Mendoza reclaims No. 3 BusinessWeek ranking

By BECKY HOGAN

The Mendoza College of Business has reclaimed its No. 3 ranking of the nation's top business schools for undergraduates according to BusinessWeek magazine's March 10 issue, jumping four spots from its 2007 ranking.

Notre Dame's College of Business previously held the No.3 spot in 2006, its highest ranking to date.

Mendoza is exceeded only by the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School and the University of Virginia's McIntire School of Commerce, who occupied the top two spots, respectively.

"I would say we've actually been performing this way before there was a ranking, and we haven't tried to change anything to get a higher ranking," said Carolyn Y. Woo, Martin J. Gillen Dean of Business. "We are always trying to improve, but it's not because of rankings... whenever we see new opportunities or weak spots we try to attend to these."

Woo said that Mendoza's high national ranking can be attributed to several factors including rigorous academics, job placement success after graduation, the strong alumni network and the College's emphasis on ethics.

"The ranking isn't important so no formal punishment was handed out," she said. "Strict rules that govern student government campaigns allow only $75 to be spent on flyers. The accusation made against Reuvers' ticket by an anonymous source claimed that they went over this amount.

After reviewing the Reuvers ticket's records, the Judicial Council determined only $67 were spent in this manner. The allotment was subsequently dismissed.

The ticket was also accused of using unapproved campaign materials, a claim that turned out to be true according to the Council's investigation.

After the primary elections on Feb. 23, the ticket changed the voting date on its posters to read Feb. 28, in order to encourage sophomores to vote in the run-off election. The Reuvers ticket, however, did not get approval from the Student Senate to make this change to its posters.

A similar issue had been raised earlier in the campaign. The day before the primary elections, a complaint was raised against Reuvers for handing out unapproved campaign materials. While most of the posters his ticket used carried the approval stamp from the Student Senate, a few were overlooked. Some of the campaign posters were removed over winter break.

"The campaign posters were removed because the accusations did not change or affect the outcome of the election," said Reuvers. "The Council's decision was not punished for election violation.

By CLAIRE REISING

Student Senate debated anti-discrimination resolution motion for several reasons. It states that the Catechism of the Catholic Church opposes discrimination of homosexual persons. The resolution further claims that other American Catholic Colleges, such as Georgetown and Kings College have added sexual orientation to their non-discrimination clauses.

"They went over this with the committee and determined that the outcome of the election was not changed, so no formal punishment was handed out," she said. "The Council did meet and determined that one of the two allegations brought forward were valid," Smith said. "However, the committee determined that the outcome of the election was not changed, so no formal punishment was handed out."

"The ticket was also accused of using unapproved campaign materials, a claim that turned out to be true according to the Council's investigation."
INSIDE COLUMN

Franchise

Sam wandered out of bed, awakened to the fourth straight day of shouting.

"I am too taking the car tomorrow," screamed Claire, Sam's older daughter.

"No, you're not, and you know you're not," sneered Claire's brother, Howie, the youngest of Sam's three kids. "That's Ethie's time."

Claire was tall and full and green, and she used to take the family car almost every weekend afternoon and brought back souls full of friends home at night. She was a good daughter. Ethie was meek and shy and brown, sitting home with her thumb in front of the TV every night. She was a despondent girl.

Things had been hard for a while, and Sam knew he was part of a problem. After years of favoring his more industrious daughter, he was now to pity Ethie and her jealousy. But what to do? Then it came to him.

Howie had just turned 14, Ethie was 16 and just got her license, and Claire was 18.

"No need for you to make the decision," Sam thought. "Howie's fairer than I could ever be. Why don't I let him decide?"

"Dad, Dad," Howie said. "You work late on Fridays. Let Ethie have the car on Saturday, and Claire have the car on Sunday. No swaps, no trades, no nothing. Everyone can plan accordingly."

Sam immediately accepted and properly promulgated the law. Quickly, Ethie grew. She went to the mall, she found friends, she mingled, she drove people places, she had a life — and people cared about her. She took the car to the gas-station, had it washed and cleaned and tuned the oil.

Claire changed. She fought with her parents, fought with Ethie and, most of all, fought with Howie. He put the rules in place, and now she had a speck of the social life that she used to.

That's the way it was until Tuesday, when a delegation of Claire's friends asked if she could drive them on early Saturday morning to the last ball at an hour away to watch a special showing of "The Day of Reckoning."

It was a once-in-a-lifetime type thing. Claire politely told them to see anyone but her. She said sure; she would just wake up early, break the rules and take the car before anyone got up.

When she hung up, she turned and saw Howie's face. "No you won't."

For three days, the shouts went back and forth. Ethie didn't like what Claire was doing — it was a threat to her newfound social status — but she didn't say much; the screamed cries came from Howie and Claire. By Friday night, Claire figured she would simply quiet down and call Howie's bluff.

She tipped to the kitchen Saturday morning, snatched the keys off the counter and slowly turned the door to avoid the squawks. She opened the driver's door, and it seemed like no one was watching and no one cared.

Claire inserted the key into the ignition and waited for the turn to start the car. She started and was full power.

She tried again. Nothing. When she quietly flipped the hood, she knew something was missing.

"Dad!" she screamed. "Someone stole the car."

Out came Howie.

"That would be me," he said fluty. "You know the rules and you tried to break them. How would it feel to Ethie if I let you break the rules you both have to live by?"

Claire found a certain sanctimony with which to respond.

"The rules weren't fair to begin with."

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

Contact Ken Fowler at kfowler@nd.edu

CORRECTIONS

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

QUESTION OF THE DAY: WHO IS WINNING IN YOUR MARCH MADNESS BRACKET?

Mark Flammagan

"St. Mary's Mountainneers, because they can't win anything else."

Kayla Bateman

"Pitt, because Pitt is it."

Ted Krutschener

"Memphis. My formidable gut tells me this."

Megan Savage

"Clemson, because my bracket makes a lot of rack out of band of like tennis. WHACK!"

OFFBEAT

Japan appoints cartoon ambassador

TOKYO — Japan has created an unusual government post to promote animation, and named a perfect figure Wednesday to the position: a popular cartoon robot cat named Doraemon.

Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura appointed the cat an "anime ambassador," handing a human-sized Doraemon doll an official certificate at an inauguration ceremony, along with dozens of "dorayaki" red bean pancakes — his favorite dessert — piled on a huge plate.

Komura told the doll, with an unidentified person inside, that he hoped it would widely promote Japanese animated cartoons, or "anime."

Sisters: eBay pulled corn flake auction

CHICAGO — Two sisters from Virginia who are selling a corn flake shaped like the state of Illinois on eBay say the online auction Web site canceled their listing.

"Something really dramatic just happened with our corn flake," Melissa McIntyre, 23, of Chantilly, Va., said Tuesday, explaining that the sisters received an e-mail from eBay saying the state-shaped cereal was in violation of the site's food policy. But the flake is back. The sisters say the Land of Lincoln twins they discovered in a box of Kellogg's Frosted Flakes is still available after all.

McIntyre and her 15-year-old sister Emily said they've relisted the flake on eBay, but this time they're auctioning a coupon redeemable for it, instead of the cereal itself.

Bidding on Wednesday was at $255.00.

Information compiled by the Associated Press.

IN BRIEF

There will be Confession at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart today at 11 a.m. and at 7 p.m.

Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper will be celebrated today at 5 p.m. in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart.

There will be screenings of the film "Persepolis" tonight at 7 and 10 in the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center.

There will be Confession at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart tomorrow at 10:30 a.m. and at 6:30 p.m.

A procession to follow the Way of the Cross will depart from the Alumni Hall chapel tomorrow at 10:45 a.m. The procession will pass through the Grotto and will continue along the banks of St. Joseph Lake.

The celebration of the Lord's Passion will begin tomorrow at 3 p.m. in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart.

There will be Confession at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart Saturday at noon and at 3 p.m.

The women's lacrosse team will play Loyola-Maryland Saturday at 1 p.m. at the Moose Krause Stadium.

The Paschal Vigil will begin Saturday at 9 p.m. in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart.

Easter Mass will be celebrated Sunday at 8 a.m., 10 a.m. and noon in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart.

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

LOCAL WEATHER

TODAY

HIGH 42
LOW 25

TONIGHT

HIGH 37
LOW 20

FRIDAY

HIGH 35
LOW 20

SATURDAY

HIGH 37
LOW 25

EASTER

HIGH 45
LOW 25

MONDAY

HIGH 48
LOW 30

The University enacting this kind of policy has a lot of unforeseen repercussions that we can't even begin to imagine. It's going to upset people, whether we like it or not.

Stephen Bant
Fisher Hall senator

The proposed resolution states that adding sexual orientation to the non-discrimination clause would give legal protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation, according to Molloy.

Molloy, who co-drafted the resolution with Pangborn senator Denise Baron, said at the February 27 meeting that the Senate passed a nearly identical resolution in 1998 when both the Faculty and Student Senators passed a resolution that prohibited discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Although the Student Senate has historically passed resolutions about the non-discrimination clause, Molloy said that the current Senate must show that it still supports the issue.

"We want to have the opportunity to discuss the policy in order to see if people think it's an issue we care about," he said.

Bant said that another resolution—a resolution about the Church's opposition to same-sex marriage—has been introduced to the Senate to discuss the issue. He added that he is concerned that the administration is not a primary supporter of the resolution.

"They support the resolution and are encouraging students to pass it, but they're not actively fighting for it like we are," Molloy said.

The resolution was introduced by O'Neill senator Matt Bant and was amended by Molloy. The Senate approved the resolution by a vote of 12-2 with one abstention.

"We had a great discussion about whether or not we should add sexual orientation to our non-discrimination clause," Molloy said.

Bant disagreed with the resolution and said that the University is actually going to buy a large supply of gluten-free snacks and bars that she brought from her home in her dorm room.

"It's going to help the students who are gluten-sensitive," Bant said.

Before the Huddle Mart began carrying the new products, Gaseer was forced to buy a large supply of gluten-free snack bars that she brought from her home in her dorm room. Gaseer is now able to buy snack bars, pasta meals, and cookies in the Huddle Mart.

She added that the prices at the Huddle Mart are also helpful to her. While shopping for foods that will accommodate a gluten-free diet, Gaseer has learned to compare prices and discounts for gluten-free foods to determine which products will be the most cost-effective for her

Contact Claire Reising at creising2@nd.edu
Mendoza continued from page 1

us in the sense that it changes our actions or the way that we look at ourselves. But if you ask whether a lot more people know how good we are the answer is "yes,\" Woo said.

"This year we paid more attention to companies that recruit our students so they know to expect that a survey will be coming to them,\" Woo said. "We are always looking at reasons to improve, but not in response to rankings."

According to the BusinessWeek ranking, the median annual starting salaries for Mendoza graduates rose to $53,500, a nearly 10 percent increase from the previous year.

The survey also said that students commented that Notre Dame’s "thick hard alums and an emphasis on ethics separated Mendoza from the pack."

"When students commented on ethics, that means more to me than anything else,\" Woo said.

The BusinessWeek ranking continued from page 1

Campaign

posters that circulated the campus — though the Council had approved their content — were prohibited because they had not been individually stamped.

The Judicial Council could not say if the source of this particular allegation is the same one as the two prior claims.

Reveres echoed the words, adding that he was surprised to see the degree to which some people went to damage his campaign.

"When it comes down to it, this is a sophomore class council election and I am surprised some people took this as far as they did,\" he said.

He also said that the timing of the accusations led him to believe they were planned to hurt his chances of winning.

"It was a funny coincidence that the first allegation came right before the primary and the second day of the runoff,\" he said.

Many freshmen said the accusations influenced their votes.

"The spirit of the elections is about what in the end gets done for the class and not about minute details that do not affect the voters.\"

Steven Ouyang freshman

"The spirit of the elections is about what in the end gets done for the class and not about minute details that do not affect the voters.\"

Steven Ouyang freshman

The Mendoza College of Business currently enrolls 1,626 undergraduate students in the departments of accountancy, finance, management and marketing.

"We are always looking at reasons to improve, but not in response to rankings.\"

Carolyn Woo Dean of the Mendoza College of Business

Despite its strengths, Junior Hagine Sargent believes that Mendoza still has room for improvement.

One weakness that I think Mendoza has is just being in South Bend. I would like to see more opportunities in the community to gain practical experience,\" he said.

Sargent said he thinks the BusinessWeek ranking is "ultimately just a number.\"

"I think the rank gives us more opportunity to be recruited, but on the day to day level, as long as you're engaged in challenging program, I think there would still be a way to stand out regardless of ranking,\" Sargent said.

Sargent said that he feels Mendoza has prepared him academically for several business fields.

"They offer a lot of opportunities for interdisciplinary advancement. I'm a marketing major, but I am also educated in wide background of accounting,\" Sargent said.

Senior Brian Cavers said that he feels Mendoza has prepared him for the business world since he graduates.

"We practice real world examples with case studies... and we analyze a company just as you would be doing in a job,\" Cavers said. "I feel confident that once I get a job... Mendoza will have prepared me.\"

Contact Becky Hogan at rhogan2@nd.edu

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**INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

**Iraq**

Bush urges U.S. to stay course in Iraq

Associated Press

WASHINGTON - Five years after the launching of a war by President Bush, he urged Wednesday that the U.S. military appointing council signed off Wednesday on a measure paving the way for provincial elections in Iraq this fall.

The decision by the council, made up of the vice president and two vice presidents, lays the groundwork for voters to choose new leaders of Iraq's 18 provinces.

The decision opens the door to greater Sunni representation in regional administrations.

Many Sunnis boycotted the last election for provincial officials in January 2005, enabling Shiites and Kurds to win a disproportionate share of seats in power in the Sunni heartland - even in areas with substantial Sunni populations.

**Israel**

Security alert, West Bank closed for holiday

Associated Press

Jerusalem — Israel declared a heightened security alert Wednesday for Purim, a minor holiday, fearing Hezbollah guerrillas might try to carry out attacks during springtime festivities.

The army said the closure would remain in effect through Sunday night, preventing thousands of Palestinian workers and merchants from entering Israel. Most come from the West Bank, but small numbers of merchants from the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip are allowed in.

The closure won't affect Palestinians needing treatment at Israeli hospitals, and cargo crossings will keep operating, a military spokesman said on condition of anonymity, citing policy.

While Israel typically imposes closures during major holidays, when schools are closed and public areas are crowded with travelers, security officials are wary since the July 2006 war.

Police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said police canceled last-minute court verdicts and fines to guard festivities, which started at schools Wednesday.

The Islamic mourning period for Muhannadh ends this weekend.

Hezbollah is believed to have close ties with Palestinian militants in the West Bank, who in the past have carried out attacks during Purim, a holiday when young children dress up in costumes.
Shuttle
continued from page 1

how materials are eroded or degraded in the lower-earth orbit spacecraft environment," he said.

The MISSE-6 experiments will give researchers a better understanding of the conditions in the lower-earth orbit, as well as clarify misconceptions about outer space.

"Most people think of space as a vacuum — that there's nothing there... But the lower-earth orbit is 250 miles above the surface of the earth and it's actually a very hostile environment," Jacobs said.

"The kinds of collisions that happen when a shuttle moves at 1,500 miles per hour are so energetic that a material exposed to this environment is often under attack by the elements."

Jacobs also said that this hostile environment is not protected by an ozone layer, causing intense ultraviolet light to affect the space station, an occurrence that could be potentially harmful to the various materials used in making satellites.

To test these factors, materials are exposed to different elements by placing modified controls on the materials, according Jacobs.

Additionally, Jacobs said that small data recorders have been installed which collect and record information about the samples every 20 minutes throughout the yearlong period.

Not only will the space experiments help to identify environmental effects on materials, but they will also determine whether space environment simulations that have been taking place in Jacob's lab are accurate.

"We've been doing experiments in our lab at Notre Dame that we think simulate the space environment," Jacobs said. "This experiment will be an opportunity to compare our simulation of the space environment with the reality of space."

Jacobs' research team has been working with six other universities on the MISSE-6 experiment, including the University of Chicago, the University of Illinois, the University of Pittsburgh, Montana State University and Utah State University.

"We were invited as a team to see if we would like to launch the MISSE-6 experiment," Jacobs said. "Notre Dame stepped up in a big way to spearhead the effort."

After approximately one year, the materials will be retrieved and examined to assess the cumulative effects of the lower-earth orbit environment.

"Experiments like this are wholly consistent with the University's mission to contribute to the advancement of knowledge," Jacobs said. "We hope that our contributions have an impact and that those advancements lead to an increased understanding of materials in the space environment."

Contact Becky Hogan at rhogan2@nd.edu
Limits on mortgage firms loosened

Mandatory cash cushion for Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac to be reduced by one-third

Associated Press

WASHINGTON By making it easier for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to raise funds and back nearly $2 trillion in home loans this year, the government is making its role in steadying the economy a little more hands on.

That strategy is moving the Bush administration toward activist government role and away from traditional free-market leanings. Behind the push: a housing crisis and credit-market calamity that have spread four through global financial markets and made it tough for consumers and businesses to borrow.

Analysts worry that the opening for Fannie and Freddie could put too much financial risk on the banks of the mortgage-financing companies, which have taken multibillion-dollar hits from the forescore wave and have been hungry for capital.

"Until a few months ago, administration officials voiced similar concerns," said they that allowing the companies to take on more financial risk could threaten the global financial system, cit­ ing the pair's recent massive accounting scandals.

Although an independent regulatory agency put the plan in place, it wasn't without some significant stage setting by top-level Bush officials.

It was under the Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight that announced Wednesday the plan to quickly inject an additional $200 billion in private funds, which will give Fannie and Freddie the ability to raise significant amounts of capital. But President Bush's Treasury Secretary, Henry M. Paulson, was said to have played a role in bringing about the move, as he did in the rescue buyout of investment firm Bear Stearns by rival JP Morgan Chase, which was orchestrated and backed up by the independent Federal Reserve.

Under the plan, the mandatory cash cushion for Fannie and Freddie — now nearly $20 billion for the two — will be reduced by a third. OfHED, which oversees the government-sponsored companies, said the goal is to free up money to help new home buyers take out loans and existing homeowners refinance into more affordable mortgages.

"Everything is now on the table. Actions that would have been inconceivable from the administration's point of view just weeks ago are mainstream today," said mortgage industry consultant Howard Glaser. "The administration is not going to shoot anything down that might help stabilize the mortgage market given the current environment."

Government doing little to help economy

WASHINGTON — Any present optim­ istic may be premature.

The sagging economy could keep shaming Uncle Sam on one side of the stock mar­ ket rallies, aggressive intervention by the Federal Reserve and efforts by Congress and the White House to put more money in consumers' pockets.

Economic fundamentals are dreary and there is only so much the govern­ ment can do to make things better before the worst is over.

"Even those applauding the recent moves by the Fed and the administration have yet to see enough taken hits from which it will be hard to recover."

"This is a period of stabilization, events, the housing slump and the credit crunch, at the same time," said Alice Rivlin, founding director of the Congressional Budget Office and for­ mer vice chairman of the Fed.

Still, she is guardedly hopeful. "The Fed is very aggressive and imaginative and has really taken very strong action, primarily to get the credit mar­ kets functioning again. And that's good."

But she said it may take more action by the administration and Congress and there may be "a need to put more public money into this."

Former Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan calls today's financial prob­ lems "the most wrenching since the end of the Second World War."

The economy is replacing Iraq as the main worry of election-year voters. This shift has put the administration in a very sensitive mode and led to increasing calls to action by the presiden­ tial contenders.

The Fed has cut its key short-term rate six times since September. That includes a three-quarter percentage point reduction Tuesday, to 2.25 per­ cent. Policymakers hinted that more cuts may be in store.

The central bank has shovelled tens of billions of dollars into credit mar­ kets. It invoked Depression-vintage authority over the weekend to engineer the fire-sale takeover of Bear Stearns to keep the 85-year old investment house from going under.

More than 130 million households soon will begin receiving rebate checks under a $168 billion economic aid plan.

On Wednesday, the administration relaxed restrictions on mortgage­ finance giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, allowing them to make up to $200 billion more in loans. The White House also is negotiating with Democrats, who run Congress, on plans to forge hundreds of thou­ sands of home foreclosures.

But there are risks.

Too much government intervention, some economists suggest, may prolong the day of reckoning when housing and credit markets hit bottom, while adding hundreds of billions to the national debt, now edging closer to $10 trillion.

Luis Garcia, a victim of predatory mortgage company Lifetime Financial, sits in his home in San Bernardino, Calif. Tuesday. The firm was shut down Tuesday by the state of California.

WASHINGTON By making it easier for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to raise funds and back nearly $2 trillion in home loans this year, the government is making its role in steadying the economy a little more hands on.

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Glaser was a federal housing official in the Clinton administration.

Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., who has long been critical of the administration's response to the housing crisis, saw recent moves as tardy and tepid. "They're beginning to put their toe in the water," he said in an interview Wednesday. "They're still a day late and a dollar short, but at least they're looking at it."
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In wrecks, sturdy cars delay victims’ rescue

Study reveals emergency crews struggle to cut through modern autos’ reinforced steel frames

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Capt. Clint Roberts and his Tampa Fire Rescue team, cutting accident victims out of hideously mangled vehicles, believes it when two people in a 2007 Lexus LS 460L heaved on a bridge-head-on crash with a full-sized pickup last year.

The Ford Fusion’s reinforced steel construction probably saved both of them, Roberts said, because their cutting tools wouldn’t have been able to shear the roof posts, which are hard to buckle.

“It was just beating the snot out of the tools,” adding minutes and delaying medical treatment, Roberts said.

The biggest question that today’s cars save lives by concealing motorists in reinforced cages, rather than absorbing crumple zones and as many as 100 air bags.

To protect themselves, workers use tools with The Associated Press, rescue official, for the United States the new technology is also hindering emergency workers, increasing forcing crews to work around the so-called “golden hour” between accident and treatment by emergency room doctors. On many 2005 and later cars, an extrication that once took 10 or 15 minutes can now take twice that or longer.

To rescue counties and cities are spending tons of thousands of dollars — if they can afford it — to buy more powerful equipment that can cut thorough newer cars reinforced steel and the lighter, tougher exotic metals used in roofs, posts and other parts.

And then there are obstacles that end in workers’ safety. Pressurized gas canisters that inflate air bags can explode if pierced by cutting tools. Recueers can be blown from cars when air bags suddenly inflate. Hidden battery cables in hybrid cars can deliver a powerful electric shock.

To protect themselves, workers now have to peel away the ceiling and interior plastic to see what’s underneath before they can even start cutting.

Experts cannot say for certain whether the delays in getting these victims to the hospital have resulted in people dying. But that’s the fear; first responders, we make faster fire tracks, which force us to get to you, to the hospital,” said Roberts.

The problem has rescue workers scrambling to update their tools and explore different ways to attack cars with their cutters, spreaders and saws. Some agencies with equipment more than a few years old are arriving at accident scenes and finding out the job is no longer doable.

Because their shearing materials had been so successful for so many years, some agencies didn’t develop a Plan B, said Tom Hollenstain, who works to educate rescue about new auto technology at the State Farm Insurance vehicle research center.

Leading hydraulic-tool makers such as Hurst Jeans — whose namesake George Hurst invented the first hydraulic extrication tool in 1970s — must keep putting more powerful saws and cutters into their equipment making it heavier and more expensive. A single Hurst cutter and power unit runs about $25,000. Add hydraulic spreaders and other tools and the price rises quickly.

A fire crew in Bonita Springs, Fla., discovered the problem last year when it rolled up on a 2007 Lexus that had overturned. Hydraulic cutters only made a few cuts into the strengthened steel roof posts, so the crew had to move their truck away. The patient was pregnant and had a small car. A job that should have taken a few minutes required 20 minutes of cutting and saving to remove the driver.

Assistant Chief Ken Craft said the incident led the department to buy new heavy rescue tools costing $54,000 — a sizable expense for a city of around 40,000.

“If the automakers roll out something new next week, we could be right back where we were,” Craft said. “That’s the problem we’re confronted with.”

Mike Ador, a volunteer firefigh ter in Rockville, Md., recalled the layered-steel roof post from a 2008 Toyota Camry that wouldn’t budge under the blades of a hydraulic cutter and the side slide crash. The patient, whose injuries were serious but not life threatening, finally had to be maneuvered around the post.

Ador used two types of saws and numerous blades to remove the post after the patient was removed. The department quickly decided to buy a new, more powerful cutter.

The flip side, of course, is that more people are surviving horrific crashes that would have killed them just a few years ago.

The Fusion’s passenger, for example, was hurt but conscious and joking with Roberts as the crew worked to get him out. The driver of the other vehicle — a 2001 Ford F-150 pickup — was dead at the scene.

With about three people hurt in crashes every minute in the United States, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration spokesman Joe Scharf said he is comfortable with the trade-off. If rescue workers, he said, will have to work harder to keep up with technology, just like everybody else.

“The fatality rate for passenger vehicles is the lowest in history,” Tyson said. “That, to me, is a pretty good news story.”

Fathers face years in prison

Bogus posting fueled racial conflict between victim and shooter’s son

Associated Press

RIVERHEAD, N.Y. — A black father was sentenced to two to four years in prison Wednesday for fatally shooting an intoxicated white teenager during a racially charged confrontation between two carloads of young people at the end of his driveway.

The parents of victim Daniel Cicciaro Jr., 17, were irate after learning that John White did not receive the maximum sentence of 15 years in prison. White, 54, was convicted in December of second-degree manslaughter and a weapons charge.

“Nice message it sends to society that as long as you’re black and there’s a problem at the end of your driveway you can grab an illegal handgun and shoot someone in the face and get away with it,” an influn­ died Daniel Cicciaro Sr. told reporters while dozens of supporters sobbed nearby.

“Well, let’s see what happens when Aaron White gets shot, and see how the laws are,” Cicciaro said, referring to 2006.

Defense attorney Frederick Brewington said Cicciaro’s remarks appeared to be a threat and demanded an investigation. Suffolk County District Attorney Thomas Spota said the matter was referred to police, and the Whits were asked extra protection at their home.

“I’ve always remained remorseful about this inci­ dent,” White told The Associated Press.

While White was led away in handcuffs, his attorneys immediately filed an appeal and bail was set at $200,000 late Wednesday, said attorney Paul Gianelli. He was expected to remain jailed overnight.

At the trial, the defense invoked the nation’s violent racist past in arguing the shooting was justified, referring to the teenagers as a “lynch mob.”

White testified that he was trying to protect his family on a warm night in 2006 when he got an unregistered pistol from his garage after a group of angry white teenagers turned up at his house to fight his son. He claimed the hand­ gun discharged accidentally, killing Cicciaro.

The conflict was fueled by a bogus Internet posting churn­ ing Aaron White wanted to rape a female friend of one of the teen’s friends.

Cicciaro, who had a blood­ alcohol reading above the legal limit for driving, was just 3 inches from the pistol when he was shot in the face, a medical examiner testified.

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Freedom of Speech"
Being from New Jersey, state pride has never really been my thing. Don’t get me wrong, I love my state, and if I can ever afford to live there in a place other than my parents’ house I’d certainly love to. But for all the things I love about New Jersey, from Bruce Springsteen to the three-time Stanley Cup winning New Jersey Devils to diners at nearly every mile mark on every major highway, it just never occurred to me to think of New Jersey as better than any other state. The school system is only, as the state’s commercials tell me, “one of the top two in the nation.” I think the lack of enthusiasm might have to do with the fact that the Garden State is rather dominated by the lurking giant right above, New York. All my life I’ve watched sitcoms on New York television affiliates, I’ve listened to New York radio stations and read New York newspapers. I’ve even rooted for New York sports teams, like the Giants and Jets (I’m not much of a football fan). However, there has always been one area in which I have always considered New Jersey vastly superior to the Empire State, and that’s the hierarchy giants right above, New York. All my life I’ve watched sitcoms on New York television affiliates, I’ve listened to New York radio stations and read New York newspapers. I’ve even rooted for New York sports teams, like the Giants and Jets (I’m not much of a football fan). However, there has always been one area in which I have always considered New Jersey vastly superior to the Empire State, and that’s the hierarchy. Of course, nearly all the first thing Gov. Paterson does is tell the first reporter he can find that he spent almost three years in relationships with women other than his wife. Presumably, the fact that money was not exchanged makes Paterson a champion of the people. However, I fear that the media and you, the media-influenced public, might be too caught up in the here-and-now, and be somewhat forgetful of the not-so-far-from-here-and-now. After all, it has only been four years since the governor of my proud state resigned in order to get in front of the story about how he hired his completely unqualified gay lover to be his Homeland Security Advisor at a yearly salary of $110,000 a year, despite the fact that Louis Freeh, the former head of the FBI, volunteered to do the job for free. Gov. McGreevey apparently thought that the fact that Golan Egel was from Israel would be enough to satisfy everyone in the state that he was qualified to advise the governor in the event of a terrorist attack. Like in the Spitzer case, there was the pathetic spectacle of McGreevey and his wife standing together at a podium, refusing to directly answer questions or fully admit wrongdoing. But here’s where New Jersey’s expertise in all matters-salacious comes into play. Rather than just resigning effective shortly thereafter, McGreevey announced that his resignation would not take place for three whole weeks. Why? To delay the voters of New Jersey the chance to choose his replacement in a special election, of course! You see in New Jersey, we only let the voters decide who should be in office when all other alternatives have been exhausted. I don’t think I’ve ever been prouder of my home state than I was the other day when former Gov. McGreevey, now of all things, a divinity student in an Episcopal seminary, in an effort to keep the scandal-crown in New Jersey, said not so fast New Jersey. You see, he wasn’t just cheating on his wife with a state employee, no. He was having wild sex parties which involved his wife. Honestly, it’s like McGreevey was standing up and saying, just try and top that, Paterson. Or maybe he was just trying to publicly embarrass his wife before the upcoming custody hearing over their daughter Jacqueline, while also trying to depresso sales of her book. Either way, it makes my heart stir with pride to be from New Jersey, where we have perfected career-ending scandal.

John Everett is a senior English major. He is thought to be somewhere between 21 and 45 years of age. He is armed only with a sharp wit and is considered cantankerous. If you have any information regarding his whereabouts, please contact the Observer’s crime desk.

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

Yesterday I was walking to class with my boyfriend, who was wearing his Army uniform, when we came upon a protest against the Iraq War on Fieldhouse Mall near Lafortune. My boyfriend stood tall, looked forward and walked past the protesters without uttering a word. We were immediately followed by a young man holding a sign that said “Support the Troops. Not the War” who “thanked” him for his service and yelled at him to come join the protest later in the day.

It was a slap in the face to my boyfriend, since some of the other protesters held signs complaining of Iraqi deaths brought about by American soldiers and demeaning the administration that has supported the troops throughout the war. At this point, my blood boiled, and I began to wonder whether this so-called supporter of the troops really knew what it meant to show support? Members of ROTC and those in the armed forces today made a choice to join the service. They were not drafted. To believe that they would stand in protest of something that they have chosen to dedicate their lives to is insulting and ignorant. To claim that you support people while standing in protest of what they risk their lives for is absurd.

So, I would like to challenge all of those who make similar claims of “support” to put down your signs and actually do something worthwhile for a change. If you truly support the troops, spend the time you waste idly standing with a sign preparing a care package for a soldier. Get a name and address on ArmySoldier.com and send a card or an e-mail thanking them. It is, after all, soldiers who have fought and died to guarantee your right to stand in protest and ridicule the very causes that they risk their lives for. If any of you would like to put your words of support into action I would be happy to pass along the addresses of my boyfriend, and all other junior cadets in Army ROTC, who will be spending most of this summer training in Fort Lewis, Washington away from their friends and families. I know they would prefer you to show your appreciation with letters and packages as opposed to your distorted version of “support” that is, in fact, a mockery.

Meghan Sweeney
senior
Foley Hall
March 19

Yatarola shows the way

Ed Keenan is clearly a lost soul careening down a path of corruption. In his article “Obama most likely not the Antichrist” (March 19), Keenan bases Greg Yatarola, the final bas­

ceres of faith and reason here in The Observer, for having nothing “origi­

n” or “relevant” in saying about the destructively monstrous that is Barack Obama, calling Yatarola’s words “absurd.”

Need I remind you all that this is just the sort of derision endorsed by the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for his enemies of the poor, diseased, and Republican. In fact, one notices that the inane idol worship that follows Obama everywhere he goes is just the opposite of what the brilliant Yatarola faces on this campus. The misguided commentaries of this modern prophet are dismissed by nearly all students in the same way as by Keenan.

Yet though he is inevitably respond­
ed to with great hostility by the Notre Dame student body, Greg the Great trucks on, writing article after article to The Observer, taking time out of his real-world day to try to lead the stu­
dents of his alma mater to the light.

Thank God for alumni who are so involved.

Andy Gray
superior
Singled Out Fall
March 19

Catholicism vs. nationalism

I believe Jay Rowley (“Sheen doesn’t deserve Laetare Medal,” March 17) is confusing two areas of an American Catholic’s life: nationalism and Catholicism.

The war in Iraq was called unjust by the Vatican under John Paul II, and Benedict XVI reiterated a call for the end of the war on Sunday. Is that said at Notre Dame may have

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person to a résumé of these accomplis­

ments. The anxiety of never feeling good enough — in any realm — contributes to the develop­

ment of an eating disorder. If the University truly wishes to address eating disorders, the solution is not to hold a conference highlight­

ing a supermodel as the keynote speaker.

Ultimately, the University must reevaluate the kind of mental health that is fostered on this campus. More immediately, the University must prioritize making high quali­

ty counseling more available to the student body.

While it is possible to find this at the counsel­

selling center, it is also true that the center is chronically unable to meet student demand, consigning some to their waiting list and charming others through as a rushed pace or in a limited number of sessions. Hiring more counselors to supplement the doctoral interns won’t eradicate eating disorders on campus, but it will increase the possibility that those who feel wretched with them will receive adequate care.

Emily Steeler
grad student
off campus
March 19

Deeper issue must be addressed

The recent Health and Body Image Conference held at Notre Dame may have succeeded in raising awareness of eating dis­

orders, but it hardly succeeded in pinpointing the issues underlying them.

A distorted body image is not the funda­

mental problem, but only a manifestation of the eating disorders. As you have been told, eating disorders are a mechanism for coping with extreme anxiety and self-hate. Our societal fixation on a certain (unrealistic) standard of physical perfection may give the anxiety a vehicle to churning others through at a rushed pace or in a limited number of sessions. Hiring more counselors to supplement the doctoral interns won’t eradicate eating disorders on campus, but it will increase the possibility that those who feel wretched with them will receive adequate care.

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Emily Steeler
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March 19
At the age of only 19, Zach Condon, a.k.a. "Beirut", crafted one of the most precocious debut records of any American artist in recent memory. Defined by Eastern European and Balkan influences, the album "Gulag Orkestar" weaves a decidedly mature tale of hope, loss and the constant renewal of life as is found when one appreciates the dueling roles of new influences amidst the permanence of memory.

Considered part of the indie scene, Beirut has flown under the radar of many casual indie fans. His rich and emotive voice carries most of the songs, with various instruments including the ukulele and the trumpet augmenting the many textures and feelings that he brings to each tune.

A minor problem with the record is the fact that it is written with such heartfelt enthusiasm for the lives and experiences of those in Eastern Europe, the Balkans and Russia. It's a sound technique and Condon succeeds in conveying a sense of the experience faced by those whose stories color his songs. But, since he grew up in the western United States and spent most of his time making the record in Western Europe, it is unlikely that many of the stories he tells are so much from lived experiences as they are from meticulous and thorough research on his subjects. The songs are not particularly bad or suffer from lack of actual influential experience, but they seem to stretch a bit too far at some points.

One of the major triumphs of the album is "Postcards From Italy." Quite similar in points to the vocal fluctuations and flows of Rufus Wainwright, it is a fully developed tune of life, love and death. Beirut sings: "The times we had / Oh, when the wind would blow with rain and snow / Were not all bad / We put our feet just where they had, had to go / Never to go." With vocals laced amidst a concord of horns, drums and the ever-present ukulele, the track creates a subtly winning portrait of the expectations that lovers invest in their loves all to watch them fall, still ever-hoping for the love to rise again in a yet to be seen day.

One of Beirut's most obvious strengths is his ability to write lyrics that are not overly involved and sprawling. Unlike many indie artists who construct songs that rely on vast stories weaved within each individual track, Condon allows the words equal footing with the music. Yet he also manages the balance between the two elements of words and music so they support each other as individual yet superbly integrated elements of each track. This effect is best seen on tracks like "The Canals of Our City," "Mount Wooral" and "Postcards From Italy." Indeed, his astute and measured use of each element of the song allows for the best songs to stand out as absolute gems while letting the more average ones still achieve their own power and effect in a manner that is usually only seen in the best songs on other artists' records.

The track "Scenic World" offers perhaps the most prettily pop sound on the record. Amidst the onset of horns and layered vocals, Condon sings: "I try to imagine a careless life / A scenic world where the sunsets are all breathtaking. / It's a beautiful moment on a wholly beautiful record from a young man who is fast becoming one of the most magical and affecting artists making music today.

Contact James Costa at jcosta1@nd.edu
After losing in the first round last season, Notre Dame vows to make a deep Tourney run this year.
Irish poised for deep NCAA run

It's time to get back to work. After dispatching most of their Big East regular-season opponents in business-like fashion, the Irish should get the job done this weekend in the NCAA Tournament. But that doesn't mean Notre Dame has an easy road ahead of it. After the Irish finished in a tie for second place in the conference, they were "rewarded" with a trip to a city two time zones away to take on a George Mason team that knows a few things about winning in March Madness. If they take care of the Patriots, the Irish will then likely take on either Washington State or Winthrop. The players know they can't mention where the Irish would head if they could notch two wins in Denver, but Notre Dame fans can speculate. If the team is still on its feet for the Sweet Sixteen, the Irish would earn another cross-country trip, this time to take on North Carolina in its backyard in Charlotte, N.C.

The potential matchup with the Tar Heels might not really seem like a reward for the players but that would be plenty of fun for fans. Can't you just imagine a savvy, wide-eyed Rick Vitale going hoarse while talking about a Harangody-Hambrugh matchup? "It's the Sweet Sixteen. It's the two best big men in the country, baby!" I'm giddy just thinking about it. If the Irish take care of business this weekend, they will find themselves in one of the biggest games in program history.

I know I'm getting ahead of myself. But not as ahead as you might think - expect the Irish to come out on fire this weekend. The Colorado air might not help Notre Dame's offense like it does baseball hitters but that doesn't matter. Luke Harangody has had a week to think about his early foul trouble and a 13-point finish in the team's early exit in the Big East tournament. That's in addition to the rougher four points and one rebound he posted in last year's one-and-done in the Big Dance.

"I wish the game could come a lot sooner than Thursday," Harangody said.

So despite sleeping in an unfamiliar bed for a few nights, the Irish big man should be even more intense than usual in the first round. George Mason is a physical squad but its frontline won't be able to hang with Notre Dame's. A potential second-round matchup with Washington State or even Winthrop would be a bigger test for the Irish but it would also be a good warm-up for a contest with you-know-who.

The Irish know what's at stake this year. They are no longer the wide-eyed Tournament rookies they admitted to being last year. "We're here to do a lot more than we did last year," Harangody said.

The Irish haven't played since their early exit from the Big East tournament. They're eager to get back to work.

"The views expressed in this column are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer. Contact Fran Tolan at ftolan@nd.edu."
Facing Cinderella

George Mason, a Final Four team two years ago, commands respect as a first-round opponent

By CHRIS KHOREY
Senior Staff Writer

For the second straight year, Notre Dame suffers a severe deficit of Tournament experience relative to its first-round NCAA Tournament opponent.

The No. 5 seed Irish, who lost the only game they played in the Big Dance in the last four years, take on No. 12 seed George Mason in the Pepsi Center in Denver, Colo., today in the first round of the NCAA's East Regional.

In 2006, as a No. 11 seed, the Patriots made a surprising run all the way to the Final Four. Their Cinderella run created a new college basketball tradition – pundits now start searching for "This Year's George Mason" as early as December.

According to many, last year's "This Year's George Mason" was Winthrop, the small South Carolina college that has been a perennial favorite in the Big South conference.

The Eagles, a No. 11 seed, also happened to be Notre Dame's first-round opponent. They beat the Irish 74-64 before losing in the second round.

One year later, the Irish are determined to erase the memories of losing to "This Year's George Mason" by defeating this year's George Mason.

"You get there and you settle in and you go to practice and then you're playing and you lose and its over," Irish forwardf Folarin Campbell said of the loss to Winthrop. "That was not a good feeling, especially because you play your whole season to build that resume and get to the Sweet 16."

This year's George Mason

The Patriots followed up their national semifinal appearance by missing the 2007 NCAA Tournament.

This season, they went 23-10 and won the Colonial Athletic Association championship with a 68-59 win over William & Mary on March 10.

George Mason still features seven players with Final Four experience and is still coached by Jim Larranga, who is now in his 11th season with the school.

"We know the run that they made a couple years ago," Irish guard Kyle McAlarney said. "This is the NCAA Tournament. We have to look at them like a Big East team."

The Patriots are led by senior forward Will Thomas, who, at 6-foot-7, 230 pounds, will probably catch up with Big East player of the year Luke Harangody in the low post.

As a sophomore, Thomas was second in rebounding and fourth in scoring on the Final Four team. This season, he is George Mason's leading rebounder with 10.5 per game and second-leading scorer with 15.8 points per game.

The leading scorer for the Patriots this season is senior guard Folmar Campbell, who pours in 15.9 points per game. At 6-foot-6, he is George Mason's match-up problems for Notre Dame's shorter guards, so Hillesland or junior guard Ryan Ayers will probably guard him.

George Mason shoots just 35 percent from 3-point range as a team, but they make up for it by getting the ball inside to Thomas inside or by Campbell getting into the lane off the dribble.

The Patriots have played three "power" conference teams this season. They defeated Kansas and South Carolina and lost to Villanova.

This year's Notre Dame

One year ago, Notre Dame was walking off the court in Spokane, Wash., having just lost to George Mason in the NCAA Tournament prior to last season. This season, Kurz said, the Irish are much more prepared for the atmosphere.

"We learned a lot from last year, like how to prepare mentally better," Kurz said. "Having gone through the experience, we know what to expect now. I think that's a big key for us."

Although seven current Notre Dame players saw time in the Winthrop game last year, one didn't play guard Kyle McAlarney. McAlarney was suspended for the spring semester last season for possession of marijuana.

"He said while the NCAA Tournament might be old hat for his teammates, he will enjoy his first Big Dance.

"I'm just going to go out there and have fun and go for it," McAlarney said. "That's all I really can do."

Another thing that's new for the Irish this season is the emergence of Harangody, who scored just four points against the Eagles last season. This year, the sophomore is averaging 20.8 points and 10.2 rebounds per game.

For much of the season, Notre Dame was utilizing the top teams in the nation in rebounding margin, but the Irish have struggled on the boards of late, even getting out-rebounded 40-34 by guard-heavy Marquette in their loss in the Big East quarterfinals.

"We have to get back to what we've been doing on the boards," sophomore point guard Tory Jackson said. "In January we dominated on the boards. We have to get back to doing that again."

Rocky Mountain High

In addition to each other, Notre Dame and George Mason will also have to contend with the altitude in Denver, where the thin air makes strenuous exercise difficult on the lungs.

To try to get used to the mountain air, the Irish left Monday night to try to get two practices in Colorado.

Hillesland dismissed the notion that the altitude will affect the game.

"Everyone has to adjust to it," he said. "It's not going to be a factor."

Jackson, however, said he has heard horror stories about altitude from his Hoosier teammates.

"I heard that if you run up and down the court a couple minutes per day, you won't be scared," he said. "I'm kind of scared."

The sophomore point guard added that he hopes Notre Dame is in better shape, so that George Mason passes out before the Irish.

"I feel like it might be an advantage because they might pass out before we do," he said.

Looking ahead

The winner of Notre Dame and George Mason will take on the winner of the Washington State and St. Bonaventure Saturday afternoon. The Cougars are a slow-paced, defensive team that finished third in the Pac-10 and averaged 67.1 points per game offensively and only gave up 60.9 points per game defensively.

In contrast, the Irish score 80.6 points per game and give up 70.5 points.

The Eagles won their fourth straight Big South title and will try to pick off their second straight higher seed in the first round of the NCAs. If they do, Notre Dame will get a shot at revenge from last year.

But according to Kurz, Notre Dame is only focusing on the Patriots.

"We have to play fearlessly," he said. "We've been playing all year," he said.

Contact Chris Khorey at ckhorey@nd.edu

Chris Hine
Sports Writer

Notre Dame handles its first two opponents. Thanks to a huge upset bid over North Carolina in the Round of 32, the Irish got the chance to play in the Sweet 16. In off day advance to the Elite Eight, where they fell for a second time this year to Louisville, Notre My Brack- et, where money may or may not be at stake, does not reflect this prediction.

First Round: W, George Mason
Second Round: W, Wash. State
Sweet Sixteen: W, Indiana
Elite Eight: L, Louisville

Chris Khorey
Senior Staff Writer

George Mason is a good mid-major team, but that Final Four was two years ago. Winthrop will upset Washington State, giving the Irish chance at revenge — and they will take advantage. Notre Dame's run will come to an end in the Sweet 16. in a de facto road game against North Carolina that will feature a classic match-up between Hanksbrough and Harangody.

First Round: W, George Mason
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NH BOB GIES/Observer

Irish junior guard Kyle McAlarney dribbles against Marquette guard Dominic James in the Golden Eagles' 89-79 win in the Big East quarterfinals on March 11.

George Mason forward Will Thomas takes a shot in the Patriots' 68-59 win over William and Mary on March 10.

All year long, Mike Brey has been telling his team to "Dream Big."

"Notre Dame's got a chance to do that. After winning a conference title last year, we will not have enough magic left to knock out North Carolina in the Big Ten. The game will be in the game until the end against the Irish will have to shoot the lights out to pull off the upset."

Fran Tolain
Associate Sports Editor

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First Round: W, George Mason
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Sweet Sixteen: L, North Carolina
Brey's 'high-strung child' keeps teammates loose

Hillesland steps into starting role with unique style of play

By CHRIS HINE
Sports Writer

Don't ask DePaul center Mac Koshwal what happens when Zach Hillesland gets angry.

In Notre Dame's 90-80 win over DePaul on Feb. 2, Irish coach Mike Brey felt Hillesland, saying the junior forward could be playing better defense on Koshwal.

On one particular play in the second half, Koshwal muscled his way past Hillesland for a basket, prompting Brey to let Hillesland have it as he came down on offense.

"I thought Koshwal dropped step and went through his chest a little too easy there. So, I just kind of commented on that," Brey said with a laugh before practice Monday.

Only Brey's re-telling of the story lacked a few other choice words he had for Hillesland. Whatever else Brey screamed at Hillesland had its desired effect — a few seconds later, Hillesland took Koshwal to the hoop and slammed it home.

"It freed me up, so next time down the floor, I was just ready to bolt over and I knew next time I got the ball. I'm going to go to the rack to try to finish," Hillesland said. "... Koshwal was guarding me and I knew he wasn't as quick as I was, so I gave him a little fake went baseline, help came, went to dunk it and it turned out well. Then, a little of some frustration built out afterwards.

"Hillesland turned to Notre Dame's bench and yelled something, though nobody on the team was exactly sure what he was saying as he ran down the floor like a man possessed.

"I don't know what he yelled, and I don't know if it was English, quite frankly," Brey said. "And if it was, if you had a delay on it, like they do on radio shows, there would've been a lot of delays." Interactions like this happen occasionally between Brey and Hillesland.

"Zach is my high-strung child," Brey said. "So, with him, every now and then, we can light each other up a little bit. That's one of the reasons he gives us great energy."

"Hillesland's energy is one of many attributes he brings to the floor on a nightly basis — the ability to guide anyone on the floor, to rebound, handle the ball, and even a little creativity on the offensive end.

"He's a tricky player, as athletic as he is, sometimes he gets stopped in his dribble and he'll kind of go under the defender and hit a weird, tough shot," Irish guard Kyle McAlarney said.

"That's just the way he plays and he's a lot of fun to play with and watch play."

Hillesland does a little bit of everything, and his stats reflect that. Headed into Notre Dame's NCAA Tournament first-round matchup against George Mason, Hillesland is averaging 6.2 points, 5.1 rebounds, and a little over 2.4 assists per game. But Hillesland's teammates said his biggest contributions can't be measured with numbers.

"There's just so many things he does well," McAlarney said. "There are times when I'll be a little winded and I'll just be like Zach, 'Take the ball up.' He can handle the ball, he's guarding the other team's most athletic guy, rebounds, he'll come down and dunk on you.

"He's not the best shooter, but you've got to give him a lot of credit, he's improved his mid-range game a lot and on top of that his basketball IQ is really high and he fits into our system really well."

Hillesland and one of his best friends off the court, junior forward Ryan Ayers, also helped keep Notre Dame's team chemistry intact when Hillesland took over Ayers' spot in the starting lineup before Notre Dame's game against Villanova on Jan. 26.

"Certainly, at first, it was kind of an adjustment. There's a certain aspect for him of 'Oh, coach took me out of the starting lineup,' but it wasn't like a derision or anything. (Coach) was just trying to shuffle it up a little bit," Hillesland said.

After the switch, the Irish won seven of their next eight, and those initial questions Hillesland and Ayers had with the switch disappeared.

"I didn't want his psyche to go down at all," Hillesland said.

Ish forward Zach Hillesland drives to the basket in Notre Dame's 68-55 win over Saint John's on March 5 at the Joyce Center.

"That was my first concern. But after the first couple of games we played pretty well it kind of faded away and it was going to work out for both of us and the team."

In the end, the switch didn't affect either's playing time significantly. Ayers averaged 26 minutes in conference play while Hillesland averaged 22.7, both figures up slightly from non-conference play, when Ayers started.

As the Irish get ready to play George Mason in the pressure-packed atmosphere of the tournament, they can count on Hillesland to provide them with a little laughter, especially if he's angry when playing FIFA on Xbox 360.

"If he loses in a FIFA game, he blames it on the 'stupid glitches in the game.'" McAlarney said. "He'd throw chairs, throw a little temper tantrum."

"George Mason might want to make sure Hillesland wins at FIFA before he hits the floor Thursday night — because there's no telling what an angry Zach Hillesland is going to do."

Contact Chris Hine at chine@nd.edu

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Now leasing
When dealing with creatures as complex and unpredictable as human beings, any artist would be foolish to create cookie-cutter characters who are all good or all bad. That has been the best part of seeing "The Wire" all the way through to its conclusion in the series finale — the show never insulted its fans' intelligence.

Even in a city as defined in as black-and-white terms as Baltimore, the world of "The Wire" painted itself in shades of gray, and that shadowy moral characterization combined with creator David Simon's unwavering commitment to presenting a realistic and gritty street-level view of his city made the show one of the best ever.

Fans following the series wire-to-wire no doubt felt the final frame feeling bittersweet. The good guys won some and lost some, as did the bad guys. In the end, while the names changed and the time slipped by, nothing really changed, and that is Simon's message. For every fall of an Avon florist there's a rise of a Marlo Stanfield. For every Wee Baby Bryce you lock up there are two Chris Partlow and Felicia "Snoop" Pearson waiting to take his place. And for every Cedric Daniels who sits on the rape of police commissioners, city politicians will see to it that Stanley Valecheks get the job instead.

As Simon said in a letter written to fans of the show and posted on hbo.com: "We tried to be entertaining, but in no way did we want to be mistaken for entertainment. We tried to provoke, to critique and debate and rant a bit. We wanted an argument. We think a few good arguments are needed still, that there is much more to be said and it is entirely likely that there are better ideas than the ones we offered. But nothing happens unless the br@#k@# is stirred."

That's the central strand of "The Wire" in as many words — the show withheld making judgments or observations and simply presented things as they are on the streets and back alleys of America's inner cities.

As far as the final episode itself, the conclusion no doubt left the audience surprised and satisfied. Fans of Stringer Bell no doubt must have felt pangs of grief upon seeing the Machiavellian drug kingpin Marlo Stanfield achieve in retirement what Bell dreamed of doing in life — leaving the street behind in order to clean up his own criminal career as a legitimate businessman. But Simon knew better than to domesticate him into a house cat. Even with an embarrassment of riches earned through dealing death and drugs, Stanfield couldn't resist the allure of the streets and so for him, "giving up the crown" as the king of the streets was a fate worse than death.

Given Simon's somewhat pessimistic if not cynical view on life, fans must have felt surprised to see him spare McNulty and Freemon from prison time, leaving them with only the loss of their jobs instead of their freedom for cooking up a fake serial killer in order to do the real police work budgetary and political handcuffs prevented them from doing.

Likewise, it appeared that the number-crunching business executives who took over "The Baltimore Sun" would axe Gus, but in the end poor Alma lost her job while the lying con artist Templeton won a Pulitzer Prize.

Without a doubt, the most satisfying moment of the final episode was Slim Charles' point-blank statement to backstabbing cheesecake.

Watching Michael rob Marlo's mentor Vinson of his riches at shotgun point must have brought a smile to Omar fans grieving the loss of their erstwhile hero. Although Michael put in work as part of a trio with cold-blooded murderers Chris Partlow and Felicia "Snoop" Pearson, just as Pearson says before Michael kills her, "[he] was never one of them." Watching him become his generation's version of Omar made sense — both men dealt in death, but both had a code.

On the flip side, Omar Little's death earlier in the season made little sense. The man who had a code died in an act of violence, laid low by the vicious street rat Gunard. Fans of Little no doubt took the death of the gay gunslinger hard. Watching the vicious vigilante get gunned down in cold blood while purchasing a pack of his favorite Newport smokes was tough to watch, but made for poetic justice.

Similarly, watching Duquan descend into drug abuse and homelessness was hard to watch. Of all his friends, Duquan showed the most promise during his brief time in school and the most compassion.

Over the course of seasons four and five, we saw one of his friends, Namond Bryce, make it out of the self-suffolding prophecy for black youth living in the drug-infested crime- and war-zone of America's inner cities. We also saw one of his friends, Randy Wagstaff, who didn't.

We saw the rise of a promising young politician in Tommy Carcetti, only to see him fall into the muck of the politics of governance and its half-truths and storytelling even as his story continued to rise all the way to the governor's chair.

We saw Wee Bey again, linked up with Chris Partlow in the chain-linked confines of Jessup's Prison yards. We saw two murderers, one charismatic, one cold-blooded, both locked up for all of eternity for his crimes.

The audience had the privilege of meeting white gangsters with good hearts and policemen with bad ones. Most importantly, it all looked, felt, smelled, tasted and talked like the real deal.

David Simon built the city from the street up, put all the pieces together and showed us how they work. He built a fictitious Baltimore that looks, feels and breathes like a real city. In the end, fans will remember that they were sad to say goodbye not because they didn't like how things turned out, but that they ran out of time to stay and visit his world.

The views expressed in Scene & Heard are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of The Observer.

Contact T. Edward Andrews at tandrewl@nd.edu
LeBron scores 30 to lead Cavs over Pistons

Wizards shut down Howard, ride Jamison to win over Magic; Nets beat Hawks to tie for final East playoff spot

Associated Press

CLEVELAND — LeBron James scored 30 points, moving closer to becoming Cleveland's top career scorer, and the Cavaliers reminded Detroit that they're still the team to beat in the East with an 89-73 win over the Pistons on Wednesday night.

James came in needing 35 points to pass Brad Daugherty as the Cavs scoring leader. NBA's leading scorer will likely break the mark on Friday when Cleveland hosts the Toronto Raptors in a potential first-round playoff preview.

Zydrunas Ilgauskas added 20 points and Wally Szczerbiak 10 for the Cavaliers, defending Eastern Conference champions.

Howard sat much of the game in foul trouble, finishing with three points and 14 rebounds. The All-Star turned the ball over four times and shot 1-for-6 from the field until the fourth quarter. He had 10 rebounds before halftime, but picked up his fifth foul with about 9:30 left in the fourth.

"It was on the bench — that was their defensive stop right there," Howard said. "People can beat up on me and nothing happens. But when I touch the ball there was a difference." Howard has浙江26 points in 15 games.

Wizards coach Eddie Jordan saw Howard eye-to-eye, which is something the Magic coach tries to avoid.

"We have Brenda, who can match him eye-to-eye, is hisopic quality," Jordan said. "In the Wizards' win, Howard wasn't crazy about all his shots. I think he's learning how to really play him," Jordan said.

Jordan said the Wizards tried to get Howard out of bounds. The ball bounced out.

James had 31 points and 13 rebounds and Orlando's All-Star center was limited to three points and 14 rebounds in the Wizards' win.

"We really took the challenge to make it difficult for him," Jamison said. "Not to get him bouncing around and dunking and Supermaning and all that stuff. We really wanted to prevent as many points in the paint as possible and have them score from the perimeter." It was Hedo Turkoglu's birthday, and the forward scored a career-high 39 points and 14 rebounds in a win over the Nets in the Eastern Conference finals last year.

It was the team to beat in the East. The Wizards kept it until 3:05 left in the fourth quarter, when Keith Bogans put Orlando ahead 81-80 with a 3-pointer.

The Wizards carried the Nets into a tie with a victory.

"I thought we got it to him in a good spot, and I thought he was just going to put space, which he did, and raise up and shoot it," Magic coach Stan Van Gundy said. "But he tried to be real aggressive and go to the basket, and just didn't get a good shot. It's disappointing, but I don't really second-guess going to him at the end. He was about the only guy that had anything going tonight."

Nets 125, Hawks 117

Facing a must-win game with Atlanta on Wednesday night, Carter had a season-high 39 points and 10 rebounds and carried the Nets into a tie with the Hawks for the final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference.

"We laid an egg last night, as far as energy and effort," Carter said, referring to a bad loss in Chicago. "I just wanted to put my mark on the game in the beginning tonight, whatever I meant to do. I meant to be aggressive and make plays." Carter, who blew on his fingers after shots to show the crowd how hot he was, hit 17 of 26 shots from the field and added eight assists for more than 43 minutes of action.

"That was vintage Vince Carter," Nets coach Lawrence Frank said. "He was phenomenon."

Richard Jefferson added 33 points and Devin Harris had a career-high 26 points and nine assists despite playing on a sprained ankle as the Nets had a season-high point total in winning for right time in the last 10 games.

"Vince has a great game," Hawks coach Mike Woodson said. "You can't take anything away. He played at a high level. Jefferson played at a high level as well as Harris. They had three key guys that really made shots."

Now Jersey also won the season-series with Atlanta 3-1, which means it has the tiebreaker should they finish with the same record. The Hawks have 14 games left.

"Those last games, there are no excuses," said Jefferson, who was 10 of 17 from the field. "We need to mentally focused and ready. This was an important game. I guess the game was at stake. There was the tiebreaker and all that stuff."

Joe Johnson had 24 points to lead six Hawks in double figures. Rookie Al Horford added 20 points and 15 rebounds, while Josh Smith had 20 points.

"We have to tighten up," said Johnson, who was in foul trouble in the second half. "I think they wanted it more than we did in the second half."

The Observer accepts classifieds every business day from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the News Desk office, 224 South Dixie Hwy. Deadlines for one-day classifieds at 3 p.m. All classifieds must be prepaid. The Observer reserves the right to edit all classifieds for content without advance notice.

Cavilliers center Zydrunas Ilgauskas looks to pass around Pistons center Theo Ratliff in Wednesday's 89-73 Cleveland win.

Orlando center Dwight Howard grabs a rebound Wednesday in the Magic's 87-86 victory over the Wizards.

Wednesday, March 20, 2008
around the dial

NCAA MEN'S BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Georgia vs. Xavier 12:20 p.m., CBS
Temple vs. Michigan State 12:30 p.m., CBS
Kentucky vs. Marquette 2:30 p.m., CBS
Baylor vs. Purdue 2:50 p.m., CBS
Kansas State vs. USC 7:10 p.m., CBS
Winthrop vs. Washington State 7:20 p.m., CBS
Arizona vs. West Virginia 9:40 p.m., CBS

NCAA Women's Tennis
ITA Rankings

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MLB pays coaches after Sox

Associated Press

FORT MYERS, Fla. -- Fans at City of Palms Park were ready for Boston's final spring training game in Florida. The Red Sox weren't.

In an extraordinary move, Boston players voted to boycott a nationally televised exhibition and Wednesday afternoon's flight to Japan for next week's season-opening series against Oakland. Upset that coaches weren't going to receive the same $40,000 payments negotiated for players by their union, a couple of hours later, all was resolved, and the Red Sox took the field one day later for a 4-3 loss to Toronto before a crowd of 7,868.

Across the country in Phoenix, Athletics players also considered a boycott. They didn't take batting practice and held five team meetings before following Boston's lead and deciding to play. An Oakland split squad lost 6-1 to the Los Angeles Angels in front of 7,940 fans before leaving for Tokyo.

"The players just stepped up and they did what I think was right," Boston bench coach Brad Mills said.

Major League Baseball agreed to pay the managers, coaches and trainers on the trip $20,000 each from management's proceeds, a person familiar with the agreement said, speaking on conditions of anonymity because details weren't announced. The Red Sox agreed to make up the difference for Major League Baseball, the person said.

"It was a misunderstanding of what agreement was reached between MLB and the MLBPA," Red Sox president Larry Lucchino said.

"We said we would step up and make sure a second agreement was created and would seek contributions from all parties. It had not yet been determined whether Oakland would make additional payments to its staff. "Everyone connected with the trip will be fairly compensated," baseball spokesman Rich Levin said.

Cancellation of the March 25-26 series at the Tokyo Dome would have been a public relations nightmare for Major League Baseball, which already has had enough bad news during an offseason dominated by performance-enhancing drugs.

IN BRIEF

Virginia Tech's leading rusher Ore kicked off team

Virginia Tech running back Branden Ore, the Hokies' leading rusher in their charge toward the FedEx Orange Bowl, has been dismissed from the team.

"During recent meetings with Branden Ore, we have decided that it would be best for Branden to pursue other opportunities," coach Frank Beamer said in a statement released by the school Wednesday. "Branden has had many great moments here at Virginia Tech, and we wish him well in the future."

Beamer did not offer details for Ore's removal, but according to people with knowledge of the situation, the coaching staff simply grew impatient with Ore's lackadaisical attitude and lack of commitment to the team. The Hokies waited for Ore's return after he failed to reach what once seemed to be enormous potential.

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The Hokies waited for Ore's return after he failed to reach what once seemed to be enormous potential. "Branden's attitude was a problem," Beamer said.

"We made it clear we didn't want to keep him here," Beamer said.

Beamer didn't offer details for Ore's removal, but according to people with knowledge of the situation, the coaching staff simply grew impatient with Ore's lackadaisical attitude and lack of commitment to the team. The Hokies waited for Ore's return after he failed to reach what once seemed to be enormous potential.

"I don't want to talk about it anymore," Beamer said. "What did you expect?"

Virginia's Chamberlain will open season as reliever

Yankees' Chamberlain will open season as reliever

"We think that's where he fits best right now," manager Joe Girardi said Wednesday.

For much of spring training, Chamberlain was a contender for a spot in the starting rotation. He was a starter in college and the minors before New York switched him to a relief role last year and called him up in August to boost its shaky bullpen.

When asked if Chamberlain would go back to the bullpen, Girardi refused to be specific. "I'm a back-end guy. That's how I'm going to classify him," Girardi said.

Dodd's Garciaparra out with broken hand

PHOENIX — Nomar Garciaparra has a broken bone in his right hand, and the Los Angeles Dodgers' third baseman might not be ready for Opening Day.

Garciaparra had an MRI on Wednesday in Los Angeles that revealed a microfracture. The Dodgers do not consider the injury to be as serious as a complete fracture of a bone, and expect to know more on the 34-year-old is examined Thursday by the team's medical staff in Arizona.

A two-time AL batting champion, Garciaparra was hit by a pitch March 7 and has had pain in his hand ever since, making it difficult to swing a bat. He's had two X-rays and two MRIs, neither of which showed any structural damage in the area where he was struck.

"We'll see where Nomar's at in another week or so, and in the meantime, I'll continue to see if we can figure out (a replacement) from within or outside," general manager Ned Colletti said.
NHL

Vanek nets hat trick as Sabres top Lightning

Dawes, Rangers beat Devils 2-1 in shootout; Blackhawkes’ Khabibulin shuts out Caps in first start of month

Associated Press

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Stung by the cascade of bows that rained from the crowd at the end of the second period, Sabres forward Thomas Vanek gave Buffalo fans something to cheer about in the third.

Vanek scored three consecutive goals in less than 8 minutes, including the winner with 4:6 remaining, as Buffalo scored six third-period goals in a 7-4 win over the Tampa Bay Lightning on Wednesday night.

"It’s good thing they stuck around," Vanek said, referring to the fans after helping the Sabres rally from a 4-1 deficit. "We didn’t make it easy for us, but it’s good to know we have that kind of support."

Besides winning their third straight and overcoming a three-goal deficit for the first time since a 5-4 win against Toronto last March 25, the Sabres also stayed firmly in place atop the East. Buffalo climbed to within a point of idle Philadelphia, which holds the NHL’s Eastern Conference’s eighth and final playoff spot.

The Sabres also jumped back into ninth place, a point ahead of Philadelphia after the Capitals’ 5-0 loss at Chicago later in the evening.

Jason Pominville of Buffalo scored twice and two assists and former Sabres forward and brother of Ryan the New York Rangers had no answers for Martin Brodeur and the New Jersey Devils.

Now, even late deficits on the road don’t rattle these Rangers.

Chris Drury scored the tying goal with 4:44 left in regulation, and Nigel Dawes beat Brodeur in the shootout to give the Rangers a victory over the Devils on Wednesday night.

New York improved to 6-0 on the season against the Devils by scoring four points in New Jersey, the leader in the Atlantic Division and Eastern Conference.

We’re going to have to beat them, or else," said Drury. "We saw Devils forward Zach Parise, who missed on the final shot of the shootout. ‘They’ve gotten a little closer than we’d like them to be. They really played well and limited our chances.’"

The Rangers appeared to have no chance to dent the Devils in the first period, trailing 2-0, but they closed to within four goals in the second, but Parise failed to connect.

The Devils beat the Rangers, who rarely got quality scoring chances. Tony Esposito, the Blackhawks’ goalie, made 25 saves and was in line for his 97th NHL shutout.

The final winning streak of the season for the Rangers, who rarely got quality scoring chances. Tony Esposito, the Blackhawks’ goalie, posted his 38th career shutout.

Sabres wing Thomas Vanek, right, celebrates one of his three goals during Buffalo’s 7-4 victory over the Tampa Bay Lightning in Buffalo, N.Y., Wednesday night.

Khabibulin made his first start since Feb. 20, when he blanked Minnesota 3-0. Following the game, he missed 12 games with back spasms before relieving Patrick Lalime on Sunday.

"When we have a chemistry like this, it’s nice to win a game,” Khabibulin said. Better than it was that it was a shutout.

"That would be a good job,” he added. "When (NHL scoring leader Alexander) Ovechkin is on the ice, obviously he’s a force out there. Tonight he has five, six, seven shots and he only had two."

Khabibulin wasn’t heavily pressured in the second half, but he only had one shot on the night.

"Everything just went their way,” said Lambo, who made 25 saves, but received little support in the third period when the Lightning were out-shot 16-4. "Everything just went in the net."

Jeff Halpern, extending his point streak to five games (four goals, four assists), also scored for the Lightning, who had a three-game winning streak snapped.

Rangers 2, Devils 1 (shootout)

For so long, the New York Rangers had no answers for Martin Brodeur and the New Jersey Devils.

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Khabibulin made his first start since Feb. 20, when he blanked Minnesota 3-0. Following the game, he missed 12 games with back spasms before relieving Patrick Lalime on Sunday.

"When we have a chemistry like this, it’s nice to win a game,” Khabibulin said. Better than it was that it was a shutout.

"That would be a good job,” he added. "When (NHL scoring leader Alexander) Ovechkin is on the ice, obviously he’s a force out there. Tonight he has five, six, seven shots and he only had two."

Khabibulin wasn’t heavily pressured in the second half, but he only had one shot on the night.

"Everything just went their way,” said Lambo, who made 25 saves, but received little support in the third period when the Lightning were out-shot 16-4. "Everything just went in the net."

Buffalo Sabres' Thomas Vanek (47) celebrates after scoring a goal against the Tampa Bay Lightning during their NHL hockey game in Buffalo, New York, Wednesday, March 20, 2008.

Jeff Halpern, extending his point streak to five games (four goals, four assists), also scored for the Lightning, who had a three-game winning streak snapped.
Thursday, March 20, 2008

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NCAA FOOTBALL

Top-rated QB Pryor commits to Ohio State

Associated Press

JEANETTE, Pa. — Oregon was too far away. Penn State was too rural. Michigan was a close second.

Terrelle Pryor, the highly-touted western Pennsylvania prep quarterback, announced Wednesday that he will play for Ohio State next season.

The 6-foot-6, 270-pound star — flanked by his parents, two younger siblings and some of his coaches — made the announcement on the auditorium stage at Jeannette Senior High School near Pittsburgh, where Pryor had one of the greatest prep careers in Pennsylvania history.

"If everyone’s here," Pryor said to start the news conference, "University of Oregon." He then unzipped his windbreaker to reveal an Ohio State T-shirt and donned an OSU hat. His parents, Craig and Thomisua, also revealed Ohio State shirts.

Pryor, who lived a hand’s-width from the top of the state recruiting rankings, has been considered by many to be the top prep quarterback in the country, so he couldn’t go wrong with any of the four schools he considered.

But he said the car trip for his family to games in Columbus, Ohio, is shorter than the flights they would have to take to Eugene, Oregon. "You’re not too ‘countryside.’" And, despite a last-minute push by new Michigan coach Rich Rodriguez, Pryor decided Ohio State is best for him, even though senior Todd Boeckman is the entrenched starter and Pryor felt he would have a chance to start as a freshman at Michigan.

"I can learn from a senior," Pryor said. "And whenever I can get in on some plays, I can make something happen."

Pryor said he didn’t make a final choice until Wednesday morning.

When he told Jim Tressel, the coach said, "Welcome to the family."

As for his final call with Rodriguez: "He was still recruiting me, giving me lines," Pryor said. "Coach Rod did his job. He’s gonna be a great coach. He is a great coach. He’ll make stuff happen at (Michigan)."

Pryor called a Feb. 6 news conference to announce his choice, but then said he hadn’t chosen a school after all. Pryor said he wasn’t impressed by that, given that Pryor was trying to help his high school basketball team to a state championship and was mulling conflicting advice from his friends and family.

Tressel said Pryor felt like "there’s a whole bunch of people that are very important in my life who think I should give this some more thought. He respect­ed them and he loves them. So I think he’s grossly misunder­stood."

Pryor’s advice to other recruits: "Pick schools you don’t want to go through it."

Asked about advice from his father and others, Pryor said simply, "I’m an 18-year-old kid and I feel like a man. I gotta make choices for myself."

One person noticeably absent Wednesday was Charlie Waish, the backup Steelers quarterback and family friend who advised Pryor.

NCAA Men’s Basketball

First round features duel of freshman stars Beasley, Mayo

Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — Michael Beasley was standing in a nar­row hallway outside the California State locker room. Suddenly, O.J. Mayo appeared at the end of the corridor.

"Yo, Michael!" Mayo yelled. "Juice!!" Beasley screamed back.

They shook hands and embraced, these two freshman stars, both of them stopping by the NCAA tournament on their inevitable journey to the NBA.

Don’t expect things to be so cordial Thursday when Mayo’s Southern California Trojans face Beasley’s Kansas State Wildcats in a game oozing with star power, the kind better suited for freshmen surely than seniors.

But he said the car trip for his family to games in Columbus, Ohio, is shorter than the flights they would have to take to Eugene, Oregon. "You’re not too ‘countryside.’" And, despite a last-minute push by new Michigan coach Rich Rodriguez, Pryor decided Ohio State is best for him, even though senior Todd Boeckman is the entrenched starter and Pryor felt he would have a chance to start as a freshman at Michigan.

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One person noticeably absent Wednesday was Charlie Waish, the backup Steelers quarterback and family friend who advised Pryor.

The Trojans face the Wildcats in a game in a deserted high school gym, perhaps the kind better suited for freshmen than seniors.

"We used to sneak up under our cots at nap time," Walker remembered, laughing. "We got in trouble together and, after that, we just bonded."

"Usually when we play one-on-one games there’s a lot of arguing and fighting," Beasley said. "I have no friends on the court," Beasley said.

Pryor confirmed the intensity of their rivalry.

"Hopefully we’re going to finish this game," he said, "because usually when we play one-on-one games there’s a lot of arguing and fighting. We hardly ever get to finish the games."

"If not for a change in draft rules, the two freshmen surely would have been NBA rookies this season. But they were required to spend at least a year in college, time spent honing their games and quickly establishing themselves as two of the country’s best players — even if it’s for one season only, as everyone expects.

"Mayo led the sixth-seeded Trojans (21-11) in scoring at 20.8 points a game, as well as assists, steals and 3-point shooting. Beasley had an even better season at Kansas State, averaging 26.5 points and 12.4 rebounds to contend with North Carolina’s Tar Heels for player of the year honors.

"Beasley vs. Mayo. Now that’s a matchup everyone can get excited about, even if you’re on another team. Mayo and Beasley, you’ve got to give it to them," said Darnell Jackson of top-seeded Kansas, which had its own game to play Thursday against Portland State.

"The guys are great players."

Considering their superb skills, it was inevitable Beasley and Mayo would hook up on the AAU and high school all-star cir­cuit. They met when they were 13 or 14 and quickly hit it off.

"After games, we get to meet each other," Beasley said. "We’re the same kind of guys. We like the same kind of things. We pretty much clicked right away.

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Tennis

Nadal avenges loss to Tsonga at Pacific Life

Associated Press

INDIAN WELLS, Calif. — Rafael Nadal came back to win the final five games and beat Jo-Wilfried Tsonga on Wednesday in an intense, crowd-pleasing rematch of their Australian Open semifinal.

Nadal, the defending Indian Wells champion, avenged his belated loss in Melbourne with a scrappy 7-6 (7), 7-6 (7-5) victory in the fourth round of the Pacific Life Open.

After Tsonga, a hard-hitting Frenchman, went up 5-2 in the third set, Nadal held serve the rest of the way and broke Tsonga’s serve in the ninth and 11th games to take a 6-5 lead.

With the crowd beginning to cheer even as he set up for the shot, the Spaniard capped the match by slamming an overhead past Tsonga.

The 22-year-old Tsonga, who has vaulted from 212 in the rankings in 2006 to No. 17, upset No. 2 Nadal 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 in the Australian Open semis before losing to Novak Djokovic in the final.

Tsonga played brilliantly at times in the rematch against the 21-year-old Nadal, but mistakes cost him at other times. After ending a long rally when both hit several outstanding shots, Tsonga ended it with a drop shot that Nadal somehow managed to hit back, then a bang-bang volley that left Nadal lying on the ground at the end of his reach.

That brought Tsonga back from a 15-40 deficit to deuce in the 11th game, but he quickly followed that with a double-fault, then hit a forehand long to lose the game.

Driving powerful forehands down the lines, Tsonga had 47 winners overall — but made 56 unforced errors. The far more consistent Nadal finished with 27 winners and 27 unforced errors, Tsonga, who had 18 aces when he stunned Nadal in Australia, had 11 against him at Indian Wells, but also double-faulted seven times.

The match lasted 3 hours, 3 minutes, and the crowd seemed rapt, reacting loudly to practically every point. Some fans yelled “Go, AII” a Tsonga nickname alluding to his resemblance to boxing great Muhammad Ali, and others screaming, “You can do it, Hajdu!”

In other matches, Djokovic advanced with a 6-2, 6-3 victory over Guillermo Canas; Tommy Haas edged Andy Murray 2-6, 7-5, 6-3; and David Nalbandian beat Juan Carlos Ferrero 6-2, 6-2.

PGA Tour

Tiger looks for sixth straight

Associated Press

DORAL, Fla. — There are 78 players at this World Golf Championship, and one guy playing out of this world.

Tiger Woods is winning at a rate not seen in more than a half-century, and he’s winning his sixth straight victory around the world among official tournaments, and he is the three-time defending champion this week at the CA Championship.

“Tiger dominates with a 25-foot birdie on the last hole; and from 15-40 in the 11th game. It was for charity, although the scene spoke volumes.

There is a sense of awe among Woods’ peers: his presence as a threat to the nerve of golf that rivals Byron Nelson’s golden season of 1945, when he won 11 straight tournaments.

“Tiger’s game is getting better every week,” said Jim Furyk, who finished second in the Missouri Valley Conference and at 30. And there is determination not to let this domination continue.

It’s a great time to be playing,” Adam Scott said. “It’s not really hard to beat him, but he doesn’t play every week. I know he’s winning all the time, but he doesn’t win every week, either.”

Then the 27-year-old Australian passed long enough that he couldn’t contain a very smile.

“There’s no proof of that,” Scott said. “But we’ll try to change it this week.

The blockbuster of the other 78 guys on the Blue Monster at Doral. Woods was listed as a 2-3 favorite on one Web site, staggering odds for a sport in which players have no chance above the competition and the hole is only 4 1/2 inches in diameter.

Not in line is Phil Mickelson at 15-1. There’s a reason for that. Woods has won at Doral the last three years, the first two when it was smooth. In 2008, he has won this World Golf Championship six of eight years, the Blue Monster at Doral.

“Tiger is the guy,” Scott said. “Tiger’s game is getting better every week.”

The Mountaineers, 6-0 to start the season, the longest winning streak in school history, and the team’s unshakeable confidence, is also unshakeable.

“Tiger looks for sixth straight victory.”

The Mountaineers, after all, are working on a streak of one.

“Obviously, it’s a very impressive record,” West Virginia center Jamie Smalligan said of Arizona’s 19-0 run, which began in 1996 and includes four Final Four appearances.

A victory by the underdog Wildcats (19-14) would enable Arizona to stretch to 21 its run of 27 set by North Carolina from 1970-2001. If history means anything, then the 10th-seeded Arizona has a decided edge over No. 7 West Virginia, its opening-round opponent Thursday night in the West Regional.

The Wildcats, despite the history, are on to the next round,” said guard Jawann McClellan said Wednesday.

Although winning 20 games and reaching the NCAA tournament has become commonplace for Arizona, this has not been a typical year for the Wildcats. Their 14 defeats equals the most by an at-large team since 1985, and their seventh-place finish in the Pac-10 was hardly a source of pride.

Then again, it’s hard to imagine Arizona doing much better this season. Hall of Fame coach Lute Olson took a leave of absence on Nov. 4, and injuries to Jerryd Bayless and guard Nic Wise forced interim coach Kevin O’Neill to scramble for depth.

“I think it showed the character of our team, how well we handled it,” said Bayless, whose ailing back no longer is an issue.

That statement the Wildcats endured, here they are again in the NCAA tournament.

It put a lot of pressure on us, the thought that we weren’t going to make it this year,” forward Jordan Hill said. “We’ve been through a lot of ups and downs, with the coaching changes and our key players being injured. So we just had to keep our heads up and keep fighting. Once we found out we made it, a weight lifted off our shoulders. Now it’s time to get to business.”

Even if they had to travel across the country as a No. 10 seed.

“We’re just happy to be in the tournament,” McClellan said. “Every year, with the scholarships spread out throughout the schools, other schools are getting better. The Pac-10 conference is getting better. It’s not as easy to just make it to the NCAA tournament, we’re getting better.”

This week the Wildcats face the Mountaineers, their old Big East rivals, and the Wildcats, but the Mountaineers are convinced their run to the NIT Championship last year will prove equally beneficial.

“Winning the games back to back and the last two on a neutral court, we’ve got enough experience, to match what they have,” Smalligan insisted.
Hornets' Wells scores 25 as Houston commits 19 turnovers; Sixers top Nuggets in Iverson's return to Philly

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — The term "losing streak" suddenly applies to the Houston Rockets, thanks in large part to a player they got rid of at the trading deadline.

Boni Wells helped New Orleans hand the Rockets their second straight loss after a 22-game winning streak, scoring 20 of his 25 points in the fourth quarter in the Hornets' 90-69 victory Wednesday night.

Wells denied the trade — which sent him and Mike James to New Orleans for Bobby Jackson — had anything to do with his effort to take over a game that was tied at 59 after three quarters.

"I've been on different teams so it doesn't really matter," Wells said after helping New Orleans (46-21) pull even with the Los Angeles Lakers atop the Western Conference. "We're really fighting for something here and if you can't get motivated every night you shouldn't be in this league.

David West, returning from a right ankle sprain that sidelined him for two games, had 23 points and 11 rebounds as New Orleans also pulled a half-game ahead of the Rockets for the Western Division lead.

Chris Paul had 21 points and 10 assists for the Hornets, who extended their home winning streak to eight while ending the Rockets' 12-game winning streak on the road.

Tracy McGrady, who scored only eight points in a 94-74 blowout to Boston on a night earlier, scored 15 against New Orleans, still well below his nearly 27-point-per-game average.

"You've got to make it easier on him," Houston coach Rick Adelman said. "They are doubling him so hard. They're coming at him all the time. If he gives it up, we have to be able to finish it.

But Houston, which shot 41 percent against Boston, was even worse in New Orleans, finishing at 34 percent in setting a season low for points while tying a season low with only 28 field goals.

"We've got to get ourselves together, but it is getting harder every game," McGrady said.

Luis Scola had 14 points and nine rebounds before fouling out with 3 minutes left. Shane Battier also scored 14, while Dikembe Mutombo and Rafer Alston each scored 10.

Battier noted that Houston's sudden slide may have something to do with the level of competition.

"We played the best team in the league, Boston, at home, then we played the team that has been having the conference for the majority of the year," Battier said. "We just didn't have enough to get over the top the last two games."

Tyronn Chandler grabbed 15 rebounds for the Hornets, who were down by 12 points in the second quarter before cutting Houston's lead to 44-39 at halftime.

After New Orleans took a 50-47 lead in the third quarter, Houston countered with an 8-0 run, and Mutombo's dunk put the Rockets up 55-50. The Hornets suddenly couldn't make a basket, getting only one free throw from West during a six-minute span.

New Orleans did not let up on defense, however, and put together an 8-2 run during the last 2:30 of the third quarter to tie it at 59 heading into the fourth quarter.

"We just knew it was a matter of time," Hornets coach Byron Scott said. "The thing I am proud of is that the guys just kept focus on the defensive end. We got more aggressive. We got tougher. We started to get loose balls, deflections, steals, everything ... and I think it kind of ignited us on the other end."

Houston turned the ball over 19 times, leading to 22 Hornets points.

Wells, meanwhile, opened the fourth quarter by scoring one point before Boston's foul dunk as he was fouled, a driving layup and a pair of free throws during the 13-2 run that gave New Orleans a 72-61 lead.

He went on to hit six free throws during the quarter and added a 3-pointer while turning the game into a blowout.

"I had the luxury of knowing those guys a little bit, practicing with them the last couple years," New Orleans coach Alvin Gentry said. "We played one-on-one so much I kind of knew the way those guys were going to guard me. The one thing that did an excellent job putting me in position. I'm just happy I finished and did my thing today. It was just a team victory. If it wasn't for the rest of the guys getting me in my spots I wouldn't have been able to do what I did today and I'm just happy we got a victory."
BASEBALL

Irish open conference play

By LORENZO REYES
Sporr Writer

After Mother Nature spoiled a two-game opening base ball doubleheader between Notre Dame and the squad travels to the east coast to face St. John's in its Big East opener on Thursday.

The Irish will face the Hoyas in a three-game set in a rivalry Powder Field in Bethesda, Md., with the series finale on Saturday.

Sophomore Ethan Kelty will send junior right-hander Matt Healy to the mound to start the first contest of the series, he searches for his third win of the season. Sporting a 4.01 ERA, opposing batters have had their struggles against him, hitting .299 against the junior.

When the Irish bats step up to the plate, they will face right-handed sophomore Tim Adelman, who sports a perfect 3-0 record coupled with a 3.86 ERA. Adelman uses his tall frame at foot-5 to overpower opposing batters.

In the second game of the series, the Irish will hand the ball to veteran pitcher Wadi Korpi as he heads to the mound with a 2-1 record. The lefty is looking for his third straight win on Friday, and a chance to improve his 0.71 ERA.

Batting Korpi will likely be lefty senior Michael Gaggioso, who is in search of his first win all season. Although he hasn't made his way into the win column, Gaggioso hasn't made many mistakes, as evidenced by his 1.87 ERA.

In the series finale, sophomore Eric Maust will take the mound, as the Irish attempt to close out the series with a win. The righty started the first game of the season against Texas Pan-American, going over six innings and allowing two runs on nine hits.

Facing the Irish will be sophomore Erik Chamber, who has struggled this season with a 0-2 record and an ERA of 8.53.

Sophomore A.J. Pollock will build off his solid freshman campaign, leading the Irish with 20 hits this season. His eight RBIs are tied for fourth highest on the team, but it is his base-running that has been helpful in creating runs for the Irish. Pollock is perfect on all seven of his stolen base attempts this season.

Brett Lilly has also been a solid run-producer this season. The senior is second on the team in hits with 16, but leads all Irish batters with 12 RBIs on the season. Lilly has done some run scoring of his own, crossing the plate for a team-high 15 times, six more than the closest Notre Dame player.

Junior Jeremy Barnes completes the three-headed offensive monster for the Irish with his team-high .323 average that has seen him pick up 15 hits, and 11 RBIs, which are second best on the squad.

The Irish have a frustrating past couple of days this week that saw two games suspended, including the home opener on St. Patrick's Day. Although the second game against Xavier was not even started, the first contest was six innings through before the wintry weather forced umpires to stop play.

Both Central Michigan and the Irish are still awaiting word from the NCAA as to the proper ruling from the suspended contest, but the makeup day of May 12 has been scheduled. After the series against the Hoyas, Notre Dame returns home to face Frank Eck Stadium Tuesday for a six-game home stand that starts off against Ball State.

Contact Lorenzo Reyes at reyes@nd.edu

ND Women's Tennis

Team travels to Texas in search of road wins

By DAN MASTERTON
Sporr Writer

The Irish leave their home court for a two-match road trip to Texas, starting Saturday in College Station, Tex., against the Texas A&M Aggies.

The No. 27 Aggies (8-4) enter the match on a two-game win streak, having defeated both Oklahoma State and Oklahoma in convincing fashion last week.

The Aggies dropped another match point over the two meetings, but like the No. 24 Irish, Texas A&M has been dominating in their superior competition of late.

The three-game win streak Notre Dame (10-7) brings to the match comes from victories against teams boasting solid programs but not top-50 rankings.

Texas A&M poses the toughest test for the Irish since March 1-5 loss to Georgia Tech, the nation's current No. 2 team.

The Aggies' attack is led by Elyse Pfister, who is ranked as the No. 76 singles player in the country. The sophomore from South Africa adds out with an impressive record but faced six straight ranked opponents to start the season.

She went 2-4 over the stretch highlighted by a win over then-No. 11 Melanie Gloria of Fresno State.

Though the Aggies have no other ranked single players or any ranked doubles pairs, they hold the home-court advantage and have lost just once in four home matches for the dual season.

Notre Dame's streak has been a result of solid team play up and down the lineup, and the impressive play by the Irish is being nationally recognized.

Senior Brook Back and junior Kelcy Tefft remained in the top spot of the national doubles rankings this week while the sophomore combo of Colleen Rielle and Cosmina Ciobanu entered the poll at No. 30.

Notre Dame has been an impressive 11-1 for the dual season and have won four consecutive matches.

On the singles side, Tefft moved up one spot to No. 38, and sophomore Kallie Krisk remained in the rankings at No. 114. Ciobanu joined Tefft and Krisk in the rankings this week at No. 105 to give the strong Notre Dame singles attack three nationally ranked players.

Going on the road against a ranked opponent gives the Irish a chance to improve on some apparent weaknesses with respect to their performance so far.

Though three games over .500 for the dual season, the Irish are still looking for their first road win at just 3-4. Some of the struggles can be fixed with a win on their 1-3 record on a three-game road-trip to start the season against all ranked. But, both the Aggies and Texas A&M offer a chance for the Irish to improve their road record.

As the NCAA Tournament inches onto the horizon, the Irish will have to start playing better against their tougher competition. Jackson said the best teams like Hawaii and Western Michigan are the way they should have, the Irish are just 2-6 against nationally ranked teams this season.

Notre Dame looks to improve upon their rank at Saturday. First serve is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. at the Mitchell Tennis Center.

Contact Dan Masterton at dmaster@nd.edu

CCHA continued from page 24

seed. Van Gulider said he thought that being the underdog could actually help the Irish.

"We're going in there entirely different than last year," he said. "(Being the top seed) carries with it a lot of pressure and this year there's not as much pressure." On Saturday, the Irish will play in either the CCHA championship game or the consolation game against either Michigan or Northern Michigan. Notre Dame lost both games against Michigan this season, including a 3-2 heartbreaker at Yost Arena on a last-second goal. Against Northern Michigan, the Irish split the season series with a 2-1 win against by scores of 2-1 in Marquette, Mich. "We're going to be playing high level teams," Jackson said. "So we're going to have a big challenge ahead of us."

"Notre Dame will be playing for more than just the CCHA tournament title this weekend, as the Irish sit squarely on the NCAA tournament bubble. A win this weekend would most likely put them into the field of 16. Jackson, though, said that his team's focus had to be in Detroit. I try to convince our team to quit worrying about that," Jackson said. "Because I think that's what's going to put us into trouble in the second half. If we don't focus on our game against Miami, it's insignificant what happens next week."

Van Gulider echoed his coach's "one game at a time" mentality. "It's difficult to look in the back of your mind, but this weekend it's all about Friday," he said. "We're not worried about Saturday. We're not worried about the type of teams we're going to face. We're not worried about anything but Miami."

Contact Sam Werner at swerner@nd.edu
Team travels to Colorado to take on Air Force

By ELLYN MICHALAK
Sports Writer

After defeating Dartmouth 15-7 last weekend, Notre Dame improved its rankings and moved into the No. 5 spot in the nation and the No. 3 spot in the GWLL.

The Irish currently sit behind Quinnipiac (6-0) and Bellarmine (6-1) in the conference.

Notre Dame travels to Colorado Springs, Colo., to face Air Force on Saturday. The Falcons are in last place.

The Falcons kicks off at 2 p.m. Saturday's game vs. the Falcons will air on ESPN3. The Notre Dame attack faltered over the course of the game, giving up a late goal to send the game to overtime. The Notre Dame attack faltered in the extra period, failing to score any goals.

That loss brought back memories of a 14-13 loss at Oregon on March 6, a game in which the Ducks scored a pair of goals in the final 15 seconds to upset the Irish.

It has already been a try for the Irish, one that has seen its fair share of unexpected and close losses.

The Irish will face Drexel on Feb. 23. After a 3-0 start, Notre Dame has lost three of its last five games, including a 16-13 overtime heartbreaker against Syracuse on Sunday that opened up the Big East schedule on a sour note for the Irish.

The Irish can turn the tide this weekend, though, when they host Loyola (3-5) at 1 p.m. Saturday.

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In their most recent loss to the Orange, the Irish dominated the second half, overcoming a three-goal halftime deficit before giving up a late goal to send the game to overtime. The Notre Dame attack faltered in the extra period, failing to score any goals.

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Tsipis continued from page 24

Devery Peters and Beca Brunswiekszi out of trouble. But McGraw said, her biggest contribution is intangible.

"She is somebody who has an assist called 'intramural' that don't really show up any- where except in the harmony and chemistry of your team," McGraw said. "She's somebody that when you first meet her, everybody likes, because they know she's just all about the team. It's always been like that for her.

Although every athlete wants to be in the starting lineup, and certainly as a senior that's not something you want to have happen to you," she said. "But she has handled it very well in terms of (that) her role in practice never changed and was still working hard trying to improve. And in the rotation, and I think you have to give her a lot of respect.

McGraw said she accepted the new role because she understood the change in her senior year, and "if my role's going to change, that's what the team needs, then I'll do it." The biggest change is the senior class, McGraw said. "It's been interesting, but I feel that the fans and the team - it's just that, that she's coming out," Allen said.

When McGraw enters a game, the Joyce Center faithful go bookers.

"It's pretty amazing," she said. "It's kind of said that I'll never come in again at the MCC. They've had me out there and I've had their support before, since freshman year.

"I've been waiting for us to be at a hotel somewhere and for me to see her out in the hallway studying," McGraw said. "She was the first one to get her books out on the plane or on the bus. She's always been like that.

"She is a very, very conscientious player. She steps up as best she gets, she's always worried she didn't do well - which she rarely did."

Moving on

That academic prowess earned McGraw an internship with the NBA and it's going to Chicago last summer, which led to a permanent job with the company after she graduated.

Her uncle, however, knows she's not done with basketball.

"Deep inside I think she knows basketball will be a part of her and my life, because we've always had younger kids some day," Jonathan said. "I've been kind of ready to step on [to that next level, as far as graduating and working] as long as she tells me she'll end up being some part of basketball, no question about that.

"Regardless of Tsipis' role, McGraw has never been more of a student of the game because she's insecurely attached to basketball." To think McGraw has been out of school for four years she has put in so much time, much more than we thought she would, and she never gets rewarded," McGraw said. "She's always been a fighter, she's always been a leader, she's always been different."

Both guards have been playing together since they started in the summer of 2004 and always seem to know where the other will be. "It's really Tulyah [Gaines] especially as a point guard that looks so much like my sister [Allen]," McGraw said. "They seem to know where each other is going. They're defensive partners and they seem to know each other almost too well.

But it's more than just four years of playing together that puts the two in sync, also is the close friendship that exists off the court.

"They've always been a combination of, playing together and friendship," McGraw said. "They've been through a lot of times saying the things I'm about to say."

Irish coach Muffet McGraw said of her relationship with McGraw and Williamson, "They will be roommates in a hotel somewhere," McGraw said. "They have been through a lot, consider that the change there for the girls, especially the freshmen, because she has never been about the game. She's always been a silent, but it's something new."

"It's hard to be more vocal but it's something new. She's stepped up because she understands the change and the guys. She's stepped up because she understands the change and the guys.

"That's how you frame that existence and make her into a team player," McGraw said. "That's how you frame that existence and make her into a team player.

"I think all three of us together are capable of doing a lot of things for this program.

"Getting her up in the morning for workouts, getting her mental- ly prepared, when you come in as a senior, you do that," McGraw said of rooming with Tsipis. "I think that's where you're going to have to push yourself a lot. She had a little freedom, but when she worked very hard to get that freedom, she really earned a lot. I'm proud of her."

McGraw said that D'Amico's biggest contribution is showing maturity especially considering she is helping tutor the playing time for 14-year-old sophomore guard Morgan in DePaul, McGraw said, "She's never been about the game. She's always been an all-American player, and never looked back.

"The Irish entered the 2007 tournament only to fall 60-51 to then top-seeded North Carolina. But this year's squad is stronger, and McGraw said she wants to end their collegiate careers in the NCAA Tournament.

"That shows that you last year weren't even as good as we were," McGraw said. "This year we've only been to the second round. We want to at least get to the Sweet 16, if not the Final Four.

"We're going to approach it like this year. We're going to approach it like this year. We don't want to end on that note."
LOLLERSKATES

The Observer apologizes for the absence of Lollerskates. It will return after break.

THE OBSERVER

Thursday, March 20, 2008

THE OBSERVER

CROSSWORD

Across
1 Jolt
2 Bush people, for complaint
3 Petal, e.g.
4 Indo-
5 May come after you
6 Flavorer
7 "Plain"
8 Parish called "Fighter"
9 "Unreliable sort"
10 Bowl
11 Bluesman
12 Web-based way
13 Gender
14 Lab receptacle
15 Cheese negotiations
16 Assessor
17 "The Lion King"
18 The same, in a short
19 Short
20 "Mimic"
21 Assessor
22 Third-stringers
23 Restricted space
24 "Sport"
25 "Unreliable sort"
26 Unreliable sort
27 "Sport"
28 Bowl
29 "The Lion King"
30 "Sugar"
31 "Sport"
32 "Sport"
33 "Sport"
34 Restricted space
35 "Sport"
36 "Unreliable sort"
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59 "Sport"
60 "Sport"
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63 "Sport"
64 "Sport"
65 "Sport"

Down
1 Penny
2 Brev
3 "Unreliable sort"
4 Write an ode to
5 Wear a tailcoat
6 Decorated, on a menu
7 Tropical free-
dweller
8 Zing
9 O. R.
10 Car discontinued in 2004
11 Bloomer/Miller
12 Web-based way to announce a party
13 Gender
turner, as on a chicken farm
14 The same, in a melody
15 Third-stringers
16 The Lion King
17 Where puns were spent
18 Belted down
19 "Legal phrase"
20 Hottest it
21 Once
22 The answer to the six starred clues
23 The answers to
24 "Sport"
25 "Sport"
26 "Sport"
27 "Sport"
28 "Sport"
29 "Sport"
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65 "Sport"

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Yesterday's Jumble: RAJAH
Answer: A busy blacksmith will do this — "FORGE" AHEAD

Answers tomorrow

Because he was named TARMADOM OF THE YEAR, BRISE

WILL SHORTZ

THE OBSERVER
Hockey

Irish to fight for tournament lives in Detroit

Notre Dame faces No. 3 Miami in CCHA semifinals; leading scorer Condra out for year with injured left knee

By SAM WERNER
Sports Writer

When No. 12 Notre Dame enters Detroit's Joe Louis Arena this weekend, it will have the opportunity to defend its Mason Cup title, beginning with tonight's CCHA semifinal matchup with No. 3 Miami. But it won't have the opportunity to do so at full strength. The Irish will be without junior right wing Erik Condra, their leading scorer who injured his left knee in Sunday's 2-1 win over Ferris State.

"Any time you lose a player of that caliber, it's going to impact your team," coach Jeff Jackson said. "But it's also an opportunity for other guys to step up in different roles." Condra had scored 15 goals and 23 assists this season and had played prominently on Notre Dame's penalty kill and power play units. Jackson said he had tried several different line combinations to make up for Condra's loss but wouldn't make any final decisions until after Thursday's practice in Detroit.

Notre Dame split the season series with the RedHawks, winning 2-1 and falling 3-1 in Oxford, Ohio, when Miami was the nation's top team. The RedHawks are led by goalie Jeff Zakkef, the CCHA leader in save percentage and goals-against average in the regular season. The junior is one of the leading candidates for the Hobey Baker Award, given annually to the nation's top hockey player.

"They may be the No. 1 team in the country," Jackson said. "They're not ranked No. 1 right now, but they're right there with the top couple of teams." On offense, RedHawks junior Justin Mercier and senior Ryan Jones make up one of the most potent scoring duos in the CCHA. The pair has combined for 52 points on the season.

"Miami is so deep, they're so talented," Irish senior captain Mark Van Gulder said. "You can't take a shift off or you're down 1-0 or 2-0." The Irish hope to use their CCHA tournament experience against the RedHawks. The Irish beat Lake Superior State and Michigan last year to host the Mason Cup, and Jackson said the players returning from that squad will benefit from winning it all.

"The fact that the guys that were there last year had that experience, I'm sure it's going to help them," Jackson said.

This year's team will be faced with a very different challenge, though. Last year, the Irish were seeded No. 1 in the tournament and were favorites to win the title. This year, Notre Dame is the No. 3 seed and the third-highest seeded team in the final four — ahead of only Northern Michigan, the No. 6 seed.

ND Women's Basketball

Their last dance

Gaines, Allen provide backcourt leadership

By DEIRDRE KRASULA
Sports Writer

There are those that lead by actions, and those that lead through words. The Irish are lucky enough to boast both. Senior guards Tulyah Gaines and Charlel Allen combine to create a guiding force in the backcourt that has helped the Irish secure a No. 5 seed in the NCAA Tournament.

There was never any question who would lead Notre Dame as the team entered the 2007-2008 season; Gaines and Allen combine with fellow senior Amanda Tsipis to form the Irish captains.

"I pretty much knew my role coming into the season," Gaines said. "That I had to be a leader, act vocally, set an example on defense, whatever I had to do.

Walk-on Tsipis earns respect of teammates, leaves lasting mark

By BILL BRINK
Sports Writer

It was a meaningless basket in a meaningless game, but it was vindication for countless hours of behind-the-scenes toil.

It was inconspicuous, at best. Notre Dame led South Florida 0-39 in the final minutes of a Feb. 27 home game. With 3.52 left, senior guard Amanda Tsipis drove through the lane from the outside and sank a layup. The crowd roared; Tsipis beamed. But here's the rub: She didn't want the shot.

"I was actually looking to pass to a senior center!" Melissa D'Amico, but her defender didn't actually come up on me, so I ended up shooting it," Tsipis said.

That lack of selfishness at a meaningless point in the game tells you all you need to know about Amanda Tsipis. The only walk-on ever to be elected captain by her teammates, Tsipis has one start in the last two seasons.

She's exactly what a walk-on optimistizes at Notre Dame," said assistant coach Jonathan Tsipis, who is Amanda's uncle. "We see with our chemistry in our locker room without the coaches around a lot of the positive impact that she's had.

"Notre Dame's Sunday match-up with Southern Methodist in the NCAA Tournament could be Tsipis' last in an Irish uniform. But the impression she made on