and Saint Mary's, the exam schedule at each semester's end has been a constant — reading days Thursday through Sunday, and exams Monday through Friday.

This year, due to the late starting day for classes in August, there will be three reading days for Notre Dame, and two for Saint Mary's. Exams for both schools will start Dec. 14, with testing on Friday and Saturday, then Monday through Wednesday.

"It's an odd finish," said Harold Pace, the University registrar.

The reason for the departure from the usual exam timetable dates back to the scheduling arrangements made in 1993, when Notre Dame's Academic

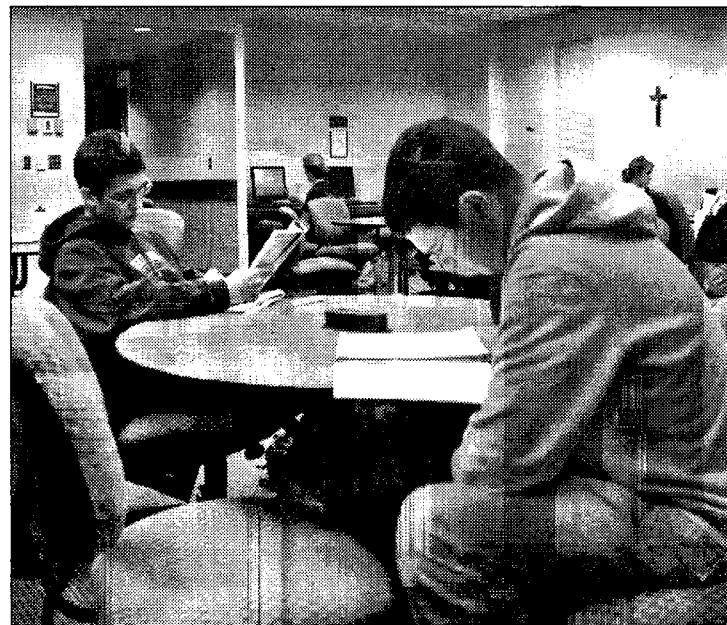
Council approved the Perpetual Academic Calendar, Pace said.

The rules of the calendar stated that the first class day in the fall semester would be on the fourth Tuesday in August, meaning dates ranging from Aug. 22 to Aug. 28.

Every few years, as in 2001, 2007 and 2012, the fourth Tuesday of the month falls on Aug. 28. The Academic Council realized, Pace said, that if adjustments were not made to the final exam schedule in those years, then the last day of exams would be Dec. 21 and grades would be due Dec. 24, the day before Christmas.

"We decided...that in those years, we would trim a study day off, and try to get started on exams early, so students could

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DUSTIN MENELLA/The Observer

Freshmen Liam Leyden, left, and Patrick Brown review course material in the second floor Coleman-Morse study lounge.

Contraceptives available for medical needs

ND Health Services prescribes birth control for health reasons, not pregnancy prevention

By JENN METZ
Assistant News Editor

Notre Dame students cannot receive birth control prescriptions or pills at Health Services unless they demonstrate a medical — not contraceptive — need for the medication.

If a student comes in asking for birth control for the purpose of contraception, "we're not going to ask a lot of questions," said Ann Kleva, director of University Health Services.

"We'll say point blank, 'I'm sorry, we don't supply those services on campus because we abide by the teachings of the

Church,'" she said. "We're not here to judge anybody. That's one avenue, one medical practice that we just do not participate in."

Health Services does not refer students to places off campus where birth control can be obtained. Kleva said it's very unlikely a student would not be able to find out the name of a location online, from friends or in a phonebook.

"If they're definite that's what they want, I'm sure they'll find a provider on their own," she said.

If a student has certain medical symptoms, however, birth control pills can be prescribed

and provided at Health Services, Kleva said. Such scenarios include patients with irregular or painful menstrual cycles, no menstrual cycle or abdominal pain.

In these cases, physicians "can and will prescribe birth control after a complete exam and evaluation if there is justifiable reason," she said.

During such an exam, physicians will rule out other abnormalities that could be causing abdominal pain, which could range from "a hot appendix to an ovarian pregnancy," she said.

The hormones necessary to regulate cycles could be pack-

aged in birth control, which Kleva said is "very effective" for that purpose.

Whether the patient on birth control has or will have sex is a conversation that may happen between the doctor and a patient, Kleva said. Questions about sexual activity, like those about the patient's menstrual cycle, are "normal questions to ask a female" during an exam to rule out pregnancy, she said.

Also, Health Services will fill prescriptions for birth control from home physicians if a patient brings in paperwork, she said, but the reason for the

see HEALTH/page 4

see BOG/page 3

ND, SMC students spread Christmas spirit

Notre Dame celebrates season with themed events, light displays, holiday concerts

By JOSEPH McMAHON
News Writer

As the wind swept remnants of the season's first snowfall across the quads, students began to celebrate the Christmas season. All around campus, giant light displays are being erected and Christmas-themed events held, giving students something other than finals to think about.

The Glee Club's annual Christmas concerts, to be held Saturday at the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center, are expected to be sold out. The all-male choral group gave students, faculty and



CASEY CARNEY/The Observer
Christmas decorations such as the nativity scene that stands in the foyer of O'Shaughnessy Hall are scattered throughout campus.

see CONCERT/page 6

Annual fundraising event at Saint Mary's to provide presents for local families

By LIZ HARTER
News Writer

Saint Mary's students have the opportunity to help 12 families and 25 individuals by participating in holiday-themed events during the next week and a half.

The annual 12 Days of Christmas event sponsored by the Office for Civic and Social Engagement (OCSE) will host fundraising events, with all money going to South Bend-area families that the College "adopted" for the holiday season.

The event began Dec. 1 when students were asked to turn in gifts they had purchased for families and individuals

see FUNDRAISER/page 4

BOG

Café may stay open past 10 p.m.

By ASHLEY CHARNLEY
News Writer

The possibility of extending Student Center hours for the rest of the semester dominated discussion at the Board of Governance (BOG) meeting Monday night.

Sarita Fritzler, chief of staff, reported to BOG members a conversation she had with Vice President for Student Affairs Karen Johnson about extending the hours of the Student Center, which is normally open until 10 p.m.

Johnson said she is interested in extending the hours, Fritzler said. Johnson said she would be willing to keep the Student Center open until 2 a.m. during finals week. The Cyber Café may also remain open until 12 a.m., she said.

Fritzler said Johnson proposed providing coffee from 12 a.m. to 2 a.m. after the Café closes.

If attendance is high during finals, the hours may be extended permanently, Fritzler said.

BOG is encouraging students to use the Student Center to study. The Board is also opening the student government office for students during the late hours.

Woman's Studies commissioner Renee Woodward said stories are now being accepted for the upcoming series of monologues about Saint Mary's.

The committee is seeking

INSIDE COLUMN

Can't buy me love?

Every day I hear about another friend getting a job offer or getting a medical school interview or sending in a graduate school application. Yet here I am, a senior Arts and Letters major who has not even updated her résumé. I feel physically sick at the very thought of a job interview.

Whatever shall I do? Companies are not banging on my door to hire me. It seems as if there is no bright future in sight for someone like myself.

Instead, I will try for the next best thing — mooching off of someone who does have a future. So successful men of Notre Dame, listen up. (And women, if you want a super awesome friend to support for the rest of your life, keep reading). I could be the perfect one for you.

I can do laundry. Since I probably will not have a job, I can do yours, too. Just don't ask me to separate lights and darks...that's not how I roll. I am pretty good at folding and putting things on hangers, so that's a plus. I also have learned some good laundry-related life lessons, such as never leaving your laundry basket unattended because someone can steal it right in front of your face. True story. Can you tell I'm still bitter?

I can cook you the best meal Lean Cuisine has to offer. I also make a mean plate of scrambled eggs on Saturday morning. Trust me. They blow dining hall eggs out of the water. Since I will probably have a lot of free time on my hands due to the absence of a job, I can learn how to make all kinds of fancy foods by watching the Food Network. I'm fully prepared to kick it up a notch and use exciting spices such as parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme.

I like football. Who here doesn't? Even better, I actually understand it. Not only that, but I can provide you with hours of entertainment (that's what she said) with my amazing sense of humor. I also know about all the best YouTube videos. (What else do you think I do while I'm not looking for a job?).

If any of this sounds interesting to you, you can look me up on Facebook to make sure I am not some sort of weirdo. Maybe we can hang out sometime and talk about the future, such as where you are planning on living and what kind of benefits your company offers for people who live in your house but are not related to you.

Don't think I'm selfish. For any other females out there who are in my position, I have a friend who just got a job that offers great benefits. His name is Nick. If you find him, you might just get in his good graces by wishing him a happy birthday. I would just mooch off of him myself, but I want to share the wealth.

The views expressed in the Inside Column are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer. Contact Julie Grisanti at jgrisanti@nd.edu

CORRECTIONS

Due to a reporting error, the Dec. 3 news article "Fence blocks part of DeBartolo quad" incorrectly stated the cardinal directions associated with the fence. The fence surrounding the utilities work area is located to the west of DeBartolo Hall and east of Hesburgh Center.

Due to an editing error, the photograph accompanying the Dec. 3 article "Travel supplements in-class learning" was incorrectly attributed. The photo was provided courtesy of Mark Quaresima.

The Observer regrets these errors.

QUESTION OF THE DAY: WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR CHRISTMAS?

Christine Walls



Cassie Hepp



Adam Steinbach



Heidi Rocha



Steven Yonsl



Caitlin Pulte

junior
Howard

freshman
Welsh Family

sophomore
Knott

junior
Breen-Phillips

sophomore
Siegfried

freshman
Welsh Family

"Santa ending
poverty on my
behalf."

"A North Face
jacket."

"World pea...
who am I
kidding? I need
an iPhone."

"I really do
want world
peace.
Seriously."

"I just want
everyone to
remember my
name."

"Cowboy boots."



DUSTIN MENNELLA/The Observer

Freshman Francie Love, left, and sophomore Colleen Franke decorate doors in Welsh Family Hall with wrapping paper, Christmas lights and paper stars.

OFFBEAT**Man accused of stealing plane to impress**

LaPORTE, Ind. — A man accused of stealing a twin-engine plane and driving it down the taxiway staged the stunt while he was drunk to impress his girlfriend, police said.

Michael Santos, 38, was charged Friday with theft, criminal mischief and operating a vehicle after his driving privileges had previously been forfeited for life.

Santos, who is being held in the LaPorte County Jail on \$2,000 bond, is accused of driving to the LaPorte Municipal Airport despite

a lifetime ban on his driving privileges.

According to police reports, Santos was drunk when he took his girlfriend to the airport Sept. 9 to show her that he could fly a plane. They climbed into the plane and were heading down the taxiway when, Santos told police, flames began shooting from the left engine.

He said he turned off all the switches and veered into a soybean field.

Accused thief makes a costume change

STOYSTOWN, Pa. — Police said a Somerset County man fled a traffic

stop, went home, shaved his mustache and changed his clothes, and reported the truck he was driving as stolen.

Conemaugh Township police said they stopped Robert Sadlon, 50, for a broken taillight on Thanksgiving night and he ran off. Later, the same officer went to Sadlon's home near Stoystown to investigate the reported theft. There, he found a just-shaven Sadlon in different clothes.

Sadlon is charged with drunken driving, escape and related charges.

Information compiled by the Associated Press.

IN BRIEF

A voter registration drive will be held tonight from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Dooley Room of LaFortune. The event is sponsored by NDVotes'08 and the Center for Social Concerns.

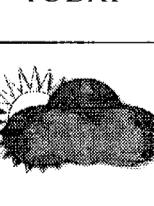
Campus Ministry is hosting a celebration of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Prayer services held to obtain special graces are being held in St. Edward's Hall Chapel at 9 p.m. each night through Sunday. The celebration is cosponsored by the Institute for Latino Studies, La Alianza and OLA.

There will be NASDAQ training sessions tomorrow from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in Eck Visitors' Center. The event is available to students only. Wednesday's topic is "Defining Your Customer Market and Competition."

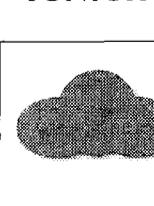
The Take Ten program will sponsor local children at the Robinson Community Learning Center in a bookmark recognition ceremony at 6 p.m. Thursday. Local school children who participated in the Take Ten program will make bookmarks. The Robinson Center is located at 921 North Eddy Street.

The annual football banquet will be held Friday at 5:45 p.m. in the Joyce Center Monogram Room. The featured speaker will be 1993 graduate Aaron Taylor, a two-year All-American Offensive Tackle and Lombardi Award winner. Tickets can be purchased through the Notre Dame Ticket Office, 574-631-7356.

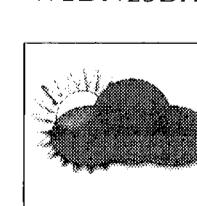
To submit information to be included in this section of The Observer, e-mail detailed information about an event to obsnews@nd.edu.

LOCAL WEATHER

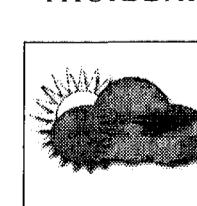
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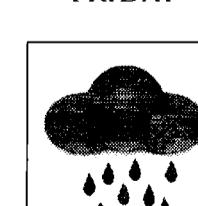
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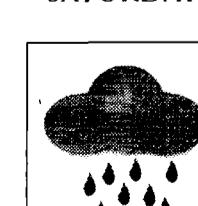
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CAMPUS LIFE COUNCIL

Task force leaders discuss second-semester goals

By JENN METZ
Assistant News Editor

Student body president Liz Brown encouraged all task forces to make recommendations to the Office of Student Affairs requesting support for task force initiatives Monday at the last meeting of the Campus Life Council this semester.

The reports should be delivered if the task forces "feel it's appropriate," Brown said.

"Reports like that, if well researched, would be a great contribution to Student Affairs," she said.

Brown's comment came after Gus Gari, chair of the Task Force on Community

Relations, announced his plan to make recommendations to Student Affairs about ways to improve community relations.

The recommendations, "still in the brainstorming stage," will most likely contain a three- to five-year plan, he said.

Gari said he is in discussions to produce a Notre Dame-specific version of the "Good Neighbor Guide" produced by the University of Virginia. South Bend Common Council members cited the UVA guide during hearings about the event permit ordinance passed earlier this semester.

Next semester, the task force will focus on transportation to and from campus, Gari

said. Chief executive assistant Sheena Plamoottil and student body vice president Maris Braun, leaders of the other two task forces, also presented their groups' goals for next semester.

Plamoottil, the chair of the Task Force on Campus Environment, said the third of a series of three green summits will be held early next semester. The summit will consist of a dinner and small group sessions of seven or eight to dis-

cuss environmental issues. Invitations "should be going out," she said. "This will be more formal."

Braun, chair of the Task

Force on

Student

Development,

said she met

with the stu-

dent co-chair

of the Uni-

versity

Code of Honor

Committee to

discuss pass-

ing off responsi-

bilities of

Honor Code-related topics

from the task force to the

committee. The task force had

discussed holding an aware-

ness week about the Honors

Code.

Braun said the committee has "similar ideas and more programs" to make it better suited to organize events and address awareness of the Honor Code.

"[The initiative] more naturally fit with a committee under the provost's office than a task force on student development," she said.

Next semester, Braun's task force will focus on gender issues at Freshman Orientation activities.

"We hope to improve gender relations for students from their start at Notre Dame," she said.

Contact Jenn Metz at jmetz@nd.edu

BOG

continued from page 1

only stories about positive relationship experiences, she said.

Student trustee Cate Cetta said the new Strategic Plan is finished. The plan details changes the administration hopes to enact during the next five years, she said.

The students had an important voice in creating the plan, said Kim Hodges, student body president.

"It's for us and by us," she said.

The Residence Hall Association (RHA) will support a local family during the Christmas season, said Cassie Quaglia, RHA president.

Each residence hall will sponsor one of the family's four children. Every student is asked to donate so the halls can buy the children presents, Quaglia said.

The Office for Civil and Social Engagement is sponsoring the 12 Days of Christmas at SMC. There are different festivities every day. The Junior Board will sell candygrams Wednesday through Friday in the atrium of the Student Center.

Quaglia said there will be a spoons tournament in Regina Hall from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Dec. 13.

The freshman formal will be held Jan. 26, said Emma Hoffman, president of the Class of 2011.

Contact Ashley Charnley at acharn01@saintmarys.edu

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Finals

continued from page 1

take their flights out before the 23rd," Pace said.

The last day of classes at Notre Dame this year is Dec. 11, and students will take exams Dec. 14-15 and Dec. 17-19. Reading days, more commonly known as study days, will be Dec. 12-13 and Dec. 16.

Saint Mary's students will follow the same exam schedule, although for Saint Mary's, the last day of class is Dec. 12, a day later than at Notre Dame.

"The exam schedule is set by Notre Dame and we follow it," said Lorraine Kitchner, the College's registrar.

Kitchner said she has not personally heard any complaints about the changes.

"There may be some grumbling out there," she said.

Pace said he has also not heard any complaints from students about the change to the normal final exam schedule, or to the reduction in the number of study days.

"I think everyone's settled into the schedule nicely," he said.

In the fall of 2001, the last time classes started on Aug. 28, causing exams to go until Dec. 19, Pace said he heard positive remarks about the exam timetable.

"We've had comments from faculty and upperclassmen saying that they kind of like the mixing of study days and final exams days," he said.

Junior Brock Stoffel said he liked the typical Monday through Friday exam schedule better, but said it was OK to have the change for a semester. Stoffel has two exams on Friday, one on Saturday and one on Tuesday.

With a study day on Sunday and no exams on Monday, he said he can put studying for his Tuesday exam off until he finishes his other three tests.

Freshman Sandra Nazareth will be taking her first set of exams as a Notre Dame student in a week and so she didn't know this exam schedule is slightly out of the ordinary.

Fundraiser

continued from page 1

through a giving tree-type system. Gifts must be turned in by Dec. 12 to the Madeleva Faculty Lounge, Library Foyer, Student Center Atrium and 161 Regina Hall.

Students can still pick up slips from various offices around campus that will contain a name, age and gift ideas for the families and individuals.

The College provides food and gifts in two ways — individuals can pick up slips and purchase the gifts themselves, or the office staff takes money and buys gifts directly, said Carrie Call, director of the OCSE.

The College's adopted families are recommended through the Salvation Army, Title 1 schools and other organizations that have ties to Saint Mary's, Call said. The Mental Health Coalition and Resources for Enriching Adult Living Services of South Bend (REAL) recommended the individuals.

"We always keep room for a

Nazareth said she is not that worried about exams, but thought she preferred the exam schedule the way it is this year.

"If I had four days in a row to study for five tests, I think I'd feel a little overwhelmed," she said.

The regular exam schedule, with four study days and then five continuous days of finals, will be used at the end of the spring semester. The split-up exam schedule in place this fall will not be repeated in 2012, the next time Aug. 28 is the fourth Tuesday of August, Pace said.

"We've had comments from faculty and upperclassmen saying that they kind of like the mixing of study days and final exams days."

**Harold Pace
University registrar**

28. In years where the fourth Tuesday is Aug. 28, the first class day will instead be the third Tuesday, Aug. 21.

"We'll now begin the fall term on Aug. 21-27 to ensure that we won't have this type of finish again," Pace said.

This change will ensure four grouped study days followed by five exam days on Monday through Friday.

But this year, students at both Notre Dame and Saint Mary's will be taking their exams with fewer days dedicated to studying.

Notre Dame senior Lauren Gulley said she'd rather have the regular timetable.

"I'm used to the old schedule," she said. "I kind of had my routine down."

Gulley has three exams to take — one Friday, one Monday and one Tuesday. In past semesters, with four study days, she could spend the first night watching a movie or going out with her friends.

On Thursday and Friday of study days, exams seemed so far away, she said.

Now, with only two study days before her first exams, she foresees some "cramming because you can't spread it out as much."

Contact Kaitlynn Riely at kriely@nd.edu

few families or individuals who are brought to us by internal referrals — people in need who work at Saint Mary's or are related to the College in some way," Call said.

Money will also be raised through events such as the Holiday Bazaar, which took place in the Student Center atrium Monday.

The Bazaar featured bracelets, dolls, jewelry, scarves and baked goods.

The 12 Days of Christmas event will also include ornament decorating, Christmas card-making for children in the cancer ward at Riley Childrens Hospital in Indianapolis and the selling of candy grams to buy gifts for the families and individuals.

"We also have a raffle for which you can buy tickets through this week and next," Call said. "The drawings will be at the late night breakfast [on Dec. 17]. This includes things like iTunes gift cards, munch money, [an] SMC stained glass mirror and an athletic jacket."

Contact Liz Harter at eharte01@saintmarys.edu

Health

continued from page 1

prescription has to be given.

"We need a letter from the doctor's office faxed to us directly telling us why it was prescribed if in fact it was prescribed for non-contraceptive purposes," Kleva said.

Prescriptions for birth control and other medications can also be transferred from the home pharmacist to the pharmacist at Health Services, Kleva said. Only government-regulated medications, like narcotics, cannot cross state borders, she said.

While Health Services does not direct students to sources to find birth control, patients will be directed to counseling services, Campus Ministry or Gender Relations Center if they have other questions, she said.

"If they need help with a relationship situation, [we] will show them where to get counseling," Kleva said.

Notre Dame's practices in the prescription of birth control are similar to those at other Catholic institutions.

Elaine Whetzel, administrator of the Health Center at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., said birth control is provided if it is "medically necessary."

"If the doctor orders the prescription, it is for medical conditions only," she said.

Unlike at Notre Dame, the Health Center at Georgetown does not fill prescriptions from outside physicians.

The Boston College Web site

states its health services does not "provide materials for the purpose of preventing conception" because of "the moral values that Boston College espouses." The director and administrators of Health Services at Boston College did not return Observer inquiries by the time of publication.

Pregnancy

At Notre Dame's Health Services, the staff is concerned primarily with supporting and protecting life, Kleva said.

If a woman becomes pregnant on campus, "we want to be supportive and offer care and guidance," she said.

"Sometimes that's a misconception. We are not here to judge," Kleva said.

She said both Health Services and the Office of Student Affairs offer support for pregnant women if they decide to stay on campus.

"In the half dozen cases I've dealt with over the years, the girls have graduated on time," Kleva said. "They can't live in the dorms, but there is family housing available. You'll find that the whole dorm will become babysitters."

Health Services offers free pregnancy tests that can be given during an appointment or taken home anonymously, Kleva said.

"We offer guidance and education," she said. "You have to look at how we all address the issues. [...] We certainly don't

"We certainly don't want a woman to feel ostracized."

**Ann Kleva
director
University Health Services**

want a woman to feel ostracized. We will do anything to protect these women."

Gynecological care

There are four physicians, two male and two female, at Health Services that are "board certified, all capable of performing [gynecological] exams on campus," Kleva said.

Patients requesting gynecological care can specify if they prefer a male or female physician, she said.

Health Services does not offer formal classes about sexually transmitted infections, but doctors are available to provide education and counseling on the topic, Kleva said.

Health Services also provides a nationally circulated brochure from the American College Health Association about symptoms and treatment options for various sexually transmitted infections.

"The first sentence says the only true way to prevent the spread of these infections is to abstain from risky behavior," she said.

Health Services keeps in stock Gardisil, the vaccine for human papillomavirus, commonly referred to as HPV. The vaccine is administered in a series of three injections over six months and may help guard against cervical cancer.

Contact Jenn Metz at jmetz@nd.edu

STUDENT APPRECIATION EVENT

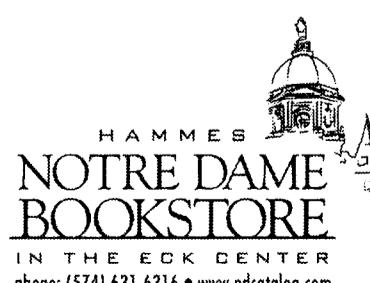
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The Varsity Shop at the Joyce Center will also be honoring the student discount from 9am-5pm.

WORLD & NATION

COMPILED FROM THE OBSERVER'S WIRE SERVICES

Tuesday, December 4, 2007

page 5

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

U.N. holds global warming talks

BALI, Indonesia — Delegates and scientists from around the world opened the biggest-ever climate change conference Monday, urging rapid progress in building a new international pact by 2009 to combat global warming — or risk economic and environmental disaster.

Some 10,000 conferees, activists and journalists from nearly 190 countries gathered on the resort island of Bali for two weeks of U.N.-led talks that follow a series of scientific reports this year concluding that the world has the technology to slow global warming, but must act immediately.

The Bali meeting will be the first major climate change conference since former Vice President Al Gore — due to arrive next week — and a U.N. scientific council won the Nobel Peace Prize in October for their environmental work, fueling the growing sense of urgency as ice-caps melt, oceans rise and extreme weather increases.

British teacher pardoned in Sudan

KHARTOUM, Sudan — A British teacher jailed for letting her students name a teddy bear Muhammad as part of a writing project headed home Monday after being pardoned — ending a case that set off an international outcry and angered many moderate Muslims.

The incident was the latest in a tense relationship between the West and Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, an Islamic hard-liner who has been accused by the United Nations of dragging his feet on the deployment of peacekeepers to the country's war-torn Darfur region.

Gillian Gibbons, jailed for more than a week, was freed after two Muslim members of Britain's House of Lords met with al-Bashir and the teacher sent the president a statement saying she didn't mean to offend anyone with her class project.

NATIONAL NEWS

None charged in MySpace suicide

ST. LOUIS — People who sent cruel Internet messages to a 13-year-old girl before she committed suicide won't face criminal charges, a suburban St. Louis prosecutor announced Monday.

St. Charles County prosecutor Jack Banas said that while he understands the public outrage over Megan Meier's death, he could not find statutes allowing him to charge anyone in the case.

"We were certainly hopeful that there was going to be some sort of prosecution, but I'm certainly not surprised," said Megan's mother, Tina Meier.

Evel Knievel settlement still pending

LOS ANGELES — Of all the bones Evel Knievel broke over the years, the costliest may have been the left arm of a PR man by the name of Shelly Saltman.

Saltman won \$12.75 million in damages against Knievel after the motorcycle daredevil attacked him with a baseball bat in 1977 in a rage over a book Saltman had written about the showman.

With interest, the still-uncollected sum has grown to more than \$100 million by Saltman's estimate, and he intends to try to collect it.

"We are going hot and heavy after his estate," Saltman told The Associated Press after Knievel died Friday at 69. "What he tried to do to me and how it hurt my family, I'm owed that."

LOCAL NEWS

Teen pleads guilty to sniper shootings

BROWNSTOWN, Ind. — A teenager pleaded guilty to reduced charges Monday in a series of Indiana highway sniper shootings that left one man dead and another wounded.

Zachariah Blanton, 18, of Gaston, had been scheduled to stand trial next week on charges of murder, attempted murder and criminal recklessness. He pleaded guilty in Jackson Circuit Court to lesser charges of voluntary manslaughter with a deadly weapon and criminal recklessness.

A judge must still approve Blanton's deal with prosecutors. Sentencing is set for Dec. 27, and Blanton could receive anything between 20 years and 50 years in prison.

VENEZUELA

Country chooses to stay democratic

Voters narrowly defeat Chavez's constitutional referendum to move toward a socialist state

Associated Press

CARACAS — Humbled by his first electoral defeat ever, President Hugo Chavez said Monday he may have been too ambitious in asking voters to let him stand indefinitely for re-election and endorse a huge leap to a socialist state.

"I understand and accept that the proposal I made was quite profound and intense," he said after voters narrowly rejected the sweeping constitutional reforms by 51 percent to 49 percent.

Opposition activists were ecstatic as the results were announced shortly after midnight — with 88 percent of the vote counted, the trend was declared irreversible by elections council chief Tibisay Lucena.

Some shed tears. Others began chanting: "And now he's going away!"

Without the overhaul, Chavez will be barred from running again in 2012.

Foes of the reform effort — including Roman Catholic leaders, media freedom groups, human rights groups and prominent business leaders — said it would have granted Chavez unchecked power and imperiled basic rights.

Chavez told reporters at the presidential palace that the outcome of Sunday's balloting had taught him that "Venezuelan democracy is maturing." His respect for the verdict, he asserted, proves he is a true democratic leader.

"From this moment on, let's be calm," he proposed, asking for no more street violence like the clashes that marred pre-vote protests. "There is no dictatorship here."

The White House took note of Chavez's setback.

"We congratulate the people of Venezuela on their election and their continued desire to live in freedom and democracy," National Security Council spokesman Gordon Johndroe said.

U.S. Undersecretary of



Opposition members celebrate Monday in Caracas after learning that Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez lost a referendum to stand indefinitely for re-election. AP

State Nicholas Burns also said it was a victory for the country's citizens who want to prevent Chavez from having unchecked power.

"We felt that this referendum would make Chavez president for life, and that's not ever a welcome development," Burns told reporters in Singapore. "In a country that wants to be a democracy, the people spoke, and the people spoke for democracy and against unlimited power."

Chavez, who was briefly ousted in a failed 2002 coup, blamed the loss on low turnout among the very supporters who re-elected him a year ago with 63 percent of the vote.

Seven in 10 eligible voters cast ballots then. This time it

was just 56 percent.

The defeated reform package would have created new types of communal property, let Chavez handpick local leaders under a redrawn political map and suspended civil liberties during extended states of emergency.

Other changes would have shortened the workday from eight hours to six, created a social security fund for millions of informal laborers and promoted communal councils where residents decide how to spend government funds.

Nelly Hernandez, a 37-year-old street vendor, cried as she wandered outside the presidential palace early Monday amid broken beer bottles as government workers took apart a stage

mounted earlier for a victory fete.

"It's difficult to accept this, but Chavez has not abandoned us, he'll still be there for us," she said between sobs.

A close ally of Cuba's Fidel Castro, Chavez has redistributed more oil wealth than past Venezuelan leaders, and also has aided Latin American allies — including Bolivia, Ecuador and Nicaragua — that have followed Venezuela's turn to the left.

"He is a man who feels for the people, a man who has suffered, a man who comes from below," Carlos Orlando Vega, a 47-year-old carpenter's assistant, said outside a polling station in a Caracas slum on Sunday.

U.S. report reverses nuclear findings

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A new U.S. intelligence report concludes that Iran's nuclear weapons development program has been halted since the fall of 2003 because of international pressure — a stark contrast to the conclusions U.S. spy agencies drew just two years ago.

The finding is part of a National Intelligence Estimate on Iran that also cautions that Tehran continues to enrich uranium and still could develop a bomb between 2010 and 2015 if it decided to do so.

The conclusion that Iran's weapons program was still frozen, through at least mid-2007, represents a sharp

turnaround from the previous intelligence assessment in 2005. Then, U.S. intelligence agencies believed Tehran was determined to develop a nuclear weapons capability and was continuing its weapons development program. The new report concludes that Iran's decisions are rational and pragmatic, and that Tehran is more susceptible to diplomatic and financial pressure than previously thought.

"Tehran's decision to halt its nuclear weapons program suggests it is less determined to develop nuclear weapons than we have been judging since 2005," says the unclassified summary of the secret report.

The findings come at a time of escalating tensions between the United

States and Iran, which President Bush has labeled part of an "axis of evil," along with Iraq and North Korea. At an Oct. 17 news conference, Bush said, "If you're interested in avoiding World War III, it seems like you ought to be interested in preventing them (Iran) from having the knowledge necessary to make a nuclear weapon."

Rand Beers, who resigned from Bush's National Security Council just before the Iraq war, said the report should derail any appetite for war on the administration's part, and should reinvigorate regional diplomacy. "The new NIE throws cold water on the efforts of those urging military confrontation with Iran," he said.

Concert

continued from page 1

area residents a taste of what is to come Monday at the O'Shaughnessy Christmas tree lighting ceremony in the Great Hall, singing traditional favorites such as "White Christmas" and "Carol of the Bells" in addition to some Spanish and Caribbean songs. According to Glee Club vice president, senior Fran McCormick, Saturday's concert will include carols from around the world.

All proceeds from this year's concert will go to the Center for the Homeless in South Bend.

Club president senior Peter Mueller stressed that the concert is an event for the whole community.

"It brings in a lot of people from all over South Bend," he said.

The concert, a blend of spiritual, ethnic and seasonal music, is an event that defines the Christmas season at Notre Dame, club members said.

"It is a very focal event that sums up the attitude for the whole season," said vice president senior John Grothaus. "Students and teachers really come together, and families from the community have traditions where they come to the concert every year. This is something for the entire campus, not an event segregated by dorm."

Tickets will be available at the door. For those that miss Saturday's concert, the Undertones, an a cappella group composed of ten members of the Glee Club, will perform a Christmas concert Dec. 12 at Washington Hall. The show will include a mix of Christmas anthems and pop songs, Grothaus said.

Tickets are available for \$5 at the LaFortune Box Office.

In addition to the Christmas concerts, residence halls across campus are spreading holiday cheer by holding charity events or decorating their buildings. A number of dorms, including Alumni, Welsh Family and Farley, are holding intra-dorm contests to see which sections can best decorate their hallways.

"We have trains, giant inflatable snow men, Christmas trees, and tons of lights," said Alumni hall president Matt Kernan. "The judging will take place on Wednesday and the entire campus is invited to come view the decorations on Friday."

Alumni will also hold the campus's only candlelight Christmas Mass on Dec. 16. The Mass is open to the entire campus.

Other dorms are celebrating by holding events geared toward benefiting various charities. This Wednesday, Howard will celebrate Howard Halliday outside of LaFortune. Howard residents will lead participants in singing carols, making s'mores, and drinking hot chocolate. The event will benefit Camp Kesem, a camp for children whose parents have been diagnosed with cancer, by selling T-shirts and encouraging donations.

"We're excited because it's the first year Kesem is recognized as a student activity," said Howard Halliday co-chair, sophomore Lauren Miller-Lemon. "We want Kesem to become part of Notre Dame, so we decided this would be a good event because we can spread holiday cheer and benefit a good cause."

Several dorms have already held Christmas events. Carroll

hall hosted the well-attended Carroll Christmas Friday. The event included a Christmas tree lighting ceremony, a cookie-baking contest, Christmas carols and an opportunity for photos with Santa Claus.

On Sunday, Keenan Hall held its Reindeer Roast, a barbecue held outside. As part of Reindeer Roast Week, Keenan residents will participate in service activities including caroling at senior citizen homes, holding a canned food drive, and buying presents for a needy family.

"As a Notre Dame student, we should be very concerned about doing service during Christmas time," said James Toner, Keenan vice president.

"As a Notre Dame student, we should be very concerned about doing service during Christmas time," said Keenan vice president, junior James Toner.

In addition to the service projects, Keenan residents have erected a giant light display on the east side of their dorm featuring a snowman and the phrase, "Twas the Knight before Christmas."

In order to mount the display, hall residents constructed a frame with PVC pipe and then attached the lights with chicken wire. Residents had to worry about finding enough power outlets in order to prevent the strands from short-circuiting.

"We were careful to only string four strands of lights together," Toner said.

The project was a chance to bring the dorm closer together and boost holiday spirits, he said.

"It's good because it involves the whole dorm; it's a celebration with your dorm family," he said.

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Man pleads guilty to slayings

Associated Press

BOISE, Idaho — A man who murdered the family of two young siblings, then sexually abused the children before killing one of them at a remote Montana campsite, pleaded guilty Monday to federal charges that could lead to his execution.

Joseph Edward Duncan III did not make a plea deal with prosecutors and earlier pleaded guilty to state charges. He told the judge he wants to take responsibility for his actions.

"I will continue to accept that responsibility to the death," he said.

Joseph Edward Duncan III

this phase of this."

Shasta and her father were not in the courtroom Monday. They live in Coeur d'Alene in a home built for them through donations from the community.

Duncan earlier pleaded guilty in state court to kidnapping and murdering other members of the Groene family at their home in May 2005. Shasta and Dylan's mother, Brenda Groene; her fiance,

M. a. r. k. McKenzie; and her 13-year-old son, Slade Groene, were bound and bludgeoned to death with a hammer.

Duncan was sentenced to life in prison without parole for kidnapping the three older victims. The death penalty remains a possibility for the state murder counts; the judge deferred imposing punishment on those counts to give federal prosecutors time to pursue their case, which is centered on events in Montana after the children were abducted.

While it is The Associated Press' policy not to identify alleged victims of sexual assault in most cases, the search for Shasta and her brother was heavily publicized and their names are widely known.

Duncan was on the run from a child molestation charge in Minnesota in May 2005 when he drove past the Groene home east of Coeur d'Alene, spotting the children playing outside, court documents say. Duncan stalked the Groene family for several days before attacking.

Duncan took Shasta and Dylan and drove into the mountains near St. Regis, Mont., where he sexually abused them for weeks before killing Dylan, documents say.

Duncan videotaped the abuse of Dylan before shooting him with a sawed-off shotgun, said Assistant U.S. Attorney Tracy Whelan.

Duncan has been quoted in court documents as saying he was trying to return Shasta to her father when he and the little girl were spotted in a Coeur d'Alene restaurant.

Duncan faces the death penalty on three of the federal felonies: kidnapping resulting in death, sexual exploitation of a child resulting in death, and using a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence resulting in death.

He also pleaded guilty to kidnapping, two counts of aggravated sexual abuse of a minor, being a felon in possession of a firearm, transportation of a stolen firearm, possession of an unregistered firearm, and transportation of a stolen vehicle.

Robertson to turn network over to son

Christian Broadcasting Network's new chief executive determined to carry on father's work

Associated Press

The Rev. Pat Robertson said Monday that his son, Gordon, has succeeded him as chief executive of the Christian Broadcasting Network, the most recent shift to a younger generation of leaders within major conservative Christian groups.

Robertson, 77, announced the transition on "The 700 Club," the Virginia-based network's flagship show, with Gordon, 49, on air with him.

"I thought that some of this day-to-day operation was important to pass down the line, especially to somebody a little more adept at figuring out the new technologies coming at such a bewildering speed to all of us," the elder Robertson said.

The network's board of directors voted over the weekend to name Gordon Robertson the CEO immediately. Pat Robertson will still be chairman of CBN and will continue to appear with his son on "The 700 Club." He will also remain president of Regent University, which he founded.

Gordon Robertson said in a phone interview with The Associated Press that his father had knee replacement surgery last spring and over the summer developed an irregular heartbeat that required surgery. But he is "in remarkably good health now."

"I call him the Iron Horse," Gordon Robertson said. "He doesn't have any quit in him."

Gordon Robertson is among several sons of major Christian leaders who have recently been charged with carrying on their fathers' work.

The Rev. Franklin Graham, son of 89-year-old evangelist Billy Graham, became chief executive of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association several years ago.

When the Rev. Jerry Falwell died last May, his sons, Jerry Jr. and Jonathan, took leadership of their father's Virginia megachurch and the school he founded, Liberty University.

Last year, Robert A. Schuller succeeded his father, Robert H. Schuller, as head of Crystal Cathedral and its ministries in California, including the popular "Hour of Power" televised services from the megachurch.

J. Michael Lindsay, a sociologist at Rice University and author of "Faith in the Halls of Power," noted that CBN faces significantly more competition now than when it started more than four decades ago and no longer has the dominant role it did in the 1970s and '80s.

"The question is whether Gordon will have the same kind of flair for the dramatic and rhetorical flourish" as his

father, Lindsay said. "I don't see any evidence of that currently. He has been much more below the radar."

Pat Robertson founded CBN in 1960 with a tiny UHF station in Portsmouth, Va.

The network has grown to about 2,800 employees, producing programs in 99 languages in more than 225 countries. The elder Robertson also founded the service ministry Operation Blessing, ran unsuccessfully for the 1988 Republican presidential nomination, founded

the once-influential Christian Coalition and made millions of dollars through business investments.

The elder Robertson is also known for on-air commentary that critics called offensive and that many evangelicals considered an embarrassment.

He once said that American agents should assassinate Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez and suggested that the debilitating stroke suffered by Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was divine retribution for his decision to withdraw from the Gaza Strip.

Robertson wound up apologizing for both remarks.

Gordon Robertson, who shares his father's Pentecostal-style faith, told the AP that he and his father have different styles, pointing to their approach to playing chess.

"Dad likes the bold strikes and bold moves," he said. "I like looking at the end game, and I think it's good to do that."

He says he won't endorse a presidential candidate.

Last month, his father backed Rudy Giuliani for the Republican nomination, despite the former New York mayor's support for abortion rights and same-sex marriage. Explaining his endorsement, the elder Robertson said, "The overriding issue before the American people is the defense of our population from the bloodlust of Islamic terrorists."

Gordon Robertson, a graduate of Yale University and Washington & Lee Law School, was active in the Republican Party when he practiced law, but said, "I literally walked away from all that." However, he said he does plan to speak out on "issues of the day."

"I think that's something ... that Christians have an obligation to do. I don't see myself shying away from that," he said.

Gordon Robertson spent five years in Manila as head of CBN's Asia operations before returning to the U.S. and working with his father. He plans to expand CBN ministries overseas through TV and the Web.

THE OBSERVER

BUSINESS

Tuesday, December 4, 2007

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MARKET RECAP

Stocks

Dow Jones	13,314.57	-57.15
Up: 2,345	Same: 971	Down: 971
Composite Volume: 3,306,114,713		
AMEX	2,351.55	-8.30
NASDAQ	2,637.13	-23.83
NYSE	9,811.86	-44.99
S&P 500	1,472.42	-8.72
NIKKEI (Tokyo)	15,598.53	-30.44
FTSE 100 (London)	6,386.60	-45.90
COMPANY	%CHANGE	\$GAIN PRICE
S&P DEP RECIEPTS (SPY)	-0.66	-0.98 147.68
POWERSHARES (QQQ)	-0.84	-0.43 50.88
E*TRADE FINL CORP (ETFC)	-10.65	-0.49 4.11
COUNTRYWIDE FNL CP (CFC)	-1.29	-0.14 10.68

Treasuries

10-YEAR NOTE	-1.94	-0.077	3.895
13-WEEK BILL	-3.58	-0.110	2.960
30-YEAR BOND	-1.11	-0.049	4.354
5-YEAR NOTE	-3.80	-0.013	3.288

Commodities

LIGHT CRUDE (\$/bbl.)	+0.60	89.31
GOLD (\$/Troy oz.)	+5.60	794.70
PORK BELLIES (cents/lb.)	-0.60	90.73

Exchange Rates

YEN	110.3150
EURO	0.6823
CANADIAN DOLLAR	1.0028
BRITISH POUND	0.4847

IN BRIEF

U.S. manufacturing continues to grow

NEW YORK — U.S. manufacturing expanded in November as new orders and production improved, but weakness in employment suggested that industrial jobs may not be as plentiful in coming months.

The Institute for Supply Management, a Tempe, Ariz.-based trade group, said Monday that its manufacturing index registered 50.8 last month, down from 50.9 in October. A reading above 50 indicates growth; below that spells contraction.

The November results, which marked the 10th consecutive monthly expansion, were slightly stronger than the 50.1 expected by analysts polled by Thomson/IFR Markets.

"While other segments of the economy are struggling, manufacturing continues to grow due to continuing strength in new orders, and a recovery in production from last month," Norbert Ore, chairman of the institute's business survey committee, said in a statement. "Prices, driven higher by energy prices, are once again the major concern."

Ford plans to offer full lineup in 2020

DEARBORN, Mich. — Ford Motor Co. plans to offer a full line of vehicles, including trucks and sport utility vehicles, in 2020 despite tougher federal fuel economy regulations likely to take effect that year, Chief Executive Alan Mulally said Monday.

The auto industry's fleet of new cars, sport utility vehicles, pickup trucks and vans will have to average 35 miles per gallon in combined city and highway driving by 2020, according to the agreement that congressional negotiators announced late Friday. That compares with the 2008 requirement of 27.5 mpg average for cars and 22.5 mpg for light trucks. It would be the first increase ordered by Congress in three decades.

The commitment may be difficult for Ford, which doesn't have a single vehicle in its 2008 model year lineup that meets the new standards.

Home retailers join winter sales rush

Businesses add holiday items in attempt to recover from slump in consumer spending

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Amid the paint, power tools and 99-piece wrench and ratchet sets, the aisles at Home Depot are filled this holiday season with wrapping paper, snow villages and artificial Christmas trees.

"I was a little surprised when I walked in," said Alice Yoder, of Charlotte, Home Depot circular in hand, as she scanned the holiday section for a pre-lit Christmas wreath advertised for \$59.99. "I knew Home Depot had a huge selection of lights and trees, but the Santas, and other home decor, that I didn't expect."

The nation's beleaguered home retailers — stung by declining consumer confidence, slumping home sales, tighter credit standards and rising fuel prices — are fighting hard to attract Yoder and others in a last-minute rush of customers to help make up for what's been a tough year.

"Customers still want to feel good about their homes," said Craig Menear, executive vice president of merchandising for Home Depot. "We took a bigger swing in holiday items this year, because we know that when times are more difficult, consumers want to take care of their homes."

Retailers generally expect this holiday season to be a nail-biter, with most expecting only small gains in sales volumes compared with last year. It's even worse for the home retailers — consumers nationwide are forecast to spend only around \$94 on home and holiday furnishings this season, down from last year's \$115, according to Deloitte's annual holiday survey.

"With the rise of gas and



Customers browse through holiday merchandise at a Home Depot store in Charlotte, N.C. Home retailers have expanded their product lines for the holiday season.

home heating prices and the mortgage rate concerns, shoppers anticipate cutting back on many categories, including home,"

said Wendy Liebmann, president of marketing consulting firm WSL Strategic Retail. "It's a season of mind-set over matter, as shoppers feel very unsettled about what the year-end will look like for them financially and emotionally."

To compensate, home retailers — including Macy's Inc., Crate & Barrel, Home Depot and others — offering both new

and unique merchandise, plus running special online promotions, along with the traditional in-store trim-a-tree wares.

At Pottery Barn, stores are offering holiday decorating classes and special shopping hours, and customers who attend receive a complimentary Pottery Barn design book. At Macy Inc., a new product launch from Martha Stewart is designed to drive traffic to home departments that didn't exist last holiday season.

Other home retailers started the holiday push

early, including The Container Store and Design Within Reach, with direct mail and e-mail offers for affordable small items and unique larger ones.

At Home Depot's Web site, customers can watch comedian and actor Steve Harvey talk about ways to prepare their home for the holidays, from floor installation to holiday decor. The store's offering is backed with a full marketing campaign, complete with print and electronic media, online and direct mail advertising.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

OPEC debates a hike in oil production

Associated Press

ABU DHABI — With oil prices backing away from record levels but nervous traders poised to bid them up, OPEC oil ministers will have a tough call Wednesday on whether to crank up production.

Up to a few days ago, the markets were betting that OPEC decision-makers would opt to increase output at their meeting in Abu Dhabi in attempts to cool red-hot prices that closed at a record \$98.18 on Nov. 23 before falling back.

Comments from OPEC members boosted such sentiment. Iraqi Oil Minister Hussein al-Shahristani told Dow Jones Newswires last week that the Organization of

Petroleum Exporting Countries will consider another 500,000-barrel-a-day production boost in Abu Dhabi.

Unnamed OPEC officials have told Dow Jones an even higher 750,000 barrel-a-day hike could be in the cards.

Oil prices tumbled in anticipation of such a move, along with fears for the health of the U.S. economy, leaving prices down by nearly \$10 by Friday — the biggest correction ever in nominal terms.

Two days ahead of the OPEC meeting, the price of light, sweet crude for January delivery fell \$1.17 to \$87.54 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

Also pressuring prices downward are reduced demand growth fore-

casts from both OPEC and the International Energy Agency. And a half-a-million barrel OPEC production hike from last month is starting to kick in, alongside with expectations of increased output from the United Arab Emirates with the end of refinery maintenance there.

Such developments support arguments by key OPEC ministers that the market is well-supplied and has been driven higher by speculation.

Amid the mixed signals, ministers will want to tread carefully — they remember the disastrous fallout from their decision to raise output just before the 1997 Asian financial crisis only to see oil prices plummet from \$20 to \$12 a barrel.

THE OBSERVER VIEWPOINT

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Viewpoint space is available to all readers. The free expression of all opinions through letters is encouraged. Letters to the Editor must be signed and must include contact information.

Questions regarding Observer policies should be directed to Editor in Chief Maddie Hanna.

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Abortion and gender

"If men could get pregnant, abortion would be a sacrament," said Rosie O'Donnell, in one of her final displays of ignorance and tastelessness before leaving the intellectual feast known as "The View" this past summer. What occasioned that particular fit was the recent

Greg Yatarola
Dome and Domer

Supreme Court decision upholding a ban on an especially impolite method of abortion. O'Donnell also drew ominous conclusions from the fact that the five justices in the majority were all Catholic men. But of course — they voted to permit the ban not because abortion isn't even vaguely hinted at in the Constitution, but because they're misogynist Vatican robots!

I'd seen that comment before. Back when I was an undergrad, the Viewpoint editor printed it once as the section's quote of the day. I'm not sure whom it was attributed to. I assumed the point was valid, that the conflict in America over abortion is largely a conflict between men and women. Yes, I've always known women who were dead-set against it, and men who are very grateful for its easy availability, but in many ways, subtle or not-so-subtle, our society reinforces the idea that the fight against abortion is a matter of men telling women what to do. Having been voted "most gullible" in high school, I was always one to accept conventional wisdom. Besides, the women I'd known who'd most eagerly expressed their opinion on the issue had been heavily on the pro-abortion side.

So I was surprised by a Washington Times article back in July 2003 titled "Pro-Life Women Shift to Majority," by Grant Schulte. According to a survey conducted at the request of a pro-abortion advocacy group, 17 percent of American women think abortion should be illegal altogether. 34 percent more think it should be outlawed except in cases of rape, incest or

mortal danger to the mother; these cases account for about one percent of abortions performed in America. So a slim majority of American women would ban 99 percent of abortions. Strangely, the New York Times, which claims to print "all the news that's fit to print," didn't report on the story. Then again, such a story must be deeply embarrassing to an outfit that consistently editorializes in favor of unlimited abortion access under the euphemism "women's rights." New York Times Magazine did indirectly cover the story, however, printing an extended diatribe by a feminist angered by the survey results, telling her fellow women to get their thumbs out of their mouths (her metaphor, not mine).

A different survey conducted around the same time showed that men lean the other way, but by a larger margin, which makes the population as a whole slightly pro-choice. And according to the keynote speaker at the state Rally for Life two years ago, there's a similar dynamic here in Maryland — the public leans pro-choice, but the women lean pro-life. So it's true: There is a gender gap on abortion. But it's not very big, and it's opposite to the one Rosie and the rest would have us believe.

My first reaction to these results was that once again, women are demonstrably morally superior to men, which is what I already believed anyway. Just look at a list of serious sins — anger, lust, greed, dishonesty, drunkenness. Isn't it like decoding the Y-chromosome? But the data in this case clearly don't support such a broad generalization of female superiority. It's not like women are overwhelmingly against abortion and men overwhelmingly for. Actually, I'm disappointed the gap's not bigger, seeing how men have less problem with killing in general (animals, criminals, enemy combatants), are less fond of babies, and are more interested in promiscuity — and make no mistake, the right to abortion is ultimately about the ability to be promiscuous. Moreover, women know, in a way men

never can, that "uterine contents" (a favorite New York Times term for "baby") is a who, not a what. And if you remove from the comparison those men who deeply oppose abortion and would ban it but who have been so morally gilded that they sincerely believe they don't even have the right to tell women not to destroy their children — the kind of men, good-hearted but gutless, who let their wives keep their maiden names, and who say "We're pregnant" — then the gap shrinks even more, maybe even vanishes.

What then are we to conclude? Maybe just what Solzhenitsyn wrote. The line separating good from evil doesn't divide one class from another, one race from another, Christians from non-Christians, or women from men. The line between good and evil goes right down the middle of every human heart. Yes, I'd still rather have the next passerby be a woman, if I were dying along the side of a road, and I'd rather be at the mercy of someone raised in a Christian home than in San Francisco, but goodness isn't a function of genes or upbringing. The possibility of turning aside toward evil and nothingness was as real for Mother Teresa as it is for me, insofar as I haven't already done so.

But I guess the lesson could just be, don't listen to Rosie O'Donnell and don't believe everything in Viewpoint. And be nice to those poor feminists — it must be extremely galling for them to rely on men for their most cherished right. Maybe that's why they're so mad? Cheers, girls!

Greg Yatarola graduated from Notre Dame in 1999. With the foresight of cynicism, he suspects it's just a matter of time till science finds a way for men to get pregnant. He hopes he's dead by then. While he's not, he can be reached at gregy@hotmail.com

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

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OBSERVER POLL

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QUOTE OF THE DAY

"One should absorb the color of life, but one should never remember its details. Details are always vulgar."

Oscar Wilde
author

THE OBSERVER VIEWPOINT

Tuesday, December 4, 2007

page 9

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Custodial staff deserves fair treatment

When I was first hired at Notre Dame, I was ecstatic. I felt that I had secured employment with a future. But four years later, I find myself disillusioned and disappointed. There are several issues I think the University needs to address: The compensation package for the custodial staff is shamefully lacking, we are over-worked and the University shows us little respect.

The first area of concern is the salary and benefit package. People are usually impressed when I tell them I work at Notre Dame as it carries a certain prestige — along with the assumption that the salary would be adequate. Nothing could be further from the truth. After four years of employment, I have received a total salary increase of \$.50 per hour. My wages are far less than the established federal poverty level for my family of five. As if this weren't difficult enough, there is a hefty deductible from every paycheck for health insurance. Heaven help us if we

become ill because there isn't enough money left to pay the co-pay for a doctor's visit.

I am certainly willing to work hard for my salary, but the custodial staff at Notre Dame is fully over-worked. There is often more work than can be done in an eight-hour shift. There exists an inequality in job assignments, and if one employee calls in sick, it is up to the rest of us to take up the slack. Also, several employees have sustained job-related injuries and experienced other health issues as a result of their employment at Notre Dame, and they are often forced to return to work before they have fully recovered.

Everybody needs to feel valued and appreciated, but the custodial staff at Notre Dame seems to receive little respect and recognition. The phrase, "The staff is the backbone of this university," has been tossed around for years, but I don't see that respect. For example, when the Jordan Hall of

Science was dedicated, the custodial staff was told we needed to leave the building during these festivities — after months of extra work assignments during the construction phase to get the building ready. There was no recognition or respect shown for our extra hours of hard work.

The custodial staff makes a contribution to this university that cannot be paralleled. This great institution has a debt to us that needs to be paid. All we are asking for is a fair salary, a fair workload, and a little respect and appreciation. Is that asking too much?

If you would like to help address these labor issues at Notre Dame, please send an email to the Campus Labor Action Project at ndlabor@gmail.com

Donna Bromeling
Building Services staff
Dec. 3

U-WIRE

Alcohol orthodoxy goes unchallenged

When is an adult not an adult? When it comes to alcohol, the answer is: "whenever those in charge feel like it."

New laws passed by the state legislature went into effect earlier this month, now creating a new "crime" for underage consumption of alcohol. Not content with simply making criminals out of anyone under 21 in possession of alcohol, the legislature has decided that the scourge of 18, 19 and 20-year-olds drinking now warrant police to seek out and arrest anyone underage with even a drop of alcohol on their breath.

Almost never is the question raised why underage adults consuming alcohol is such an epidemic to be stamped out with prejudice — the idea is simply taken as unchallenged orthodoxy. Why shouldn't underage adults be drinking? "Because it's the law." No further reasoning required.

Despite the university theoretically being a place of free inquiry, almost never does one hear members of the administration questioning the wisdom of diverting scarce police resources to the end of harassing underage students

Steve Skutnik
North Carolina State University The Technician

getting a beer buzz. Even our own student leaders regularly crow about the need to prevent the bane of underage drinking through education and enforcement — as if the notion of challenging the current age regime (and in particular, the law enforcement priorities that go with it) was completely off the table.

Thus, one has to ask — are lawmakers, administrators and student leaders simply too petty or cowardly to actually question the wisdom of treating adults as children when it comes to alcohol, or do they actually buy into the completely asinine notion that a double-standard of adulthood somehow manages to single-handedly stave off a plague of social ills?

Even if one were to generously assume that prohibiting underage drinking was completely successful in its enforcement (an unlikely notion, given both the status quo and the history of prohibition), what harm do proponents propose they are preventing? If it's the consequence of irresponsible drinking, why doesn't the current policy not simply time-shift this behavior a mere few years into the future?

Of course, these same people will regularly trot out the

condescending argument that adults under 21 are simply not responsible enough to handle alcohol — despite being responsible enough in the eyes of the law to handle the vote (a far more dangerous good in the wrong hands), own firearms, and be tried as an adult for their crimes. The irony is appalling.

Meanwhile, underage adults can take comfort in the fact that while they are legally denied the refreshing taste of a cold one for the next few years, they can still enjoy the thrill of being sent out to fight and die in whatever third-world hellhole Uncle Sam decides to invade next. All for the sake of a country that would infantile them back home.

Because until they begin to exercise one of the few rights they have as a legal adult — the right to vote for those who would change the current laws — this will be one of the few thrills the law will still allow.

This article was originally published in the Dec. 3 edition of The Technician, the daily publication of North Carolina State University.

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

Grad school a choice, not a necessity

As I sit at my desk this weekend, only a few weeks before final exams, I have literally millions of vocabulary words, dates, times and places of different events in U.S. history, Spanish phrases, math formulas and literary devices flying restlessly around my brain. And through the fog one solitary thought prevails: "There has got to be a better way!"

I looked at some of my friends this weekend who were killing themselves to learn and absorb every last piece of information possible, and then I looked at some of my friends who were at the movies and then out to dinner and then at parties. Ultimately we know that people who don't study for finals historically don't do well on them. These people probably won't get into great graduate schools straight out of college either.

But what is so bad about that?

All my life I have been conditioned to think that after high school comes college and after that comes some sort of graduate

school, just the same as one moves from second to third grade without any questions asked. But now as I really am forced to examine my life and what I want to do with it, I have to ask myself: Why graduate school?

There is an interesting social shift at play here. Twenty years ago the end all be all of education was simply a college degree. It was not uncommon for many to go to vocational schools right out of high school, never making it to college at all. Today many people think of a bachelor's degree as no better than a high school diploma and consider graduate school not a possibility, but a given. However, I contend that much can be done with a four-year undergraduate degree.

There are plenty of professions that make money with no graduate schooling whatsoever. If I wanted to be a journalist, work on a political campaign, start my own company or any number of respectable professions I could begin within the next few years.

Undoubtedly sometime in high school we were all shown that pie chart depicting the average salary of those with high school

diplomas, those with bachelor's degrees and those with master's degrees. Those with a bachelor's, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, are supposed to make about \$20,000 more per year than high school grads. Those with a master's are supposed to make another \$10,000 per year on top of that (averaging \$62,000 per year).

But let's be real here. One's motivation towards life, family background and work ethic have significantly more to do with your salary than does the number of years of college you completed. Sure, it is essentially impossible to be a doctor or a lawyer without going to medical or law school. But let's face it: We're not all cut out to be doctors or lawyers (no matter how many times our relatives tell us we are).

While grad school does open the door to careers not available to those without those coveted master's degrees, think of all the opportunities wasted. Most obviously, the fact that you are in college another two to four years is time you are not making money. In fact, during that time you are most likely racking up some substantial

debt currently coming close to averaging \$100,000, according to U.S. News and World Report. And even if grad school is something you want to do, often times the job you can get out of college will pay for you to go back to school, since you will become a greater asset to their company.

Maybe I'm just bitter because finals are upon us and the stress of that coupled with the imminent holiday season is getting to me. Am I going to go to grad school? I don't even know yet. All I'm saying is that maybe it's not the logical next step after we graduate from here. Maybe we should think about exploring the possibilities presented to us immediately following George Washington. Bill Gates didn't even go to college, and look at him. All right, bad example. But you get my point.

This article originally appeared in the Dec. 3 edition of The G.W. Hatchet, the daily publication of George Washington University.

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

Please limit Letters to the Editor to 350 words and Guest Columns to 800 words.
E-mail your submissions to viewpnt@nd.edu

STRONG BODIES FIGHT ND BOXERS ANSWER A DIFFERENT CALL

By MARK WITTE
Scene Writer

Down! With the strength I shouldn't have left, I slowly lower myself down to the floor and back up again. 48! Before either I or the sweat coursing over my eyelids have a chance to

recover, it's back... Down! My arms plead with me now. 49! The sweat pours off my face, running for its life. Down! Why does my sweat

taste salty? 50! Thank God! I spring to my feet and look at the clock. I blink once or twice. This can't be right, only 4:45... I blink again. The big hand hasn't moved. My head sags. More sweat escapes, cascading to the floor. It's only been 15 minutes.

To be honest, I am not really sure why I signed up for Bengal Bouts. Perhaps I felt compelled to follow in my father's footsteps — he participated in Bengal Bouts as a junior way back in '84. But he did insist that I not feel compelled to do the same. Perhaps it was because, now that I'm 21, I could sign my own form even if my mother gave me that sinister look of disapproval. But then again, she signed the form anyway. Perhaps it was because, when a veteran stopped me at Activities Night and asked if I wanted to fight, my manhood felt a call to duty. Or maybe, as my uncle insists — and this seems the most logical of all the explanations — I'm just stupid.

And maybe I am.

When one of the captains bellows out "Six inches," you'd better say a quick "Hail Mary" and keep praying that nobody drops his legs.

Practice is only two hours a day, but what's lacking in time is easily made up in intensity. For the first two weeks I went to bed so exhausted from the hundreds of sit-ups, pushups, arm circles and endless calisthenics that not even the worst lion's roar of my roommate's snoring could keep me awake.

Like the other novices, I've learned to dread certain exercises. When one of the captains bellows out "Six inches," you'd better say a quick "Hail Mary" and keep praying that nobody drops his legs. After that I'm not sure which is

worse: hearing a captain yell "Get it bouncing" when there's still 15 minutes left in practice, or being asked if anyone knows a good joke while holding push-up position at the end of a set. Neither usually ends very well.

But for all this bodily punishment, sometimes it's best to examine the larger picture.

The motto of Bengal Bouts is "Strong bodies fight that weak bodies may be nourished." The words are valiant, the cause even more so. Each year the fights raise tens of thousands of dollars for the Holy Cross Missions in Bangladesh. And this season, as much as any season before, Bangladesh needs the contribution.

On Nov. 15, Bangladesh was rocked by a category 4 cyclone. More than

4,000 people were left dead by the 150 mph winds and enormous tidal waves. An estimated 5.5 million were homeless or displaced, and the country's economic growth will likely take quite a blow.

At a Mass he gave Sunday in the Dillon Hall Chapel, Father Lou Del Fra stressed the importance of finding ways in our future or current endeavors to serve and help others. He pointed out that if we work only for ourselves, we'll eventually run out of reasons to get out of bed in the morning. Now that finals are fast approaching with the usual assault of papers, projects and all-nighters, Father Del Fra's words provide new incentive to keep fighting.

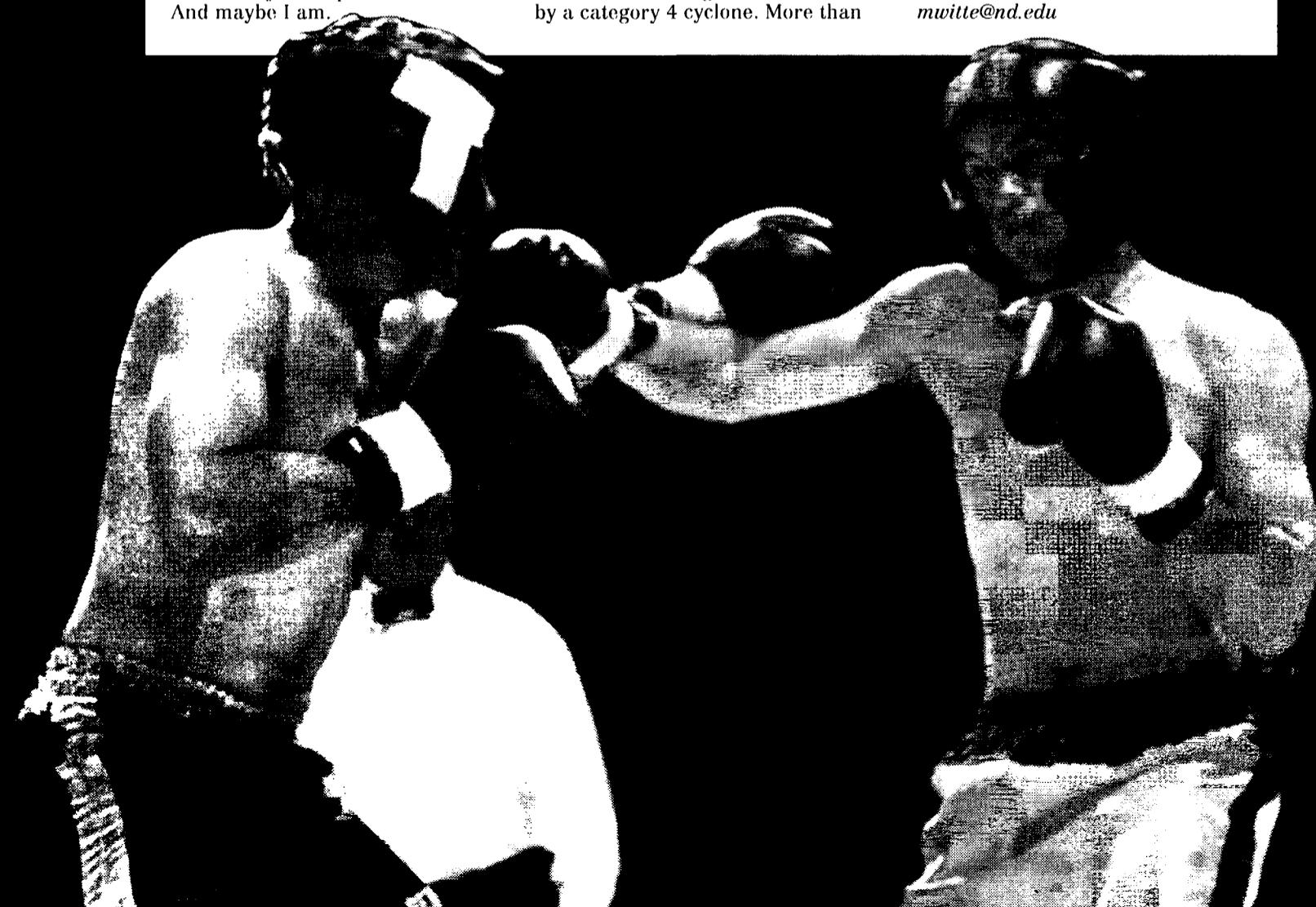
While you may not be able to hit your professor or his final with a right hook, know that your studies are strengthening your mind so that someday you may nourish others.

I know that next time I'm at practice, feeling exhausted, clenched tightly in the plank position and fighting tooth and nail to keep my knees from touching the floor, it's not any personal glory or thought of winning that will keep me up.

I know what got me out of bed this morning. Maybe I'm not that stupid after all.

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

Contact Mark Witte at mwitte@nd.edu



MATT HUDSON | Observer Graphic

THE OBSERVER SCENE

Tuesday, December 4, 2007

page 11

Leerone adds flair to indie genre



MATT HUDSON | Observer Graphic

By STEPHANIE DePREZ
Scene Writer

Leerone is the latest indie-chick to come bantering across the music scene. She carries with her a bag of lyrical tricks just persuasive enough to convince you her melodies aren't juvenile and wields piano skills just subtle enough to trick you into thinking that you aren't listening to Tori Amos Lite.

Leerone would like you to believe that she is the real deal, or maybe the next P.J. Harvey in suspenders. Her appeal is in the weirdness, as most indie bands today have found: Instead of finding a niche, create your own. Unfortunately, if everyone is doing it, it's no longer fun for us, the listener. It is possible, though, to ignore the fact that Leerone might be trying just a bit too hard to look like she isn't trying at all, and to simply enjoy her music.

She would also like you to believe that her new album, "Imaginary Biographies," is everything you've been yearning for and all the quirkiness you've been missing. And to a point, she's right. Though her music may never be able to break out of the indie role it's so clearly slated for, it tends to jump politely between a reverent tribute to the great pioneer of female singer-songwriters, Tori Amos, and the irreverent disgust of the very audience-specific Dresden Dolls. Leerone has

moments so soft and terrific that it seems like you've drifted into a Vanessa Carlton album. She also provides the motivation that will have you swearing she's a "Riot Grrl" who's kept this album locked tight somewhere for the past 15 years.

The biggest draw in Leerone's music is her lyrics. "Plant, tend, pick and share the love you have/ Ingest the love you are given/ Then, recycle and distribute again/ It's love, in motion ... Kinetic love," she sings. The melodies become subservient to her hopeful criticism of life today. The song "Junk/Peace of Mind" opens with a very low-key piano riff that meanders aimlessly until she begins to explain. "I don't care too much for Golden

Globes/ I don't care what People magazine has to say about its top hats or the rhetoric of stardom," Leerone sings, making you wonder if she's serious. Lyrics like this wander in and out of the album, broken up by heartfelt observations and matter-of-fact whining.

The music has moments of jarring clarity. "Care For Some Whiskey?" is an instant trip to some eastern European bar with jabbing chords — and an accordion — that give every other beat a satisfying punctuation. Certain tracks could have been lifted straight from a failed Off-Broadway show, like "Bring It On," and others, like "Rosie Lee," are deceptively sweet with haunting lyrics.

In its entirety, "Imaginary Biographies" is a strange excursion into indie-rock's future. It's not radio music, because it's made for active listening. This also isn't music for the casual listener.

To play this album and ignore it is hardly doing it justice — it's worthy of at least one sitting. Plus, it would make quite a gift for any musically inclined intellectual if you haven't a clue what to give this Christmas.

Contact Stephanie DePrez at sdeprez@nd.edu

Imaginary Biographies

Leerone

Label: Fussy Music

Recommended Tracks: "To Fill the Void" and "Care For Some Whiskey"



Photo courtesy of art.com
One of solo artist Leerone's clear influences is pianist Tori Amos.



Photo courtesy of rocknpopcast.com
Leerone's style is also influenced by indie artists like P.J. Harvey.

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NBA

Hawks end seven-game losing streak in Philly

Despite missing Ford, Bosh and Bargnani, Raptors deal Bobcats their sixth-straight loss in 98-79 victory

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — The young, high-flying Atlanta Hawks are maturing rapidly.

Josh Smith scored 22 points, Marvin Williams and Josh Childress both added 16 and the Hawks snapped a seven-game losing streak at Philadelphia with an 88-79 victory over the 76ers on Monday night.

Joe Johnson scored 15 points and Al Horford had 12 points and 13 rebounds for the Hawks (7-9), who last won at Philadelphia on March 21, 2003.

Atlanta improved to 3-5 on the road this season and 28-104 overall under coach Mike Woodson.

"When you're talking about making the playoffs, it's very important to win on the road," Woodson said.

The Hawks haven't been in the playoffs since the 1998-99 season.

For now, it was a positive step just to win a road game in an arena where they have struggled for several years.

"Since I've been an Atlanta Hawk, we haven't won here in three years," Smith said. "It feels real good because it's a tough place to play with a difficult environment."

Willie Green scored a season-

high 23 points while Andre Miller added 18 for the Sixers (5-12), who lost for the 10th time in the last 13 games. Andre Iguodala and Kyle Korver scored 11 points each while Reggie Evans and Samuel Dalembert both had 10 rebounds.

"I thought it was kind of a flat game in the beginning," Sixers coach Maurice Cheeks said.

Philadelphia was 2-of-11 from 3-point range. Over the last three games, the Sixers have hit just 5-of-37 3-pointers, including an 0-for-14 effort in last Friday's one-point win over Washington.

"We've got to find a way to put the ball in the hoop," Korver said. "We're just not able to get good shots."

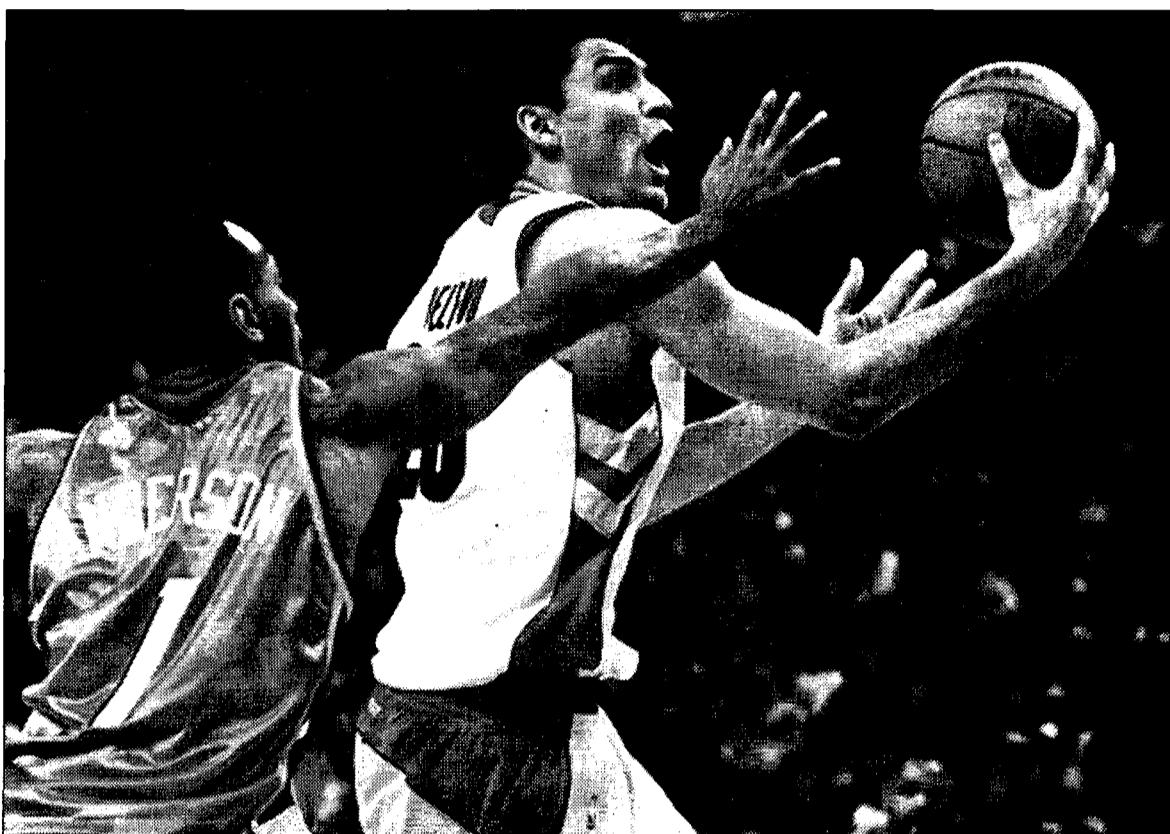
The Hawks led 66-62 after the third quarter and extended their lead to nine on several occasions.

Atlanta led 79-72 before Childress hit a 3-pointer from the baseline and Johnson converted a three-point play for an 85-72 lead with 1:41 remaining.

Woodson pointed to his team's defense during the key 6-0 run.

"We've been playing good defense in the fourth quarters," he said. "Tonight we made a stance in the third quarter and it carried over into the fourth."

Green was 7-for-7 from the



Raptors guard Carlos Delfino, right, drives to the basket as Bobcats guard Derek Anderson attempts to stop him. Delfino had 17 points in Toronto's 98-79 win over Charlotte Monday.

field in the second quarter and scored 16 points, as the Sixers overcame a seven-point deficit to take a 46-45 halftime lead.

Smith's 3-pointer at the buzzer had given the Hawks a 24-17 lead after the first quarter.

Raptors 98, Bobcats 79

Toronto's best players were out with injuries. It didn't seem to bother the Raptors.

Charlotte's best players couldn't shoot straight. It proved costly to the Bobcats.

Kris Humphries and Carlos Delfino both scored 17 points, Joey Graham added 13 and the Raptors shrugged off injuries to three top players to hand the Bobcats their sixth straight loss on Monday night.

Toronto played without forwards Chris Bosh (strained groin) and Andrea Bargnani (hyper-extended left knee) and guard T.J. Ford (left thumb).

It didn't matter to the Raptors, who got 12 points and nine assists from Jose Calderon and double-digit scoring from five others to post their fourth straight home win.

"The guys who needed to step up, stepped up," Raptors coach Sam Mitchell said. "The guys

who played, played well. The defense was good. We did the things we wanted to do."

The same could not be said of the Bobcats, who failed to overcome poor shooting performances by Raymond Felton (0-for-8), Jason Richardson (3-for-17) and Gerald Wallace (4-for-13).

"When that group is 7-for-38, then we don't have a chance," Charlotte coach Sam Vincent said. "Our core players, who have to provide us with some scoring punch, just couldn't get it going. We don't have the depth for two or three of our core guys to not perform."

The Bobcats missed nine of their first 11 field goal attempts and were 12-for-43 (28 percent) in the opening half.

"I just had a bad game tonight," said Richardson, who was 0-for-6 in the first half. "Being one of the top guys on the team, I've got to show up every night, but nights like that are going to happen sometimes where you can't make a shot."

Wallace scored 19 points and rookie Jared Dudley had 16 points and 10 rebounds for Charlotte, which has lost the six straight after a 6-4 start, the best in the team's four-year his-

tory.

Depth was no problem for Toronto, who buried Charlotte by shooting 11-for-20 in the first quarter. The Raptors led 16-4 midway through the first after Graham, making his first start of the season, threw down a one-handed dunk.

Delfino's 3-pointer as the buzzer sounded to end the first gave Toronto a 27-16 lead.

Charlotte has not led after the first quarter in any game during its current losing streak.

"We're digging ourselves into the Grand Canyon right now and it's too much to come back," Wallace said.

The Raptors began the second quarter with a 10-3 run and a tip-in by Humphries gave Toronto a 54-33 halftime lead.

Toronto is 2-1 in the three games it has played without Bosh, who leads the team with 18.8 points and 7.9 rebounds.

Calderon said Toronto pulled together with its top trio on the bench.

"Without Andrea, without Chris and T.J., everybody plays together," Calderon said. "Today, Kris Humphries and Joey Graham had a good game. We need everybody to win games."



Sixers guard Willie Green goes for a layup during Atlanta's 88-79 win over Philadelphia on Monday.

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TOP STORY — Stanford B2 bas-
ketball team predicted to win inter-
hall title despite losing two best
players

AROUND THE NATION

Tuesday, December 4, 2007

COMPILED FROM THE OBSERVER'S WIRE SERVICES

page 13

NCAA Men's Hockey USCHO.com/CSTV Division I

Poll

team	record	previous
1 Miami	13-1-0	1
2 Colorado College	10-4-0	4
3 Michigan	14-2-0	2
4 Denver	10-4-0	3
5 Michigan State	10-3-2	5
6 NOTRE DAME	14-4-0	7
7 North Dakota	7-5-1	8
8 New Hampshire	8-3-1	6
9 Clarkson	10-5-0	9
10 Wisconsin	7-6-1	13
11 Massachusetts	6-3-5	11
12 Northeastern	7-4-1	16
13 Harvard	6-2-1	15
14 St. Cloud State	7-5-2	10
15 Minnesota	8-7-1	14
16 Minnesota-Duluth	6-5-3	12
17 Boston College	5-4-5	19
18 Bowling Green	8-4-0	NR
19 Rensselaer	7-5-3	18
20 Michigan Tech	6-7-1	20

CCHA Conference Standings

team	conference	overall
1 NOTRE DAME	10-2-0	14-4-0
2 Miami	9-1-0	13-1-0
3 Michigan	9-1-0	14-2-0
4 Michigan State	6-2-0	10-3-2
5 Ferris State	6-4-0	7-6-1
6 Bowling Green	5-3-0	8-4-0
7 Northern Michigan	5-9-0	6-10-0
8 Nebraska-Omaha	4-7-1	5-7-1
9 Ohio State	2-8-0	4-11-1
10 Western Michigan	2-8-0	4-10-0
11 Alaska	1-6-1	1-8-1
12 Lake Superior	0-8-0	2-11-1

NCAA Women's Soccer

NSCAA/adidas Poll

team	record	previous
1 UCLA	14-1-2	1
2 Texas A&M	16-2-1	2
3 U. of Portland	13-3-0	3
4 UNC	15-3-0	4
5 Stanford	13-2-3	5
6 Penn State	15-3-1	7
7 Virginia	11-3-4	6
8 Purdue	16-2-2	8
9 USC	13-2-2	11
10 Texas	13-3-3	12
11 NOTRE DAME	14-4-1	13
12 West Virginia	14-4-1	14
13 Georgia	15-2-2	17
14 Florida State	11-4-3	15
15 Tennessee	13-3-2	59
16 Santa Clara	11-5-3	16
17 Boston College	11-4-3	10
18 Wake Forest	11-5-3	18
19 California	12-5-0	19
20 San Diego	14-2-3	20
21 Florida	13-4-2	22
22 Oklahoma	12-5-2	25
23 Missouri	12-6-0	21
24 Connecticut	12-5-1	23
25 Brigham Young	14-3-2	24

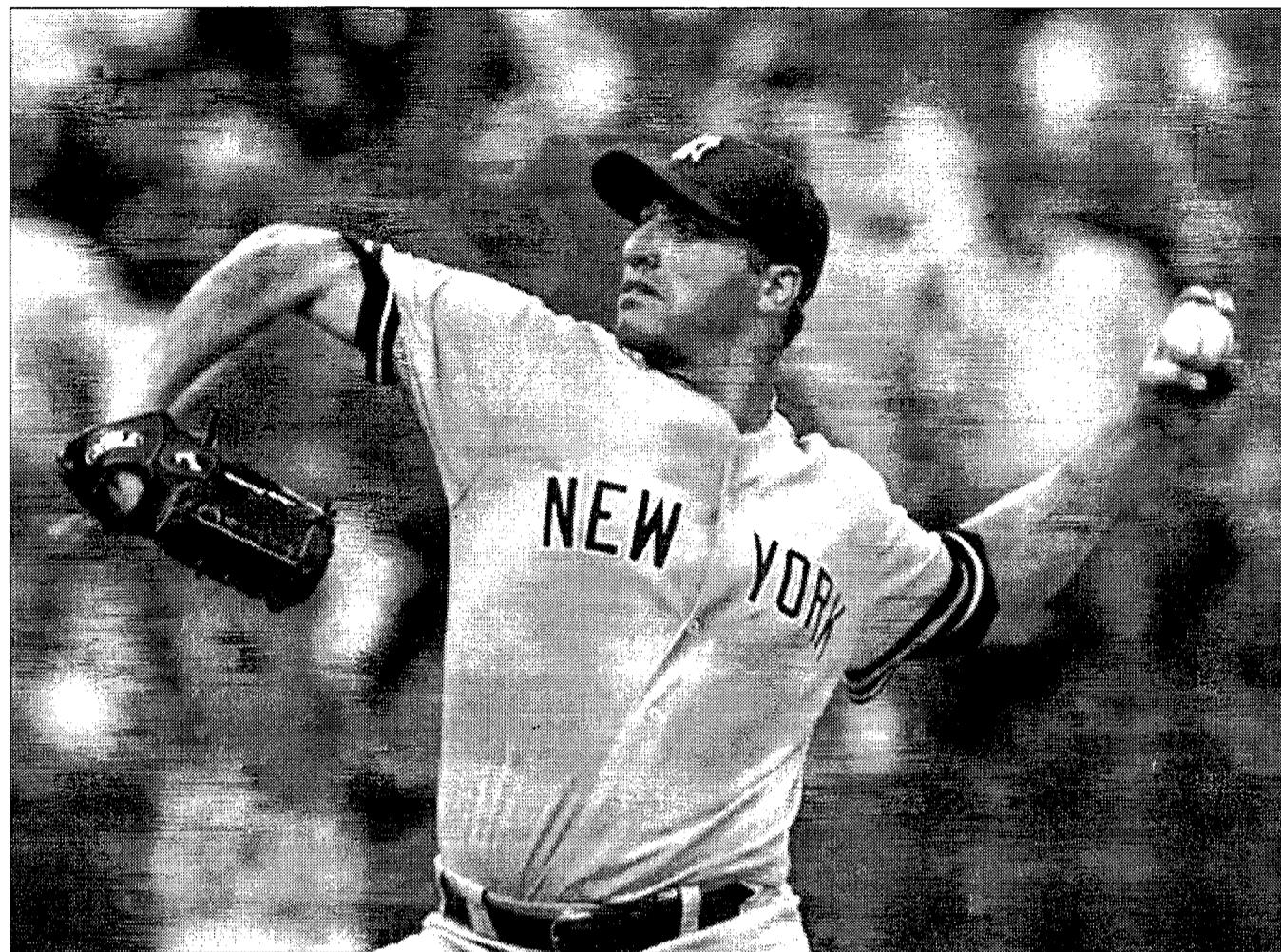
around the dial

NCAA Men's Basketball

Notre Dame vs. Kansas State
7 p.m., ESPN

North Carolina at Pennsylvania
7 p.m., ESPN2

MLB



AP
Andy Pettitte, 35, told New York Yankees teammates Sunday that he will pitch in the 2008 season and put off retirement. The left-handed pitcher went 15-9 with a 4.05 ERA this year for the Yankees.

Pettitte to return as Yankees pitcher in 2008

Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—Andy Pettitte decided to pitch for the New York Yankees in 2008 and put off retirement.

Pettitte's agent, Randy Hendricks, said Monday that the 35-year-old left-hander had started telling teammates on Sunday. Hendricks then informed Yankees general manager Brian Cashman of the news.

Hendricks said Yankees captain Derek Jeter and catcher Jorge Posada had lobbied Pettitte to return, and the pitcher consulted his wife.

"Players such as Jeter and Posada told him how much they needed him back, as

did Brian Cashman and Joe Girardi," Hendricks said. "Andy decided this weekend that he didn't want to keep the Yankees on hold as they sought to determine their team for next year."

The decision came as the Yankees set a Monday deadline for the Minnesota Twins to decide whether they will trade them two-time AL Cy Young Award winner Johan Santana for pitcher Phil Hughes, center fielder Melky Cabrera and a midlevel prospect.

Pettitte had declined a \$16 million option last month, saying he needed more time, and Posada said last week that Pettitte was leaning toward retirement. The pitcher had said late in the

season that it had become increasingly difficult to be away from his family during the season.

Pettitte was 15-9 with a 4.05 ERA this year in his return to the Yankees following three seasons with his hometown Houston Astros. He went 11-3 after the All-Star break and was New York's most effective starter during the first-round playoff loss to Cleveland, pitching 6 1-3 scoreless innings in Game 2.

New York had said it could wait until next month for Pettitte to make a decision. Cashman said the \$16 million option Pettitte declined was a standing offer.

All of the Yankees' major

free agents have now decided to return, with Pettitte following Posada, third baseman Alex Rodriguez and closer Mariano Rivera. The only major change thus far as been replacing manager Joe Torre with Girardi.

New York's projected rotation now includes Pettitte, Chien-Ming Wang, Mike Mussina, Hughes and Joba Chamberlain, with Ian Kennedy in reserve. But Yankees senior vice president Hank Steinbrenner said Sunday his preference was to make the deal for Santana, which would give New York a stronger ace as it competes to regain the AL East title from the World Series champion Boston Red Sox.

IN BRIEF

UCLA fires head football coach Dorrell

LOS ANGELES — UCLA coach Karl Dorrell was fired Monday, a day after the Bruins accepted a bowl bid and two days after a loss to cross-town rival Southern California.

Dorrell was let go despite leading the Bruins to a postseason game in each of his five seasons at UCLA, which had an outside chance to reach the Rose Bowl before its 24-7 defeat by USC over the weekend.

The 43-year-old Dorrell, a former UCLA player who previously had not held a head coaching job, had a 35-27 record.

The Bruins (6-6) will play BYU (10-2) in the Las Vegas Bowl on Dec. 22. UCLA athletic director Dan Guerrero said Dorrell will decide whether he wants to coach that game and, if not, defensive coordinator DeWayne Walker will serve as interim coach.

Demsey back on PGA tour after 10-year absence

WINTER GARDEN, Fla.—After a 10-year absence and two surgeries to remove a brain tumor the size of a golf ball, Todd Demsey finally made it back to the PGA Tour on Monday with perhaps the most significant round of his career.

Demsey, a former NCAA champion and amateur teammate of Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelson, closed with an 8-under 64 in the sixth and final round of Q-school to earn one of 26 full-exempt cards next year in the big leagues.

Frank Lickliter II, who opened with consecutive 62s, completed a wire-to-wire week at Orange County National and finished as the medalist at 29-under 403. He won by four shots over Brett Rumford of Australia.

But the day belonged to Demsey, 35, who played bogey-free on the Crooked Cat course and was carried along by an amazing calm.

Oilers top struggling Ducks to complete sweep

ANAHEIM, Calif.—Dustin Penner showed the struggling Anaheim Ducks what the defending Stanley Cup champions are missing.

Penner, allowed to go to Edmonton in the offseason, scored against his former team in the first period as the Oilers beat the Ducks 4-0 Sunday to complete a sweep of the teams' home-and-home series.

It was Penner's second appearance in Anaheim after signing a five-year, \$21.5 million offer sheet with the Oilers in August which the Ducks refused to match. The second-year forward had 29 goals for the Ducks last season, second only to Teemu Selanne.

Without Penner and Selanne, who is not playing while he contemplates retirement, the Ducks continue to search for consistent scoring.

NFL

Vikings manage to right the ship

After blowout loss to Packers, Minnesota has won three straight

Associated Press

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. — When the Minnesota Vikings trudged off the turf at Lambeau Field last month following a 34-0 rout at the hands of the Green Bay Packers, their season appeared to be on the brink of disaster.

They were 3-6 after being thoroughly dominated by their NFC North rivals, and lost star rookie Adrian Peterson to a knee injury that many thought would cripple an already struggling offense.

"You don't like to play that way and it was not a happy locker room after that game, nor should it have been," Vikings coach Brad Childress said Monday.

It was as grim as it could get.

"I don't think anybody in that room was particularly happy with how they portrayed themselves," Childress said. "It wasn't just the offense. It wasn't just the defense or special teams. It was all of us. And when I say 'us,' I am talking about players and coaches."

Three weeks later, Peterson is back on the field and the Vikings are steamrolling opponents in a way that hasn't been seen since Childress took over as coach before last season.

The Vikings have outscored the Raiders, Giants and Lions by a combined 112-49 in three straight wins that have put them right back in the thick of the jumbled NFC playoff race.

How have they done it?

They have kept their penalties down, their rushing yards up and gotten much better play at quarterback and in the secondary over the last three weeks.

"I just think we're focusing a lot more," said Chester Taylor, one half of the team's dynamic backfield duo. "We're playing four quarters and just not stepping on our own feet and making mistakes that we used to make in the beginning of the season. We're just coming along as a team right now."

With Peterson and Taylor, the Vikings have become a high-powered offense by pounding the ball on the ground, a rare strategy in this day and age of spread offenses and empty backfields.

They are averaging nearly 36 yards per game more on the ground than the second-ranked Jacksonville Jaguars and have rushed for 105 first downs this season.

Now 28 games into the Childress tenure, the offen-

sive line has finally started to come together and is opening gaping holes for Peterson and Taylor, who are taking advantage of excellent downfield blocking by the receivers to break big gains.

The Vikings are averaging a league-leading 5.6 yards per rush, thanks in part to Tarvaris Jackson's increasing competence at quarterback.

In his second season, Jackson completed just 21 passes in his first two months, missing four games with injuries and looking overwhelmed when he was under center.

In the last three games, Jackson is 41-for-52 (78.8 percent) for 504 yards, three touchdowns and two interceptions.

"Just getting completions are big," Childress said. "You kind of underestimate that sometimes, but completions are big.... I think I said it back during training camp — the one thing you couldn't give Tarvaris was the turns, the experience."

On defense, the team's embattled secondary finally appears to be coming together as well. The Vikings have always been a top-flight defense against the run, but opposing quarterbacks have had little difficulty moving the ball down the field through the air against the league's lowest-rated pass defense.

That has changed in the last two weeks. The Vikings intercepted Eli Manning four times — returning three for touchdowns — in a 41-17 victory in the Meadowlands, then allowed just one touchdown to the high-flying Lions in a 42-10 win on Sunday at the Metrodome.

"I think they are playing off each other very well, and I think we're doing some different things in terms of disguising," Childress said. "I think the guys on the back end are doing a great job of holding looks until the last moment, the linebackers the same way."

In broader terms, it's a completely different atmosphere in the locker room now compared to the Monday after the Green Bay debacle.

"We're more of a confident team than we were three weeks ago, but we also know where our focus needs to be," linebacker Chad Greenway said.

With games remaining at San Francisco (3-9), home against Chicago (5-7) and Washington (5-7) and at Denver (5-7), that newfound confidence appears to be justified.

"I would say that nothing wins like winning," Childress said. "You build on it, whether it is offense, defense or special teams and they all play off each other.... It's amazing how much that adds a little hop in your step."

NFL

Bush struggles in second season

Associated Press

METAIRIE, La. — There was a fumble that Reggie Bush was fortunate to recover.

There were two short passes that slipped through his hands.

Then there was the inaccurate, no-look toss on a botched trick play that may go down as the moment New Orleans truly blew its chance to get back into playoff contention.

Yet, more than any of those, the images that seemed to symbolize Bush's difficult second season occurred off the field at the end of the Saints' 27-23 loss to Tampa Bay.

Bush was walking toward the tunnel leading to the Louisiana Superdome locker room while what was initially called a fumble by Saints kick returner Lance Moore was in the process of being overturned. There were 14 seconds left, and head coach Sean Payton had to run Bush down and angrily order him back to the bench.

After the game, Bush sat in front of his locker for more than a half hour, still in uniform, with his hands on his head as he stared at the floor. He declined to speak with reporters.

On Monday, he was absent while reporters were permitted to talk with players in the locker room at the team's suburban training facility.

"Reggie is a great talent. Reggie is one of the best athletes I have ever seen, but that only gets you so far," quarterback Drew Brees said. "Certain fundamentals and discipline to playing this game — that is learned and that's not something that just happens immediately."

Were expectations of Bush too high? He won the Heisman Trophy at Southern California, was the second overall pick in the 2006 draft and signed a contract worth up to \$62 million over six years. Yet,

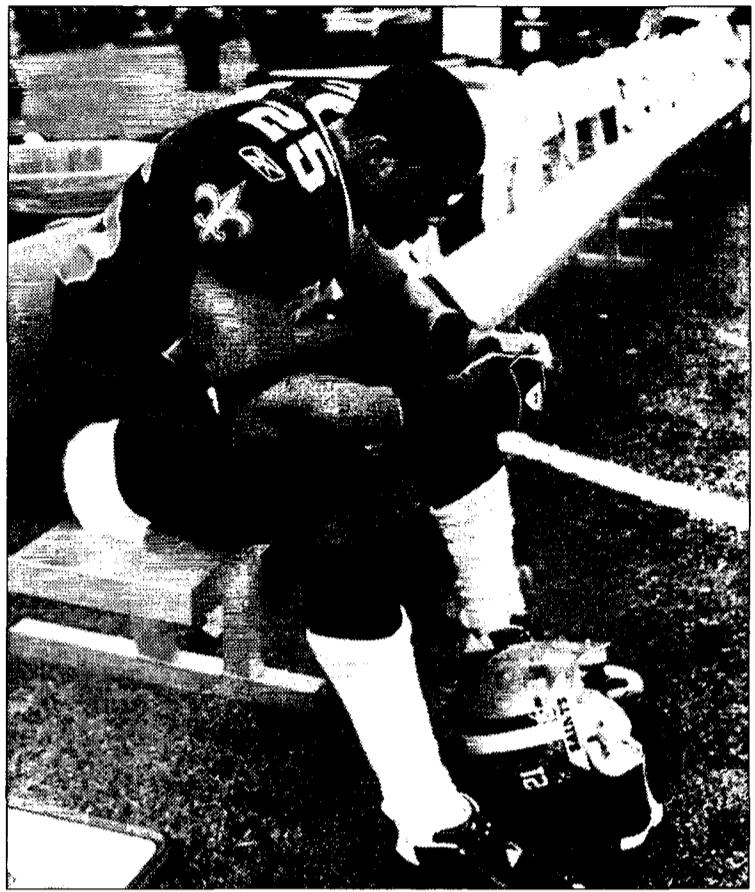
"Reggie is one of the best athletes I have ever seen, but that only gets you so far."

Drew Brees
Saints quarterback

many players who were virtually unstoppable during their amateur days have entered the NFL with a lot of hype, only to find that much of what worked in college only got in them in trouble against stronger, faster, more disciplined NFL defenders.

Bush seemed to be figuring that out, even overcoming it, during the latter half of his rookie season, which was defined primarily by three spectacular plays: A game-winning, 55-yard punt return for a touchdown against Tampa Bay; a screen pass that he turned into a weaving, 61-yard score at Dallas; and his 88-yard touchdown catch in the NFC championship game at Chicago, a play he finished by high-stepping and then somersaulting into the end zone.

With those highlights in mind — not to mention his 1,307 yards running and receiving combined and his nine touchdowns during the



Saints running back Reggie Bush sits on the bench near the end of New Orleans' 27-23 loss Sunday to Tampa Bay.

2006 regular season — no one snickered when Bush confidently predicted during training camp that 2007 would be his breakout season.

After 12 games, it looks more like a breakdown season.

Bush's numbers are not bad, but far from spectacular. He's scored six touchdowns, has 581 yards rushing and 417 yards receiving. His longest run so far has been 22 yards and his longest reception 25.

The long, game-breaking plays Bush says he expects of himself haven't come this season, unlike the big mistakes he hoped to avoid.

He's been lucky the Saints have recovered most of his eight fumbles, including a

punt that bounced away from him after hitting off his facemask during a win over Jacksonville.

His most costly errors were a lost fumble at the Houston 1-yard line in a loss to the Texans and the botched toss to Henderson on Sunday while the Saints were trying to protect a 23-20 lead in the final 3 minutes.

Bush, who had trouble with the handoff, already was running past Henderson by the time he got a handle on it. He had to make a split-second decision: Keep the ball and eat a likely loss of yardage, or make the risky toss.

Bush chose the latter. Henderson reached back behind him with one hand but could not pull it in. Tampa Bay ended up recovering on the Saints 37 to set up the go-ahead touchdown.

Payton sought to deflect criticism from Bush. The coach said initially and again on Monday that he put Bush in a risky situation.

"There's a lot of risk in a play like that and your worst

fear is realized when you don't handle the exchange or block it just how you want," Payton said. "It's my fault for putting us in that position in that point in the game."

Speaking generally, however, Payton did say Bush needs to improve in the areas of ball security and pass blocking.

There have been other off-field distractions. The NCAA and Pac-10 are still investigating whether Bush or his family received improper benefits from agents while he was still in college. Bush has said repeatedly he did nothing wrong and his lawyer has said the Bush's are simply being extorted by criminals.

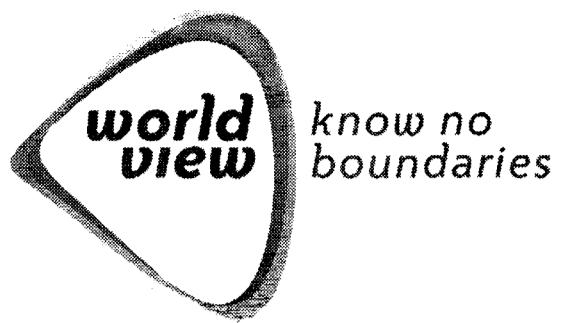
Bush is also named in a civil lawsuit filed by a fledgling marketing agent who claims to have given the Bush family money. Bush could lose his Heisman if he's found to have violated NCAA rules.

Still, Bush has never been accused of anything illegal and his NFL career in New Orleans would not be affected. Furthermore, Bush has insisted that the case has not distracted him on the field.

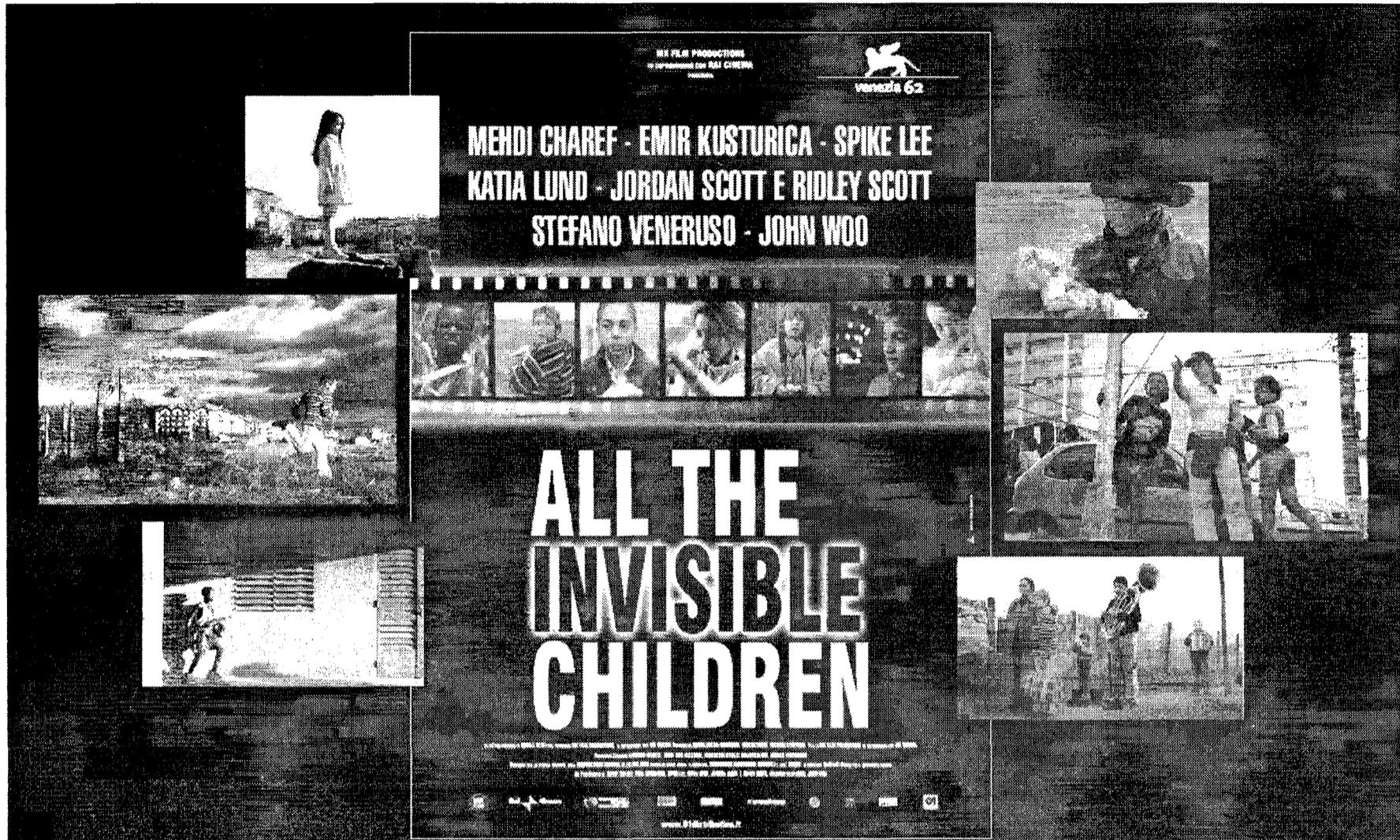
Brees said Bush benefited as a rookie from the presence of veteran running back Deuce McAllister, who went out for the rest of this season after a knee injury in Week 3.

"Reggie is still a young player in this league, and like I said, I think a young back absolutely needs mentoring in this league from a guy like Deuce," Brees said. "It has been tough because (McAllister) has been hurt and isn't here like he was last year for him. So that's tough and I think it is just learning how to be a professional."

"There's definitely a learning curve, and keep in mind the tremendous expectations for Reggie Bush from the moment he stepped foot in this league," Brees continued. "So I think that everyone expects him to go out and just be Superman all the time and that is not the case, especially in this league."



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Brazilian-born director Katia Lund will be present to discuss the film and her segment, *Bilu e João*. Lund's work in the *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro has raised social consciousness in Brazil and around the world. Her most notable work has been as co-director of *City of God*. Joining her will be writer and actor Eduardo Gutemberg dos Reis, who co-wrote *Bilu e João*. Born in Rocinha, one of the largest *favelas* in South America, Gutemberg dos Reis most recently co-wrote a feature film titled *Rice and Beans*, which will be directed by Lund.

Saturday, December 8 at 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. in Browning Cinema, DeBartolo Performing Arts Center
Katia Lund and Eduardo Gutemberg do Reis will present and answer questions from the audience at 9 p.m.

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NFL

Tears and memories highlight Taylor's funeral

Friends, family and former teammates gather to find closure and pay tribute to former Redskins safety

Associated Press

MIAMI — The little girl entered the big gymnasium in a stroller, asleep and oblivious to the 3,000 people on hand to pay last respects to her father, Sean Taylor.

Later, 18-month-old Jackie Taylor was wide awake and running wind sprints past the huge flower arrangements in front of the stage. Wearing a red dress, she stood and applauded with the rest of the audience following the introduction of her father's team, the Washington Redskins. She waved a milk bottle, sucked on a pacifier and went up and down the front row hugging grieving relatives.

There were plenty of tears at Taylor's three-hour funeral Monday, but also ripples of laughter and words of inspiration.

"Let me hear you scream!" shouted the Rev. Jesse Jackson, urging the audience to cheer Taylor's memory. "One more time! This is a celebration!"

The 24-year-old Taylor died last Tuesday, barely 24 hours after he was shot in the bedroom of his home a few miles from where he grew up. Police say he was a victim of a botched burglary, and four young men have been charged with unpremeditated murder.

Three of the suspects were transported from Lee County jail to Miami-Dade County jail Monday evening, said Janelle Hall, a spokeswoman for Miami-Dade County jail. Charles Wardlow, 18, Jason Mitchell, 19, and Venjah Hunte, 20, were expected to appear in court Tuesday morning, Hall said.

The fourth suspect, Eric Rivera, 17, would be processed at a juvenile detention center in Miami-Dade County, Hall said.

A lawyer for one suspect said a fifth suspect was being sought.

"It's times like this that all of us struggle to find meaning in life," NFL commissioner Roger Goodell told mourners.

"Today my heart is broken," said LaVar Arrington, wiping away tears as he recalled his two years as Taylor's teammate with the Redskins. "I'll get through it. We'll all get through it."

The funeral sought closure through prayers, tributes and gospel music. One singer expended so much emotion she collapsed into a chair upon leaving the stage and was carried away in it as the service continued.

Eulogies by family, friends and dignitaries praised Taylor's baby face, shy smile, kindness, warmth, faith and extraordinary athletic skills.

"Many times God must have looked down and said, 'Man, I made a great football player,'" Redskins coach Joe Gibbs said.

Michael Outar recalled the start of his nephew's football career as a 6-year-old with

the Homestead Hurricanes. Young Sean was assigned No. 66 and a place on the defensive line.

"He asked me, 'Uncle Michael, what do I do?' I told him, 'Hit the guy with the ball.' That's what he did, over and over," Outar said.

Taylor grew into a hard-hitting safety. He helped the Miami Hurricanes win the 2001 national championship, became a first-round NFL draft pick in 2004 and led the NFC in interceptions this sea-

son when a knee injury sidelined him last month.

The list of celebrities in attendance was long. They included more than two dozen former Hurricanes now in the NFL, among them

Edgerrin James, Devin Hester and Jeremy Shockey. Former Hurricanes coaches Larry Coker and Butch Davis sat in the front row, along with current coach Randy Shannon.

Mourners also included actor Andy Garcia, whose niece, Jackie Garcia, was Taylor's girlfriend and the mother of their child; and O.J. Simpson, whose children attended the same high school as Taylor.

Simpson expressed sympathy for the relatives of those arrested, as well as for Taylor.

"It's horrible, not only for him, but for those other four families," Simpson said. "There are four other lives that are gone."

Videotaped tributes on large screens showed a sequence of bone-crunching hits and broken-field runs by Taylor with the Redskins, Hurricanes and Gulliver Preparatory in Miami. The final tribute closed with the words "We will miss you Sean" over a photo of him leaping across the goal line after an inter-



LaVar Arrington, a former Redskins teammate of Sean Taylor, speaks at Taylor's funeral Monday held at Florida International University in Miami.

ception.

The Redskins organization filled an entire section of seats, with even their mascot present. The team flew down in a charter one day after an emotional 17-16 loss to Buffalo, and they play again Thursday.

"Despite what happened yesterday, it doesn't matter now," defensive end Andre Carter said after the funeral. "We were happy to be here and be part of the service and to pay our respects."

Gibbs' eulogy focused on faith. He told the mourners Taylor became more spiritual as he matured after joining the team.

"His life began to change,"

Gibbs said. "You saw the way he loved Jackie and Jackie."

Others also spoke of Taylor's transformation following the birth of his daughter. They addressed only indirectly his earlier brushes with the law, which started with a 2001 fist fight and included most recently a 2005 confrontation involving guns.

There was pointed criticism for the way the media portrayed Taylor's past in the wake of his violent death.

"One of the things that I hope comes out of this tragedy is that the media get a small lesson in grace and humility," said Florida City mayor Otis Wallace, a friend of the Taylor family. "For those who took

the liberty of recklessly speculating that this young man's death was caused by the way he lived, all I can say is they should be ashamed."

The audience responded with a standing ovation.

On the other side of the state, in Fort Myers, the four young men charged in Taylor's death sat in jail cells. Ed Griffith, a spokesman for the Miami-Dade County State Attorney's Office, said they could be in court as early as Tuesday morning.

Rivera, Wardlow, Mitchell and Hunte face charges of unpremeditated murder, armed burglary and home invasion with a firearm or another deadly weapon.



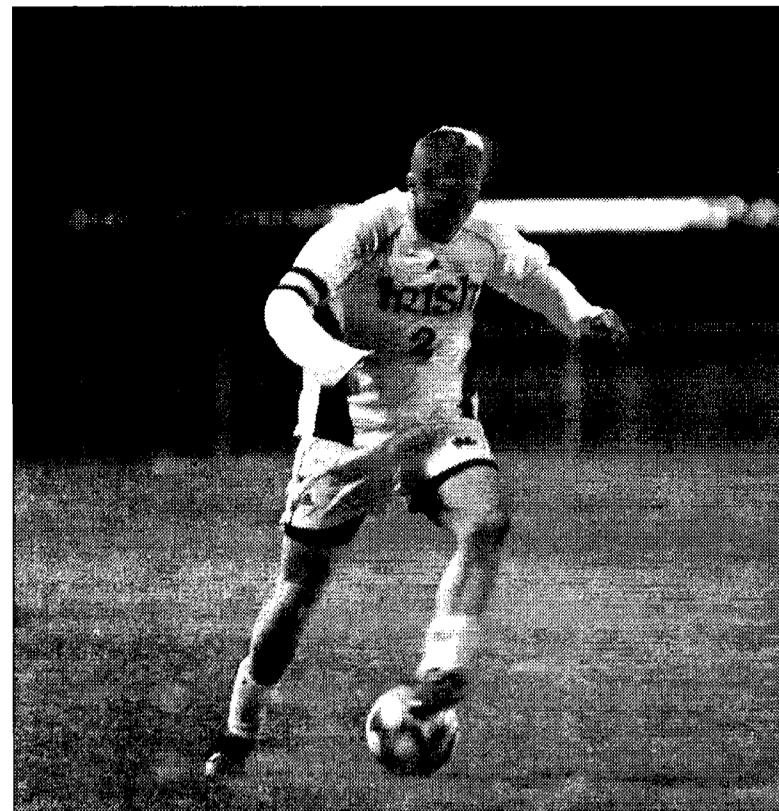
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DAN JACOBS/The Observer
Senior defender Ryan Miller dribbles downfield during Notre Dame's 2-1 win over Oakland at Alumni Field on Nov. 28.

Seniors

continued from page 20

"Alright, I guess I'll start hanging out with him."

The pair grew closer the next year when they shared a dorm room.

"We had a pretty good time," Lapira said, "but I don't think Coach liked it too much."

Irish coach Bobby Clark said the guys had a little too much fun living together and he had to pull in the reins a bit.

"We were almost like evil twins. When we would get together we would just feed off each other," Yoshinaga said. "Since then we've toned it down a little bit."

Clark agreed and said he has enjoyed watching both players progress as athletes and students during their four years.

Lapira, Yoshinaga and the five other Irish seniors are now at the end of their careers with a chance to do something no Notre Dame team has done before — make it to the Final Four with a win over Wake Forest this weekend.

The senior class has played a large part in getting Notre Dame to where it is now.

"There is no question that the

leadership has been one of the reasons that the team has done well," Clark said. "In a season there will always be hard times and setbacks and that's the time when you need strong leadership."

Notre Dame (14-4-5) has not had many hard times or setbacks this year. However, it was a goal from Yoshinaga and a shutout from senior Chris Cahill that pulled the Irish out of a three-game winless streak in mid-October.

Senior defender Ryan Miller said the success was due to a great work ethic in the off-season.

"If you were around in the spring, you would have seen how hard guys were working. I've never seen that in my four or five years here," Miller said.

The group started working together the day after its quarterfinal loss in last year's tournament to Virginia.

"I think our team likes hanging around with one another. It's one of the nice things about this team," Clark said. "You don't need everybody on the team to be bosom buddies, but it is good that they get a good laugh together."

Contact Dan Murphy at dmurphy6@nd.edu

CLUB SPORTS

Irish nab second place in Invite

Special to The Observer

Notre Dame men's volleyball hosted seven teams from around the Midwest Saturday in the Irish Invitational at Rolfs Athletic Center. The Irish reached the finals before falling to Indiana in a rematch of a game earlier in the day.

The Hoosiers got their revenge in the championship match in three hard fought games, 25-21, 22-25, 15-10.

The very young Irish team, playing in its first tournament of the season, struggled to gain momentum going in the second and third games of its fifth match of the day, despite the outstanding play of senior Tim Goldsmith and sophomore Mike Nejedly. Notre Dame finished with a 4-1 record on the day.

The Irish reached the finals by defeating Ball State in two games in the semifinal, 25-20, 25-22. Senior outside hitter Dan Zibton and sophomore Alex Lewis led the offense, while senior libero John Tibble anchored the Irish defense.

To reach the top bracket, the Irish knocked off the Hoosiers 25-20, 25-21 on what proved to be a showcase of young talent for Notre Dame. Freshman setter Mark Landolo and right side hitter Jason Healy led the team to victory, including multiple

assists from Healy while Landolo was busy on defense.

Notre Dame opened pool play against Grand Valley State-B in the first match of the day. While the Irish struggled at first, they hung on for the victory in three games, 25-20, 22-25, 15-12 with great defense from freshman Peter Balestracci and senior Frank Dax, who was playing in his last tournament with the team. Notre Dame also defeated Michigan State in two games, 25-17, 25-21, for the third victory in pool play. The Irish finished pool play in their home tournament 3-0 for the third straight time.

Women's hockey

The Irish traveled to Iowa this weekend to play the Quad City Blueliners for Notre Dame's season-opening series.

The weekend proved fairly successful overall. The Irish outshot Quad Cities 26-15 on Saturday night, despite the unending line of penalties issued to both teams.

The Blueliners' goalie kept them in the game as she saw lots of great shots from senior Kara Brennan, freshman Gillian Allsup and their linemates. Notre Dame lost the game 5-1 with its only goal coming in the third period scored by junior Amy Wilhelmy. Freshman Cassie

Kral picked up the assist.

On Sunday morning, the team's play was notably better. The Irish outshot the Blueliners 27-13 and got away with fewer penalties than the night before.

In the first period, Notre Dame was down 1-0, but made an outstanding comeback throughout the second period. Junior Lauren Beuke scored an unassisted power play goal to open the period, which was followed shortly by an unassisted goal from sophomore Emily Chappell. Chappell assisted another goal scored by Beuke, putting the Irish ahead 3-1.

The second period ended with another power play goal from Chappell. The Blueliners scored one last time, leaving the final score at 4-2 for the Irish.

First year goalie Julia Gragtmans steadily improved over her first weekend of hockey.

Dealing with a new coaching staff and a new goaltender, first year coach Conor Brennan was proud of the team's performance and progress.

"We definitely showed that it was our first game together on Saturday, but after the first period it was all uphill for the rest of the weekend," he said. "By the looks of Sunday's game we should have a really strong season."

Defense

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said. "I think that's what got us going early, her in the middle of the press creating havoc with Michigan. I think she's doing absolutely everything we could ask of in a point guard."

Minutes later, guard Ashley Barlow came off the back line in the 2-3 zone to help with a double-team near the elbow. When the ball went into the corner, Barlow made it back in time to throw a hand in the shooter's face.

"She's just so unafraid. She's fearless, she's relentless, she's determined, and she'll do anything, absolutely anything it

takes for us to win," McGraw said of Barlow.

One minute after that, guard Melissa Lechlitzner got her 5-foot-7 body up high enough to steal a cross-court pass.

McGraw said that Lechlitzner, who had four assists and two steals, made a major difference in the game.

"It was a seamless transition from Tulyah going out, getting all those steals and making us go defensively, and then Lech came in and did pretty much the same thing," McGraw said. "She ran the team, she got some steals, she gave us energy."

Notre Dame did not let up in the second half. Soon after the half began, Notre Dame again presented Michigan with a tight full-court press. The

Wolverines managed to inbound the ball past the press, and called out, "Fast break, fast break," as they ran down the floor. They ran the fast break, but center Melissa D'Amico stonewalled the charge and forced the drive underneath the basket by the baseline. By that time, Gaines had made her way back and forced Michigan into a set offense.

The Irish use their quickness and athleticism on defense to set up their fast-break offense, guard Charel Allen said. "We like to rebound and run, and that's what we did on them," she said.

With 13 minutes to play, Barlow intercepted a pass and fed it to guard Lindsay Schrader. Schrader penetrated the lane before throwing a no-look pass behind her back to Gaines, who made an easy layup.

Part of the reason why the Irish can play such a fast-paced athletic game is that they can sub often.

"I think because of the depth we can sub more," McGraw said. "When someone looks tired, we can take them out and they can rest up a little bit before we put them back in. I think they play harder while they're in there. They play five or six minutes at a stretch because they know they can get out and rest."

Notre Dame held Michigan to just 12 field goals and eight assists in the game and forced 22 turnovers. McGraw, however, said the defense can play better.

"I think when we watch the film I think we'll see that we weren't as intense on the defensive end as we needed to be," she said. "I didn't think that our defense was as good as the score indicates."

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Weis

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thing to do, so we did that."

After Notre Dame's 21-14 win over Stanford in Palo Alto, Calif., on Nov. 24, Weis methodically traveled back to South Bend, moving intermittently from west to east, making recruiting visits along the way. Weis flew from Arizona to Washington for the meeting.

Asked if there was a final decision about his membership on the commission Weis said: "It's moving in that direction."

Haywood up for Houston job

Notre Dame offensive coordinator Mike Haywood, who is from Houston, has interviewed for the vacant University of Houston head coaching job and is waiting to hear back from the school.

"I think that sometimes in the coaching carousel, there's times that guys get into a mix for a reason," Weis said of Haywood. "And any time a job comes open in your hometown where you know all the high school coaches, and you know, have relationships with them, and you played high school football there, I think that that always bodes well for your chance for success."

Weis said he is under the impression Haywood could find out if he got the job as early as this weekend.

Recruits coming to town

Weis, who stressed that he will not analyze the season as a whole until he finishes a round of recruiting duties on Dec. 17, said he will host more than a dozen recruits this weekend. Weis and the recruits will attend the men's basketball game against Northern Illinois Saturday, at which Mike Brey's squad will try for a school-record 25th consecutive home victory.

"We're going to go break this record on Saturday night, so we're going to be a part of that," Weis said. "We're rooting for Coach Brey and the basketball team."

Hear no evil...

When asked about David Grimes' touchdown catch against Stanford that Big East officials ruled a completion on the field but the Pac-10 replay official overturned, Weis was vague and declined to mention the Pac-10 by name.

"I think that we've had a very good relationship with the Big East officials this year since we've gone to the Big East, and I think that they do a very good job of keeping us informed on things that happen," Weis said. "And we'll just kind of leave it at that."

Notre Dame used Big East officials as the field referees for all its games this year. Previously, the Irish played road games with Big Ten officiating crews.

More on coaches

If Weis initiates any changes

to his coaching staff, it will not be until February — after recruits sign their national letters of intent.

But Weis did say he would change the team's current special teams coaching paradigm, under which all coaches contribute to different parts of the operation. Notre Dame's kicking game struggled mightily, along with its kickoff return blocking. Its punt coverage, however, was a bright spot.

"It has to be changed," Weis said. "I was not pleased with the way it went."

Before including the entire staff in the special teams operations, Brian Polian was the team's special teams coach. Although Polian officially became the inside linebackers coach this year, he often directed special teams assignments on the sidelines.

Weis did not rule out maintaining a multiple-coach special teams setup, but said he could envision a scenario with a single special teams coach "if it were the right person."

Musings on next season

Notre Dame begins the 2008 season a week later than the NCAA's official opening day and has only one, instead of the possible two, idle weeks. But Weis said he was not concerned with that.

"I mean, it's just when you're starting," Weis said. "It's just like anything else, the schedule is the way it is. We still have a bye week during the year. Would you rather have two bye weeks during the year? I think having one bye week, and ... to have a bye week right at the midpoint of the year I think is almost an ideal situation or the proper time to heal some bumps and bruises and give you a midseason evaluation point."

Notre Dame has a week off after its sixth of 12 games next season — between road contests with North Carolina and Washington.

Weis sticks to BCS opinions

Weis once again argued that teams should not jump in the polls over teams who do not play on a given weekend.

Asked about Louisiana State's vault up the Bowl Championship Series standings and into the national title game, Weis said he thought Georgia should have gotten one of the two spots in the game after No. 1 Missouri and No. 2 West Virginia lost Saturday.

"I ended up voting Ohio State [No.] 1 and Georgia [No.] 2 because that's where they were on the line," Weis said. "They were 3 and 4. Not that I'm a big fan of Ohio State or Georgia or anyone else, but if you're next in line and you don't play, and the two teams ahead of you lose, I think that you move up. I just don't know how you get penalized for not playing."

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KSU

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East season begins after Christmas.

"We can make our name out here and let everyone know who we are," sophomore guard Tory Jackson said.

The Irish have reeled off three wins in a row since losing back-to-back games at the Paradise Jam in the Virgin Islands, but the Wildcats (5-2) represent a major step up in competition.

"All these teams [we've played] are good, but when you play Kansas State at the Garden, that's a different level," Notre Dame guard Kyle McAlarney said. "I think everyone's going to bring a higher energy to the game."

The task of guarding Beasley will probably fall on Ayers or fellow Notre Dame small forward Zach Hillesland. Both theoretically have the length and quickness to cover the 6-foot-10, 235-pounder.

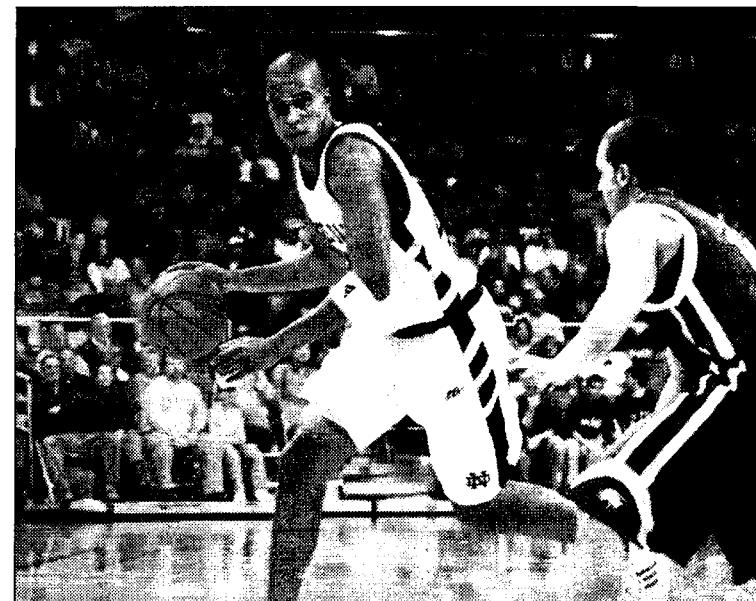
Whether they will actually be able to stop him from scoring, however, is another matter. Irish players said what is most important tonight is not whether Beasley makes shots, but what happens after he misses them.

"As long as we rebound and get efficient stops, we'll be good," Ayers said.

Rebounding has been an Achilles heel for Notre Dame this season. The Irish were out-rebounded in both of their losses and only beat Eastern Michigan on the boards by two on Saturday.

"When we rebound the ball well, we're great because we can get out in transition," McAlarney said. "But sometimes we forget to box out or don't do the little things."

Tonight's game is a homecoming for McAlarney, who



ALLISON AMBROSE/The Observer
Junior guard Ryan Ayers dribbles during Notre Dame's 76-65 win over Eastern Michigan at the Joyce Center on Saturday.

grew up in Staten Island. And since the junior missed last season's Big East tournament after being suspended, he said he can't wait to play in the Garden.

"I'm excited to see some familiar faces in the crowd," he said.

After a slow start to the season, McAlarney has rocketed up the Notre Dame scoring chart. In the last three games, he has averaged 23 points per game and is shooting 63 percent from behind the three point arc.

The Irish have scored well on the inside as well. Forwards Luke Harangody and Rob Kurz are averaging a combined 31.2 points per game.

But Harangody and Kurz will have to take on arguably the two best post players they've seen this year in Beasley and freshman Bill Walker. Walker (6-foot-6, 200 pounds) has added 10.8 points per game to Beasley's impressive statistics.

On the perimeter, Kansas State is led by freshman Jacob

Pullen, who is averaging 13.5 points per game and has hit 11 three-pointers this year to lead the team.

So far, the Wildcats' year has been similar to Notre Dame's. Kansas State opened the year with three straight wins against overmatched opponents, then suffered a disappointing loss to George Mason in the Old Spice Classic in Lake Buena Vista, Fla. The day after that loss, they struggled against Central Florida before winning in overtime.

After an easy win over Rider, the Wildcats hosted Oregon in a non-conference showdown. The Ducks barely edged the Wildcats, 80-77.

While Kansas State's athleticism presents a challenge Notre Dame has not seen yet this year, Jackson said the Irish are ready.

"They've got great players, but we've got a great team," he said. "That's going to be the difference."

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THE OBSERVER SPORTS

Tuesday, December 4, 2007

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FOOTBALL

Hailed by the Chief

Weis invited to join disability commission

By KEN FOWLER
Sports Writer

Charlie Weis met with President Bush, whom he called "the Big Boss," on Nov. 29 to discuss a possible appointment to a White House commission for Americans with disabilities.

Weis revealed the meeting during his season wrap-up news conference Monday morning in the recruiting lounge of the Guglielmino Athletics Complex.

"About six months ago the White House had sent a representative out to meet with me," Weis said. "They have a commission for people with disabilities in the country that has 21 people on it. They had sent a guy out to ask my wife and I — they wanted to ask me, but on behalf of what we do — whether I'd be interested in being on that commission."

"They had asked us if we would be interested in having a little visit with the Big Boss on Thursday. We thought that would probably be a good

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JENNIFER KANG/The Observer

Irish coach Charlie Weis walks by sophomore Paddy Mullen during warm-ups before Notre Dame's 31-10 loss to Penn State on Sept. 8 in State College, Penn.

MEN'S SOCCER

Senior class leads club to Elite 8

Friendship of Lapira and Yoshinaga creates success on the pitch

By DAN MURPHY
Associate Sports Editor

Seniors Joseph Lapira and Alex Yoshinaga have hooked up for big goals in each of Notre Dame's NCAA Tournament wins so far this year, but that is nothing new for the Irish.

In their first Big East game freshman year, both players found their way onto the scorecard. Yoshinaga had two goals as well as the assist on Lapira's game-winner.

"We had a bet — when he scored I shaved my head, when I scored he would shave his beard," Yoshinaga said. "So I shaved it bald and he shaved the beard."

Forty goals and 105 points later, Lapira's beard has grown in again, and Yoshinaga went more than two years without having to get another haircut.

In that time the pair developed chemistry on and off the field that has helped lead the Irish to a second straight quarterfinal appearance in the NCAA Tournament.

Lapira has racked up a trophy case full of awards highlighted by winning the M.A.C.



JESSICA LEE/The Observer

Senior defender Alex Yoshinaga controls the ball during Notre Dame's 1-0 win over St. John's on Nov. 11 at Alumni Field.

Hermann Award at the end of his junior year. Yoshinaga missed the majority of his junior year with a broken collarbone, but was fourth on the team in points scored his freshman season with 13.

Neither Lapira nor Yoshinaga remembers how

their friendship started, but it has grown throughout their four years at Notre Dame.

"I don't even remember, I think my mom took a liking to him," Yoshinaga said. "She said, 'I like that boy,' so I said,

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MEN'S BASKETBALL

Irish need to contain Beasley

ND takes on K. State in crucial showdown

By CHRIS KHOREY
Sports Editor

Before Notre Dame even started watching film on Kansas State, the Irish knew who they needed to stop.

Wildcats freshman forward Michael Beasley, who is averaging 25.7 points and 15.0 rebounds per game, is already considered a surefire top pick in next summer's NBA draft.

"He's been doing great, getting a double-double every game," Notre Dame forward Ryan Ayers said. "I think our defensive position will be very important against him."

The contest with Kansas State tonight at 7 at Madison Square Garden in New York is the biggest game of the season so far for the Irish (5-2). The game, which will be televised live on ESPN, is Notre Dame's last chance to defeat a "power" conference team before the Big

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ND WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

'D' carries team in Michigan victory

Depth allows Irish to shut down Wolverines

By BILL BRINK
Sports Writer

Michigan head coach Kevin Borseth summarized Notre Dame's defensive prowess this season with one sentence.

"I just feel like a wounded fish in shark-infested waters," Borseth said after Notre Dame's defense shredded Michigan in its 77-46 win over the Wolverines Sunday.

Borseth wrote off Michigan's offensive stagnancy to lack of execution, but anyone watching could see a disparity between his explanation and the actual happenings of the game. The Irish pressed the Wolverines deep in their zone, played tight defense on the perimeter, and utilized double-teams effectively.

Michigan had a size advantage over the Irish, most notably in 6-foot-6 center Krista Phillips. But what they lacked, and what Notre Dame has used to its advantage this season, were quickness and athleticism.

Notre Dame got a hand or body in the way of numerous

passes or shots in the game. The Irish full-court press kept Michigan in its zone for extended periods of time, and when the Wolverines did set up its half-court offense, Notre Dame could double-team players and still have time to get back in position after a pass.

The Irish alternated between man-to-man and zone defense, something coach Muffet McGraw said helped keep the Wolverines guessing.

"I think we kept them off balance a little bit," McGraw said after the game. "When we press we like to fall back into the zone. I like playing the zone, I think we're good at it, and I also like the man-to-man, so I think if we can keep switching it on and off it will help keep us a little bit more intense."

One didn't have to look hard to find examples. In the last five minutes of the first half, guard Tulyah Gaines lunged to her left to knock a pass out of bounds.

"Defensively, [Gaines is] active, she can steal," McGraw

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