Four tickets run for student body leadership

Experienced contenders face newcomers in Feb. 12 election

By KAITLYNN RIELY
Associate News Editor

With current student body president Lizzi Shappell and vice president Bill Andrichik due to graduate in May, eight new faces have climbed into the ring, their eyes on one prize: becoming the next leaders of Notre Dame's student government.

In an e-mail sent to The Observer Thursday, the Judicial Council announced the four tickets running this year.

The students running for president and vice president are junior Liz Brown from Cavanaugh and sophomore Maris Braun from Breen-Phillips, junior Danny Smith from Alumni and junior Ashley Weiss from Breen-Phillips, freshman Cipriano Riveria of St. Edward's and sophomore Catherine Kane of Welsh Family and freshmen Garrett Cipriano and Michael Padberg, both from Zahm Hall.

This year's candidates include an all-female ticket, a ticket with two ROTC members and a transfer student.

Brown and Braun enter their campaign armed

see ELECTIONS/page 4

Candidates create personal blogs to communicate with voters

By JOHN TIERNEY
News Writer

With student campaign races heating up, both Liz Brown and Danny Smith are doing something unprecedented in Notre Dame election history—they are both taking their campaign trail online with blogs.

While the Judicial Council, the governing body for University elections, encourages candidates to create Web sites, Brown and Smith independently came up with the idea of running a blog.

"When we were originally brainstorming our platform, we decided that we want to run a blog to keep people informed about what's going on in student government," Smith said. "We wanted people to be able to communicate with us. We realized that this is a goal for our campaign too, so the blog idea really branched off a pretty good idea."

While the blogs are the newest addition to the campaign trail, neither candidate wants new technologies to replace actually going out and meeting potential voters.

see BLOGS/page 6

Spring break plans already in the making

By ROHAN ANAND
News Writer

There seems to be one adaptive Notre Dame students follow in planning their spring break vacations—haste makes waste. That is, those traveling worldwide for the nine days of respite this March haven't delayed making their final arrangements.

Avoiding procrastination has certainly been economical for sophomore Brandon Doyle and his fellow quad members and leader of the Broken Halls, who are traveling to Orlando. Three of them will fly down and one will drive so they have access to a car once they arrive.

"We booked our tickets in December and got great airfares," Doyle said. "And with a car, we can easily get around Orlando — see the Disney parks, Epcot Center and Universal Studios, and visit beaches within an hour's drive easily."

Whether spring break travel plans are voyaging to domestic beaches or hopping across borders to hit up international hot spots or heading out and having a good time, the majority of the student body simply wants to escape the wintry climate of Northern Indiana. Such is the case for junior Angel Leal of Howard Hall and her friends from California and Texas. Naturally, their main priority in choosing a vacation was to land somewhere sunny.

"We felt that we had to get out of the Midwest for break this year," Leal said.

Shappell presents progress

By KAITLYNN RIELY
News Writer

The Student Affairs committee of the Board of Trustees gave the Shappell-Andrichik administration a positive appraisal Thursday when student body president Lizzi Shappell, vice president Bill Andrichik and chief executive assistant Liz Brown presented their State of the Student Union address to the committee members.

Andrichik said the past year had been a successful one.

"We started the year with about 35 or so platform initiatives and we have either fully completed or, if you include the things that are going to happen, like the Eating Disorders Conference and the Community Summit, then we are in the upper 20s to approaching 30 if those initiatives," Andrichik said.

Shappell said this year her administration was able to complete most of the objectives on their initial platform because they haven't had to deal with any of the sudden issues that arose last year, like the academic freedom debate and the disorderly house ordinance.

"It's been a far more relaxed year in that sense with not dealing with as controversial

High turnout likely for Late Night Olympics

By RECKY HOGAN
News Writer

Tonight the Joyce Center will transform into an athletic center with a cause, hosting one of the most widely attended charity events of the year — Late Night Olympics.

This will be the 21st year that Notre Dame and Saint Mary's students gather to raise funds for the St. Joseph County Special Olympics.

Students participate in athletic events and raise money for their dorm. Last year nearly 1,200 participants raised approximately $8,300.

"Typically, the grand prize winner takes half of the money for their dorm. Last year, the MBA students won, but gave all right back to charity. This is the only time I have ever seen that during my time here," Bill Regan, assistant director for instructional programs and special events at RecSports, said.

Annual turnout is expected to be similar to previous years, but Regan hopes the weather will not be a factor tonight.

"I hope the snow doesn't deter people from coming out and having a good time," he said.

Late Night Olympics consists of 12 events, ranging from 3-on-3 basketball to inner tube water polo. Each

see LATE NIGHT OLYMPICS/page 6

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INSIDE COLUMN

State of the headshots

Hello, dear reader. I am writing today about something that is important to me, and I have decided to write this in inside column format. I have decided to position my words in a column-like shape to talk to you about the state of headshots in The Observer.

You may remember my other inside column (the second of three, if you are into collecting my inside columns) of Fall 2006, when I discussed the importance of having the proper headshot to go with your article in our snapshot of a search. I think you'll agree, articles without headshots suck.

Since my column's appearance, I have seen a larger number of headshots in The Observer (directly attributable to me), but I have also seen a steady decline in quality. This is disturbing.

CASE IN POINT: The issue of Tuesday, January 30th is strewed with awful, stultifying headshots. EXAMPLE A: Jonathan Klinger's article on fair trade in the Viewpoint section has with it possibly the worst headshot in Observer history. It appears to be cropped from a larger photo of Jonathan (or, if I may, Jon) near a coral reef. However, this cannot be so because he is wearing a suit.

Further more, his head isn't even filling the frame of the headshot. There is a limited space in which to make a headshot IMPACT. I suggest you fill it, Jon.

EXAMPLE B: Marty Schroeder's article on Super Bowl commercials. The way his head is slightly cocked, but notcocked all the way, makes me distrust him and his motives. His stare suggests something to me of a secret, not unlike the Mona Lisa. I don't want to stare at the headshot and try to figure out what he is thinking. I want it all in the article. Give me a headshot that says, "no need to look here, it's all in the article." Marty, take your half-cocked Mona Lisa shots somewhere and leave them at home.

But do not lose hope, dear readers. Among strewed piles of shapeless crappy headshots, there are some shiny good things. The edition of Wednesday, January 31st, in the Viewpoint section features a very well done headshot of Katie Palmmer. Neutral background, full frame, and the perfect facial expression. Wow.

While there are many terrible headshots in the Observer, not enough articles even give their writers a chance to improve on their headshot mistakes. My colleague, Recap Ken Fowler's passionate polemic shot in, in the Column section has with it possibly the worst headshot in Observer history. His stare suggests something to me of a secret, not unlike the Mona Lisa. I don't want to stare at the headshot and try to figure out what he is thinking. I want it all in the article. Give me a headshot that says, "no need to look here, it's all in the article." Marty, take your half-cocked Mona Lisa shots somewhere and leave them at home.

OFFBEAT

'Super Tonic' causes sensation in Cancun

CANCUN, Mexico — He is called "Super Tonic," and at a whopping birth weight of 14.5 pounds, the little fellow is causing a sensation in this Mexican resort city.

Cancun residents have crowded the nursery ward's window to see Antonio Vasconcelos, who was born early Monday by Caesarean section. The baby drinks 5 ounces of milk every three hours, and measures 22 inches in length.

"We haven't found any abnormality in the child, there are some signs of high blood sugar, but a slight blood infection, but that is being controlled so that the child can get on with his normal life in a few more days," Narciso Perez Bravo, the hospital's director, said on Wednesday.

Fake employer took women's urine samples

OMAHA, Neb. — A 36-year-old Omaha man accused of hiring women to his home and taking urine samples when they thought they were applying for a job was found guilty Thursday of two counts of criminal impersonation. Victims told police Kevin Oliver said he worked for a cell phone company T-Mobile and was interviewing them for jobs. Prosecutors said there never were any jobs.

"To this day, we don't know what his ultimate goal was but whatever it was it was deceptive, it was damaging and it was protracted," said Omaha city prosecutor Marty Coehoy. "This went on for 18 months that we know of."

Information compiled from the Associated Press.
CAREER FAIR

By EVA BINDA

Nearly a quarter of Notre Dame's student body and over 100 employers trekked through snow and ice to the Joyce Center Thursday night to take part in the Winter Career Fair.

"I think this may be our largest and most diverse career fair since 1999," said Lee Svete, director of the Career Center. "There's something for every major, which is usually hard to do with a mixed buffet table of opportunities."

Anita Rees, associate director of the Career Center, noted that there was a "constant flow" of students with some showing up at 3:50 p.m., 10 minutes before the fair's 4:00 start time.

"There was an especially heavy flow at the beginning," Rees said. "Employers were amazed with the turnout and they're saying how great Notre Dame students are."

Students came dressed in business suits and formal attire to meet employers scheduling upwards of 200 interviews taking place today as a result of the Career Fair, with about 81 employers scheduling upwards of 15 interviews each.

Contact Eva Binda at jbind@nd.edu

Break

continued from page 1

Leal said, "So, we began searching for places on Travelocity.com, and we got a package deal to Mazatlan (Mexico) that ended up being cheaper than Cancun or other popular sites."

While students like Leal may have struck gold relying solely on Internet deals, on-campus resources such as Anthony Travel also organized some vacations that many students found attractive, said Kayleen Carr, leisure manager for the company.

"The second biggest destinations this year include a cruise on the Carnival Glory, which roughly 100 Notre Dame students have booked so far," she said. "The first largest destination, Costa Rica, will be sailing about fifty students."

Carr also noted that most students traveling on the Carnival Glory cruise will be seniors, as they are required to be 21 years of age to book a cabin. Most Notre Dame students paid roughly $500 apiece to go on this cruise.

In addition, students who opted to travel on the cruise — a seven-day passage through Costa Maya and Cozumel, Mexico, the Bahamas and Belize — are mainly seniors looking to commemorate their final spring break doing something unique.

"It was the most convenient and affordable trip for us," said senior Christa Laneri, who will be going with her roommates. "We wanted to do something special like a cruise through the Western Caribbean, and a group of girls going on a cruise will be much safer than going to a foreign country.

Junior Ted Buch found a unique way to escape the frigid weather: flying to Egypt to visit a fellow Notre Dame friend who is studying abroad at the American University of Cairo.

"I want to make a point of going somewhere for break," he said. "I'm tired of the same old, same old. I've always been fascinated by pyramids, hieroglyphics, and now that I have a friend there, it makes sense to visit."

Many students seeking last-minute deals can use STA Travel, the world's leading student travel organization with 400 worldwide branches as a resource. Carrie Moffatt, the branch manager at the Purdue University location, said there has definitely been a major increase in college students traveling this spring break.

"Students seem to be picking up on the great deals offered in London, Paris, Amsterdam and Rome," she said. "And even more expensive vacations to places like Costa Rica and the Caribbean have been hot this year."

Buch's preparation for his journey will certainly require more cash than a trip to Central America, but for him, months of personal savings plus a job waiting tables will help fund his endeavor besides that, there's little to worry about, he said.

The flight and the hotel accommodations will take up most of my costs, but I think it's all worth it," Buch said. "I imagine I'll do all the sightseeing and enjoy the nightlife in Cairo. My only hope is that I don't run into trouble anywhere."

Contact Rohan Anand at ranand@nd.edu

So you want to run the show?

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Application online at sao.nd.edu or 315 LaFortune.

Email to theshow@nd.edu or return to 315 LaFortune by Wednesday, February 7th at 5PM

Questions? Email theshow@nd.edu

third eye blind

common

black eyed peas

cake

third eye blind

common

cake
Renovated health center dedicated, ready for use

By MEGHAN WONS
News Writer

Although University President Father Micro of the University of Rochester, where she was a student, has been a member of the Notre Dame Marching Band for the past three years and sits on the Deus Caritas Est committee to discuss Pope Benedict XVI's encyclical. Weiss served on the Junior Parents' Weekend committee and has hope to make football ticket booklets obsolete by encoding ticket information on student IDs. Weiss did not have her interviews yet, but plans to put the football ticketing system online, create a band away-game endorsement so the marching band can travel to more away games and address the high costs of prescription drugs on campus.

Jenkins says blessing over Saint Liam Hall

By MEGHAN WONS
News Writer

Visitors who step inside the newly renovated University Health Center, now known as Saint Liam Hall, will discover a "magnificent transformation," as Director of Health Services Ann Kleva called the building at its dedication Thursday afternoon.

Although Saint Liam Hall was fully operational on Jan. 15, according to staff pharmacist Betsy Creary, it was blessed and dedicated yesterday as part of the Board of Trustees weekend.

University President Father John Jenkins said a prayer and sprinkled a plaque in the lobby with Holy Water.

"Let us ask God's blessing on this place," he said.

Kleva encouraged the Trustees and special guests in attendance to tour Saint Liam Hall at their leisure after the ceremony.

While the façade of Saint Liam Hall remains consistent with the former University Health Center, the new inside bears no resemblance to the old.

"The building was completely gutted," registered nurse Pat Brubaker said. "They took all our input about what we (the staff) would like -- we're really pleased that the building now supports us in our care.

"The beds are better, the doors are bigger, there is more confidentiality -- the care was excellent before, but now we have a space that reflects that level of care."

Pharmacist Betsy Creary said she is also enjoying the new space. "Before, we just had a window in the hallway for the pharmacy, now we have much more space and there is more confidentiality," she said.

"Saint Liam Hall was an 8 milli­ on project, according to the health service's Web site. Level one of the hall features an allergy clinic, business offices, a laboratory, the pharmacy, a student service office, a travel clinic and an x-ray room. The second level features a small chapel, a state-of-the-art conference room, the Office of Alcohol and Drug Education, patient rooms and administrative offices. Level three is home to additional conference rooms and the University Counseling Center, which was formerly housed in the old post office on Notre Dame Avenue.

Sister Sue Dunn, former rector of the hall, attended the dedication.

"I just think it's amazing -- everything is so well done. It's a very professional and welcoming place. It's a wonderful gift all," she said. "It's especially great that all things related to wellness are in the same building.""We have to tour this, said Betsy Creary.

Megan Pohl, a senior who has been a member of the "new" health centers, said Saint Liam Hall trumps the old building.

"The atmosphere was much more reassuring," she said. "It looks more like a clinic, a student run health center did."
**INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

**U.N. sees China as key to end crisis**

KHARTOUM, Sudan — The United Nations hopes the Chinese president will push for a solution to the Darfur crisis during his landmark visit to Sudan on Friday. But Khartoum is not pinning its hopes too high on the country’s oil exports, which has vetoed sanctions at the U.N. Security Council to prevent harsh measures against Sudan over the Darfur conflict.

**Suicide bombers kill 45 in Baghdad**

Thursday by the Army of God and the Islamic Revolution with a defiant promise to proceed ahead with the country’s controversial nuclear program.

Ahmadinejad suggested Tehran would announce next week that it is beginning to install a new assembly of 3,000 centrifuges in an underground portion of its uranium enrichment facility at Natanz that U.S. has warned could bring further sanctions against the country.

The Iranian leader said his government is determined to continue with its nuclear program, despite U.N. Security Council sanctions imposed over its refusal to halt uranium enrichment, a process that can produce fuel to generate electricity or for the fissile core of an atomic bomb.

Kicking off 10 days of celebrations to mark the 28th anniversary of the 1979 Islamic revolution that brought hard-line clerics to power, Ahmadinejad said Iran will celebrate next week “the stabilization and the establishment of its full right” to enrich uranium at the facility.

The chief of the U.N. nuclear watchdog agency, Mohamed ElBaradei, has said he will be in Tehran on Sunday, the day that Iran says it will announce plans to set up the facility.

**National News**

**Engineers say 127 levees at risk**

WASHINGTON — One hundred twenty-seven levees around the country are at risk of failing, according to a list to be released Thursday by the Army Corps of Engineers.

Communities near those levees were being notified about the grade I danger level and told to prepare for a possible breach.

The figure was said by Butch Kinerney of the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s national flood insurance program. Earlier reports had said the list would contain the names of 146 levees at risk of failure, but recent inspections whittled that number down. Kinerney did not provide a list of the levees or where they are located.

**Caucus conflict over mistreatment**

WASHINGTON — Three female members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus accused the organization’s leadership of misleading them on plans to treat women unfairly. Rep. Loretta Sanchez said the caucus chairman called her a “whore.”

Rep. Joe Baca denied uttering the insult, which Sanchez cited among grievances that led her to announce this week she was quitting the group.

**Local News**

**NFL cancels church’s Bowl showing**

INDIANAPOLIS — The NFL, with a mixed schedule of games and events, announced Thursday that it’s dropping a weeklong proposal to show the Colts-Bears Super Bowl game, saying it would be too complicated.

NFL officials spotted a promotion of Fall Creek Baptist Church’s “Super Bowl Bash” on the chain’s digital ad and overnighted a letter to the pastor demanding the party be canceled.

Initially, the league objected to the church’s plan to charge a fee to attend and that the church used the license-protected words “Super Bowl” in its promotions.

**Casey: troop increase unnecessary**

WASHINGTON — The outgoing top U.S. general in Iraq diplomatically allayed differences with his commander in chief on Thursday, telling lawmakers that President Bush has ordered thousands more troops into Iraq than needed to tamp down violence in Baghdad.

Gen. George Casey quickly added he was told by a recently confirmed successor, Lt. Gen. David Petraeus, that they could get away with 5,000 centrifuges without another Security Council resolution and additional international pressure, then they are very badly mistaken,” Burns said last week.

The installation would be a major jump in Iran’s uranium enrichment program, though it could take months to set up the 3,000 centrifuges and get them working. In the process, uranium gas is spun at supersonic speeds in a connected array of centrifuges to purify it. Uranium enriched to around 5 percent is used for nuclear reactor fuel; enriched to 95 percent, it can be used to build a warhead.

Iran now has two cascades of 164 centrifuges each. Tens of thousands are needed for a continuous program. The status of the new centrifuges has been unclear as Iranian officials gave contradictory statements over the past month. Tehran originally said last year that the installation would begin by the end of 2006, but January came and there was no word the work had started.

On Sunday, an Iranian lawmaker said installation had begun, but he was quickly contradicted by officials from the country’s Atomic Energy Organization. Mohammad Saeedi, the agency’s deputy head, said, “If we begin to install centrifuges, we will publicly announce it.”

Ahmadinejad’s remarks Thursday signaled that Iran would begin the installation before Feb. 11 — the final day of nationwide celebrations in memory of the Islamic Revolution. He has also called people to the streets that day to show support for the nuclear program.

“Enemies of the Iranian nation must know that their wrongful beliefs will be revealed once again during Feb. 11 rallies by the great Iranian nation,” he said, according to the state-run news agency. The United States and many Western countries accuse Iran of seeking to develop nuclear weapons, a charge Tehran denies. The Security Council has threatened to impose further sanctions on Iran if it continues to refuse to roll back its program.

Tehran pushes nuclear program

Ahmadinejad announces plans for uranium enrichment at anniversary celebrations

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**Olympics continued from page 1**

Brown said that if they were going to lean heavily on it, but we're just going to use it as a supplement to what we were planning to do prior to even developing the blog idea," Brown said.

While the Brown and Smith campaigns are experimenting with the use of blogs, they will also continue to use the standard campaign Web sites and Facebook groups — methods voters became familiarized with during past elections.

Student body president Lizzi Shappell said the addition of blogs allows candidates to continue the recent trend of using technology more consistently throughout the campaign.

In my two years of campuswide elections, I have noticed increased use of Web sites and Facebook groups," she said.

Although Brown believes that the blog is "not just indicative of how much support you really have," she does find the group provides an open means of communication with students.

Facebook is a great way of getting the word out about our campaign, and it's a way for people to go the Web site," she said. "It's also our best way of messing with their minds to see if people remain interested in the site."

Although Facebook can add to a campaign, both Brown and Smith have recognized the hidden dangers of the site and said they took measures to ensure privacy when meeting with candidates who want their photos.

"You're Presidential candidate Matt Braun and I have clean elections for the past two years," said Smith.

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Smith told the Board on their community relations progress — an issue that has been a central concern for student government for the past two years.

Shappell described her administration's approach to community relations — a relation after the passing of the disorderly house ordinance — as "more proactive" than in the past.

"I'm in favor of this," said Smith. "It's a progressive administration by describing the success of the South Bend bus tour for freshmen that took place in August and her hopes for building relations in the upcoming community summit.

One board member said, in light of Notre Dame's recent involvement with the Millennium Village Project in Uganda, it's important that Notre Dame stay involved in its own community as well.

"Sometimes it's probably not so important for the fact that they are across the ocean but not even in their local area," the board member said.

And the South Bend bus tour and the community summit are good ways to get involved, the board member said.

One trustee asked Shappell if she had an agenda for the community summit. Shappell said they will come to the meeting with certain discussion topics — like better integrating students into off-campus neighborhoods and promoting internship and service opportunities. "But we don't have an agenda," she said.

"We are so much looking to address this with community leaders and get conversations started that we hope can continue outside this summit through the appropriate parties," Shappell said.

Brown updated the Board on the status of the College Readership Program, an initiative that provides three papers — the New York Times, the Chicago Tribune and USA Today — to four different local dorms across the country for five weeks a year.

Brown said the program has been a success, with approximately 90 percent of the students reading the papers each day. The program is paid for by hosting events, Brown said, so they are considering adding another disposal location in the Hesburgh Library and installing taller racks in the North Dining Hall.

Andrichik briefed the Board on the work he has done to improve student-alumni relations. His goal has been to increase communication between the two groups, he said.

One major push he has made has been to grant students access to the Golhrish network so they can utilize alumni contacts in their job search. ThePiners with the Career Center, the Alumni Association, the Development Office and other parties involved have resulted in a compromise, Andrichik said.

"Now, students during senior year only and graduate students have access to the full contact network of over 100,000 active e-mail addresses and lists," he said. "Those students take a 20-30 minute long class before being granted access, which allows them to have their resume checked and to hear the proper way to contact someone professionally."

"There has been a lot of work on students and alumni to interact in a social atmosphere and working with the Alumni Association to transition the Golhrish Network to a new software program that will allow for a better networking Web site.

This is the second of three meetings the Board of Trustees will hold with members of the student government this year. The topic of the first meeting in October was to brief Board members on the Facebook Web site.

Contact Kaillynn Riey at krielyn@nd.edu

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**BOT continued from page 1**

"We start slow, but every­thing is generally designed to be self-officiated and those that are not will be automatically taken care of," a Regan student worker.

Safety is also one of Regan’s top priorities this weekend.

"We want to do this as a fun event," he said. "We want kids to be smart, because we don’t like to throw people out."

Students who appear to be intoxicated will be asked to leave.

"In the past, there hasn’t been anything drastic, but we just want to make this a fun night for everyone," Regan said.

The signature event of the night will take place at 9:30 p.m. in the field house where beneficiaries from the Special Olympics play a game of basketball against rectors and staff members.

"People really seem to like this event. Students get a chance to see where their money is going," Regan said.

Regan has high hopes for another successful event from an event that has become a growing tradition on campus.

"We would like to see more people come up and encourage everyone to come out, even in the cold, cold winter night," he said.

Contact Becky Hogan at rhogan2@nd.edu

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**Blogs continued from page 1**

"I'd be concerned about the blog being too personal, if we were going to lean heavily on it, but we're just going to use it as a supplement to what we were planning to do prior to even developing the blog idea," Brown said.

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Although Facebook can add to a campaign, both Brown and Smith have recognized the hidden dangers of the site and said they took measures to ensure privacy when meeting with candidates who want their photos.

"You're Presidential candidate Matt Braun and I have clean profiles anyway," she said. "In light of a recent law passed in Spain banning explicit materials from participating in runway shows, the eating disorders discussion is in.
**MARKET Recap**

**Stocks**

Dow Jones 12,673.68 +51.99

**Upper Semicircle Dow Composite Volume: 2,255,000 (1,650,000)**

| AMEX | 2,145.76 +22.05 |
| NYSE | 2,458.58 +4.45 |
| S&P 500 | 4,037.67 +72.96 |
| NIKKEI(Tokyo) | 17,003.17 +84.27 |
| FTSE 100(London) | 6,282.20 +79.10 |

**Treasuries**

| 10-YEAR NOTE | 4.23 +0.01 |
| 30-YEAR BOND | 4.60 +0.09 |
| 30-YEAR T-BOND | 4.14 +0.07 |
| 30-YEAR YIELD | 4.23 +0.01 |

**Commodities**

| LIGHT CRUDE (BArreI) | $78.67 |
| GOLD ($/ounce) | $1,205.00 |
| FOB BILLES (USc/Gallon) | $2.01 +0.02 |

**Exchange Rates**

| Yen | 120.7100 |
| Euro | 0.7477 |
| Pound | 0.5801 |
| Canadian $ | 1.1799 |

**BRIEF**

Visteon Corp. plans plant closing

INDIANAPOLIS — Visteon Corp. plans to close its eastern Indiana auto-parts plant in September, a move that will idle nearly 900 workers in a county where it has for decades been the largest employer.

Visteon announced the closing of the Connersville plant during a meeting, as part of the company's three-year plan to fix, close or sell about 30 facilities to make the company a smaller and more competitive entity, said Jim Fisher, a spokesman for the Michigan-based company.

"We've done a very thorough review of this facility," Fisher said. "We do not believe there is a viable business case for continuing to operate it."

The plant in Connersville, some 60 miles east of Indianapolis, employed 150 to 140 salaried employees, Visteon and union representatives will begin negotiations over severance packages, Fisher said.

**Stocks rise following spending data**

NEW YORK — Stocks climbed for the third straight day Thursday as an already buoyant Wall Street embraced robust consumer spending figures and largely overcame disappointment in Google Inc.'s profit report. Both the Dow Jones industrials and the Russell 2000 index of smaller companies closed at new highs.

The gains followed Wall Street's best day of the year on Wednesday, when it advanced sharply after the Federal Reserve signaled that the economy remained solid and that inflation was mostly in check. The central bank's comments followed its decision to leave short-term interest rates unchanged, a bit of confidence into an uncertain market. The first month of the year had revealed, though, that the Fed and a drop corporate profits would bring an unwelcome end to the party.

Even so, a number of investors were looking for signs of a strong economy and that the economy is on track to send the Dow Jones index above 13000. This has been the case for several weeks now, but the Dow has been unable to close above 13000.

"It seems to me the Fed is on hold for the foreseeable future and stocks are taking a pause in that," said Brian Levitt, corporate economist for OppenheimerFunds Inc.

**Exxon Mobil posts record profits**

Oil conglomerate announces highest numbers despite quarter-

**Associated Press**

HOUSTON — Tick. Tick. Tick. In those three seconds, Exxon Mobil made $3,706 billion last year.

In the fiscal year, the average American woman made about $39,500. More than ever, time is money for Exxon Mobil, the world's largest oil company.

The Irving, Texas-based company on Thursday posted the largest annual profit by a U.S. company — $39.5 billion — even as earnings for the last quarter of 2006 declined 4 percent.

The record net income amounted to roughly $4.5 million an hour for the world's largest publicly traded oil company, which produces about 3 percent of the world's oil.

That compares to about $12 an hour for the average U.S. worker, according to the Labor Department.

But out of this world profits may not last. The lower commodity prices that sank their teeth into Exxon's fourth quarter may linger for at least the first part of 2007, even if the cost of doing business rises because of factors such as a shortage of drilling equipment and labor.

So while big players like Exxon Mobil Corp., Chevron Corp. and ConocoPhillips are second and third, respectively, among integrated U.S. companies — are expected to continue to rake in sales of revenue, the totals aren't likely to be the eye-popping amounts of recent years.

"I'd say overall, if you look for earnings to drop 5 to 15 percent from the huge highs this past year, you're probably going to see most of these companies fall within that range," said John Parry, a senior analyst at energy consulting firm John S. Herold Inc. Exxon Mobil's profits didn't go unnoticed on Capitol Hill, where one lawmaker called them "outrageous" and said oil companies have benefited too long from a Republican-backed energy policy that cheats American taxpayers.

Exxon Mobil wasn't alone among oil and gas entities posting a huge profit in 2006. On Thursday alone, three other companies — Royal Dutch Shell PLC, Marathon Oil Corp. and Valero Energy Corp. — also reported best-ever full-year profits. The four companies combined had earnings of $72.6 billion last year.

Last week, Houston-based ConocoPhillips said its $15.5 billion profit last year topped its previous record from 2005 by about $2 billion dollars. Chevron is scheduled to report 2006 results Friday.

Exxon Mobil's 2006 profit beat its own previous record for a U.S. company of $36.1 billion set in 2005. Its net income for 2006 equals the approximate gross domestic product — a measure of all goods and services produced within a country in a given year — of countries like Ecuador, Luxembourg and Croatia.

Also notable was Exxon Mobil's revenue, which rose to $377.64 billion for the year, surpassing the record $370.68 billion it posted in 2005.

"Exxon Mobil continued to leverage its globally diverse resource base to bring additional crude oil and natural gas to market," said Rex W. Tillerson, chairman of the Irving, Texas-based company.

Exxon Mobil's record earnings followed a year of extraordinarily high energy prices as crude oil topped $78 a barrel in the summer — driving up average gasoline prices in the United States to more than $3 a gallon.

Prices retreated later in the year as crude oil supplies grew and concerns over Middle East tensions eased, among other factors.

Exxon Mobil Corp. posted a $39.5 billion record Thursday — the highest annual profit of U.S. company, topping their 2005 record.

**Senate votes to raise minimum wage**

WASHINGTON — The Senate voted overwhelmingly Thursday to boost the federal minimum wage by $2.10 to $7.25 an hour over two years, but packaged the increase with contro­versial tax cuts for small businesses and higher taxes for many $1 million-plus executives.

The increase in the minimum, the first in a decade, was approved by a 94-3 vote, capping a nine-day debate over how to balance the wage hike with the needs of businesses that employ low-wage workers.

A top priority of Democrats, the wage hike has both real and symbolic consequences. It would be one of the first major legislative successes of the new Democratic-controlled Congress.

"Passing this wage hike represents a small but necessary step to help lift America's working poor out of the ditches of poverty and onto the road toward economic prosperity," said Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass.

President Bush urged the House to support the measure, including the tax help for small businesses. He said, "The Senate has taken a step toward help­ing maintain a strong and dynamic labor market and promoting contin­ued economic growth."

The bill must now be reconciled with the House version passed Jan. 10 that contained no tax provisions. House Democrats have insisted they want a minimum wage bill with no strings attached, though some have conceded the difficulty of passing the legislation in the Senate without tax breaks.

Republicans stressed the importance of the business tax breaks in the bill, though it was a significantly smaller tax package than Republicans had sought during previous attempts in Congress.

"The Senate's reasonable approach recognizes that small businesses have been the steady engine of our growing economy and that they have been a source of new job creation, a source of job training," said Sen. Michael Enzi, R-Wyo., who helped manage the debate for the GOP.
Election result symbolic, foretelling

Kimberly Hodges’ recent student body election victory represents more than a successful campaign driven by a goal-laden platform — it marks a milestone in College history. As the first black president of the 1,500-member Saint Mary’s student body, Hodges is a testament to the College’s initiative to increase minority representation on campus — and an encouraging sign for that initiative’s future. This year Saint Mary’s boasts its highest percentage of students representing diverse multicultural backgrounds — 10.1 percent. It’s fitting that more of those voices are finding their way into student government.

Hodges helped increase the number of black students from one in the Class of 2009 to 13 in the Class of 2010 — a cause she supported through visits to Chicago high schools. Those visits shattered the vision of a completely homogeneous Saint Mary’s student body, and she returned to Saint Mary’s with at least 50 applications from students with diverse backgrounds.

These recruitment efforts change the College’s image at the most necessary level — the one that will draw prospective students who have the ability to alter the diversity breakdown. There’s nothing more powerful in drawing students to a college than testimonials from people who go there and love it. Hodges didn’t love it immediately, however — and that makes a testament from her more powerful. Although she initially felt out of place as one of three black women in her freshman class, Hodges decided to stay at the College and find her sense of purpose, a much needed attitude that shows ability to succeed at Saint Mary’s does not depend on race and religion.

It is imperative that her push for increased diversity continues during her time on the faculty hiring committee because College professors should reflect the multicultural needs and backgrounds of their students. Being a minority in a nearly homogeneous campus environment can be intimidating, but Hodges’ ambition and student government success offers a updated image of the traditional Saint Mary’s woman and will hopefully contribute to future diversity initiatives at the College.
Global warming grounds Punxsutawney Phil

On Gobbler's Knob this morning, Punxsutawney Phil endured his 121st rude awakening while being groped, as usual, in inappropriate places — all in the name of the groundhog's prognostication and the local economy's enrichment. Although Phil has seen his shadow more than 90 percent of the time during his storied career, there is no evidence of shadow for this year. Challenges that face the name of the groundhog's prognosticator are many.

During his storied career, the name of the groundhog's prognosticator has seen his shadow more than 90 percent of the time during his storied career, there is no evidence of shadow for this year. Challenges that face the name of the groundhog's prognosticator are many.

Dismay of us Northerners, the betting money this year challenges that trend. With weather forecasters calling for snow showers in Pennsylvania, nearly three-quarters of Las Vegas bettors believe (at 13-4 odds) that the new year’s shadow and that spring is just around the corner. But alas, global warming will soon reveal the rodent Phil and devastate not only the lives of ordinary Punxsutawney citizens, but of Phil and his human friends, including Bob Roberts (a name worth repeating) whose official title is “His Protector.”

Once higher temperatures increase throughout the world, the cold weather season will abbreviate. As the winter calendar diminishes, Phil will need to adjust his timetable of six more weeks of potentially cold weather. The Groundhog Club’s “Inner Circle,” those gentlemen who wear top hats and bestow titles that belie reason upon each other, will advise Phil on how to adapt his predictions.

Phil might slice the 6-week extended cold weather timetable back to a month, and continue to decrease his options each subsequent year until February in Pennsylvania averages 60-degree daily temperatures. At that point, it would not matter whether or not the sun cast Phil’s scary shadow. On the upside, though, Phil would improve his accuracy record, thus rivaling his distant cousin and fellow groundhog forecaster, Georgia’s General Bea Lee, Ph.D. Cousin Lee claims a 94 percent accuracy record hardly a difficult task even for a rodent in a state that averages 44 degrees in February and 53 degrees in March.

On the down side, the demise of the world-famous Yankee groundhog would be the tipping point for both a local and national economic catastrophe. Every element of our GDP would suffer. One simply can review today’s Groundhog Day schedule to realize how global warming would end most activities, thereby casting the nation into a rodent-less state — going down the hole.

Imagine the confusion in the local Punxsutawney unemployment office as workers and bureaucrats attempt to match the expertise of the inner circle’s members to their jobs. The conversation would sound something like this: “Hello, we are recently unemployed because we did not heed Al Gore’s warning about global warming. Can you assist us?” asks Treasurer and Head Tailmaker Keith Shields.

“What have you gentlemen done prior to this?” asks the bureaucrat. “You President and Chief Healthman Paul Johnston answers, “These two are Co-Handlers, but that one is a Cloud Builder while the other is a Fog Spinner.” “I thought you were all either butlers, waiters or funeral directors,” replies the bureaucrat.

“Actually,” interrupts the Big Fluke Maker, “These two also work well together. He is the Stump Warden, and that’s the Burrow Master. And this duo is the team of the Iemican and Storm Chaser.”

Peering over his bifocals, the bureaucrat asks, “Why are those gentlemen sitting way over there so far away from everyone?” Sky Painter answers, “Everyone keeps them at some distance. He’s the Plow Man, and he’s the Big Windmaker.”

For Phil’s part, to survive the rodent’s end, Phil would need another skill like playing chess. He would be reduced to a more demeaning setting, like appearing in sleeping pill commercials with Abe Lincoln. He would become sullen knowing that his inability to weather global warming single-handedly caused a great depression that rivaled the 1929 stock market crash.

For example, Vegas oddsmakers and Vegas oddsmakers would no longer handle two-way action on bets covering Phil — other than to speculate if he might bite Lincoln. Toyota, the official car of Phil, sales would fall behind GM, Ford and Chrysler. While Phil’s Food Court would close and the groundhog cookie decorator would end, only the pancake breakfast, complete breakfast buffet and Groundhog Luncheon would barely survive. Pro Wrestling would cancel the Groundhog Rumble at the Community Center Gym, thereby threatening the future of the sport.

The mayor would no longer perform Groundhog Day wedding ceremonies in Phil’s Wedding Chapel at the Civic Center. Phil’s for fun and maze would close as would Phil’s Shadow Chaser event at the Punxsutawney Christian School. Upset Christians would demand the cancellation of pagan rituals like the “Phil Phind Scavenger Hunt,” the Woodchuck Whistle Carving Show and the crowning of Little Mr. and Miss Groundhog.

Anarchy would rein as alcoholic beverages or illegal substances would now be permitted on the premises. The movie “Groundhog Day” would play nonstop, and conditions would force Phil to move to Georgia and live with a Rebel cousin where he would be forced to eat grits.

Global warming gloom would spread over mankind. Damn Al Gore and his crystal ball!

Gary Caruso, Class of ’73, is a political strategist who served as a legislative and public affairs director in President Clinton’s administration. His columns appear every other Friday. He can be contacted at hotlinetalk.com.

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

**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

Added cost from dining hall theft only encourages

On Jan. 31 a front page article detailed this year’s crime spree in the dining hall. Over 45,000 items were stolen, totaling a cost of $25,000. As a student at the university and an avid thief, I question the validity of the university’s claims. To begin, the numbers of items stolen are rounded off, and my guess is they are rounded up perhaps to the nearest half-thousand. If the University wants to call attention to a theft problem, specific numbers will make the problem more realistic in the eyes of the students. Also, it is very likely that every missing utensil is considered “stolen,” including lost or broken items.

Secondly, Director of ND Food Services Dave Penikowski threatens passing the cost on to the students. We already had $280 added to our tuition to pay for stolen items. This did not help cover the costs, rather increased the cost of stealing to begin so they could get their $200 worth. Passing the costs to the students is not going to fix the problem. This also fails to take into account the return of silverware at the end of the year. Many dorms have containers at the end of the year for students to return stolen dining hall goods that they stole for school-year-only use. We have senior citizen volunteers guarding the dining hall. Shouldn’t they be enough to catch the thieves?

If you ask me, the students are stealing for two reasons: stealing to save money this year or to stock their dorm rooms for next year. The students want to make back the extra $250 on their tuition bill, and they want the chance to successfully steal from a guarded dining hall. Take away the extra $250 on tuition, and the students will want the chance to successfully steal from a guarded dining hall. Take away the extra $250, and the students will want the chance to successfully steal from a guarded dining hall. Take away the extra $250, and the students will want the chance to successfully steal from a guarded dining hall. Take away the extra $250, and the students will want the chance to successfully steal from a guarded dining hall.

The result will be an immediate increase in stolen goods, for probably a week, and then students will get bored and the numbers will dramatically decrease. Now that I know I will be charged next year to replace equipment I’m not stealing, I may begin “stocking my dorm room” in order to cover the extra costs.

**EDITORIAL CARTOON**

Wouldn’t make it to the TV with the remote, ensuring another NFL Sunday or would it be figure skating? Oh... what a hit!
Humorous ‘Office’ deserves place among the elite

Not too long ago, I was watching an episode of "Seinfeld" and remarked that they don’t make shows like that anymore. It’s not just that "Seinfeld" was funny or that it was sharp and relevant — it was one of those rare shows that reached critical mass and became a cultural indicator. The proof of this is in the way "Seinfeld" became quotable and everyone knew the reference. Things like "not that there’s anything wrong with that" or "too soup for you" were immediately recognizable and people even referred to certain situations as a “Seinfeld moment.”

It’s hard for sitcoms to reach that same kind of level nowadays. The can-do spirit of "Seinfeld" and "Friends" left an empty void of sharp, well-written comedy. The ones that come closest, like "Arrested Development," were too clever for their own good and were cancelled in the first season of low ratings.

"Ragtime," NBC’s adaptation of the British hit of the same name, "The Office," has everything going for it — it has a genuine talent in star Steve Carell, is well written, funny and full of pathos and effective emotional undertones. The show has improved steadily with age, and now (the third season) the characters and their relationships have been firmly developed and the plotting has found its own identity, differentiating it from the British version.

"The Office" is part of the new age of sitcoms, a mockumentary style that uses handheld cinematography and direct addresses to the camera. Like "Arrested Development," it seems too clever for its own good, and while it has been a critical success (much like Ron Howard’s show), it is consistently outperformed in the ratings department. "The Office" Thursday’s line-up, which includes perennial favorites "Scrubs" and new hits like "30 Rock," and has just been picked up for a fourth season. More than any other sitcom on television right now, "The Office" is close to reaching a critical mass akin to "Seinfeld." Though viewership is not as high as, say, "Friends," its fan-base is devoted. Even Sports Illustrated’s Stewart Mandel used to regularly mention the show in his weekly column. Yet "The Office" is so close to escaping "cult show" status in reaching mainstream audiences. "Arrested Development," like the once-cancelled "Family Guy," posthumously found new fans on DVD, but "The Office" still has a chance to become the biggest show on television. If that happens, it would be a true rarity, something only achieved by shows like "Seinfeld" and "The Cosby Show" — the best show on TV could also be the most popular.

The best parts of the show are the dialogue and the acting. "Dwight Show" Shanahan Steve Carell (who won a Golden Globe for this role) and Ed Helms whip off quotable lines effortlessly such as "I’m always thinking one step ahead. I’m like a carpenter ... who builds stairs" or "Toby is in HR, which technically means he works for corporate, so he’s really not part of our family. So, he’s really not part of his family." These are among the countless gems in each week’s script.

I’m really pushing for "The Office" to be one of those perennial favorites. Shows like it — shows that are insightful and intelligent. "Seinfeld" worked because it said a lot about our society and we were able to see some of our most ridiculous fears and hopes reflected in it. "The Office" works for much the same reason, but it’s a better show, with a strong cast and lots of personality. It’s really a once-in-a-lifetime kind of show, the kind of program that makes “Must See TV” a truism, the kind program that people will talk about years from now and say, "They just don’t make shows like that anymore."

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

PLAY PREVIEW

PEMCo’s latest production is truly impressive

By ANALISE LIPARI

With "Ragtime," the Pasquarilla East Musical Company takes a sweeping step into deeper and far more serious territory than it has ventured towards before. Tackling such issues as poverty, racism, motherhood, love and the spectacle of the American Dream, PEMCo’s "Ragtime" is a rousing success.

By far the most ambitious production that PEMCo has undertaken in recent memory, the strength of "Ragtime" is a testament to the power of a magnificent score and an excellent, energetic cast. Quelling doubts regarding how well an amateur cast of students could tackle "Ragtime," a musical rife with deep social, political and emotional strife, the production is impressively well done.

The complex and interwoven plot is set up very well with the play’s opening number, "Ragtime," which juxtaposes against one another three central, conflicting groups: the upper-class, white community of La Rochelle, New York, the mass groups of immigrants from Eastern and Western Europe and the residents of New York’s Harlem, and each group gives rise to a central plotline. In Harlem, ragtime-playing pianist Coalhouse Walker (Kyle Carter) intoxicates dancers with his rebellious new type of music. In New Rochelle, a typical American family headed by Mother and Father (Jacqui Acuna and Tim Polito) lives a seemingly content life of economic success. Lastly, in the Lower East Side neighborhoods of New York, Cuban immigrant Tatsie (Tim Masterton, also co-producer) strives, like millions of others, to capture his American dream.

If, for any reason, a potential audience member were contemplating not seeing "Ragtime," Kyle Carter’s performance as Coalhouse Walker should and will overwhelmingly persuade them to change their mind as soon as possible. Carter is remarkably in a role most doubted could be even adequately filled; he is magnetic, sweet, affable, powerful and altogether extraordinary.

The depths of his surprisingly impressive voice and his mastery of Coalhouse’s emotional range are striking, and, to his credit, his coalhouse is so close to completion right now. "The Office," The production is presented by someone

Contact Analise Lipari at alipari@nd.edu
EASTWOOD UNERTHIS HEARTFELT STORY OF IWO JIMA

By RAMA GOTTUMUKKALA
Some Critics

The art of writing letters, that once great vessel of human emotion, is slipping steadily into distant memory. Keystrokes have supplanted penmanship for documenting our most heartfelt hopes, dreams and wishes. Of this increasingly quaint practice, Elizabeth Hardwick, an American literary critic, once wrote, "Letters are above all useful as a means of expressing the ideal self; and no other method of communication is quite so good for this purpose."

In his most accomplished artistic statement to date, "Letters from Iwo Jima," director Clint Eastwood addresses Hardwick's romantic notion headlong, niques, devising a scheme to dig expansive underground tunnels through the black volcanic rock of the island.

Originally titled "Red Sun, Black Sand," an elegantly vague title for a film about letters from Iwo Jima" is a tale of honor about Japan, a nation that cherishes that virtue above all others. Set 61 years ago, it reveals the 1945 Battle of Iwo Jima from the perspective of the Japanese soldiers who fought and died there, and whose several hundred letters, unearthed many decades later, inspired the film's emotion. The next two hours helping us to understand the soul of Eastwood's film is a film that Embracing his inescapable fate, Kuribayashi addresses more traditional trench warfare techniques, devising a scheme to dig expansive underground tunnels through the black volcanic rock of the island.

In an early scene, Kuribayashi steps out from the plane and into the light. As he surveys the vast, desolate reaches of Iwo Jima's shoreline, we are privy to his innermost thoughts, revealed through his first letter. "I am determined to serve and give my life for my country," he writes, the key word being determined. Kuribayashi knows full well the extent of America's military might, Kuribayashi has come to this island to die, like an ancient samurai whetting his blade before his final battle. Eastwood spends much time helping us to understand why.

Embracing his inescapable fate, Kuribayashi, a kind but firm leader, implores his troops to make these tunnels the last stand against the waves of American troops who make landfall halfway through the film. The Japanese soldiers digging those tunnels include Saigo (Kazunari Ninomiya), an idealistic baker unused to the horrors of warfare, and Shimizu (Ryo Kase), a quiet, reserved former member of Tokyo's military. Both men are young and idealistic, forced to deal with violence and death despite the contradictions to their gentle natures.

Perhaps Kuribayashi's staunchest supporter is Lt. Colonel Takeichi Nishi (Tsunyo Ihara), a Japanese nobleman and Equestrian Gold Medal winner at the 1932 Olympics in Los Angeles. Nishi, like Kuribayashi, faces a stern moral challenge because of his fondness for his country, having previously debated in the American consciousness with "The Last Samurai." Just as Watanabe was a boon in that film, Ihara is a gem in this one.

Horrifying, powerful, visceral, uplifting, bleak and deeply affecting, "Iwo Jima" covers the gamut of emotions. It is a deeply human film, one of those rare war pictures that reveres life even as it takes so much of it. The movie says more about war in its quietest lull than the best war film since 1998's "Saving Private Ryan." While crafted with the cinema, the most visual of mediums, in mind, here is a film that has all the affection, melancholy, warmth and genuine human feeling of the most sincere, handwriting letters.

It took an American director born and bred in westerns to show us the high costs of war for the ravaged nation of Japan. Eastwood and his collaborators make us care so deeply for these characters, these human beings, that when they fall, we can barely stand to watch. Reaading his troops for the final banzai charge, Kuribayashi adds them in the pale moonlight.

"A day will come when they will weep and pray for your souls," he says with a tender but steady resolve. He draws his samurai sword, the most revered symbol of the motherland he has seemingly trained to abhor Japan as the faceless employed by Tom Stern, a longtime Eastwood collaborator. Utilizing a desaturated color palette, Stern has seemingly touched away all the vitality in the film, leaving a pallor that suits the film's mood.

Eastwood has claimed Best Director honors twice at the Oscars, for 2004's "Million Dollar Baby" and 1992's "Unforgiven." While both of those triumphs were deserved, his latest directorial effort — completed at the tender age of 76 — surpasses them. Every great picture has a signature moment that stands the test of time, causing viewers to ruminate on its impact decades after its completion. "Letters from Iwo Jima" has at half a dozen, more than enough to make it the best war film since 1998's "Saving Private Ryan."
NHL

Kolnik breaks slump, leads Panthers in victory

Dunham’s playing experience behind the net with Hossa, Kovalchuk gives Islanders needed boost to defeat Thrashers

Associated Press

SUNRICE, Fla. — Florida Panthers center Josef Kolnik played a key role in helping his team to a 3-0 win over the Washington Capitals on Thursday night.

Kolnik had two goals and an assist as the Panthers won for the fourth time in five games.

"He had a great game tonight," Florida coach Jacques Martin said. "I thought his line was really, really good tonight." Kolnik gave up a big goal on that line, and it seems like the change of luck really helped us.

Stumpel had three points for the Panthers, including a goal, and has posted 15 points in 11 games.

"I feel comfortable out there," Stumpel said. "We got this one done, obviously we need to get the next one.

Martin Gellinas, the player replaced by Kolnik on the line that includes Stumpel and Roslovtech, also had a goal with two power-play goals. The Panthers finished 3-0-6 with Stumpel.

"We just have to play a simple game, especially on special teams," Stumpel said. "After blundering the third period in the last game, we have to do it. We don’t want to get any against. Just play our hockey." Ville Peltonen was the other game-winner for the Panthers, 7-1-2 in their last 10 home games.

Chris Clark, Alex Ovechkin and Dany Sulzer scored for Washington, 2-7 in its last nine. Ovechkin scored for the fourth consecutive game of his career, and his point streak to 13 games, the longest in the NHL this season. Sulzer snapped a five-game point streak.

"It’s always nice to play with John in the middle," said Peltonen, a smart center. He knows where his wings are.

Islanders 5, Thrashers 2

Spending last season with teammate Mike Dunham an appreciation for Marlan Hossa and Ilya Kovalchuk.

So it was no surprise the New York Islanders felt satis­fied after putting the Florida Panthers to the sword on Thursday night.

With a 3-0-6 record, Dunham was the obvious man to give the Islanders the boost to defeat the Thrashers.

"I've got a lot of chances," Kovalchuk said. "I need to shoot 100 percent.

"Evgeni Malkin won the 12th goal, which came on the power play with 3:59 left, made it 2-2. Victor Kozlov scored twice, including an empty-netter.

New York earned three points in four possible points in Atlanta during a seven-day span. The Islanders fell behind 3-0 to the Thrashers in the opening six minutes last Friday but rallied to force overtime.

Atlanta, the Southeast Division leader, won had three of four against the Thrashers in the opening six minutes last Friday but rallied to force overtime.

"We were really good in the third period," said Malkin, who scored twice.

"I felt at 2-2 that we missed a lot of good scoring chances," Thrashers coach Bob Hartley said. "We could have scored 20 goals. What counts is that we had the game, we had the crowd behind us and the momentum, and we gave it away.

The Islanders had lost five of seven and 11 of 15 to fall into 11th place in the East. New York has earned points in five straight games — four since the All-Star break.

Nolan rested center Alexei Yashin, who has trends in his right knee, and No. 1 goalie Rick DiPietro, who was knocked out quickly by the Thrashers in the previous meeting after he allowed three goals on five shots.

"Especially after the last one, we had a lot of chances," Nolan said. "We need to shoot a lot more."

Dunham’s playing experience behind the net with Hossa, Kovalchuk gives Islanders needed boost to defeat Thrashers

"Make sure you get a lot of pucks to the right circle over the shoulder of goalie Kari Lehtonen. It was his fourth goal in five games and his 14th of the season.

Dunham battled injuries and job security throughout the season, appearing in just 17 games and posting an 8-5-2 record. He watched Hossa and Kovalchuk practice nearly every day, however, and worked against both players many times.

"Sometimes games come back to a team that released them last year with something to prove," Islanders coach Ted Nolan said. "He played well tonight.

Hossa, whose scoring the win­ning goal against New Jersey on Tuesday, missed a penalty shot on Wednesday, and was kept at bay against both players.

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Dunham battled injuries and job security throughout the season, appearing in just 17 games and posting an 8-5-2 record. He watched Hossa and Kovalchuk practice nearly every day, however, and worked against both players many times.

"Sometimes games come back to a team that released them last year with something to prove," Islanders coach Ted Nolan said. "He played well tonight.

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Anthony left off All-Star roster

NEW YORK — One bad night may have overshadowed all the good Carmelo Anthony has done this season.

The NBA's leading scorer was not among the seven reserves announced Thursday night for the Western Conference team that will play in the NBA All-Star game.

Denver teammate Allen Iverson was extending his streak of consecutive All-Star appearances to eight. He started the last seven games while playing for Philadelphia. Anthony, who is averaging 31.3 points but missed 15 games while suspended for his role in the brawl at Madison Square Garden, was the most obvious omission.

Earlier Thursday, Anthony said he hoped his suspension wouldn't prevent him from earning his first All-Star spot. "I hope no one holds that over my head over anything," he said. "Things happen. One incident like that is held over one person's head, life ain't fair. I did my punishment. I could've easily kept my mouth shut out by appealing it and doing other stuff about it, but I just did my 15 games suspension and hopefully put that behind us.

Steve Nash, Amar'e Stoudemire and Shawn Marion were all chosen from the Phoenix Suns, but Dirk Nowitzki was the only player picked from the Dallas Mavericks, who have the league's best record. The Mavericks had been hoping Josh Howard would be selected as well.

Detroit and New Jersey had multiple reserves picked for the Feb. 18 game. Chauncey Billups and Richard Hamilton, who both made their first All-Star appearances last season, are going back, and Jason Kidd and Vince Carter will represent the Nets in the game at UNLV's Thomas & Mack Center.

Indiana's Jermaine O'Neal and first-timers Dwight Howard of Orlando and Caron Butler of Washington round out the East reserves.

The seven reserves were voted on by the head coaches in their respective conferences. Coaches couldn't vote for their own players, and had to select two forwards, two guards, a center and two players regardless of their position.

The remainder of the West reserves were San Antonio guard Tony Parker and Utah forward Carlos Boozer.

For the Associated Press

In BRIEF

Retired NBA players lobby for better pensions

MIAMI — They limp through life, often too proud to ask for help but desperately in need of help. They are the aging NFL retirees and, as a rule, the older they are, the less they receive from the league's pension and disability funds.

"An embarrassment," is what famed former player and coach Mike Ditka called it.

"Twenty percent of nothing is nothing," former Bills offensive linemen Joe DeLamielleure said.

Ditka, DeLamielleure and another Hall of Famer, Len Barney, joined one-time Packers star Jerry Kramer on Thursday to promote Kramer's endeavor to advocate for Social Security and other valuable memorabilia to raise money for their fellow retirees.

Ditka described the situation as "shameful," saying he received a $100,000 donation from an owner of a sport other than football.

Judge allows negligence lawsuit against NFL

COLUMBUS, Ohio — A federal judge ruled Thursday that Korey Stringer's widow can proceed with her negligence lawsuit against the NFL and equipment maker Riddell Inc. over his heatstroke death.

Korey Stringer sued the league and Riddell following her husband's death in 2001, after claiming the NFL hadn't done enough to prevent equipment used by players protected from injuries or deaths caused by heat-related illnesses.


Judge John Holschuh dismissed one of the lawsuits' claims, in which Korey Stringer argued that the NFL didn't set proper guidelines for practicing in the heat.

Nuggets forward Carmelo Anthony was not one of seven reserves named to the Western Conference All-Star team. Anthony was suspended for 15 games earlier this season due to a fight against the Knicks.

Anthony was suspended for 15 games earlier this season due to a fight against the Knicks.
MEN'S TENNIS

Seminole visit ND for weekend matches

By DEIRDRE KRASULA
Sports Writer

All signs point forward for the Notre Dame men's tennis team as the Irish will look for their second and third wins against No. 13 Florida State today at the Eck Tennis Pavilion.

Notre Dame blanked Indiana 7-0 on Monday to better their record to 2-1 overall (1-0 at home). Notre Dame's wins over Indiana and William and Mary gave the team a two-point jump in the ITA rankings to move to No. 11.

"We'd really like to start off playing consistent yet aggressive doubles," Bobby Bayliss, Irish coach, said.

"All signs point to our team playing a very good match both days," he added.

The Irish last faced the Seminoles in 2006 where they rallied for a 4-3 win in Tallahassee. Notre Dame has won four of its last five against Florida State. The Seminoles have posted a 5-0 mark for the season after garnering victories over Florida Atlantic, Georgia State and Furman.

The Seminoles first singles player, Jonathas Sucupira, helped secure a victory over Georgia State with a 6-3, 6-4 win over Andres Arango.

The Irish will look to get ahead early by taking at least two of the doubles matches. Coach Bobby Bayliss feels grabbing the doubles point will be a helpful boost for the team.

"We'd really like to start off playing consistent and yet aggressive double," he said.

Jumping out to the 1-0 lead after doubles play will relieve pressure for the Irish singles.

"It all starts there if we can get that first point of the match from doubles," Bayliss said. "Either team that gets the doubles point only has to split the singles to win the match so it's a big momentum builder."

Coming out of the gate with the doubles point under their belt will allow the Irish to focus on the singles matches.

Notre Dame will be challenged by Sucupira as well as senior Ytai Abougzir. Abougzir is ranked No. 2 in the world in under-18 play.

The Seminoles will have to make an adjustment to play on the indoor courts at the Eck Tennis Pavilion. The Irish also have the added boost of home court advantage as well as team that is healthy and playing well.

"The added boost you get from a home crowd that spurs you on and pushes you a little higher is always an advantage," he said.

The Irish will look to come away from Florida State's match with a win to prepare them for Saturday's match against No. 8 Duke.

Notre Dame fell to the Blue Devils 4-3 in Feb. 2006. The Blue Devils lost senior powerhouses Ludovic Walter and Jonathan Stokke, but have promising talent in freshman Dylan Arnould and Aaron Carpenter. Carpenter clinched the 7-5, 6-3 victory in sixth singles to give Duke the 5-2 win over No. 52 Old Dominion.

Despite losing in 2006, the Irish will hope that the combination of home court advantage and talent will lead to a strong showing against the Blue Devils.

"All signs point to our team playing a very good match both days," he said.

Contact Deirdre Krasula at dkrasula@nd.edu

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INFORMATIONAL MEETING: MON, FEB 5 AT 5PM
DEBARTOLO PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
Team faces home challenge

By JAY FITZPATRICK
Sports Writer

Notre Dame has had a lot of success this season, but will face its biggest test of the season when it competes in the Meyo Invitational this weekend at the Loftus Center.

The Irish are ranked No. 9 in the latest edition of the national rankings by Collegiate Track and Field magazine. With other teams rising, the Irish are facing the challenge of being ranked higher than they were at the beginning of the season.

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The Irish have started the season strong, with multiple qualifiers for both the men and women's teams. The last time the squad competed at the Notre Dame Invitational Jan. 26, 31 Irish athletes qualified for the Big East championships later this month including six Notre Dame male mile runners.

Notre Dame's female team was just as impressive in the distance events, with two Irish athletes qualifying for the mile and 3,000 meter races.

Both teams have also performed well in the sprint events, with each gender sending at least one runner to the conference championship in the 60, 100, 200 and 400-meter dashes.

Despite having such success in almost every event, Irish coach Joe Piane said that even in the season's opening meet, "We need to have good performances to get us prepared for the Big East meet," he said.

"We need to prepare the top distance runners from across the country compete. This year, Notre Dame will provide some of that talent, including junior Jake Watson and senior Todd Plack, who run the mile in 4:03 and 4:05, respectively. "It should be a very, very good run," Piane said of the meet's signature event. "Hopefully we'll have somebody approaching four or at least approaching four." With only one meet remaining before the Big East championship, the Irish will have to try to accumulate as many conference bids as possible this weekend. The only remaining meet this season is the Windor Team Challenge, and Piane said he is not sure of how many competitors he is going to send.

"So we really gotta jump on the horse real quick and get some kids qualified," Piane said. "And we've done it on the women's side and the men's side."

Overall, Piane has been pleased with his team's performances in the indoor season. Piane said that so far the team is accomplishing its goals for the indoor track season. "Our goal is always to do well at the Big East and hopefully at the NCAAs. So the first step is to get as many kids qualified for the Big East as possible," he said. "Generally we have 28 to 30 or 32 per gender qualified and I think we're pretty close to that number."

"We'll get a few this weekend."

Contact Jay Fitzpatrick at jfitza5@nd.edu

Irish distance runner Todd Plakek runs in the mile during the Notre Dame Indoor Opener Jan. 19 in the Loftus Center.

ND SWIMMING

Irish focus on Big East despite Louisville meet

By GREG ARBOGAST
Sports Writer

The Notre Dame men and women will both travel to Louisville this weekend, but they will be in a New York state of mind.

This weekend's meet is the final meet for both the men and the women before they head to East Meadow, N.Y., and Long Island, N.Y., for the Big East championships that begin Feb. 14.

"We're looking very much at the Big East (championships)," Irish men's coach Tim Welsh said. "We're in a sharpening process right now, and this weekend is our last chance to get things right before we get to New York."

For the No. 17 men's squad, Louisville will be a reprisal from the stiff competition the team has faced in recent weeks. Notre Dame suffered their first dual meet loss of the season at the hands of then-No. 8 Northwestern by the score of 167-131 Jan. 20. The Wildcats — now No. 6 — are undefeated in dual meets on the season.

Last weekend, the Irish hosted the Shamrock Invitational in which they participated in a quadruple dual meet against No. 19 West Virginia, Penn State, Connecticut and Oakland. Notre Dame went 2-2 on the weekend, defeating Connecticut and Oakland but falling short against Penn State and still-undefeated West Virginia.

The Irish will look to pick up some momentum this weekend against a Louisville squad that has floundered their way to a 3-9 dual meet record. The Cardinals lost in their last meet 189-110 against Jan. 27.

"Louisville isn't as fast up front or as complete as Northwestern or West Virginia, but they're very good in the stroke events and the relays," Welsh said. "I would put them as one of the top four teams in the Big East."

The Notre Dame women can expect a stronger challenge from Louisville this weekend. The Cardinals hold a 10-2 record in dual meets this season, and they are coming off a 189-111 win at Western Kentucky Jan. 27.

"I don't know how much of a threat they'll be to us," senior Katie Carroll said. "I don't think they have the depth we do, and I think we'll be our depth that pulls us through."

That kind of confidence is surprising after Notre Dame's showing in last weekend's Shamrock Invitational. With wins over Oakland, Connecticut and No. 19 West Virginia, the Irish went 3-0-1 on the weekend with the only stumble coming against No. 15 Penn State.

With their defeat of West Virginia last weekend, the Irish gained the upper hand in one of the primary challengers to Notre Dame's bid for their 11th consecutive Big East title. The Irish face a similar opportunity this weekend against the Cardinals.

"This is another good opportunity to send a message," Carroll said. "It will show them that we're not messing around."

Contact Greg Arboagast at garbegas@nd.edu

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FENCING

Irish prepare for Midwest Duals

Bednarski will not rest top competitors

By KEN FOWLER
Sports Editor

Notre Dame wants to make the most of its home tune-up. The Irish host Indiana, Michigan State and Purdue in the Midwest Duals Saturday at 10 a.m. in the Langford Gym — the team’s usual practice facility in the northeast corner of the Joyce Center’s second floor — before traveling to Durham, N.C., Feb. 9 for the two-day Duke Duals against some of the best teams in the Southeast.

“This will be a tune-up for our fencers before the longer competition next week,” Irish coach Janusz Bednarski said.

For the Irish, 5 Irish men and No. 2 Irish women, Saturday’s competition should be easier than their duals in New York a week ago, when the squads combined to finish 7-5. At Purdue, Michigan State and Indiana, fencing is only a club sport.

“You can not underestimate an opponent,” Bednarski said. “We should win this tournament, but how we win, it’s our problem.”

Junior epeeist Greg Howard, the team’s captain for his weapon, said the Irish will stay focused for the event.

“It is important that we do well against them,” he said, adding that falling into a false sense of security could hurt the Irish after last week’s tough competition.

Bednarski said he expects the competition to feature at least one or two high-quality fencers among the weaker squads.

“Sometimes one of them is better, and we will try to show that no one, even good, can … beat our fencers.”

Junior foil Rachael Cota said the women in her weapon division want to sweep the competition.

“I’m pretty confident that the foil girls will go 27-0,” she said. “Our goal is to have fun.”

After finishing 17-1 each in the NYU Duals last weekend, Irish standouts Kelley Hurley, a freshman epeeist and Patrick Chantas, a senior sabre, may see limited action. If the Irish can handle the competition without their top fencers, Bednarski will substitute younger and “fresher” fencers to face the opposition, the coach said.

Contact Ken Fowler at kfowler@nd.edu

Irish right wing Evan Rankin skates down the ice with the puck during Notre Dame’s 4-1 win over Miami (OH) Jan. 26.

Jackson continued from page 20

Jackson

Miami and a four-point lead over third-place Michigan.

The “nation’s best” label is not the only milestone possible for the Irish this weekend. With one more conference win, Notre Dame will set a program record with 16 league wins in one season — currently the Irish are tied with the 1981-82 and 1998-99 teams at 15 wins.

“We’ve proved we can play with pretty much everybody we’ve played,” Jackson said. “We haven’t played New Hampshire or Minnesota or those teams. But within our conference we’ve shown we can play pretty much against anybody.”

Bowling Green has had very few bright spots in a sub-par season, but one came last weekend when the Falcons picked up a 2-2 tie against Alaska. The Falcons have only two scorers with more than 20 points — Jonathan Matsumoto (24) and Derek Whitmore (20) — and are in last place not only in the standings, but also in team offense (1.86 goals per game), team defense (4.03 goals per game) and on the power play (0.888 success percentage).

Falcons goal tenders Jimmy Spring and Eddie Neville have split time and the brunt of the opposition’s offensive attack this season, and it shows in their numbers. Sprat has a .916 goals against average with a 4-15-1 record, while Neville owns a 4.18 GAA.

The Irish met the Falcons in a two-game home series earlier in the season with Notre Dame sweeping 5-2 and 4-0, but that hasn’t kept Jackson from fretting more over this weekend than Miami.

“I get more nervous about these games, that I do about Miami of Ohio because I know our guys will be as ready to play as they need to be against Miami,” he said. “This is part of us becoming a good team, being a good team is to be able to respond coming off a tough weekend against Miami and then going into Bowling Green, maybe a team that’s last in the standings.”

Irish goalie Dave Brown — who came up big against the RedHawks with 40 saves on 43 shots faced in two games — will most likely start Friday night against the Falcons, but Saturday’s starting goalie depends on several factors, Jackson said.

It depends on the number of shots Brown faces in the first game and if he appears fresh when the time comes Saturday, Jackson said.

Jackson said that in order to help keep Brown physically and mentally ready, he gives the goaltender days off where he does not have to put on his equipment, but only does cardio and training.

“Keeping him from putting his equipment on everyday is the key,” Jackson said. The puck will drop in both games at 7:05 p.m., but it will not be televised locally.

Contact Kyle Cassity at kcassity@nd.edu

Sweeping the competition to feature at least one or two high-quality fencers among the weaker squads.

“Sometimes one of them is better, and we will try to show that no one, even good, can … beat our fencers.”

Jeff Jackson
Irish coach

Irish coach Janusz Bednarski said the team’s fencing will not rest on top competitors because their weapon division want to sweep the competition.

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Irish coach Janusz Bednarski said he expects the competition to feature at least one or two high-quality fencers among the weaker squads.
Belles center Maria Canfield sets a screen for guard Allison Kessler during Saint Mary's 81-72 win over Olivet Jan. 31.

Relax

continued from page 20

(Kessler.)

Kessler — the Belles' leading scorer — has not been the focal point of Saint Mary's offense during the streak. Aside from Newsom, guard Bridget Lipke has averaged 13.8 points per game in the four-game stretch. Henley said center Anna Kammrath has also improved over the season.

"Anna really stepped up and worked her butt off," Henley said. "She's incredibly coachable, she's in great shape and she has a good understanding of the game. We want to work on shot selection and get her stronger in the paint, but she's played very well.

"Neither Kammrath or Newsom were starting at the beginning of the season. That shows you how hard they worked."

Regardless of her lessened impact on the team's offense, Kessler hasn't slowed down. She dropped a career-high 33 points Wednesday against Olivet, and is now 28 points shy of 1,000 for her career.

"As only a junior, that's amazing," Henley said. "She'll get it. The only question is whether she'll get it at home or on the road."

Kammrath and Newsom will have their hands full against Calvin's inside game. Forwards Lisa Winkle — who averages 9.4 boards per game — and Marcia Harris seal up the inside.

Calvin has made 47.4 percent of its field goals and 37 percent from three-point range, a facet of their game that will take away the option of playing a zone defense. Combined with the post play, Calvin poses a potent threat. The way the Belles are playing, however, creates palpable excitement.

"We're the ones that played them closest, with a one-point loss," Henley said, referring to the 53-52 Belles loss on Jan. 6. The Belles came a missed free-throw away from forcing overtime.

Contact Bill Brink at wbrink@nd.edu

Hook, Line and Sinker

Irish forward Luke Harangody attempts a hook shot during Notre Dame's 90-45 win over Winston-Salem No. 29.
Bulls

continued from page 20

said before practice Thursday. "Even though we're not that good, we're not dumb. Also, they've been marketing this game in their athletic department since August. This will be their best home crowd and they'll be looking to get their hands on us."

South Florida's defense was also a frustrating Irish guard Russell Carter in the teams' first meeting. The Bulls held the Big East's second-leading scorer to just nine points — well below his 18.4 points per game conference average.

"It's a very tough place to play in South Florida," Carter said. "A lot of teams have trouble down there."

Last time the teams squared off, Irish forward Rob Kurz picked up the slack while the Bulls concentrated on Carter. Kurz finished with a team-high 21 points and 10 rebounds.

"I think the one thing about our team that I think we haven't done all this year is to get other things to get one guy going if he isn't going," Kurz said. "We've usually taken advantages of guys like that."

"Even though we're young, we're not going to do anything stupid," he said. "We're working on this thing sore for three weeks. We will have to see how he is Saturday afternoon."

Kurz is second on the team with 14.0 points per game and first with 8.8 rebounds per contest. If Kurz sits out, and South Florida is able to contain guard Tory Jackson and forwards Zach Hillesland and Luke Harangody will have increased importance in the offense. The trio had no trouble contributing against Syracuse.

Harangody (21 points, 13 rebounds) and Hillesland (14 points, 10 rebounds) each set season-highs in points and rebounds while Jackson scored a career-high 19 points in the Carrier Dome. Jackson was also able to break Syracuse's full-court pressure and get to the free throw line late in the game, going 11-of-14 from the charity stripe.

"You're seeing a young man (Jackson) who gets more confident every week. He's more confident last week when he knew Kyle (McAlarney) was not coming back and that he is the guy," Kurz said. "One of the things we've worked on is to put a guy in to get him into the lane. I think we're starting to learn how to use this type of point guard as a weapon."

South Florida center Kenyon Martin hurt the Irish inside last time, scoring 23 points and grabbing 11 boards. If Kurz is not able to play, Notre Dame will have to adjust defensively.

The Irish could take an extra step in their man-to-man defense, or switch to a zone to prevent Granberry from hurting them inside again — something that has brought the Irish success earlier this season.

"We've usually taken advantage of guys like that."

"I think everybody needs to take a little more aggressive approach to the offense and look to score some points," she said. "And I think everybody needs to rebound a little bit more. I think individually we just need to step up a little bit."

While Notre Dame's offense will try to reload, its defense will be tested once again by West Virginia's strong combination of post play and three-point shooting.

Inside for the Mountaineers, junior center Oluinya Sammi has been a dominant presence averaging 13.9 points and 7.4 rebounds per game. West Virginia is also not afraid to load up on the three-point line. Sophomore Nick Davis — who have each attempted over 100 three-pointers. In comparison, the Irish on the season have attempted just 80 four-pointers. And those two players have taken more active roles and not sit back and wait for the uppersclassmen to take over."

Contact Chris Hine at chine@nd.edu

Allen

continued from page 20

too much," she said.

Overall, Allen is the Irish's leading scorer at 15.7 points per game and is second on the team with 7.3 rebounds per game. But over the recent road trip, Allen only shot 15-of-55 for 10.6 points per game. McGraw believes that one of her team's problems during the losing streak has been that no one other than Allen has been able to pick up the slack if she is shut down offensively.

"I think everybody needs to take a little more aggressive approach to the offense and look to score some points," she said. "And I think everybody needs to rebound a little bit more. I think individually we just need to step up a little bit."

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100 Birthday Baby:

DOWN

1  Some executive offices  
2  Some executive offices  
3  Good thing to be put out of  
4  Lab wear  
5  Chinese leader?  
6  Small heart, say  
7  It helps in passing  
8  Lecture follow-up  
9  Language related to Bennock  
10  Band featured on The Monkees show "Rock Star"  
11  Rarely  
12  100%  
13  Went out for a while  
14  Clinical trial phenomenon  
15  Problem while drying out  
16  Utah city  
17  Party hiree  
18  Rescue's cry  
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ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

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**HOCKEY**

No. 2 Notre Dame vies for top ranking at BGSU

Jackson not distracted by team's success

By KYLE CASSILY
News Writer

A No. 2 unanimous national ranking with several first-place votes in the last month of a long regular season means nothing. At least that's what the Irish say.

"The ranking is insignificant until if and when we get to Joe Louis Arena — and having to win there," Irish coach Jeff Jackson said in reference to the CCHA semifinals and championship in Detroit in March.

Coaches usually walk a modest line, but their players can sometimes be a little more forthcoming. Right?

"Rankings are nice — they’re nice to see sometimes — but we try to focus on every weekend coming up," sophomore left wing Garrett Regan said. "Right now where we’re ranked isn’t as important. Obviously we just want to keep playing as well as we can, and the rankings will take care of themselves." Guess not.

But, whether they like it or not, the Irish have yet to cook up across the country this weekend whenever national rankings are discussed, as the CCHA-leading Irishers travel to Bowling Green for a two-game series against the last-place Falcons. The first-ever No. 1 ranking in program history could hang on the Irish mantle, if only temporarily, with a sweep — and a little bit of Black Bear help.

"To be [the] No. 1 ranked team, it doesn’t bother me," Jackson said. "But fame is fleeting."

The Irish (21-5-2, 15-3-2 CCHA) came into the series against Bowling Green (5-22-1, 3-7-1 CCHA) after an emotional win and tie at home with No. 10 Miami. Last weekend a last-minute goal strengthened Notre Dame’s iron grip on first place in the CCHA. With eight games remaining in the regular season, the Irish have a three-point lead over

see JACKSON/page 16

**MEN’S BASKETBALL**

From start to finish

By CHRIS HINE
Sports Writer

Even though Notre Dame defeated South Florida handily at the Joyce Center Jan. 21, there are plenty of reasons for the Irish to avoid looking past the Bulls in Tampa.

On the year, the Bulls (11-1, 2-6 Big East) are 8-4 at home. Meanwhile, the No. 19/21 Irish (18-4, 6-3 Big East) have struggled away from the Joyce Center, winning just two of their six games on the road.

"We would be fairly naïve and not very smart to think it is going to be easy down there. They’re healthier and they’ve played well at home," Notre Dame coach Mike Brey said. "But we’ve got to get ourselves ready to compete when we get down there.

Irish forward Rob Kurz (center) jumps to control the tip during Notre Dame’s 66-63 win over Villanova Jan. 27. The Irish travel Saturday to face South Florida in Tampa.

see BULLS/page 18

**ND WOMEN’S BASKETBALL**

Irish look to beat WVU, end losing streak

By JAY FITZPATRICK
Sports Writer

Notre Dame is hoping to end its current three-game skid, but may have to wait as they face off against a surging West Virginia squad Sunday at 5:30 p.m. at the AHA.

The Irish (13-8, 4-4 Big East) are returning home after a three-game road trip in which the team failed to win a game. Meanwhile, the Mountaineers (15-7, 6-3 Big East) have taken a different route, winning seven straight and eight of their last ten games.

"They’re playing really well right now, they’re in fourth or fifth place in the Big East," Irish coach Muffet McGraw said. "So it’s kind of a tough game to be coming off a three-game losing streak to face.

In the Irish’s last game out against Pittsburgh, they failed to put two strong halves together and were outscored 45-34 in the second half en route to a 71-62 loss. One of the main factors in the team’s losses over the road trip according to McGraw was the team’s dependence on guard Chareld Allen.

"We need to get a little more from everyone. I think that we’re relying on Chareld Allen a little bit too much," McGraw said.


see ALLEN/page 18

**SMC BASKETBALL**

SMC rests, prepares for Calvin

By BILL BRINK
Sports Writer

It would be tough to imagine giving the nature of the team’s practice Thursday — the players are in the midst of a four-game winning streak and prepping for a road game at Calvin Saturday.

After playing a version of the childhood game around-the-world, Saint Mary’s (19-10, 8-4 MEA)-engaged in a free-throw competition. Each successive shot made allowed the player to advance one basket.

Reach the end and relax until time expires.

Full sprint and run sprints.

Shortly thereafter, cupcakes were distributed and as “Happy Birthday” was sung to forward Jane Fleming, who turned 19. After that, the team was dismissed.

“They’ve been playing hard,” head coach Jennifer Henley said. “We don’t want them to get burned out.

The Belles are averaging 78.5 points over their last four games, 12 points above their season average. Leading the offense has been forward/center Erin Newsom. The sophomore — last week’s MEA Player of the Week — has averaged 19.3 points and 8.8 rebounds per game in the four-game stretch.

“Newsom has come full circle on defense,” Henley said. “But unless you’re looking for it, you won’t notice it.

“We’ve scored 83 and 81 points our last two games, and it’s not all [guard] Alison

see RELAX/page 17

**SPORTS**

**FENCING**

Midwest Duals

Saturday

The Irish will compete at the JACC this weekend as a tune-up for the Duke Duals next week.

see FENCING/page 16

**ND TRACK & FIELD**

Meyo Invitational

Saturday-Sunday

The "Meyo Mile" highlights Notre Dame’s last home, indoor tournament.

The men’s and women’s teams travel to Louisville to take on the Cardinals this weekend.

see ATHLETE/page 15

**ND SWIMMING**

No. 11 Irish host No. 13 Florida State and No. 1 Duke at home today and Saturday.

see SWIMMING/page 15

**TENNIS**

The NBA releases its All-Star rosters, with the most notable exception being Nuggets forward Carmelo Anthony.

see BASKETBALL/page 14

**NBA**

The NBA releases its All-Star rosters, with the most notable exception being Nuggets forward Carmelo Anthony.

see BASKETBALL/page 16

**FLORIDA 6**

Washington 3

Panthers right wing Juraj Kolnik breaks out of a five-game scoring drought in the Florida win.

see HOCKEY/page 12

**NHL**

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**THE OBSERVER**