Rape prevention is common goal

Amid 'Monologues' controversy, groups fight campus violence

By KATIE PERRY
Assistant News Editor

While the production of "The Vagina Monologues" has long been a polarizing issue on campus, one of the play's stated goals — stopping sexual violence against women — is a constant objective at Notre Dame and Saint Mary's. And various organizations on both campuses are making efforts to emphasize it, whether or not they support the play.

Notre Dame's Feminist Voice and Right to Life organizations have found the issue's severity outweighs its partisan volatility, and leaders are in talks with student government and the Orestes Brownson Council — a campus group dedicated to the study of traditional Catholic teachings — to collaboratively host a fundraiser for groups that benefited financially from previous years' presentations of "The Vagina Monologues."

Student body president Dave Borton said representatives from Feminist Voice, Right to Life, the Orestes Brownson Council and student government met Feb. 8 to discuss a way — a benefit formal — to raise funds for sexual assault prevention in an attempt to replace those not earned from this year's "Monologues," held in DeBartolo Hall Monday through Wednesday. Last year's performances raised approximately $15,000.

see GOAL/page 4

Bissinger buzzes on famous football novel

By BRIDGET KEATING
News Writer

Venerated author Buzz Bissinger delivered a spirited message on the power of sports and the inspiration they lent to his best-selling novel "Friday Night Lights," in an enthusiastic crowd at Washington Hall 7 p.m. Thursday evening in the final event of the Notre Dame Literary Festival (NDLF).

NDLF Chairperson Laura Fox described the event-sponsoring Student Union Board's attraction to the author of "Friday Night Lights" as a fitting end to the festival. His performance was titled "Through the Looking Glass."

"Bissinger's talent and work appeal to students' sports fanaticism and varied interests," as he has written about football, baseball and urban politics," Fox said.

Bissinger, winner of prestigious awards such as the Pulitzer Prize, Livingston Award, American Bar Association Silver Gavel Award and the National Headliners Award, delivered a pointed speech on his book, which centered on the impact of high school football on small-town life. He began by verbally painting a picture of his journey to Odessa, Texas, through "dry, dusty Texas," where high school stadiums were "shrines, temples, glistening, perfect. It was obvious that something powerful was going on in those places."

He animately emphasized the "sacred, special American experience" that football represents.

see BISSINGER/page 9

see SMC/page 6

Junior parents pour onto campus for weekend event

By JACLYNN MADDEN
News Writer

The parents of Notre Dame juniors have migrated annually to South Bend for Junior Parents Weekend since 1952, when University President Emeritus Father Theodore Hesburgh wanted juniors' parents to have the opportunity to take part in their child's Notre Dame life prior to graduation.

More than 1,200 families are scheduled to arrive in the South Bend area today to celebrate the 54th annual Junior Parents Weekend (JPW). This year's JPW theme, "Traditional Notre Dame," embraces the true nature of the three-day gathering — for parents to experience the spiritual, social and academic aspects of Notre Dame.

JPW 2006 chairperson Marri Kajfez, a junior herself, expressed enthusiasm for the weekend and all its family-oriented events.

"We hope that the juniors and their parents enjoy the traditional Notre Dame that we have sewn through our events," she said. "I'm really excited to see all the parents that are going to be here experiencing Notre Dame in such a unique way."

JPW kicks off at 9 p.m. today with the Opening Gala, a formal event at the Joyce Center to include dancing, a cash bar, hors d'oeuvres and portrait photography. On Saturday morning, the College of Science, College of Engineering, College of Arts and Letters and Mendoza College of Business will hold Collegiate Workshops for their students in which juniors and parents will hear faculty addresses and attend departmental presentations. Juniors and parents then will head to each student's residence hall for hall luncheons, where parents can mingle with rectors and roommates.

University President Father John Jenkins will celebrate the JPW Mass at 5:30 in the Joyce Center Arena. Immediately following the Mass, the President's Dinner

see JPW/page 4
**Inside Column**

**Running on empty**

Between a costly, poorly-led war and Social Security complications, the Bush Administration faces numerous problems as George W. Bush begins his second term. Unfortunately, the one issue that remains largely overlooked — the environment — will unquestionably prove the most disastrous.

At first Bush's concern for the environment looked promising — while speaking to several environmental advisors in May of 1999, he pledged that after his term as president, "the air will be cleaner, the water will be cleaner, and the land will be better cared for.

Today, this statement is less true than the threat of WMDs in Iraq. In his first three months after being sworn into office as the 43rd president of the United States, Bush announced that the United States would not take part in the Kyoto Protocol, an agreement between countries to reduce carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions. Without the United States which, with only five percent of the world's population, emits almost a quarter of the world's carbon discharges, the Kyoto Protocol cannot be reached.

Alarmingly, Bush refuses to take part in the agreement in part because he believes the rise in global temperatures is a natural phenomenon, despite countless research indicating that global warming is human-induced.

President Bush is refusing to recognize the Kyoto Protocol and undermining the threat of global warming. Bush has also supported drilling in the Arctic Wildlife, weakened clean air and water standards, broken his promise to protect and repair our National Parks and allowed the cleanup of toxic waste dumps. It is not surprising that environmental protection groups see the Bush Administration of neglecting the Bush Administration of neglecting some of the pressing environmental issues that face our world — known as the "city of mosques" — in ruins.

"It is a peace message to all Iraqi cities to cast away all the sectarian and ethnic issues and hold together,” said Hassan Muhammad, a member of Falluja's Cultural House group. "Falluja, 56 km (32 miles) west of Baghdad, was a stronghold of Sunni Muslim militants until the U.S. offensive, which left much of the city — known as the "city of mosques" — in ruins.

**Question of the Day:** Are you going to SMC monologues?

**Offbeat**

**Ruined iraqi city promotes peace with olive trees**

FALLUJA, Iraq — Residents of Falluja, the Iraqi city devastated by a U.S. offensive in 2004, have been planting thousands of olive trees in a bid to promote peace.

The first trees were planted Wednesday near a football pitch that became a graveyard for the victims of the U.S. military assault against insurgents holed up in the city. The aim is to plant 250,000 trees by April, organizers said.

"It is a peace message to all Iraqi cities to cast away all the sectarian and ethnic problems today at 9:30 in Carroll Auditorium.

**IN BRIEF**

The Saint Mary's College Dance Ensemble Workshop will host its annual performance today at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday at 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 in O'Laughlin Auditorium. The program will include ballet, jazz and modern dance.

Notre Dame Concert Bands will perform a Rosa Parks Memorial Concert today at Leighton Concert Hall in the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center. It is a free but ticketed event. Call 574-631-2800 to reserve tickets.

Black Koffeeshow, a showcase of African American art, literature and music expressed in the Notre Dame community, will take place today at 7 p.m. in LaFortune Ballroom.

The Chicago-based improv comedy troupe Second City will perform today at 9:30 in Washington Hall. Tickets are $5 for students and $10 for non-students and are available at the LaFortune Box Office.

The Irish women's tennis team will face Tennessee at 12 p.m. Saturday, and Harvard at 10 a.m. Sunday at the Eck Tennis Pavilion.

Israeli philosopher Avishai Margalit will speak at the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies' annual John Howard Yoder Dialogues on Religion, Nonviolence and Peace at 11 a.m. Monday at the Hesburgh Center for International Studies.

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

**Correction**

The Observer regrets itself as a professional publication and stresses the highest standards of journalism at all times. We do, however, recognize that we will make mistakes. If you have made a mistake, please contact us at 631-4540 so we can correct our error.
Weis gets personal at Saint Mary’s disability lecture

By NICOLE ZOOK and AMANDA SHROPSHIRE

News Writer

Notre Dame head football coach Charlie Weis discussed his experience as the father of a child with developmental disorders in a talk to students at Saint Mary’s Thursday.

Weis asked the standing-room-only crowd in Vander Venet Theater to imagine their first child — “apparently thriving, apparently normal” — fade into her own little world, “almost like a fog.”

That was the case with Weis’ daughter Hannah 11 years ago when she was first diagnosed with Pervasive Development Disorder (PDD).

Weis said he and his wife, Maura, went through a difficult time, asking themselves what they did wrong after realizing the problem could not be fixed.

‘PDD is kind of a catch-all,’” Weis said. ‘‘We were trying to go right to the kids to make their lives better.’’

Weis said the original goal of the foundation was to raise $100,000 per year. But every grant requested in the first year was satisfied, and the foundation now raises more than $500,000 every year.

Weis said the organization fulfills needs such as fence for backyards — so children do not wander off — and computers for kids to speak through.

Weis, who calls himself a “very private person” and said he had “zero awareness of autism” prior to Hannah’s diagnosis, now receives more than 2,000 requests to speak each year — donating all of the speaking fees to Hannah & Friends.

“We are globally and developmentally delayed, because it is personal,” Weis said. “The good part of me doesn’t come from football, it comes from bringing compassion to people who just don’t get autism.”

Weis said he attempts to give his audience “a grasp of what you really deal with” when someone you love has autism.

“There is no day that it doesn’t affect you,” Weis said.

Weis said he and his wife have a long-term goal of building a farm with multiple backyards — so children do not wander off — and computers for kids to speak through.

Weis said the farm would be geared toward people with various special needs and would allow them to live fulfilling lives almost on their own.

“My wife and I talk about her as an angel,” Weis said. “Hannah came to us so we could do some good. She was given to us to be a messenger. Our lives are much more fulfilled because of what she has given to us.”

Contact Nicole Zook at zook8928@saintmarys.edu and Amanda Shropshire at ashp01@saintmarys.edu.

ACE invites you and your parents to a

JPW Open House

In the offices of the Alliance for Catholic Education, 112 Badin Hall

From 2-4PM

Friday, Feb. 17th

If you’re interested in ACE, and want to let your parents find out more information, please stop in!
Goal
continued from page 1

"It was one of the most important meetings that I've been to at Notre Dame," Baron said. "To see individuals who are diametrically opposed on the issue of Sexual Violence Monologues come together in a shared spirit of creativity and shared opposition to sexual violence was great."

Baron and student body vice president Elizabeth Shappell met Feb. 10 with Executive Associate Director of Student Affairs President Frances Shavvers and Vice President for Public Affairs and Communications Pat Nordstrom, and Hilary Crnkovich. He said the purpose of the meeting was to update the administrators on campus sentiment and discussions regarding academic freedom.

"We told them of the joint meeting," said Lezynski. "To see individuals who are diametrically opposed on the issue of Sexual Violence Monologues come together in a shared spirit of creativity and shared opposition to sexual violence was great."

Dave Baron student body speaker and student representative for the Arts and Letters, said he was impressed with the meeting.

"I was one of the most impressive meetings that I've ever attended," he said. "It was one of the most impressive meetings that I've ever attended."
INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Death squads to be investigated

BAGHDAD — The Shiite-dominated Interior Ministry announced an investigation Thursday into claims of death squads in its ranks as police found a dozen more bodies, bringing the number of apparent victims of sectarian reprisal killings here to at least 30 this week.

The probe was announced after U.S. military officials indicated there was evidence to support the allegation of death squads. The 12 men found on Monday had been bound and shot in the head execution-style.

At least 25 civilians were killed in violence across Iraq, including three tribal sheiks slain in a drive-by-shooting north of the capital.

Prevail is winner of Haiti election

HAVANA, Cuba — Rene Preval was declared the winner of Haiti's presidential election Thursday under an agreement between government and electoral council, staving off a crisis over last week's disputed vote.

With nearly all the ballots counted, Preval had been just shy of the 50.1 percent margin needed to win.

Under the agreement, officials declared Thursday to divide the 65,000 blank ballots cast in the Feb. 7 election among the candidates in proportion to the percentage they had already won. That gave Preval a 51.15 percent majority, said Michel Brunache, chief of Cabinet for interim President Boniface Alexandre.

The blank votes represented about 4 percent of the estimated 2.2 million ballots cast.

NATIONAL NEWS

Man trained to commit jihad in U.S.

SACRAMENTO — A man accused of attempting an al-Qaeda training camp is a trained terrorist intent on attacking Americans, prosecutors alleged Thursday, but his attorney called him just a directionless young man prone to wild storytelling.

In opening statements of Hamid Hayat's federal trial, prosecutors said the 23-year-old Pakistani, a former California farm worker, has been involved with potential terrorist targets.

Hamid Hayat talked about jihad before he even left the United States, prosecutor Laura Ferris said in opening statements. "He admitted he went to a jihadist training camp, not once but twice.

White House defends its port sales

WASHINGTON — President Bush recalled Thursday he was satisfied with Vice President Dick Cheney's explanation about the White House's sale of ports to private companies, and Texas authority officials said they would reconsider its earlier approval of the deal.

"I thought his explanation yesterday was a powerful explanation.

"There was a "deeply traumatic moment" for Cheney "and obviously it was a tragic moment for Harry Whittington," said the shooting "profoundly affected the vice president.

"In Texas, meanwhile, the Kerr County Sheriff's Department released its report from Chief Deputy Gilberto San Miguel Jr., which said he interview a certain person on the morning after the shooting.

Cheney explained that he did not see hunting companion Whittington come up behind him and accidentally sprayed him with birdshot in the face and upper body while aiming at a quail, the report said.

"As for the timing of the public disclosure of the shooting, Bush said Democrats are drawing "the wrong conclusion about the administration" when they say it depicts the White House as overly secretive.

"Yesterday when he was here in the Oval Office and saw the deep concern he (Cheney) had about a person who was wounded," Bush said. "I thought yesterday's explanation was a very strong and important explanation to make to the American people.

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Cheney also defended his decision to keep the shooting from the public until a day after it happened, allowing the ranch owner to tell a local newspaper about it instead of making an official announcement from the White House.

Guantanamo should be shut down

GENEVA — The United States should shut down the prison for terror suspects at Guantanamo Bay and either release the detainees or put them on trial, the United Nations said in a report released Thursday.

"We are concerned about the Guantanamo Bay situation and the situation in the United States," said Michelle Bachelet, the executive director of Human Rights Watch, at a briefing.

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The report, summarizing an investigation by five U.N. experts who did not visit Guantanamo, said photographic evidence and testimony of former prisoners showed that detainees were shackled, chained, hooded and beaten if they resisted.

Some interrogation techniques — particularly the use of dogs, exposure to extreme temperatures, sleep deprivation for several consecutive days and prolonged isolation — caused extreme suffering, the report said.

"Such treatment amounts to torture," it said, urging the United States to "refrain from any practice amounting to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

It also said Guantanamo's military commissions are under the ultimate authority of the White House and that detainees should have trials.

LOCAL NEWS

Arrest made in hospital fondling

ANDERSON — A teenager entered a woman's hospital room and fondled her before then breaking into the hospital's gift shop, authorities said Thursday.

Police officers arrested Derek D. Hutchison, 18, of Anderson, inside the volunteer services office of Anderson's Southside Hospital at 12:30 a.m. Wednesday on preliminary felony charges of burglary, theft and sexual battery.

Hutchison was a visitor of an emergency room patient when he went into the main part of the hospital, said Marlene Carey, St. John's vice president of corporate communications.

Cheney's explanation 'just fine'

Bush approves the vice president's handling of his traumatic hunting accident

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Bush said Thursday he was satisfied with Vice President Dick Cheney's explanation about his hunting accident, and Texas authority officials said they would reconsider its earlier approval of the deal.

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"There was a "deeply traumatic moment" for Cheney "and obviously it was a tragic moment for Harry Whittington," said the shooting "profoundly affected the vice president.

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It also said Guantanamo's military commissions are under the ultimate authority of the White House and that detainees should have trials.
Catherine Pittman said not only genres from poetry to essays, which include a variety of issues, but she also hopes it will serve as an instructional tool for other communities who wish to create their own version. "I hope to premier my documentary in April," she said. "I also will hopefully present it at national educational conferences in Wisconsin." But for now Francis is focused on this weekend's performances at 7 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday in Carroll Auditorium. She said she hopes to surpass last year's performance and, in some instances, "it will open your eyes and shift your thinking."

Snyder said she also wants the audience to experience a change in their thoughts and attitudes regarding the performance. "I hope the audience feels uncomfortable at times, sad at some parts, but knows they are doing the right thing."

"What I presented to board was inconsistent with what was going on at EBS," said Kenneth Rice, former CEO of Enron Corporation. Rice claims he was told to mislead Enron board members. Rice is among 16 ex-Enron executives who have pleaded guilty to crimes stemming from the government's investigation of the energy company's swift tumble into bankruptcy proceedings in December 2001. But as he has done throughout his three days of testimony, Rice stopped short of saying Skilling lied to investors about the health of Enron.

The SMC Monologues are an original production of the stories based on the experiences of women in the Saint Mary's Community. They review the submission process and said she hopes it will open your eyes and shift your thinking. 

The 27 actresses in this year's production will each read one of the selected monologues, and Francis said we will recite her own submission. Center for Women's Intercultural Leadership (C.W.I.L.L.) research analyst and Monologues actress Joy Davis said her participation in the SMC Monologues allows her to get involved with students who are proactive in changing the College community. "It's really been a phenomenal process both ways to watch students develop their own voice and become empowered to speak out on challenging issues," she said. "It's also a real honor to be able to give voice to a fellow SMC woman's experience."

"The power of presence is what makes the monologues different than any other publication I've edited before," she said. "The experiences of women on stage combine with the presence of the women they are reading for to create a space in which all feel sorrow, joy, embarrassment, pain and, most importantly, healing." Francis said she feels the College is one of the first in the nation to create a version of Ensler's "Monologues" written solely by the members of the immediate community—a fact that is gradually confirmed through SMC Monologues' coverage in "Women in Higher Education" and discussion at national educational conferences. Francis is creating a documentary about the SMC Monologues' production process and said she hopes it will serve as an instructional tool for other communities who wish to create their own version.

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The SMC Monologues are an original production of the stories based on the experiences of women in the Saint Mary's Community! Suggested Donation of $3. All proceeds will go to SOS (the rape crisis center for St. Joseph County), and the YWCA

Don't miss your chance to hear the voices of Saint Mary's speak!! It is an AMAZING and EMPOWERING production. Join us as we celebrate the lives of Saint Mary's women

Sensitive, adult topics intended for mature audiences

For more information please contact Ginger Francis @ fran3260@saintmarys.edu or Jen Hanlon @ hanl6805@saintmary.edu

Sponsored by C.A.R.E., Feminists United, and SAGA (Straight And Gay Alliance)
NEW YORK — Stocks Thursday, buoyed by Hewlett-Packard's earnings, a surprising jump in home construction, and more positive comments from the Federal Reserve, rose for the week, the department said. The Dow Rose its highest level since June 5, 2001, demonstrating Wall Street's confidence in large-cap stocks.

In Brief

XM Radio posts wider quarterly loss

NEW YORK — XM Satellite Radio Holdings Inc.'s losses soared in the fourth quarter on higher costs for marketing and acquiring subscribers, and a key director quit over disagree­ments about the company's direction, warning of a looming "crisis." Investors punished the sh ares of the Washington, D.C.-based company, sending XM Radio posts wider quarterly loss

BOSTON — Shares of Boston Scientific Corp. rose nearly 9 per­cent Thursday after the medical device maker's top chief financial officer thought nearly $4.5 million worth of his company's stock, purchased in an open market, was "ill-timed," and that he now plans to "hold and drive up the stock's price." The shares' rise to their highest level since May 9, 2001, helped the stock rebound from a recent slide amid investor wor­ries about the company's pending $2.7 billion acquisition of Guidant Corp. Shares of Boston Scientific also have languished following a Jan. 25 warning by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration about quality-control problems at the Natick-based company. Analysts said investors Thursday responded to stock purchases by Larry Best that amounted to a personal vote of confidence in his company's future. "I think investors do take insider buying as a good sign, and I think they especially wanted Boston Scientific to do it," said Jan Wald, an analyst with A.G. Edwards & Sons.

Best, chief financial officer and a senior vice president, bought 200,000 shares on the open mar­ket Wednesday at an average price of $22.43, according to a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission. In recent days, another company insider, board member Nicholas Nicholas Jr., bought 25,000 shares. Shares of Boston Scientific rose $1.97 to close at $24.58, and trad­ed at more than three times the normal volume on the New York Stock Exchange. It was the highest closing price since Jan. 13, when shares closed at $25.20. Too Levy, a Deutsche Bank ana­lyst, said in a research report that the moves by Best and Nicholas increased his confidence in the outlook for Boston Scientific and its Guidant acquisition.

Dow hits high on late surge

Investors are at ease after Wall Street shows excellent gains in cautious trading

Boston Scientific stock up sharply

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Week of "Friday Night.

He went on to speak about the power of sports and the experience of seeing 20,000 fans cheering on high school boys when he moved to Odessa in 1988.

The author then turned to the negative influence of athletics and "the other side, the way in which kids were literally being sacrificed in the hope of winning a state championship."

He further described the town's obsession and adoration of high school football.

"Preparation for life after this intoxicating experience is considered little more than an afterthought," he said. He spoke at length about Booby Miles, the Permian High School football player whose life and high school football career are chronicled in "Friday Night Lights." Bissinger said the book is "one of the few schools that can attract top students and continue to have a winning tradition.

"Audience members were able to socialize with the acclaimed author at a reception following the speech."

BUZZ BISSINGER

"Preparation for life after this intoxicating experience (high school football) is considered little more than an afterthought."

Contact Bridget Keating at bkeating@nd.edu

\* Additional text on the page is not fully visible.\*
January boasts record-breaking housing construction

WASHINGTON — Construction began unexpectedly, January is on pace to deliver the fastest housing build in the nation’s five-year history, and one that analysts are forecasting will outlast this season’s unusually warm weather, the Associated Press reported Thursday.

The Commerce Department reported Thursday that building activity was up 14.5 percent last month compared to December, pushing January to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 2.27 million units. That was the fastest construction rate since March 1973, but it was expected to be a one-time blip caused by unusually warm weather in January that prompted builders to start work on more homes. Analysts are forecasting that housing construction will slow this year as the nation’s five-year housing boom quiets down.

In other economic news, the number of Americans filing claims for unemployment benefits rose to 297,000 last week, up 19,000 from the previous week. The increase was larger than economists had been expecting but they cautioned against reading too much into the one-week rise.

They said the level still remained in a zone that indicates a strong job market.

Ian Shepherdson, chief U.S. economist for High Frequency Economics, said that jobless claims are likely to bounce around quite a bit for a few weeks, reflecting the disruptions in filing claims caused by the weekend’s huge snowstorm in the Northeast.

The weather played a major factor in the big rise in construction last month, which was the mildest January in more than a century. Some economists, however, said that a 6.8 percent rise last month in building permits, which are not affected by the weather, could be a signal that housing activity will not slow as much this year as previously thought, as long as mortgage rates do not rise too quickly.

"Low long-term rates and a strong jobs market will continue to provide substantial support to the housing market," said Bob Walters, chief economist for Quicken Loans, an online lender.

On Wall Street, the Dow Jones industrial average rose 61.71 points to close at 12,059.68 on Friday, February 17, 2006.

The biggest gain came in the metropolitan area that includes Phoenix, Ariz., where home prices shot up by 48.9 percent.

Some economists have expressed concerns that once home sales start to slide, the big price gains could turn into sharp declines in prices in some areas, bursting the speculative bubble in much the same way that the stock market bubble burst in early 2000, helping to push the country into a recession.

However, new Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke testified to Congress on Thursday, said he did not expect such a severe impact from the housing slowdown. "A leveling out or a modest softening in housing activity seems more likely than a sharp contraction," he told members of the House Financial Services Committee.

Building activity rose in all parts of the country in January. The biggest gain was a 29.2 percent rise in the Northeast followed by increases of 23.7 percent in the Midwest, 16.9 percent in the West and 8.7 percent in the South.

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"Low long-term rates and a strong jobs market will continue to provide substantial support to the housing market," said Bob Walters, chief economist for Quicken Loans, an online lender.

On Wall Street, the Dow Jones industrial average rose 61.71 points to close at 12,059.68 on Friday, February 17, 2006.

The biggest gain came in the metropolitan area that includes Phoenix, Ariz., where home prices shot up by 48.9 percent.

Some economists have expressed concerns that once home sales start to slide, the big price gains could turn into sharp declines in prices in some areas, bursting the speculative bubble in much the same way that the stock market bubble burst in early 2000, helping to push the country into a recession.

However, new Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke testified to Congress on Thursday, said he did not expect such a severe impact from the housing slowdown. "A leveling out or a modest softening in housing activity seems more likely than a sharp contraction," he told members of the House Financial Services Committee.

Building activity rose in all parts of the country in January. The biggest gain was a 29.2 percent rise in the Northeast followed by increases of 23.7 percent in the Midwest, 16.9 percent in the West and 8.7 percent in the South.
Let's hope he saw what we saw.
A blunt, vulgar, shocking production that without hesitation por-
trays masturbation, extramarital sex and lesbian seduction as
appropriate education for college students. Production that absolutely
should be out of the picture in the nation's top Catholic university.

Academic departments should be able to decide to sponsor the
play. This right must be upheld in the pursuit of academic freedom —
whether it is consistent with justice for the administration to adopt
a policy of censorship.

The Vagina Monologues' — performed by their talented peers, in a classroom,
brings to light. Exposing Notre Dame students to aspects of con-
temporary challenges. Confronting and engaging Church teaching while
teaching. In and out of the classroom, students already are
edifying.

Theatre departments must make speakers' educational effort worthwhile by listening to
their provocation. Questions by students and faculty are
pointed. Though Jenkins should allow the play's performance to
continue to be held in a large classroom, environment that
plays an important part in setting the audience's expectations and the event's academic tone. Other campus academic events don't
show such problems, so the "Monologues" shouldn't — that is, the funds the play raises for charities fighting violence
against women can be raised through other means, just as cam-

The Observer Editorial Board

The Observer is the independent, daily newspaper Serving Notre Dame and Saint Mary's students since 1883. 

We believe in providing a forum for all opinions, even those that challenge the views of the majority. The Observer is a student publication and as such is not beholden to any outside influence. It is our duty to report the news and provide a platform for discussion and debate.

The Observer is the official student newspaper of Notre Dame University and Saint Mary's College, Indiana. It is published daily during the academic year and weekly during the summer. The Observer is a student-run publication and is independent of the university administration.

The Observer values diversity of opinion and encourages respectful dialogue. We strive to report the news accurately and fairly, and we welcome feedback and suggestions for improvement.

The Observer reserves the right to edit or reject letters. We reserve the right to publish letters in any format, including online and in print. The Observer's editors make final decisions on what is published.

The Observer's mission is to provide a platform for student expression and to foster an environment of free speech and open dialogue.

The Observer's staff consists of students who are dedicated to producing a quality newspaper that serves the Notre Dame and Saint Mary's communities.
An unholy approach to television's lure for titling

The year accentuates a need for revenue by so-called televangelists. While their methods sometimes differ, they share a common element: a rhetoric for pledges, vows or tithes. Recently billboards, direct-mail pieces and even news broadcasts have permeated our lives. This writer surfed the channels past midnight to record some requests and announcements that P.T. Barnum was correct when declaring that a sucker was born every minute.

Spirituality is the most private and personal aspect of our lives. Facations in any religion should not "preach" on how to correctly worship. Yet, time after time, televangelism instruct us on the proper way to worship, mostly with a "born again" conversion. Interestingly Jimmy Swaggert contradicts fellow ministers saying that they make more money while preaching in a black pit. Swaggert reveals that a decade ago the Lord told him to write a novel about a man who he sells for more a $125 with three musical -- and he is an only son. My Brokeback Mountain occurred a few days after breaking off the closet. A few persons hand engaged the older Robertson a yellow paper with a pledge for $10,000 followed by another pledge of an unusual $5,004 amount. Moreover, the elder Robertson's quick math left the watchomer bewildered. He asked for a mere 65 cents a day, "about $20 a month" or about $237.25 a year. Actually, 65 cents a day equals more at $237.25 a year, less than $20 a month. The crawl below the screen listed names and "$20 per month."

Robertson's concept is "free miracle water" with a call to a 800 toll-free number. Never mentioning contributions, he preaches his method. After airing sessions where he sold others by touching their foreheads before they fell to the floor, the program cut to testimonials from those receiving miraculous money. One woman told of $7,000 miraculously transferred into her checking account. Another claimed that $10,000 appeared in her account. Testimonials are the livelihood of fundraising, and each program aired several.

Many begin describing how desperate the people were for housing, money, a job or their own lives. A February Dyer from Ron Hembre of Cornerstone TeleVision Network, which airs the 700 Club twice a day, features an upbeat cover story about a woman who planned to kill her boy friend and told her family she has transformed her life since she began watching Cornerstone. When Cornerstone last contacted her, "she had a thriving ministry as an author, songwriter and speaker."

Cornerstone also offers five ways to contribute — monthly pledge, telethon pledge, special gift, memorial gift and caring hearts — but nowhere does it list how to obtain an accounting of income and expenses. To take this message of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth, Hembre offers a $10,000 special gift feature which raises a foreign flag on his Avenue of Promise leading to "Signal Hill." After a year, the foreign flag will be sent in a presentation box to the contributor. Hembre writes "Prayer helps us align our will with that of our Father, but also spurs us on to fulfill His command to reach a world He loves an died for." "Yes, that's what our U.S. Hugin Ministries tots that you're believing brings about your receiving." He quotes Mark 9:23 with editing, "Jesus said ... If thou canst ..." He writes that "some criticize, intolerance and misunderstanding has surfaced. For those who live Brokeback's pain behind, there's no turning back — no return to the self-destructiveness of self-denial, to the prison of silence."

A Mountain' of discovery

The answer might come from fellow minister and清晨, second generation of time I spent on that lonely hilltop. My Brokeback Mountain occurred 2 years ago in San Francisco. Second time, however, I was engaged to be married to a woman. But a severe case of cold feet pushed me to a critical turning point. Unlike ts, the critical moment for me was when Jack Twist (Jake Gyllenhaal), the movie's protagonist, broke off that engagement six weeks short of my wedding day.

Believe me, it was not easy telling my fiancée a hurtful truth. I was gay, sure enough, it was during an engaged Encounter weekend, that I, then a Roman Catholic, prayerfully faced up to my own truth. I was an only son, and pressures of family, church and state weighed heavily on me. So much expectation rested on my shoulders to marry well and make a good name for Ennis and Jack different societal pressures ensnared them. I was bucking at it nothing less than a miracle the courage that I, a that turned controversial 28-year-old naval officer. It was simply risky for me. My fiancée's father was retired and a member of a good Catholic family, rage and hurt could easily have gone way to payback. But I was committed to military officials as I broke the silence and came out to the world.

Instead, my fiancée's mother phoned a few days after breaking off the engagement, and said to me, "Chuck, I know what you did for my daughter, telling her, you did out of love for her. And I will never forget that."

The parish priest, who had mentored and confirmed me into the Catholic faith in my hometown of Johnstown, Pennsylvania, encouraged me to break off the engagement and come clean. He was the one who I would have sought sensitive pastoral care for my parents as they dealt with a bitter disappointment.

Fortuitously, I lived in California. Gay life is a slower burn but has been going on long way from 1963 to 1983, from the loneliness and heartbreak that E. Annie Proulx's short story tells in wrenching stark prose. The story's plot line and mood are only "Brokeback Mountain." The book's pictures capture all of the pathos and more, with full moons and crystalline blue skies, the alpine beauty of big-sky country Wyoming-style, the wide-open stretches of landscape that Ennis and Jack share with coyotes, bears and herds of sheep.

For me, Gustavo Santadalla's haunting music captures perfectly the prevailing melancholy. That music and the dark Wyoming skies pierced only by moonlight enabled me to go back in time, connecting with my own private Brokeback. In the film, it is the moun­tain range that separates Jack and Ennis, together, if only for the warmth of human connection in a bedroll. Suddenly, the spark of same-sex love ignites and never really dies away.

Many of us have been there. It's a breaking point — where only the raw male physically and emotionally can keep the doors shut. Words can't quite bridge the disconnection and loneliness many of us feel — imprisoned behind walls of stifling silence and denial.

In this context, you don't have to be a cowboy to feel the pain of the ill-fated love story of Ennis and Jack. My husband and I, "Brokeback Mountain," visiting my family for the holidays. If there is ever a gay-themed story with hometown resonance, this story qualifies.

There I recalled another powerful scene from the movie. It's the one in which a highly contrived, emotionally disconnected Ennis holds two shirts. One shirt is Jack's; the other belongs to Ennis. That clothing and the memory are all that remain.

Undoubtedly, during the last 40 years, society's knowledge and understanding of gay people have had an explosive growth. Yet I fear that for far too many Brokeback's chains still shackle and bind. From small towns in rural America and even within close-knit urban communities — I wonder about men too constricted to trust their true feelings, too afraid to come out fully, too burdened to be more honest with themselves, family and friends. I wonder about the silent painful Brokebacks — past, present and future — within the Native American and Saint Mary's extended family.

I guess I'm lucky. More than 20 years later and well off my Brokeback hilltop, I celebrate nearly two years of being happily and legally married to another man here in Massachusetts. Still, married or single, there is something about "Brokeback" that speaks to us all. Of course I'd love her and her mother.

E-mail Sarah at Viewpoint.l@nd.edu

Gary Caruso

Capital Comments

A 'Mountain' of discovery

The story's plot line and mood are only "Brokeback Mountain." The book's pictures capture all of the pathos and more, with full moons and crystalline blue skies, the alpine beauty of big-sky country Wyoming-style, the wide-open stretches of landscape that Ennis and Jack share with coyotes, bears and herds of sheep.

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E-mail Sarah at Viewpoint.l@nd.edu
The University of Notre Dame concert band honors Rosa Parks during Black History Month with a special performance in Leighton Concert Hall.

Wallace and Gromit — The Curse of the Were-Rabbit Friday at 5 p.m. in Leighton Concert Hall.

The 25-member choir performs an inspirational, soulful African gospel program in Leighton Concert Hall.

The Soweto Gospel Choir's 'Curse of the Were-Rabbit' is performed in Leighton Concert Hall.

The movement of the characters and the exaggerated shapes of their bodies, such as the cyclists with enormous calves and the bad guys literally shaped like blocks, gives the movie an entirely different feel. The animation is also darker, grittier and in some cases more grotesque than the Disney or Pixar gloss that American viewers are used to.

The film visually peaks fun at a variety of cultural stereotypes. Paris is portrayed as an expanding metropolis so big that it has swallowed up its rural suburbs, while Belleville is painted as an over­whelming, gaudy city. The citizens of Belleville are obese and the French in the film actually eat frogs.

The film didn't receive a wide release in the United States, as Sony Pictures was naturally nervous about a PG-13 rated, French animated film, but it will be playing this Friday and Saturday at 10 p.m. in the Browning Cinema.

The film follows Madame Souza, the grandmother of a young orphan boy named Champion. He becomes fascinated by bicycles and Madame Souza becomes his dictatorial trainer. Champion eventually makes it to the Tour de France.

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The Triplets of Belleville is a difficult movie to categorize. It's animated, but it lacks the "feel good" quality of Disney and Pixar films. It's technically in French, but lacks any real dialogue. It's also about things — cycling and an ancient trio of jazz singers — that a viewer would be hard­pressed to find in any movie, let alone an ani­mated one.

Somehow, the mix of European visual flair and antiquated references to people like Josephine Baker and Django Reinhardt manages to cohere into a stunning film. In spite of its failure to fit into the usual film categories, "The Triplets of Belleville" is a highly entertaining movie that will leave the viewer with a song in his or her head and a burning desire to see the movie again to discover what was missed the first time.

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Show Review

‘Van Gogh’ paints powerful portrait

By MARTY SCHROEDER
Scene Critic

"Inventing Van Gogh," by Stephen Dietz, is a powerful play that brings characters from different times together for a dynamic inquiry into the human experience. It involves love, obsession, what is meant by the word "art," and, ultimately, what it means to be a human being with something to live for. None of the characters involved are perfect, but they all display their humanity in distinct ways.

This play is about Patrick Stone, a struggling painter in the present day. Viewers learn that he has painted for some time and that his work is good, if not great. Unfortunately, Patrick is now going through the painter's equivalent of writer's block. He is commissioned by the painting authenticator René Bouchard to paint — or forge — the long-lost and only remaining self-portrait of Vincent Van Gogh, from which Bouchard hopes to make a fortune. The play then begins to delve into a series of flashbacks that bring Van Gogh and an important figure from his life into Patrick's world.

This production, directed by Patrick Vassel and Drew McElligott, brings the script to life very adeptly. The play involves some scenes that take place during Van Gogh's life, some that occur during Stone's life and a few that involve both characters interacting in the same time period. Due to the nature of the play, the action can be hard to follow at some isolated points, but overall this production does a very good job of minimizing any confusion. As the play progresses, the viewer is caught off guard by the fact that Stone can become an important part of Van Gogh's life and vice versa. But suspension of disbelief is something that comes naturally with this play due to the excellent acting.

This acting is the heart of the production. Vassel is very adept at playing the confused Stone, and Nathaniel Grams is the appropriately arrogant yet insecure mentor, Paul Gauguin.

Finally, Vassel brings to the stage a confused Stone who is absorbing what these two great artists have to say. This slighty with some self-doubt. McGirr's delivery combines these two to give his character many levels.

The final destination of any visit to Our Lady's University is Her own Grotto. On a cold night, in the glow of moonbeams, starlight and flickering candles, it's easy to believe in miracles.

By MARTY SCHROEDER
Scene Critic

"Inventing Van Gogh," stars Drew McElligott, left, as Vincent Van Gogh and Hallie Miller as Van Gogh's love interest, Halle Miller and Van Gogh's love interest and Gauchet's daughter, Marguerite. Finally, Brandon McGirr is excellent as Van Gogh's arrogant yet insecure mentor, Paul Gauguin.

The play ends quite dramatically, but its real power lies in the middle. In this section, there is much interaction, ranging from Miller and Stone discussing their past, to Dr. Miller's fruitless quest for Van Gogh's last self-portrait, to Gauguin and Stone arguing over what art is and what previous artists are of merit. One particular scene involves Stone, Van Gogh and Gauguin arguing over which artists that came before Van Gogh are noteworthy. The subtext of this scene is how one should live life. The interaction between McGirr, McGirr, and Vassel is one of the strongest aspects of the play.

McElligott, at his most energetic here, walks all over the stage and gives Van Gogh an erratic presence that seems to mirror his painting style. McGirr is also at his strongest. He portrays a very self-assured Gauguin but the script betrays this slightly with some self-doubt. McGirr's delivery combines these two to give his character many levels.

Finally, Vassel brings to the stage a confused Stone who is absorbing what these two great artists have to say. While the end provides the resolution to all the conflicts throughout the play, it is this very conflict that arouses the most emotion and gives the most satisfaction to the audience.

The Washington Hall Lab Theater is admirably used as Stone/Van Gogh's studio, which ultimately fuses into one studio they both use. The lighting, designed by Ryan Retartha, has the stage awash in blues, reds and yellows, giving an essence of the colors that stage awash in blues, reds and yellows, giving an essence of the colors that come naturally with this play due to the excellent acting.

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Switzerland's swingeing record with upset victory

United States, Canada take care of undermatched opponents Tuesday with flashy offense and strong goal-tending

Associated Press

TORINO, Italy David Aebischer got tough with a Czech shot that smacked against his pads.

He turned aside 40 shots — including 20 in the second period — and carried Switzerland to its first Olympic win in 20 years. It was the biggest victory yet in a Torino Olympics that has been outscored 11-3 in its first five games.

Aebischer, best known for replacing Patrick Roy as the Colorado Avalanche's top goalie, was brilliant while his team was short-handed for most of the final 7 minutes of the middle period. The Swiss (1-1 in Group A), who have won three of the six final eight penalties in the period and were down two men for 5 minutes, 36 seconds, Aebischer got tougher as flag-wavers waved fans chanted his name.

Marek Zidlicky tied it at 2 for the Czech Republic (1-1) a minute to be in the third, but that was the last goal they'd get.

"They wanted it more, I guess," Zidlicky said.

Forward Martin Rucinsky said: "Maybe it's a good thing that happened to us. Maybe it will wake us up and give us a warning."

Jaromir Jagr, who stopped Jaromir Jagr six times in the second period. "We have to be careful because it's going to be a close game," Jagr said.

The Swiss (1-1 in Group A), including 20 in the second period, have to be on top of our game," Brian Rolston said.

"It always helps to get off to a good start," Jagr said.

Americans still have their three losses. USA 4, Kazakhstan 1

The U.S. (1-0-1) used three straight saves in its successful Olympic debut.

Mike Modano made it 1-1 at 11:53 of the third, 51 seconds after Yevgeniy Koreskov scored for Kazakhstan on its first-period shot.

DiPietro turned aside five shots in the first period — only one of which came from in close as the Americans dominated. Rolston was the fourth forward on the Americans' power-play unit, serving a role he fills with the Minnesota Wild.

"It also helped take the load off the U.S. defense, down to six players for the second straight game as New Jersey's Brian Rafalski sat out with an injury believed to be to his midsection.

Kazakhstan couldn't muster any kind of counterattack. Unlike Wednesday against Latvia with John Grabowski in goal, the Americans didn't have to fear any mistake turning into an odd-man rush the other way.

Even when there was a break-down, the threat was minimal. Aryn Argokov had a second-period breakaway but then shot high over the net. Later, DiPietro fell down while the puck was in his zone and still didn't have to scramble back into position.

Kazakhstan didn't register a shot in the middle period until 13:09 elapsed. By then, the shot tally was 26-6.

Canada 5, Germany 1

The only distinction Canada's hockey team has had in the Olympics is boredom.

Wade Redden, Joe Sakic and Simon Gagne gave the defending gold medalists a 3-0 lead halfway through the first period and, wearing distinctive black uniforms, the Canadians roughed up Germany Thursday.

Canada and Finland are the only teams with 2-0 records in Group A, with three games remaining in round-robin play. The top four teams in each of the two groups reach the quarterfinals.

"It always helps to get off to a good start," Sakic said.

In easily beating Italy and Germany, the Canadians have looked more comfortable than they did at this stage four years ago in Salt Lake City, when the eventual gold medalists lost to Sweden 2-0 and barely squeaked by Germany 3-2.

That prompted executive director Wayne Gretzky's "us against the world" speech in which he said everyone but Canadians rooted against the Maple Leaf, and his players responded by winning the gold medal.

This time, the distraction caused by Gretzky was totally unintentional — his link to an alleged gambling ring supposedly run by his Phoenix Coyotes assistant coach, Rick Tocchet. But Gretzky's attorney said Thursday he has been assured Gretzky's only involvement in the case will be as a possible "fact witness" who might be interviewed informally.

"There's nothing there," Sakic said. "He's fine."

Asked if any Canadian players were joking with Gretzky about the matter, Sakic replied: "No."

Gretzky has mostly stayed out of sight since a Tuesday news conference in Turin, watching games from a private box before leaving without talking to reporters.

Germany gambled by starting San Jose Sharks goalie prospect Thomas Greiss rather than No. 1 goalie Olaf Kolzig, who played well in a 4-1 loss Wednesday to the Czech Republic.

With Greiss in goal, Canada was in charge from the start. The Canadians outshot Germany 40-12 and scored on three of nine shots in the first period — even as Germany persisted in trying to play its international version of the neutral zone trap.

"I think we are starting to jell and coming together," Todd Bertuzzi said.

OA 4, Kazakhstan 2

It didn't take long for the pressure to ease on the U.S. goalie and his teammates in a victory Saturday night over Kazakhstan.

"Obviously, you're going to have jitters the first time you play in this event, but at the end of the day, it's still the same game," the New York Islanders goaltender said.

The difference was in the result.

The U.S. (1-0-1) used three first-period goals to move into second place in Group B with three points behind Slovakia - the Americans' next opponent and the only 3-0 team in the six-squad bunch.

It didn't take long for the U.S. to shake off any remaining jet lag and the disappointment of its 17 shots in the first period and one of which came from in close as the Americans dominated.

Rolston was the fourth forward on the Americans' power-play unit, serving a role he fills with the Minnesota Wild.

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Even when there was a break-down, the threat was minimal. Aryn Argokov had a second-period breakaway but then shot high over the net. Later, DiPietro fell down while the puck was in his zone and still didn't have to scramble back into position.

Kazakhstan didn't register a shot in the middle period until 13:09 elapsed. By then, the shot tally was 26-6.

Canada's 5, Germany's 1

The only distinction Canada's hockey team has had in the Olympics is boredom.

Wade Redden, Joe Sakic and Simon Gagne gave the defending gold medalists a 3-0 lead halfway through the first period and, wearing distinctive black uniforms, the Canadians roughed up Germany Thursday.

Canada and Finland are the only teams with 2-0 records in Group A, with three games remaining in round-robin play. The top four teams in each of the two groups reach the quarterfinals.

"It always helps to get off to a good start," Sakic said.

In easily beating Italy and Germany, the Canadians have looked more comfortable than they did at this stage four years ago in Salt Lake City, when the eventual gold medalists lost to Sweden 2-0 and barely squeaked by Germany 3-2.

That prompted executive director Wayne Gretzky's "us against the world" speech in which he said everyone but Canadians rooted against the Maple Leaf, and his players responded by winning the gold medal.

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**Around the Dial**

**Men's College Basketball**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Record Prev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duke</td>
<td>25-1-1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Villanova</td>
<td>26-2-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>16-3-3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>22-3-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memphis</td>
<td>22-2-4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td>18-3-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>21-3-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio State</td>
<td>18-3-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>20-7-7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>16-6-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCLA</td>
<td>20-5-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>21-3-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>20-4-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>16-5-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSU</td>
<td>16-7-21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>17-1-7</td>
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<tr>
<td>UFL</td>
<td>21-5-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>21-3-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>16-6-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>15-8-18</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>20-5-13</td>
</tr>
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<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>19-5-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>16-5-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Illinois</td>
<td>16-7-30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>16-7-36</td>
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**NCAA Men's Basketball**

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<tr>
<th>Team</th>
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<td>3 Syracuse</td>
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<td>19-5</td>
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<td>18-8</td>
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Indian head basketball coach Mike Davis answers questions at a press conference Thursday. Davis announced that he plans to step down at the end of this season.

Davis to leave Indiana at season's end

Associated Press

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. — Mike Davis' departure from Indiana was as sudden as his ascent to the top of Hoosiers basketball.

Just a couple dozen yards from where he became Bob Knight's successor in 2000, Davis walked into a crowded room and announced he would resign at the end of the season.

He was still wearing a crimson Hoosiers' sweater that he plans to step down at the end of this season.

Davis said as his wife watched from the side.

Indiana head basketball coach Mike Davis answers questions at a press conference Thursday. Davis announced that he plans to step down at the end of this season.

Indiana head basketball coach Mike Davis answers questions at a press conference Thursday. Davis announced that he plans to step down at the end of this season.

This is like the MasterCard commercial. You know, it's priceless what God has given me to be the head basketball coach here."

The embattled heir to one of college basketball's signature programs made his decision public with five games left before the Big Ten tournament.

In six seasons, he was 109-76. But Indiana (13-9, 5-6) has been slumping lately. The Hoosiers have lost four straight games and are just 3-7 since a promising 10-2 start that put the team in the top 10.

But Indiana (13-9, 5-6) has been slumping lately. The Hoosiers have lost four straight games and are just 3-7 since a promising 10-2 start that put the team in the top 10.

Davis was scheduled to earn about $800,000 with outside income over the final two years of his contract.

At the news conference, Herbert and athletic director Rick Greenspan extolled Davis' successes — becoming the first coach in school history to win 20 games and reach the NCAA tournament in each of his first three seasons, leading the Hoosiers to the national championship game in 2002 and producing one of the nation's finest recruiting classes two years ago.

But fan unrest, unfinished business and mounting pressure led to Davis' decision.

**In Brief**

Gordon is Daytona favorite

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Jeff Gordon thinks it's far too early to label him the Daytona 500 favorite.

But based on his early Speedweeks showings and an outstanding string of success in the Great American Race, he's the only one who doesn't think he's on the driver to beat.

Gordon staked his claim Thursday by winning one of the twin qualifying races at Daytona International Speedway that is used to set the field for Sunday's season opener. Elliott Sadler won the first race, which also showed strong runs from Dale Earnhardt Jr., Jimmie Johnson and Tony Stewart.

"I don't want to be sad for me," Davis said as his wife

Steinbrenner speaks out against Baseball Classic

Tampa, Fla. — George Steinbrenner began spring training in classic Yankee style, saying he was disappointed by winning one of the twin qualifying races at Daytona International Speedway that is used to set the field for Sunday's season opener. Elliott Sadler won the first race, which also showed strong runs from Dale Earnhardt Jr., Jimmie Johnson and Tony Stewart.

"I don't want to be sad for me," Davis said as his wife

Steinbrenner spoke at a press conference Thursday about the baseball Classic, saying he was disappointed by winning one of the twin qualifying races at Daytona International Speedway that is used to set the field for Sunday's season opener. Elliott Sadler won the first race, which also showed strong runs from Dale Earnhardt Jr., Jimmie Johnson and Tony Stewart.

"I don't want to be sad for me," Davis said as his wife

Steinbrenner said "If a player gets hurt, he's risking a lot. But it was Seig's idea and he wants to do it, so I suppose we're going to do it."
Undefeated Irish face two ranked opponents

By DAN TAPETILLO
Sports Writer

After coming off a dominating 6-1 win over rival Michigan Tuesday, the No. 1 Irish are confident as they head into this weekend's matches against two top-30 opponents. On Saturday, the Irish face No. 22 Tennessee, and the competition will only get tougher Sunday with No. 9 Harvard coming to the Eck Tennis Pavilion.

"This weekend is definitely going to be tough," junior Catrina Thompson said. "But ever since we beat [then-No. 10] North Carolina, we know we can compete with the best teams in the country."

This season, Tennessee has proven themselves with wins over Purdue and Illinois. However, the Lady Vols are coming off of a recent loss to No. 23 Wake Forest, a team the Irish defeated 4-3 last weekend. "Wake Forest was not an easy team to beat," junior Catrina Thompson said. "So [Tennessee's loss to Wake Forest] does not mean Tennessee is going to be an easy win for us on Saturday."

Heading into this weekend's matchup, Tennessee holds a pair of nationally ranked doubles teams. Playing at No. 1 for the Lady Vols this season is the national No. 28 duo of Blakeley Griffith and Bryce Marable. The second nationally ranked pairing for the Lady Vols is Melissa Schaub and Samantha Orlin, who stand at No. 38 in the country.

But the Irish are the only pro-gram in the nation that has three ranked doubles pairings. The No. 1-ranked duo of Christian and Catrina Thompson have led the Irish this season with only one loss to their record. The Thompsons are followed by the No. 35-ranked pairing of sophomore Brock Buck and freshman Kelsey Tefft, who are currently on an eight-match winning streak.

The Thompsons are followed by the No. 45-ranked seniors Kiki Stastny and Elsa O'Riain. "Stastny and Connolly have been such a big part of our success this season," Christian Thompson said. "They have a great record in doubles and we wouldn't be as strong as we are without them."

Leading the team in singles this weekend are Christian and Catrina Thompson, who both have earned national rankings at Nos. 24 and 44, respectively. Christian Thompson is coming off of a tough win over Michigan's No. 48-ranked Nina Yafall (6-4, 7-5) last Tuesday.

"The win at Michigan [over Yafall] was really big," Christian Thompson said. "It was because it took a lot of mental strength for me to pull it out.

In Sunday's match against Harvard, the top-ranked Thompsons will face the challenging No. 6-ranked doubles pairing of Melissa Anderson and Ellis O'Brien.

"This weekend is definitely going to prove where our team stands against the best in the country," Catrina Thompson said.

Contact Dan Tapetillo at jaspe8@nd.edu
FENCING

Junior Notre Olympics provide tune-up

Notre Dame sends seven young athletes to compete in Hartford

By JACK THORNTON
Sports Writer

While the Irish are enjoying success as a team, seven members of the squad are competing at the Junior Olympics in Hartford, Conn. this weekend. The competition begins today and continues through Monday.

The women are sending foilists Adriana Nott and Rachel Cotu, as well as epee Kim Moutoya and sabre Ashley Serrette.

Of the men, foilists Mark Kubik and Alexander Grisaranko are going along with sabre Tom Horton.

"I'm really excited to go," Serrette said.

"For me it just seems really important and special. It's pretty tough competition because you have top competition from each region and others who are just here to experience it."

The Irish contingent will join nearly 2,000 other athletes at the event, split between junior (under-21) and cadet (under 17) divisions. Players could either qualify by winning regional tournaments or by amassing enough points on the national circuit.

"I had to go through qualifiers, and when I qualified through that I got to go," Serrette said. "But there are other people with a high ranking."

Many of Notre Dame's best fencers are ineligible to compete because of the age restrictions in the tournaments.

Kubik is competing in his fifth Junior Olympics — he took third place overall as a foilist two years ago.

"I'm coming here to do a little better — hopefully winning," Kubik said.

Competing in the Junior Olympics earns competitors points on the national circuit, a points-based championship series.

Freshman sabre Bill Thanhouser would be competing in the Junior Olympics, but instead is competing at the World Cup in Paris, France this weekend.

"He chose to go to the World Cup because it's more points towards the circuit," Notre Dame coach Janusz Bednarski said.

The team returns to competition as a full squad Feb. 25 with the Midwest Regional Championships at the Joyce Center. Both teams finished No. 1 in the nation, while the women are currently ranked No. 1 in the nation, while the men are ranked No. 2.

Contact Jack Thornton at jthornt4@nd.edu

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TRACK AND FIELD

Irish prepare for Championships

ND looks to cap off a successful winter in Akron this weekend

By JASON GALVAN
Sports Writer

Notre Dame will put its strong record to the test this weekend at the 2006 Indoor Championships in Akron, Ohio.

The top athletes from the conference will perform at their most competitive meet before the NCAA Championships in March. The Irish men's and women's teams are looking to shine this Saturday and Sunday.

"I think we can do well and hopefully improve on what we've done," junior sprinter Maryann Erigha said. "Our conference gets more and more competitive each year, and the high level of the athletes who compete there makes this event something to really look forward to."

Erigha is off to a strong start with several wins during this season's campaign — two alone coming at last weekend's Windsor Challenge at Ontario, Canada. She will look to improve upon her best times in the 60-meter (7.21), 200-meter (23.74) sprints.

We have a lot of good competitors and our freshmen have been really impressive this year as well," Erigha said. "We're looking to perform well in all our events and do our best to win this weekend."

Freshmen jumper Mary Saxer and multi-event specialist Alyssa Hasan have put together solid starts to their careers at Notre Dame. Hasan set a school record for the pentathlon — 3,665 points at the Notre Dame Invitational on Jan. 27 — and Saxer cleared a height of 4.05 meters, setting a new school record in the pole vault. The two are looking to make strong showings and build upon already solid performances this year.

"I just have to keep going up in my heights, qualify for the NCAA Championships and keep getting better," Saxer said. "We're pretty hopeful about doing well and everyone just wants to do their best and win."

Other athletes, such as senior All-American distance runner Stephanie Mudia, are set to take their performances to the next level.

Mudia finished fourth at the Meyo Invitational in the 3,000-meter run and qualified for the Big East meet with a time of 9:57.47, but she wants to build upon this finish. Mudia will compete in the 5,000 and 3,000 meter runs. And though she also qualified for the mile, she has decided to cut this event from her list.

"I'm not really thrilled with how I did at Meyo and I have sort of a ways to go from my expectations," Mudia said. "But now, though, it's just a matter of getting into the race and getting it done and I'm definitely ready for it."

Irish junior All-American Kurt Benninger, who early this year kept at the Notre Dame Invitational became the first Irish runner to clock a sub-four-minute mile (3:57.40) twice in his career, also will compete for the Irish this weekend.

Contact Jason Galvan at jgalvan@nd.edu

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Optimism

continued from page 24

Five years ago, the Irish beat Connecticut — twice — the second win coming in the Final Four just two days before the Irish won the 2001 national championship. Beginning with that victory, the Irish have won four of their next 10 games against the Huskies, becoming a yearly threat on UConn's schedule. A young rivalry began to bud. On Sunday, Notre Dame again squares off with the Huskies in a must-win game. But this time, the Irish are fighting to salvage their season, struggling to turn around a disappointing stretch in the Big East that has them at 5-7 in conference with losses to mediocre opponents like Seton Hall and Villanova.

"This year I think of it a little bit different — it's a big game for us," McGraw said.

Connecticut, like so many other teams, enters the game with an imposing 23-3 record and a No. 3 national ranking.

The Huskies, however, have a lot to lose.

"They're fighting for a No. 1 seed in the NCAA Tournament right now," McGraw said.

McGraw, however, seemed excited when discussing Sunday's match up and appears to view the game in more optimistic terms — an opportunity for major progress.

"It's really a great time for us to play them," she said.

"We need to play a really good team to help our RPI." McGraw is so confident because she knows her team is dangerous. She fully expects Connecticut to play that way.

"They won't look past us," she said. "They'll be ready to play.

Connecticut is one the best teams in the country, and its national ranking accurately reflects that. But the way McGraw sounds, maybe it won't be so shocking if the Huskies weren't ranked No. 3 Monday morning.

Rivals have a way of making these things happen.

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

Contact Eric Reter at ereter@nd.edu

Huskies

continued from page 24

prospects for making the NCAA Tournament. With a less-than-stellar conference record, McGraw said she knows Notre Dame must improve its current RPI of 40 to be in good position when the selection committee makes its decisions.

Connecticut enters at the other end of the spectrum. The Huskies have won 11 of their last 12, dating back to Jan. 7. Their only loss has been a 60-56 loss to Rutgers, which is also Connecticut's only Big East loss.

"They're really peaking; they're right where they want to be for the Big East Tournament," McGraw said. "It's really a great time for us to play them because we need to play a really good team to help our RPI. And if we play well, it will give us confidence for a strong finish." McGraw said Connecticut has four players with scoring averages in double digits. Guard Arian Strother leads the team with 14.3 points per game, followed by 14.2 points from forward Barbara Turner. Chardon Houston and Charel Allen average 13.0 and 11.5 points going into the matchup.

"I think defensively, one of our biggest challenges of the year," McGraw said. "Because generally everybody we play, there's somebody on the team that we don't have to worry about. But this is a team that I own, in their (wholesale) starting group, but also coming off of the bench, players who are capable of having a big game."

Connecticut's strengths are not limited to the offensive end. The Huskies have 262 steals on the season (10 a game), compared to 173 for their opponents. What's more, Connecticut grabs an average of five more rebounds than its opponents, and the team is plus-30 on blocks for the season.

"They're a really good defensive team, and I think it's something they don't get enough credit for," McGraw said. "People over-look that because they score so many points."

That combination of offense and defense has led to sheer domination of Connecticut's opponents. The Huskies average scoring 74.9 points per game and giving up just 55.5. The 19.4 average margin of victory is sixth in the nation.

But McGraw said Notre Dame's win in Storrs, Conn. last year, which snapped Connecticut's 112 game conference home winning streak, gives the Irish hope heading into the matchup.

"We have the confidence to know that group, right here, has the ability to beat them," she said. "If you look at the stats of that game, it wasn't because (former Irish star forward) Jackie Batteast had a great game, so we have confidence.

The stars of that game included Courtney LaVere (14 points) and Charel Allen (11) — both of whom should see a considerable amount of playing time today. And like she did a year ago, when she scored 12 points while adding five assists and four rebounds, Megan Duffy will run the point for the Irish.

McGraw said she will not start Allen Sunday for strategic reasons.

"I think we need a spark off the bench; I think that she gives that energy coming in off the bench," McGraw said. "We thought about starting her, but if we changed the lineup, I'm not sure who would give us that energy off the bench.

The Irish enter the game in a tie for spots 9-11 in the Big East, with West Virginia a game back at no. 12. The Mountaineers face Pittsburgh Sunday in Morgantown, W. Va. and then host Notre Dame Wednesday at 7 p.m.

Despite the loss to DePaul, the Irish are nearly assured a spot in the Big East Tournament, held in the Hartford Civic Center March 4-7. For Notre Dame to miss the tournament, Seton Hall likely must win its last four games and the Irish would have to lose out.

Contact Ken Fowler at kfowler@nd.edu
Hockey

Heat turns up in last road trip of the season

Irish travel to Ohio to play Bowling Green in two crucial games

By CHRIS KHOREY
Sports Writer

After a crucial sweep of Ferris State last weekend, the Irish will travel to Bowling Green for their last road games of the regular season this Friday and Saturday at 7:05 p.m. against the Falcons. Notre Dame (11-16-3, 9-12-3 CCHA) is tied with Alaska-Fairbanks for ninth place in the conference with 21 points. The Irish and Nanooks currently trail Northern Michigan and Ohio State by one point in the conference leader Miami (Ohio) Feb. 24 and 25 and will be hard pressed to get points against the No. 2 Roadrunners.

Irish coach Jeff Jackson said while his team is aware of the complicated home ice situation, they are not focusing on how well other teams around the conference are playing. "It seems like all the teams that are competing against each other for the eighth place spot play each other the next two weeks," Jackson said. "We have to worry about ourselves. We can't worry about Bowling Green or the teams that are right in front of us."

"We can't worry about Bowling Green or the teams that are right in front of us. We have to put ourselves in a position to win every night." Notre Dame and Bowling Green faced each other earlier this season in a two-game set in South Bend Nov. 10-11 with the Irish winning both games, 9-4 and 4-2. Jackson said the Falcons are a much better team than they were three months ago. "I thought they played us tough here, the only thing was that they didn't have our great goaltending that weekend," Jackson said. "But that kid has improved a lot since then and he's playing well now."

Despite allowing the Irish 13 goals in those two games, Bowling Green goalie Jon Morrell has a 3.24 goals-against average this season. The Falcons are also the nation's ninth best offensive team, averaging 3.4 goals per game. They are led by two dynamic offensive players in Alex Foster, who leads the country with 36 assists this season, and Jonathan Masumoto, whose 17 goals lead Bowling Green and whose nine power-play goals rank eleventh nationally. "They have two of the best players in the entire conference," Jackson said. "We can't let them get rolling." Notre Dame is coming off its first sweep since its two wins over the Falcons in November, beating the Bulldogs 4-1 and 3-2 in the two home contests Friday and Saturday. Jackson said a large part of the team's success was due to goaltender David Brown and the defense in front of him. "[Brown] played extremely well," Jackson said. "Ferris' coach complimented our defensive play — that we weren't giving them many rebounds. Even when David would allow a rebound our backcheckers were cleaning up the play."

While scoring — especially during the strength situations — has been difficult for the Irish, Jackson said he has never seen a time that he expects to continue. "If we get a power play goal a game and a couple of strength goals a game, the way I've been playing defensively and with our goaltending, it should give us a good chance to win every game," he said.

The all-time series between the Falcons and Irish is tied at 34-34-1. Contact Chris Khorey at ckhorey@nd.edu

SMC Basketball

Belles focused for difficult finale

Team tries to avenge early season defeat to conference foe Hope

By TIM KAISER
Sports Writer

Saint Mary's will take on Hope College in Holland, Mich. Saturday in the team's last regular-season game.

The Belles are coming off a tough loss to Albion on Wednesday night but were able to hold their spot at third in the MIAA standings. And the team is more motivated than ever. "It's hard to say [where Saint Mary's is compared to Hope] because the beginning of the season is so different, but they're an all-around solid team from the one- to five-positions," Broderick said. "I'm not surprised they are still undefeated." Senior forward Shelly Bender was less impressed. "I didn't think they were going to be undefeated," she said. "They're good, but not unbeatable. I don't think Hope's perfect MIAA record will affect us at all."

The Belles have seen what Hope can do, but after a whole season, they are confident they can force a different result this time. "We used to play an all around solid game, from a post perspective, point guard, shooting guard," Broderick said. "We're looking to dictate." Bender also thought her team should stick to the game plan that's been driving the winning ways. "We don't need to change, just play like we know how to play," she said. "We can win if we do that. [Hope] was our first home game. Now we've played for two months, improved, and we know we're going to do well."

Despite their struggles last time, the Belles think that a season's experience will make this contest much more competitive. "We are going in with a lot more confidence, a lot more experience, and we've improved so much from November," Broderick said. "Our coach has devised a really, really good game plan. We're playing with much more confidence, and, knowing that it is the last game this regular season, the seniors will give it all they have; lay it on the line, like they do every game."

Bender also thought her team would play just as hard in their final regular-season game. "We're just going to go out there and play," she said. "We've been improving every day, and we're planning to play a lot longer. Everyone is just improved and more excited, and we're building up to the tournament."

Contact Tim Kaiser at tkaiser@nd.edu
Hiben
continued from page 24
architecture program. But as the year progressed, he realized he would have to either find a new major or quit the football team.
"It had been going on for quite a while," Hiben said. "During this fall, I realized our future here would be a point in time when I would have to pick architecture over football." As a freshman at Notre Dame, it's impossible to do both at the same time. He had known that this would have to happen.

"I've had little action as a rookie tight end — playing sparingly in seven games — would have been in the mix for playing time at the position next season," Hiben said.

Senior Anthony Fasano decided to forgo his final year of eligibility to enter the NFL Draft, leaving junior John Carlson as the probable starter and senior Marcus Freeman as the only other returning scholarship tight end.

Freeman's status is unclear because he would be a fifth-year senior, and those players coming back for a fifth-year are very capable of playing as a starter. "I want to play the better teams in the country," Bayliss said. "They fill their place up and that's definitely in my future."

"I'm in the best shape of my life — how can I stop competing when I'm healthy enough?"

"We'd been playing well but that's definitely in my future."

While the Irish had the upper hand of late, I remembered that we were very capable of playing a great match at home and they certainly did," Bayliss said. The Irish fell 4-3 in a match that had a severe negative impact on their NCAA Tournament seeding, dropping them to the lower part of the bracket and dropping them to the No. 14 rank, Bayliss still remembers that crushing loss.

"I've got a lot of memories of going to Ann Arbor," he said. "We'd had the upper hand of late, I remembered that we were very capable of playing a great match at home and they certainly did," Bayliss said. The Irish fell 4-3 in a match that had a severe negative impact on their NCAA Tournament seeding, dropping them to the lower part of the bracket and dropping them to the No. 14 rank, Bayliss still remembers that crushing loss.

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The Irish prepared for a tough match, knowing that any team playing a major rival like Michigan would have to battle for every point.

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"I've got a lot of memories of going to Ann Arbor," he said.

The Irish return to the scene of those memories tomorrow, taking on the Wolverines in an evening match in Michigan to continue the streak of Big 10 teams in the schedule. After a loss to Illinois on Feb. 7, the Irish have posted dominant wins over Northwestern, Purdue, Wisconsin and Michigan State. They play Ohio State at home on Feb. 24 and travel to Indiana on March 7.

"I want to play the better teams in the Big 10 every year," Bayliss said. "I want to play the very best teams in the country."

Bayliss said the team's almost uninterrupted stretch of Big 10 teams from January through the beginning of March is the result of scheduling around mid-semster breaks.

"The Big 10, of course, has mandatory round robin scheduling that begins in late March and goes through late April," Bayliss said. "Because of our spring break and most other schools' spring breaks taking up two weeks in March... those dates are usually not available."

The Irish are riding a four-match winning streak going into Ann Arbor, improving to 6-4 with Wednesday's win over Michigan State. Notre Dame's doubles teams have been playing particularly well, as they have won the point in each of the past four wins.

In singles, Stephen Blass and have not been announced. Hiben's departure opens the door for highly touted signee Konrad Reuland, who was a first-team USA Today All-American out of San Capistrano, Calif.

Hiben said he spoke with director of personnel development Ron Powlus throughout the process, and Powlus told him that if architecture was the best choice for him, he should pursue it. Hiben also said that although Weis was surprised when he informed him of his final decision, he is leaving the team on amicable terms.

"I think [Weis] was surprised he wanted me to stay," Hiben said. "He was telling me he wanted me to think about it, that hopefully we can work something out. However, the reality is that you do have to choose either architecture or football... It was very pleasant when I left the team, which was a relief. It was my decision, and I think people will respect that.

Since he is leaving the team, Hiben will no longer attend Notre Dame on a football scholarship. But he said he has been working with the Office of Financial Aid to ensure he can stay at Notre Dame.

"The scholarship will be cut off in a few days," said Hiben, who said that after talking to Powlus he almost immediately went to Financial Aid to get things squared away. That's one of the big things that my family's been aware of. We were prepared for that to happen."

Hiben, who was also a track and field standout in high school by setting school records in the hurdles and shot put, said he has not ruled out competing for the Irish track and field team at some point. But he emphasized that if it happened, it would occur in the future. For now, he's focused on the major that took him away from football.

"The reason for leaving the team is so that I can excel at architecture," Hiben said. "So I have to make sure I adapt to life without football, that school is going great for me and after that I will definitely talk to the track coach. I'm not sure if that will be this spring or next year or when I return from Rome, but that's definitely in my future."

"I'm in the best shape of my life — how can I stop competing all together? So that's something to look forward to."

Contact Heather Van Hoozer at hvhoozer@nd.edu

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A self-made billionaire whose success carried him to Forbes' list of America's wealthiest people. His career has been built on the foundations learned in childhood...share success, take responsibility, and give back. Instead of retiring with his wealth, he uses it to support charity.

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All royalties from Winners Never Cheat benefit the Huntsman Cancer Foundation - a leader in prevention, early diagnosis, and treatment of cancer. Events are subject to change.

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Hall continued from page 24

3:30 p.m. Saturday coming off a recent two-game road trip and catch the Pirates at the end of a three-game home stand of their own.

"Seton Hall is resilient as heck, obviously," Notre Dame coach Mike Brey said following Wednesday's 62-55 win over South Florida. "They get smoked by Connecticut, and I'd say we'll get right back and beat West Virginia, and West Virginia couldn't get a shot off. I mean I saw it — they just smother you."

Seton Hall, under fifth-year coach Louis Orr, actually averaged fewer points scored (71.3) than points allowed (72.9) in Big East play. The Pirates also lost three of their first four conference games — to JCU, Little Egypt and West Virginia. But Seton Hall rattled off five straight wins up to its loss at Connecticut. The Pirates are No. 6 in the Big East, and their frontcourt has been dominant recently.

Forwards Grant Hillmeier, Brian Lang and Kelly Whitney combined to score 50 points on 18-of-25 shooting against the Mountaineers. That performance has Brey comparing this Seton Hall team to a familiar opponent from the past.

"It seems like our offense is a little stagnant at times, and we've got to do a better job of getting guys the ball in the right spots," Brey said. "The physical Pirates frontcourt, as a key area of improvement to earn the necessary possible victories.

"On the defensive end, I'm going to compare them to the old Pittsburg teams," Brey said. "(It's like former Panthers forwards Chevon Troutman and (Chris) Taft — Billmeyer and Whitney, hanging on you, beating on you ... they're tough kids.)"

Irish co-captain and point guard Chris Quinn said after Wednesday's win that the team has discussed defensive intensity as a key area of improvement to earn the necessary possible victories.

"On the defensive end, we've got to build on what we did against Rutgers," Quinn said, referring to a 90-63 win over the Scarlet Knights Feb. 8. "We need awareness of different players the other team has."

Rutgers had Quinn Douby. South Florida had Holmes and Buckley.

"Whitey is the player to stop Saturday, though the Pirates have several scoring options. The 6-foot-8, 240-pound forward/center scored 21 points and grabbed 12 rebounds in the West Virginia win. Brey will use Irish forwards Torin Francis, Rick Cornett and Bob Kurz to combat the physical Pirates frontcourt, though Notre Dame knows it is just as important to improve on offense from the 12-turnover, 11-assist performance against South Florida.

"It comes out of moving the ball better," Quinn said of taking care of the ball. "It seems like our offense is a little stagnant at times, and we've got to do a better job of getting guys the ball, the right spots."

"It's all a mental focus must remain on the dangerous Seton Hall squad, though even an even more imposing opponent looms. "We know what's coming Tuesday," Brey said, "but we've got to deal with Saturday night. We've played well on the road, though. We've gone for it (and) given ourselves chances. I have every reason to believe it'll be the same game as against Continental Airlines arena on Saturday."

Contact Pat Leonard at pleonard@nd.edu

Irish guard Kyle McAlarney dribbles against South Florida guard Chris Capko Wednesday during Notre Dame's 62-55 victory.
THE OBSERVER

Published Monday through Friday, The Observer is a vital source of information on people and events in the Notre Dame and Saint Mary's Community.

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Irish tight end Hiben leaves team in favor of architecture

Freshman prioritizes academic goals ahead of football ambitions

By HEATHER VAN HOGARDEN
Sports Writer

Joey Hiben knew he had to make a choice — three hours of football practice every day or three hours of studio. He chose studio.

After much deliberation, the freshman tight end informed coaches on Tuesday that he was leaving the football team to pursue a degree in architecture at the University.

"It came down to architecture (being) more important than football to me," Hiben told The Observer from his dorm room Thursday.

A University spokesman said Irish head coach Charlie Weis would have no comment on the matter.

Architecture majors at Notre Dame are required to study in Rome during their third year of the five-year program. Hiben said the foreign study requirement was not the deciding factor in his decision to eliminate football in favor of a major in architecture, because he could have made that a redshirt year anyway.

He said instead that the conflict of mandatory studio and football practice in the fall forced him to make a decision. And he chose the major that had always caught his interest.

"It basically boils down to the time constraints of architecture," Hiben said. "Ever since I was 12 years old, I [have been] very interested in architecture."

Hiben, a Chaska, Minn., native, said one of the reasons he chose Notre Dame after originally committing to Purdue during recruitment was its

ND WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Hustlin' the Huskies

Irish look to upend No. 6 Connecticut this weekend

By KEN FOWLER
Sports Writer

It's the kind of game that can define a season.

Coming off a 79-50 drubbing at the hands of DePaul, the Irish (14-9, 5-7 Big East) host No. 6 Connecticut (23-3, 11-1) Sunday at 7 p.m. in the Joyce Center in a matchup of conference rivals heading in opposite directions.

Notre Dame has struggled all season, playing inconsistent offense and defense and rarely winning the battle on the boards. But the team is looking forward to the game with Connecticut.

"We had one of the best practices of the year yesterday. At this point of the year, some teams have quit," Irish coach Muffet McGraw said. "But we have battled ... and I think that shows a lot about the character of this team."

The Irish want to rebound after their 69-65 overtime loss to No. 1 Connecticut yesterday. At this point of the year, some teams have quit," Irish coach Muffet McGraw said. "But we have battled ... and I think that shows a lot about the character of this team."

The Irish have two conference foes. As Notre Dame began to establish itself as a national power, the UConn matchup was a must-win game — the cover charge to get into the elite door of NCAA women's hoops.

ND faces familiar foe in unfamiliar circumstances

Five years ago, it wasn't a rivalry. Five years ago, Notre Dame had never beaten Connecticut, one of the standard bearers of women's basketball over the last decade.

Back then, Irish head coach Muffet McGraw announced that sentiment, making it clear that one-sided rivalries aren't rivalries. Rivalries involve back-and-forth action. They involve winning on both sides. As Notre Dame approached, Notre Dame was 12 years old, I [have been] very interested in architecture."

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