Grad student lends aid in Bangladesh

Shawn Ahmed postpones studies, liquidates accounts to chronicle service trip to East Asia

By JOSEPH McMATHON
Assistant News Editor

The mission of the University of Notre Dame calls its students to rise to extraordinary levels in service to others. Still, it is rare to see a student liquidate his accounts, postpone his studies, and travel halfway around the world to hand out mosquito nets and clean water in a disaster area.

Shawn Ahmed, a 26-year-old graduate student in sociology, did exactly that, all the while chronicling his exploits on YouTube and Flickr under the pseudonym, "The Uncultured Project." Ahmed has been in Bangladesh since late June.

"I call it 'The Uncultured Project' because there really is nothing sophisticated about it," Ahmed said. "I did not fund any training or concrete plan. I just bought a camera, grabbed my computer, and flew to Bangladesh to see if I could make a difference."

His mission was inspired by Notre Dame's 2006 forum on world health, which featured Dr. Jeffrey Sachs, a renowned poverty expert.

"I would not have started the (Uncultured project) if I was just an undergraduate from my small University," said Ahmed, who previously attended Toronto University. "In September of 2006, I liquidates accounts to chronicle service trip to East Asia.

Grad student lends aid in Bangladesh

Wabruda sponsors conference

College promotes unity, history through event

By KATLYN SMITH
Assistant News Editor

The Irish Green is considered part of the DPAC site in the 2002 Campus Plan, which aims to allow the University to expand in a way that retains the character of the campus, but also does not prevent or stifle growth.

The park will feature 200 large specimen trees, a lawn, and a terrace extending from the DPAC that will act as a place for receptions, performances, and other special events," Marsh said.

Weaving through the lawn

Irish Green construction to resume this spring

University could complete park behind DeBartolo Performing Arts Center for Fall 2008

By JOHN TERNEN
News Writer

Irish student, 21, decapitated in Beijing

Wang Xiaojing, 21, an Irish student who was visiting Beijing, was found dead and decapitated in a Beijing park Saturday morning. He was believed to be the first Irish student to be killed in China.

Wang was from the city of Dalian in northeastern China. He had been studying in Beijing for the past three years.

Family members said they were shocked and saddened by the news. They described Wang as a hardworking and intelligent student who was popular with his classmates.

The University of Notre Dame in Beijing said it was aware of the situation and was providing support to Wang's family.

Irish Green construction to resume this spring

University could complete park behind DeBartolo Performing Arts Center for Fall 2008

By JOHN TERNEN
News Writer

Construction on the Irish Green, a park behind the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center (DPAC), will resume this spring, with the hope of being completed for the beginning of the Fall 2008 semester.

University Architect Douglas Marsh said the park is being built with an unspecified amount of money given by an anonymous donor. Marsh said the Irish Green is considered part of the DPAC site in the 2002 Campus Plan, which aims to allow the University to expand in a way that retains the character of the campus, but also does not prevent or stifle growth.

The park will feature 200 large specimen trees, a lawn, and a terrace extending from the DPAC that "will act as a place for receptions, performances, and other special events," Marsh said.

Weaving through the lawn

Wabruda sponsors conference

College promotes unity, history through event

By KATLYN SMITH
Assistant News Editor

In observance of African-American Heritage Month, the Notre Dame student group Wabruda will sponsor the first-annual Black History Conference on campus.

Wabruda, named Notre Dame's black community of the year for 2006-07, means "brother" in Swahili. The club has been around for about 15 years and has grown to 20 members, said William D. Williams, who has been president of the club for the past two years.

The group aims to promote brotherhood in the Notre Dame black community through professional and career development, service and intellectual elevation, Williams said.

"I would not have started the (Uncultured project) if I was just an undergraduate from my small University," said Ahmed, who previously attended Toronto University. "In September of 2006, I liquidates accounts to chronicle service trip to East Asia.

Grad student lends aid in Bangladesh

Wabruda sponsors conference

College promotes unity, history through event

By KATLYN SMITH
Assistant News Editor

The annual Notre Dame College Jazz Festival (CJF) celebrates its 50th anniversary in Washington Hall this weekend, and features new judges, bands and performances this year.

"To celebrate the 50th anniversary, we have added a few things that we normally wouldn't do," said senior Chris Francica, who is co-directing the festival with senior Scott Howard.

"This year, since we're celebrating the 50th anniversary, we had a higher volume of bands and higher quality of jazz programs apply to the festival," he said. "Geographically, we have groups from as far away as Texas, Louisiana and Pennsylvania, as well as more local groups from universities in Michigan and Illinois.

"The festival will also include performances from the African-American Jazz Caucus/Historically Black Colleges and Universities All Star Big Band. This band features the best jazz musicians from the nation's historically black colleges and universities who come together to perform at select locations throughout the country."

Another addition to the festival is the diversity of jazz music that will be played. From classical to contemporary, from swinging to R&B, there is something for everyone, said Francica.

"There is a temptation in high school for students to choose unchallenging classes to maintain a high GPA," Misiolek said. "We want them to meet other women interested in math and science and encourage them to stay with math their four years of high school.

"Saint Mary's professor of mathematics, Mary Connolly, has been involved with the event since its inception. She said Hypatia Day has been very successful in the past.

"Girls leave Saint Mary's bubbling over with what they have developed and constructed in the lab. We want to encourage them to hang on to that excitement over math," Connolly said.

"Close to 30 Saint Mary's math students are involved, along with representatives from the math, science, nursing and chemistry clubs.

This year's participants were specifically selected by their local math and science teachers. They had to demonstrate their abilities and mathematical talents and as a result, Misiolek has high expectations for the event.

"After meeting in our classrooms and labs with our students who have succeeded in math and science, we hope these younger students will feel confident in their ability to do it too," Misiolek said.

Jessica Brinker, president of the math club and a math major, highlighted the event's significance.

"Hypatia Day is a great opportunity for drop-in clinics to get a glimpse of college life and become more excited in math and science," Brinker said.

The day begins with a keynote speaker, typically a female figure in the mathematics field.
**INSIDE COLUMN**

**Labor of Love**

I still remember three years ago what Tom Brumage, then the production manager of ABC's "Nightline," told me about journalism class and the news industry. 

"You have to be kind of masochistic and low hard-work," he said. "If you can't do it, and you're stuck with it, go into non-news." 

I'm stuck with that. I've known it for years. What I didn't realize yet was how many other people were the same way.

It's not that everyone at The Observer is seriously considering a career in journalism. (There are just a few, actually.) And it's not that all of us are passionate about news, either. Nearly 200 people contribute to this paper, and for plenty of different reasons. Many aren't as idealistic as I am. Many aren't as dedicated as their sleeping patterns (and person)

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Labor of Love

Maddie Hanna
Editor-in-Chief

**QUESTION OF THE DAY:**

**What will get Best Picture at the Oscars?**

- Brad Duffy
  - Sophomore
  - Senior Fisher
- Connor Martin
  - Sophomore
  - Off-campus
- Heather Johnson
  - Sophomore
  - Welsh Fam
- Laura McCarty
  - Freshman McGlinn
- Molly Boyle
  - Freshman Pasquerilla East
- Stephanie Leyva
  - Senior
  - Off-campus

"Juno because it's a pro-life movie."

"I party harder than Paul Walt."

"No Country for Old Men."

"Ratatouille."

"Ten Things I Hate About You" is a tribute to Heath Ledger's greatest role in a teen movie."

**IN BRIEF**

As part of the Ten Years of the Jordan Auditorium of the Mendoza College of Business, the Mass will be celebrated for the Feast of the Cross of St. Peter today at 5 p.m. in Alumni Hall Chapel. Father Brian Daley will preside and the Notre Dame Gregorian Schola will perform.

There will be Stations of the Cross today at 7:15 p.m. in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart. Stations will be held each Friday during Lent.

The 50th Annual Collegiate Jazz Festival will begin today at 7 p.m. with a concert featuring at least four different bands. The festival will conclude Saturday with an afternoon concert at 1 p.m. and an evening concert at 7 p.m. All events will be in Washington Hall.

There will be a Lenten Retreat of reflection, mass, and reconciliation sponsored by Communion and Liberation at Notre Dame Campus Ministry in 330 Colman-Morse Center, Saturday from 9 am-12 pm. All are invited to attend.

Notre Dame hockey will play Ohio State today and Saturday at 7:35 p.m. and 7:05 p.m. in the Joyce Center.

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

**OFFBEAT**

Fish launched into space for study motion sickness

**STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Seventy-two small fish were briefly launched into space by researchers Thursday, hoping their swimming patterns (and personal hygiene) are a little off, so say the least.**

I'm fully aware of how much the general public detests fish. So many of their criticisms have merit — isolation, lack of an antigens, a lack of proteins, a lack of proteins, a lack of proteins. But I've spent four years with some pretty selfless people. Whatever you've thought of the paper this year, I know they worked hard for it.

For me, masochism isn't something I admire. It's a labor of love. To all those who have labored with me, I'm beyond grateful. Thank you.

The views expressed in the Inside Columns are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer. Contact Maddie Hanna at m_hanna.15@nd.edu

**MEDIA MAIL**

**CORRECTIONS**

The Observer regrets itself as a professional publication and reserves the right to correct errors for the highest standards of journalism at all times. We do, however, recognize that we make mistakes. If you have made a mistake, please contact us at 631-4906 so we can correct our errors.

**LOCAL WEATHER**

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**TODAY**

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- Boston 34 / 20
- Chicago 26 / 13
- Denver 49 / 23
- Houston 67 / 61
- Los Angeles 61 / 51
- Minneapolis 26 / 6
- New York 33 / 22
- Philadelphia 78 / 51
- Phoenix 50 / 40
- St. Louis 26 / 19
- Tampa 79 / 66
- Washington 32 / 28

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- Tampa 79 / 66
- Washington 32 / 28
Ahmed
continued from page 1

2006 we had the Notre Dame World Health Forum where Sachs basically said this was your homework — to end poverty in your lifetime. I was working towards my masters and Ph.D. in sociology [at Notre Dame], and eventually wanted to get a career field of development with a charity or the U.N. or something.”

Ahmed said that his mission is simply to spread awareness about global poverty issues through his online videos and photos, and he stressed that he is not looking for any money.

“Anyone who does aid work knows that it’s much easier when you don’t have to carry a camera around and that it saves time when you don’t have to edit videos,” he said. “The reason I’m doing all that is because I want to get the word out and get other people thinking about poverty. I’m not just trying to get a pat on the back for the aid work I’m doing. I’m trying to get people to realize that we can end poverty in our lifetime if our generation makes it their personal responsibility to do so.”

One of the major reasons Ahmed chose Bangladesh is that he still has a lot of family there. His father attended Notre Dame College in Dhaka before deciding to immigrate to Canada during a bloody civil war when Bangladesh split from Pakistan. However, he still has roots in the rural villages, and his grandmother still has a house in the small town of Mobipheur.

“Well, Bangladesh was actually the easiest for me because I have family here, this way I don’t have to worry that much about room and board and my transportation. I have aunts, uncles, and my grandmother here,” he said.

Ahmed said people in the rural villages, where he has a family connection, most people are used to people emigrating out. “Once people go to North America, they rarely come back in my case the reaction was “This person has come back and now he’s trying to give us stuff?” It surprised a lot of people. Ahmed has spent much of his time working in the local villages, giving out water purification systems, mosquito nets, and wind-up flashlights so that kids can do their homework in the dark. He has done all of this with only his own and some of his parents’ money. I’ve been trying to do small things in the local are to show people what they can do with very little money,” he said. “I’m not trying to be a charity or NGO. I’m trying to show what you can do with a little bit of money here and there to inspire others.”

He has also been working with other organizations, including a clinic that administers to native peoples sponsored by Notre Dame’s Bengal Bots in the village of Talkatgra.

“I found a clinic not far from my grandmother’s village that gets Bengal Bots funds and hopefully I can go there and see what they need as well as film what is going on,” Ahmed said.

Since coming to Bangladesh, Ahmed has endured many trials, including Cyclone Sidr — a storm more destructive than Hurricane Katrina that killed over 4,000 people. Ahmed decided to travel to the disaster area to hand out blankets to needy families, and chronicled his experiences in a video entitled “Cyclone Sidr Disaster — The Hard Lessons of Aid Work.”

“Some of it is rural villages, some of it is in the outskirts of the city, and some of it was in the disaster area. It felt like a bomb had just gone off — all the homes were destroyed,” he said.

After Ahmed had run out of the money to keep doing what he was doing, there’s always someone else left out in the cold.”

Ahmed through YouTube several times about his message, “The reason I’m doing all that is because I want to get the word out and get other people thinking about poverty.”

Shawn Ahmed
Graduate student

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Shawn Ahmed
Graduate student

Looking for solid business and accounting experience to put on your resume?

The Observer is accepting applications for a 2008-09 Business Manager and Controller. Responsibilities include preparing a yearly budget and handling payroll for a 200-person staff.

Since the Controller will take over as the 2009-10 Business Manager, Controller applicants should be sophomores, or juniors staying for a fifth year.

Both positions are salaried, about six to 10 hours a week.

Please contact Maddie Heatley at mhae@nd.edu or Kyle West at kwesti@nd.edu if interested.
Wabruda
continued from page 1
Another defining aspect of the group is that members dress in shirt and tie to their classes, which Williams said, "We hope to bring all kinds of people together.
Williams said he hopes to attract people of all ages and races to the group.
"Black history is American history," Williams said. "We all have a lot to learn about these issues," he said.
The weekend's events aim to educate audiences about black history and how it has affected the lives of Africans Americans today.
The events give homestay to our ancestors," Williams said.
I'm really passionate about our mission," Williams said.
This weekend's conference not only aims to promote understanding and appreciation of African American history, but also to unite faculty, staff and students from all of the University.
If we are going to solve American problems, we have them to come together to learn. It's like they say in Notre Dame football, "It's the X."" Williams said.
I have organized several weekend events, which include three lectures Saturday morning and afternoon, which are to take place in the Jordan Hall of Science. The first, featuring Reginald L. Robinson, a visiting Professor of Law and Critical Theory at Southern Illinois University, is entitled "Wake up! It's a Bleeping Con: Reawakening the Great Pennsylvania". The second lecture will focus on African American history during the Civil War era, with feature Verge "Brother Slave" Foundation of the American Association of African American History and is titled "Underground Railroad." In the third lecture Bishop Gideon Adeji, a professor of Crystal Hilltops investment, will talk about "The History of the Irish in America." Saturday's activities will commence with a performance at Legends by spoken word artist Shaam Aley, from 10 p.m. until midnight.
The conference will take its activities off Notre Dame campus Sunday for a day of interdisciplinary excursions in several historical sites in southern Michigan, including a visit to the Underground Railroad Cemetery in Vandalia, Mich., a family farm in Pew Pete, Mich., and the State's Truth in Battle Creek, Mich.

Contact Justin Tierney at ptierey1@nd.edu

Professor studies west Irish vilages

A ghost town of stone houses frozen in time for decades, the island off the western coast of Ireland is an unblemished graveyard where roofless buildings remain as they were after the islanders were forcibly relocated to the mainland by the government in 1960. To see it, "we used to find the bottom of the bus," said Ian Kaji, who in 2005 wrapped up a 5-year excavation studying the origins of agriculture at a Neolithic site next to the Dead Sea in Jordan, decided his next project would take place in a more hospitable climate and now, along with some of his students, is exploring the history of Irish and other abandoned villages along Ireland's west coast.
"My wife and I spent three weeks bicycling through western Ireland on our honeymoon in 1995," he explained through a translator. "And it was just so beautiful and so accessible. I fell in love with the place.
His reasons for ultimately selecting this corner of the world to research are more daunting and actually evolved from his wildly popular Archaeology of Ireland course, which he teaches every two years and for which he and his students travel to Ireland over fall break to tour sites and hear from "the famous."
"We have information about potatoes being a critical resource, which they were, he said. "But we don't know what other types of food people ate, so how do we understand the famine, and how do we understand different dietary resources in different areas?"
Now that the "groundwork" has been laid, this summer Kaji and his team will spend a week at this site recording all of the abandoned buildings and use this information to understand other areas where destruction has taken place.
They also will conduct excavations at several villages, where archaeologists will learn more about the famine.
"We have information about how famine affected people of different ages, which they were," he said. "But we don't know how famine affected people of different ages, which they were."
While the students took note of the incredible rich archaeological record and how relatively little is known about it. "We're excited," Kaji said.
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INTERNATIONAL NEWS
Ex-colonel to testify for terror suspect
SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — In a stunning
turnaround, the former chief military prose­
cut, told the Associated Press he will appear at a hearing
for Salim Ahmed Hamdan,

The Associated Press

U.S. gives U.N. more data about Iran's Nanka

For the second time in recent weeks, Washington has given the U.N. nuclear watchdog information on what it says were Tehran's attempts to make atomic weapons, but much of it is of doubtful value, diplomats said Thursday.

The diplomats also said The Associated Press did not have a large file last week to the International Atomic Energy Agency, the U.S. agreed to let the Iranians look at some of the material so they could respond, but Tehran has shown no interest.

NATIONAL NEWS
20 million pounds of recalled beef eaten
LOS ANGELES — More than a third of the 143 million pounds of California beef recalled last week went to school lunch programs, with at least 20 million pounds consumed, officials with the U.S. Department of Agriculture said Thursday.

About 20 million pounds of the meat went to schools in the state, said Eric Thelin, deputy administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service's special nutrition programs.

Of that amount, about 20 million pounds have been eaten. 15 million pounds are on hold at storage facilities and 15 million pounds are still being traced. Officials said, however, that they still weren't able to satisfactorily account for the names of all the places the meat wound up.

“Since today, I cannot tell you how many locations the product has been to,” said Kenneth Peterson, of the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service. “The best that we can do is identifying the location and marking sure the product is under control.”

Poor economy threatens clean energy
Governors who want clean energy to be a national priority are trying to bring together states with widely different ways of producing power, like tapping ocean temperature differ­
ences off Hawaii and mining coal in West Virginia.

But a souring economy has tightened state budgets and forced spending cuts that could temporarily short circuit renewable energy development.

Twenty states now project budget gaps, which together total $34 billion for 2009.

LOCAL NEWS
Republicans protest immigration bill
INMANAPOLIS — Republicans walked off the floor of the Indiana House Thursday night in protest over a proposal that would prohibit the state or local governments from providing public assistance to illegal immigrants. That would include help in obtaining employ­

ment, housing, higher education or other types

according to the university. On at least one occasion a faculty member received a package rigged with razor blades, the statement said.

"Enough is enough," UCLA Chancellor Gene Block said. "We're not willing to wait until somebody is injured before taking legal action to protect our faculty and administrators from terrorist tac­

Rioters in Belgrade, Serbia past a burning car in front of a damaged McDonald's restaurant after a protest rally against Kosovo's independence on Thursday.

S E R B I A
Mob breaks into U.S. embassy

Rioters protest American support for Kosovo's independence; one charred body found inside

Associated Press

BELGRADE — Angry Serbs broke into the U.S. embassy on Wednesday, smashing windows and setting fire to an office Thursday night as rioters rampaged through Belgrade's French and German embassies.

The attacks came less than a day after a protest against Western support for an independent Kosovo.

At least 150,000 people packed in Belgrade, waving Serbian flags and signs proclaiming "Stop USA terror," to denounce the bid by Kosovo's ethnic Albanian majority to create their own state out of what Serbs con­

consider the ancient heartland of their culture.

Protestors burned American flags and the mob that attacked the embassy tore down the U.S. flag there.

Anti-American sentiment in Serbia has been fanned by hints it might back a move by Kosovo to join the United Nations building and police checkpoints in Kosovo, the surge of riot­

underlined the determin­

ation of Serbs not to give up Kosovo quietly.

The Serbian government said it has won't resort to military force, but the street­

* Republica's homes have also been vandalized and they have received threatening phone calls and e-mails, and some of them have received threats of violence.

UCLA files for restraining order on activists

Researchers protest immigration bill

LOS ANGELES — The University of California went to court Thursday to try to keep animal rights activists away from UCLA employees and graduate stu­

ents who say they have been threat­

ed because of their research.

Three times since June 2006, Molotov cocktail-type devices have been left near the homes of faculty, administration officials who oversee or participate in research that involves animals, according to a state­

ment from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Researchers' homes have also been vandalized and they have received threatening phone calls and e-mails, according to the university. On at least one occasion a faculty member received a package rigged with razor blades, the statement said.

"Enough is enough," UCLA Chancellor Gene Block said. "We're not willing to wait until somebody is injured before taking legal action to protect our faculty and administrators from terrorist tac­

"Terrorists are targeting U.S. officials for their work on sub­

jects like space, aviation, and others for supporting Kosovo's independence. "It is a matter of the greatest concern," he said.

Researchers worry that Kosovo's example could encourage separatist sentiment else­

where. The Kremlin has underlined its displeasure by hinting it might back separatists in pre-Western nations such as the former Soviet republic of Georgia.

Serbian officials dis­

missed violence earlier in the week as "insignificant," and no police were guard­ing the U.S. Embassy com­

pound even though it had been targeted previously. American officials said the offices had been closed at midday because of security concerns.

Milorad Veljovic, a top Interior Ministry official, said that security forces had been called in quickly recogniz­

ing Kosovo's independence. "The situation under control and that mobs had been broken up.

Masked men smashed UCLA files for restraining order on activists

Researchers protest immigration bill

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Three times since June 2006, Molotov cocktail-type devices have been left near the homes of faculty, administration officials who oversee or participate in research that involves animals, according to a state­

ment from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Researchers' homes have also been vandalized and they have received threatening phone calls and e-mails, according to the university. On at least one occasion a faculty member received a package rigged with razor blades, the statement said.

"Enough is enough," UCLA Chancellor Gene Block said. "We're not willing to wait until somebody is injured before taking legal action to protect our faculty and administrators from terrorist tac­

lers, violence and harassment."
Clinton to Obama: Stop stealing words

New York senator accuses rival candidate of political plagiarism, elicits disapproval from Democratic audience

Associated Press

AUSTIN — Hillary Rodham Clinton accused presidential rival Barack Obama of plagiarism Thursday night, but drew boos from a Democratic debate audience when she ridiculed him as the candidate of "change you can't believe in.

Obama dismissed the charge out of hand, then turned the issue to economics when he countered, "What we shouldn't be doing tonight, is playing politics.

The exchange marked an unusually pointed moment in an otherwise civil encounter in the days before March 4 primaries in Texas and Ohio — contests in which even some of Clinton's supporters say she must win to sustain her campaign for the White House.

The former first lady and 31 straight primaries and caucuses claim she will win the nomination, but she added the U.S. agenda for such a "new" Clinton lately had been urging voters to turn against him by saying, "It's get real.

"The implication is that the people who've been voting for me or are involved in my campaign are somehow dehumanized," Obama said.

Clinton also raised Obama's use in his campaign speeches of words first uttered by his friend, Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick.

"If your candidacy is going to be about words then they should be your own words," she said. "...Lifting whole passages from someone else's speeches is not change you can believe in, it's change you can't believe in."

"The debate audience boomed. Obama said the entire controversy was evidence of a "silly season" that the public finds disquieting. Besides, he said of his speeches at one point, "I've got to admit, some of them are pretty good."

The two rivals sat next to one another in swivel chairs in a University of Texas auditorium for the 90-minute debate, one in a dwindling number of opportunities for the former first lady to chart a new course in the presidential race.

Obama has lost 11 straight primaries and caucuses to Obama — including an overseas competition for support among Americans living aboard — and has fallen behind in the chase for the number of delegates needed to become the presidential nominee.

Obama's strong showing has made him the man to beat in a historic struggle between a black man and a white woman, and even former President Bill Clinton has said his wife must win both Ohio and Texas early next month to preserve her candidacy. New polls show Texas a dead heat, and give Clinton a lead in Ohio, but far smaller than the one she held in recent weeks.

Announcing the Year 2008 Annual Awards of the Albert Ravarino Italian Studies Travel Scholarship

Thanks to a generous gift from the Albert Ravarino family, the Italian Studies Program is pleased to announce the year 2008 annual competition for travel in support of summer research and foreign study in Italy. Grants will be made in amounts not to exceed $3,000, and will not normally cover all expenses. Notre Dame graduate and undergraduate students who are planning to pursue research or a formal program of summer study in Italy are invited to apply. Students must have completed at least one year of Italian language. The course work will normally be in Italian; will involve the study of Italian language, literature, and culture; and must be applicable to a student's degree program at the University of Notre Dame.

Recommended programs for foreign study include, but are not limited to: Loyola University in Rome, Boston University in Padua, UCLA in Pisa, Miami University in Urbino, Columbia University in Scandiano. Interested students are encouraged to consult the materials on Italian foreign study in the Department of Romance Languages, 343 O'Shaughnessy Hall.

Students are invited to submit a letter which should include:
1) an explanation of how the proposed research or foreign study will enhance their degree program at Notre Dame;
2) a personal statement indicating their background, interests, and long-term goals;
3) a description of the research project or the program they intend to follow;
4) a budget indicating the costs involved;
5) two letters of recommendation;
6) a transcript showing all grades and courses completed;
7) a list of other sources of funding (being sought or confirmed) for the same project (i.e. Office of International Studies, Nanovic Institute, etc.)

Application Deadline: Wednesday, February 27, 2008

Albert Ravarino Italian Studies Travel Scholarship
Program in Italian Studies
343 O'Shaughnessy Hall
University of Notre Dame
Bleak data fans fears of recession

Regional manufacturing news and index of leading economic indicators disappoint

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The stock market finished with a sharp decline after a bevy of bleak readings on the economy heightened investors' fears of recession. The Dow Jones industrial average fell more than 140 points.

Wall Street was disappointed when the Philadelphia Federal Reserve Board reported that new orders fell more than predicted. Another piece of bad news was the Conference Board’s January index of leading economic indicators, which posted its fourth straight drop.

Innovations have already been pricing in another interest rate cut — perhaps up to half a percentage point — after minutes from the Federal Reserve’s last policy-setting meeting indicated central bankers will remain vigilant about the economy. The Fed, which meets again March 18, has forecast slower growth and continued risks to the economy from housing and credit markets.

Though exporters are assured by the central bank that it will lower rates again if necessary, that expectation has not been enough to galvanize the confidence in the stock market and the economy. Wall Street remains concerned that the economy could be so weak that rate cuts, which take months to work their way through the economy, won’t prevent further deterioration.

The Fed cutting rates is a little bit like a fire engine pulling up to your house,” said Brian Gendreau, investment strategist for ING Investment Management. You’re happy help has arrived, but still, your house is burning down.”

The Dow fell 142.96, or 1.15 percent, to 12,284.30. The biggest loser among the Dow 30 components was General Motors Corp., which posted its fourth straight drop, after lender GMAC LLC, which is part-owned by GM, said it will slash hundreds of jobs at its auto finance business. GM fell $1.24, or 4.9 percent, to $24.30.

Broader indexes also declined. The Standard & Poor’s 500 index shed 17.50, or 1.29 percent, to 1,342.53, while the Nasdaq composite index fell 27.32, or 1.17 percent, to 2,299.78.

“What you’re seeing is a tug of war out there,” said Arthur Hogan, chief market analyst at Jefferies & Co. “There are those that believe we’re in a recession and earnings will move lower, and others that feel we’re working on a bottom. That can change the direction of stocks minute-by-minute.”

Bond prices moved sharply higher on expectations of a rate reduction. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note, which moves opposite its price, fell to 3.78 percent from 3.87 percent late Thursday.

Light, sweet crude for April delivery dropped $1.47 to settle at $96.23 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange, after the government reported that U.S. crude oil inventories increased by more than expected last week. Crude had reached a new record above $101 in overnight trading.

Gold jumped to a record high above $950 an ounce on Thursday, while the dollar dipped slightly against most major currencies.

Earthquake hits northeastern Nevada

Associated Press

WELLS, Nev. — Windows shattered and building facades and signs fell, but no one was seriously injured when a powerful earth­quake shook this rural northeastern Nevada town.

The quake, which had an estimated magnitude of 6.0, according to the U.S. Geological Survey’s National Earthquake Information Center in Golden, Colo., struck at 6:16 a.m. last Thursday. It was felt as far away as Las Vegas, and as many as 30 aftershocks were reported.

“Definitely a lot of people felt it, and many of them were awakened,” said USGS geophys­ist Carriean Bedwell.

In Wendover, Utah, on the Nevada-Utah line, Tammy Waddsworth was ironing clothes when the quake hit. “I kept thinking, ‘When is it going to quit?’” she said. “A couple pictures fell off the wall, but we were awoken,” she said. “One of my grandkids ran outside. They didn’t know what else to do. It scared them.”

The most serious damage was reported in Wells; largely unoccupied historic district, where an esti­mated 20 to 25 buildings have been heavily damaged.” Elko County Sheriff’s Sgt. Kevin McKinney said.

Traders and brokers work on the trading floor of the New York Stock Exchange a short time before the closing bell Tuesday. Stocks declined sharply Thursday.

The Observer
Cuba

cuba to decide its future

Country likely to keep Castros in power in Sunday's elections

Associated Press

HAVANA — A technocrat whose reforms are credited with saving Cuba's economy after the Soviet collapse. A former guerrilla who persuaded the U.N. to condemn Washington's embargo. The man who has defused the international relations.

These men are the next generation of Cuba's leadership, and their fortunes in the government shake-up coming Sunday will say a lot about where the island is headed now that the 81-year-old Fidel is giving up the presidency.

Parliament will almost certainly keep the Castros in charge by replacing Fidel with his younger brother, Raul. Raul, 76, has been first in line for the presidency for decades and has been acting prime minister since Fidel's brother took ill in July 2006.

Already, Raul has spoken of unspecified "structural changes" and called for an open discussion of problems with the system. But it is unclear what kind of economic reform Cuba's communist leadership is willing to allow. The government is releasing vice-presidents will be crucial in determining whether the president has a mandate for change.

It's up to the National Assembly — the 619-member parliament elected last month — to select the 31 people who as the Council of State will lead Cuba for the next five years. A parliamentary committee has been privately debating the new council's makeup for several weeks, probably taking into account the recommendations of the Castro brothers as well as top Communist Party officials.

On Sunday, the assembly will choose Cuba's next vice president and five other vice presidents, and 24 other members of the Council of State. Fidel, who was re-elected to the National Assembly to remain on the council but is unlikely to serve a top position.

The current Council of State is overdue for renewal, with two thirds of its members over 60 and only two each in their 30s and 40s. Only four women sit on the council, and about half the members fought in the 1950s.

While nothing is certain, many experts believe Raul will be the next president. The No. 2 slot remains more up for grabs.

The leading candidate is Carlos Lage, balding and bespectacled, who at 56 is a generation younger than the Castros brothers. He is already a vice president, and as Lazo Gonzalez, he is the director of the news agency of de facto prime minister. Quiet and unassuming, Lage has always been steeped in pubic affairs.

He is credited with designing the modest economic reforms in the early 1990s that allowed Cuba to survive the Soviet collapse. With Raul's support, he pushed through proposals for limited self-management, foreign investment, cooperative farms, farmers markets and the legal use of the U.S. dollar.

Those moves created cash flow that improved people's lives without sparking political turmoil in many Cubans fear after witnessing the fall of communism in eastern Europe. But then, as now, both Lage and the Castros said there would be no changes at the expense of socialism, including the free social services most Cubans consider a birthright.

While he supported temporary, limited economic openings in a time of crisis, Lage has suggested that is as far as he wants to go, telling state managers last year that Cuba will not copy the forays of communist-rulled China and Vietnam into capitalism.

Foreign Minister Felipe Perez Roque has a reputation for more ideological orthodoxy, especially in seven years as Fidel's personal secretary. He fiercely defends Cuba's policy of cracking down on government's crackdown on dissidents in 2003, calling them mercenaries.

Short, slightly stocky and freckled, the 42-year-old has a narrow experience in government, and as an U.N. ambassador he is largely credited with orchestrating U.N. resolutions calling for an end to the U.S. economic embargo.

Lage, well known in Fernado Ramirez de Estanol, 56, but he someone to watch. He served as chief of Cuba's mission in Washington in 1992-2001, a period in which the Baltimore Orioles player, a 76-year-old in Havana and young Elian Gonzalez was returned from Florida.

Remirez now serves as the head of Cuba's consulate and termed abroad and has traveled with Raul to Vietnam and China. With perifex English and a pleasant, bespectacled face, Ramirez would be a key player if the next U.S. president accepts Raul's pleas for talks.

One man who could undermine his efforts to put a younger man in the No. 2 spot is Hidalgo, who at 56 is a generation younger than the baby-faced, who at 56 is a generation younger than the baby-faced Fidel. He is smart and well versed in international relations.

Raul has suggested that is as far as he wants to go, telling state managers last year that Cuba will not copy the forays of communist-rulled China and Vietnam into capitalism.

"Fortunately, our process can still count on cadres from the old guard and others who were very young in the early days of the Revolution."

Raul Castro
acting Cuban president

Liberia

Bush reassures ruined country in African tour

Associated Press

MONROVIA — President Bush offered encouragement and help Thursday to lift this shattered country from years of ruinous fighting as he concluded a tour of Africa and turned toward other global problems.

In Liberia, the final stop on Bush's five-country trip, almost nothing works and people are nervous about their future in the aftermath of a 14-year civil war that ended in 2003.

The country is overrun with weapons, malnutrition is pervasive, half of children are not in school, and many buildings are uninhabitable. There is little running water or electricity and no sewage or landline public system.

"It's easier to tear a country down than it is to rebuild a country," Bush said.

"And the people of this good country must understand the United States will stand with you as you rebuild your country."

Though Bush's entourage was a bit jittery about the seven-hour stopover, Liberia's president, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, declared at one point, "You're safe."

Bush used his five-country trek to showcase how billions in aid and diplomatic engagement are improving the everyday lives of people across the continent.

Though each nation he visited already receives huge amounts of assistance, Bush had new announcements for Africa ready to drop at each stop:

- Ghana, $350 million to battle tropical diseases across the developing world.

- Tanzania, $100 million to train and equip African peacekeepers going to Sudan.

- Liberia, founded by freed American slaves, offered an opportunity to inter a source of security for the Liberian people instead of a source of terror," the president said.

"We're working to heal the wounds of war, and strengthen democracy, and build a new armed forces that will be a source of security for the Liberian people instead of a source of terror," the president said.

"It's easier to tear a country down than it is to rebuild a country."

George Bush
president
Associated Press

ELKHORN, Wis. — A man was convicted Thursday of poisoning his wife, who left behind a letter implicating him should she come to an "early demise." Mark Jensen, 48, was found guilty of first-degree murder in the death of his wife, Julie Jensen, and faces a mandatory life prison sentence, with the judge to determine if he should ever be eligible for parole.

Mark Jensen stared dozily at the jurors as each concurred with the judgment. Bailiffs led him quietly out the side of the courtroom afterward.

"I'm convinced the jury reached the wrong decision," defense attorney Craig Allow said. "I'm hopeful that Mark will get a new trial."

Julie Jensen, 40, was found dead in her Pleasant Prairie home on Dec. 3, 1998, after being sick for a few days. Mark Jensen was charged with killing her in 2002, but legal wrangling over evidence repeatedly delayed the trial. The evidence included a letter she wrote implicating her husband and said anything happen to her, as well as her statements to a police, a neighbor and her son's teacher that she suspected her husband was trying to kill her. At the time, Mark Jensen was having an affair with a woman he has since married.

"I pray that I am wrong and nothing happens, but I am suspicious of Mark's suspicious behaviors and fear for my early demise," Julie Jensen wrote in the letter. She told the neighbor to give it to police only if she died.

Julie Jensen's four brothers spoke at a news conference afterward, thanking the jurors, law enforcement agents and witnesses who testified against Mark Jensen.

"It was a hard decision to have to endure hardship and muster a lot of courage to come forward,"said Angel Griffin said, adding that he hoped the case would give hope to other victims of domestic violence.

Jury deliberated for about 32 hours over three days before reaching a verdict Thursday.

Jury Sandra Schott described Julie Jensen's letter as "extremely important" in their deliberations.

"At first, (the letter) wasn't making a lot of sense to me. I was just one of the people having doubts," she said. But she turned around as jurors delved deeper into Julie Jensen's words and the evidence supporting the prosecution's claim.

In closing arguments, attorneys on each side had said there wasn't enough evidence supporting the other's theory about the way Julie Jensen died.

Prosecutor Robert Jambois said Mark Jensen plotted to kill his wife, searching the Internet for information on ethylene glycol — commonly used as antifreeze — and then giving her sleeping pills and making her drink juice spiked with the toxic chemical.

One concern: A strain called Brisbane/10 that's responsible for much of this winter's misery appeared to improve, her husband pushed her face in a pillow and suffocated her, Jambois claimed.

Dr. Nancy Cox director Center for Disease Control and Prevention

"There's a lot of work that will be going on ... to try and make sure that everything comes together in such a way that there will be plenty of vaccine."
In light of his 23-point, 12-rebound performance in Notre Dame’s 82-70 win over Pittsburgh last night and his inspired play this season, The Observer endorses forward Luke Harangody for Big East player of the year.

The 6-foot-8 bear of a power forward has lifted the Irish whenever this season, displaying an uncanny combination of raw power, intensity and skill.

The numbers don’t lie. Sporting a swivel new frame, (having dropped a few pounds over the summer) Harangody has shown a velvet touch around the rim in averaging 20.5 points per game to go along with 10.1 rebounds per game. Leaner and meaner, Harangody has transformed himself into a veritable back-to-the-basket bucket machine. He leads the entire Big East in scoring and is currently ranked second in the conference in rebounding.

Most importantly, due in large part to Harangody’s efforts, Notre Dame has built a 10-3 conference record and a 20-5 record overall. The Irish also currently sit near the top of the standings. Harangody has also led the Irish to a scoring average of 80.2 points per game, good for first in the Big East.

Whether laying out for loose balls, muscling for boards or playing his physical brand of defense, his style of play brings football rather than basketball to mind at times. Perhaps we should be endorsing Harangody for Heisman. Throughout the past two seasons, Harangody has built a hard-nosed reputation for himself by hustling, hustling and generally out-working the competition, battling for boards and scoring in all manner of put-backs, baby hooks and bank shots.

It’s safe to say no one could call the Big East the Big Easy. Bear in mind that Harangody’s prodigious numbers come from grinding night in and night out against stiff competition in a conference many claim to be the toughest in the country from top to bottom. And Harangody fits right in with the Big East’s hard-nosed style of play, having borne more than his share of hard fouls, bruises and floor burns in this hardwood school of hard knocks.

Nine days ago, Harangody turned in one of the best performances of his young career, dropping 32 points and pulling down 16 caroms in a lasing effort against Connecticut on Feb. 13. He scored a career high in points in a lasing effort against Connecticut on Feb. 13. He scored a career high in points in a conference game and g rabb in g 16 carom s in a losing effort ag ainst Connecticut on Fe b. 13. He scored a career high in points in a conference game. He scored a career high in points in a conference game. He scored a career high in points in a conference game. He scored a career high in points in a conference game. He scored a career high in points in a conference game. He scored a career high in points in a conference game. He scored a career high in points in a conference game. He scored a career high in points in a conference game. He scored a career high in points in a conference game. He scored a career high in points in a conference game. He scored a career high in points in a conference game. He scored a career high in points in a conference game. He scored a career high in points in a conference game. He scored a career high in points in a conference game.

For leading the Big East in scoring, leading Notre Dame to a likely NCAA Tournament berth, we commend Harangody’s play thus far this season and endorse him for Big East player of the year.

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**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

**So gay?**

I was sitting in LaFountaine a little while ago listening to two of my friends in the business school discuss a recent test. During discussing a certain section of the test, one of them exclaimed, “Yeah, that part was gay.” I got this strange feeling when I heard this. It was not because I was shocked that he would use the word “gay” to describe a business test, but rather that describing things as “gay” has become such an integral part of our day-to-day conversation.

I cannot pinpoint a reason or time when everything seemed to become “gay.” But I can’t think of any adults I know who refer to basic concepts and objects as “gay,” so it is clearly something that has developed during our generation. I also do not know why things have become “gay.” For example, it is technically impossible for a test to be gay. Tests do not mate or have physical desires to other tests (last time I checked). But everything that we do not like is “gay,” and no one ever seems to stop and think why we feel this way.

I will admit that at many points in my life I have described things as “gay.” Friends who would annoy me would be “gay,” teachers who gave lots of homework would be “gay,” and music that I did not enjoy was “gay.” Calling things “gay” is now natural. Yet in almost all of these instances, the thing I was describing was in no shape or form “gay.” There are plenty of derogatory words that I could use to describe these things. They could be lame, stupid, dumb, weird, or idiotic. But whenever I encounter something that rubs me the wrong way, it instinctively becomes “gay,” and it makes no sense.

What makes this even weirder is that if we were to use another orientation to describe these drawbacks, the reaction would be much different. If I were to describe a friend who was acting funny as “got Catholic,” people would freak out. Same thing if I were to call a homework assignment “so Asian.” Yet if either of these things were called “gay,” everyone else would most likely agree, even though it makes no sense.

Everyone knows that Notre Dame is not the most welcoming place for homosexuals, but we should not use this as a reason for things to be called “gay.” The issue at hand is not the morality or concept of homosexuality. It is about making sense and showing respect. No matter how you slice it, calling something “gay” is nonsensical. There are much better, more accurate words to describe things we do not like. The rather significant portion of the world that is gay probably does not like to be associated with all things lame-duck. No affiliation should suffer this fate, no matter how much one disagrees with it. I do not think that this name-calling will ever really end. It has become such a part of us that most of us do not even think about it. In fact, I bet that someone will read this and ironically pro­ up to call it “gay.” But I hope that at some point in the future we can all stop, think, and maybe come up with a better word to describe things that bother us.

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**EDITORIAL CARTOON**

*Submit a Letter to the Editor (Please.)*

www.ndsmcobserver.com

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**QUOTE OF THE DAY**

“When I read about the evils of drinking, I gave up reading.”

-Henry Youngman

U.S. comedian
Confessions of a latte liberal

Gary Caruso
Capitol Comments

Vagina Monologues being held amid controversy, Catholic Faculty issues dividing the alumni, faculty, students and administration. Catholic Bis...
"No Country" Should Take Top Honors

Get ready for the best night of the year as Oscar turns 80 and we breathe a sigh of relief that the show can go on after the 100-day writers' strike. We'll see if host Jon Stewart can put the fear him.

Best Supporting Actor
Javier Bardem ("No Country for Old Men"). He's brilliant and heartbreakingly in "Into the Wild" and I would love to see him take home the Oscar just for being an adorable old man, but Javier Bardem is guaranteed to win for "No Country for Old Men." He deserves it too. Bardem portrays a man who on the outside appears to be a psychopathic killer, but really, his character just operates by different principles and a different morality. Bardem makes it so that by the end of the film, we don't hate his Anton, but we do fear him.

Best Supporting Actress
Amy Ryan ("Gone Baby Gone"). This is really the only major Oscar category that is still wide open. Ryan had some serious momentum going into awards season, but now Cate Blanchett, Ruby Dee, Saoirse Ronan and Tilda Swinton have all caught up. However, Ronan is unlikely to win since hers is the only acting nomination for "Atonement," which had a disappointing morning when the nominees were announced. The race comes down between Ryan and Blanchett (who impressively morphed herself into Bob Dylan), but I'm going to give it to Ryan just because I loved her so much in Season Two of "The Wire."

Best Animated Film
"Ratatouille." Although I was pleasantly surprised by the nominating "Surf's Up," it really should have been nominated at the Golden Globes too. There, nothing can stop the juggernaut that is Disney-Pixar. "Ratatouille" was received with such universal praise, that it is considered one of Disney-Pixar's best. Its critical and box office reception was enough of a victory considering the film's concerns about marketing something with a funny name centered around rats handling the food we eat. In fact, many people believed that "Ratatouille" should have been nominated in the Best Picture category, something that hasn't been done since 1991's "Beauty and the Beast," when there was no separate category for animated films.

Best Original Score
"Atonement." Since "Into the Wild" and "There Were Blood" were excluded from this category, I'll throw "Atonement" a bone and go with it. Just for the record, my pick would have been "There Will Be Blood," but it was disqualified due to a little something called Rule 16, which determined that the score wasn't eligible because it included pre-existing music. Nevertheless, Radiohead's Jonny Greenwood did a phenomenal job adding to the madness we felt watching Daniel Day-Lewis on screen.

Best Original Song
"Falling Slowly" (from "Once"). It's called vote-splitting folk, and that's what's going to ruin Alan Menken and Stephen Schwartz's chances with "Enchanted," the Disney duo are geniuses, but Glen Hansard and Markéta Irglová's captivating performance of "Falling Slowly" is more than deserving. In "Once," the music is the film so it's only fitting that it gets a win in the original song category.

Best Cinematography
"There Will Be Blood." I wish "There Will Be Blood" had been nominated in a different year than "No Country for Old Men" because it deserves so many more awards than it will win. But this category is a way to go to Roger Deakens for his impossible shots in the film about all tyrant who loses his humanity to his ambition. There was one shot in particular in the film that made me grasp and turn to my friend to see if she had the same reaction. Fingers don't usually take my breath away for those reasons.

Best Actor
Daniel Day-Lewis ("There Will Be Blood"). Day-Lewis Daniel Plainview is a force to be reckoned with in "There Will Be Blood." Much like Charles Foster Kane in "Citizen Kane," when Daniel is on screen no other character matters. Day-Lewis, who stayed in character even when the cameras turned off, intensely portrays the crazed effects of a man driven by ambition until he finally drinks Paul Dano's milkshake once and for all. We can only hope that Day-Lewis' acceptance speech will be as touching as his Heath Ledger-inspired speech at the Golden Globes.

Best Actress
Julie Christie ("Away From Her"). Her strongest competitor is Marion Cotillard ("La Vie en Rose") with Ellen Page ("Juno") gobbling up for the surprise attack, but Christie will certainly add the Oscar to her already-filled awards shelf come Sunday. She last won the Oscar for 1965's "Darling." A win for Christie would be validation for older actresses throughout Hollywood.

Best Adapted Screenplay
"No Country for Old Men." The adapted screenplay and director categories will be slightly earlier indications as to whether or not "No Country" will win best picture. It's true that "No Country" was most captivating in its silences, but the dialogue we did hear was brilliant. Its main competition is "The Diving Bell and the Butterfly," which just won the BAFTA, but look for the Academy to honor its love for "No Country."

Best Original Screenplay
"Juno." The indie comedy gem won't win best picture so original screenplay will be its consolation prize. That comes as no surprise since original screenplay is usually the best for indie anyway. Remember last year's "Little Miss Sunshine." And while the script isn't perfect, Diablo Cody deserves the Oscar for expressing young voices without dumbing them down. "Juno" is filled with heart and wit, and we have the mind and pen of Diablo Cody to thank for that.

Best Director
Ethan Coen and Joel Coen ("No Country for Old Men"). It's about time isn't it? These are the fine filmmakers who brought us "Fargo" and "O Brother, Where Art Thou?" and now they've brought us the dark and inspired "No Country," the film they may become best remembered for. However, Julian Schnabel could beat the dus in their quest for Oscar gold. He won the Golden Globe in heartbreak. "Crash" failed to garner a best picture vote, but a best director win could decide to share the wealth on Sunday.

Best Picture
"No Country for Old Men." If you haven't been able to tell from my previous predictions, I'm going with "No Country for Old Men." The choice seems almost too predictable, but that's what everyone said about "Braveheart Mountain" and we saw what happened there (Really? "Crash"?!) The acting is impeccable, as is the directing and everything else. However, I think the upset watch goes to "Michael Clayton" and not "Juno." Michael Clayton managed to garner multiple acting nods, a director nod and an original screenplay nod. Let's just say that it's bringing its own set of weapons to compete with "No Country." Cattle gun and sawed-off shotgun.

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

Contact Cassie Belek at cbelek@mid.edu
As Notre Dame's lone senior, Rob Kurz has been through it all. Now he's passing that wisdom on to his teammates.
Kurz’s leadership crucial for success

Each of Notre Dame’s starting five brings something different to the table. Forward Luke Harangody is the star, the Big East Player of the Year candidate who is capable of putting up 30-plus point performances with a dazzling array of hook shots, up-close jumpers and out-of-nowhere tip-ins.

Guard Kyle McAlarney is the sharp-shooter — the short, scruffy guy from Staten Island with perfect form and a dead-eye jump-shot.

Point guard Tory Jackson is the distributor who seemingly racks up assists just from being in the game and can hit runners in the lane even after he’s disappeared among much taller players.

Swingman Zach Ilillesland is the high-flyer, throwing down alley-oops and darting around heavy-footed centers for reverse lay-ups.

And then there’s that other guy.

He’s the one you never hear TV announcers yelling about. The one whose highlight video consists entirely of mid-range jumpers. The other player in games by a combined 11 points.

Kurz, the only senior on the Irish roster seems to be the one to hit the big shot when his team needs it. On Jan. 5, after Notre Dame saw a 21-point lead slip away against Connecticut, it was Kurz who hit a three-pointer with 2:11 left to give the Irish a 64-61 lead they wouldn’t relinquish.

Last Sunday against Rutgers, with Notre Dame clinging to a 67-64 lead and under a minute remaining, Kurz buried a baseline jumper to put his team up three and allow it to hold on for the win.

Sometimes, however, the captain realizes that his best contribution is to get out of the way. In both match-ups with the Huskies, the 6-foot-9 forward spent most of his time on the perimeter so that Connecticut forward Jeff Adarian couldn’t help double-team Harangody.

Kurz’s consistency this season has bordered on absurd. While other players have career highs one night and then are off the next, Kurz gets a near-double-double every game.

The senior has been in double figures in either points or rebounds (often both) all but three conference games so far and in two of those “off nights,” he was battling the flu.

The views expressed in this column are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer. Contact Chris Khorey at ckhorey@nd.edu.
Everybody Loves Rob

Only Irish senior leads with consistent play, ‘wise’ advice and a little unintentional humor

By CHRIS HINE
Sports Editor

It takes a lot to make Rob Kurz angry. But two years ago, when Kurz watched the NCAA Tournament, he couldn’t stand what he was seeing.

Fresh off a 2005-06 season full of agonizingly close losses, Kurz and his Notre Dame teammates failed to make the Tournament for the second year in a row. For Kurz, his career at Notre Dame was not going the way he planned and watching others fulfill their dream of playing in the NCAA Tournament while he sat at home certainly didn’t help his blood pressure.

“It was so frustrating and as soon as the season ends, you’re working toward next year and the first thing you think of is your No. 1 goal to make the Tournament,” Kurz said. “It’s incredibly frustrating and just the amount of attention the Tournament gets, it’s tough to not be a part of it. It’s brutal watching the Tournament games in your room when the season is over.”

In Kurz’s sophomore season, the Irish experienced enough heartache to inspire a B.B. King album — losing in overtime to Louisville and then-No. 3 Connecticut, in double overtime to Pittsburgh, Georgetown and Michigan, and less than three points to No. 6 Villanova, West Virginia and Marquette.

“It was brutal because we felt like we had a much better team and had more talent to be playing better than we did,” Kurz said. “The way we competed in a lot of games we showed we could have had a good year, but for whatever reason, we just couldn’t get over the hump.”

But after living through the 2005-06 nightmare and watch-}

ing others succeed in the Tournament, Kurz and former guard Colin Falls resolved to gain that second, sometimes sense of disappointment forever.

“We absolutely learned a lot about ourselves and our team after the tough season with the close losses. Right who is playing professionally in Italy, said in an e-mail, ‘I think more than anything and being the leaders of the team, set the tone in the off-season that hard work and sense of urgency were the only things that were going to get the Notre Dame basketball team back on track. And I think the pain of that season and not wanting to ever experience that feeling again that drove us that summer.’

The next season, the Irish were playing in the Big Dance, thanks in large part to the play and leadership of Kurz, who averaged 12.5 points and eight rebounds per game. Irish coach Mike Brey said Kurz developed the voice he would need as the lone senior on this season’s team.

“I think toward the end of last year, being able to hang out with Colin, he saw Colin helped manage the group, and I thought he was just a kid out of that book and I thought he did a great job over the summer,” Brey said. “That was the first time he was really a voice with our guys.”

Despite the Tournament appearance, last season still left some unfinished business for Kurz. Notre Dame lost 74-64 to Wisconsin in the first round and Kurz wants to make a run deep in the Tournament this season.

“Obviously, my first two years were learning experiences and I’ve gotten the opportunity to really enjoy our success these past two years,” Kurz said. “Getting back to the Tournament this year would be unbelievable but getting there isn’t enough.”

But before the Tournament arrives, Kurz and the Irish have a chance to win the Big East regular season title. The Irish have a 10-3 record in conference, and like two years ago, the Irish are feeling a sense of close games, but this time has come out on the winning end. For Kurz and the Irish.

And Kurz is a big reason for that. The Irish senior guard, who has become the primary jump shot to put Notre Dame up three in its 71-68 over Rutgers on Sunday, hit a tie-breaking 3-pointer late in Notre Dame’s 73-67 win over Connecticut on Jan. 5 and the second key 3-pointer in overtime to lift the Irish over Providence 81-74 on Jan. 31.

“I think he’s accepted the role as the silent enforcer,” former Irish Sports Analyst Digger Phelps said. “He’s the one guy that when it’s crunch time, is always there to get it done. He’ll end up with a double-double, and he’s the one guy that makes this team what it is.”

Kurz said the difference this season is a change in the team’s attitude.

“I don’t think it enters into your mind because the focus is trying to win another game, trying to win this one; where two years ago it was always when are we going to win the game? Can we escape with the win?” Kurz said. “It was a little different this season because it seemed like we were going to make the NCAA tournament games. Now, our mentality has evolved to the point where we’re not going to put the floor down and play fearlessly and aggressively.”

“I tease him about being an old man or a father or something like that,” Tory Jackson said. “But he’s wise, keeps us out of trouble, just like a father would. He’s a steadying force. His ethic shows everyone on the team what it takes to play in the Big East.”

“Tight a steady force. His work ethic is kind of contagious,” former Irish forward Zach Hillesland said.

“Along with everyone, but most importantly, his captain, his teammates say his leadership style mirrors his style of play on the court — steady, consistent, never flashy, but always dependable. He’s the one who keeps everything together in championship games.”

“I tease him about being an old man or a father or something like that,” former Irish guard Tory Jackson said. “But he’s wise, keeps us out of trouble, just like a father would. He’s a steadying force. His work ethic is kind of contagious.”

Jackson described him as an easy-going guy who gets along with everyone, but most importantly, his captain, has everyone’s respect. He’s the one that makes this team what it is.

“Why are you going to give you our whole house if he couldn’t,” Jackson said. “I mean, we wouldn’t want him to get used to it. He’s a great person, if I had a kid, I’d have him look up to Rob Kurz for his work ethic.”

Kurz lends a valuable voice in the huddle and in the locker room, but he’s most effective as a leader in the locker room. He’s constantly in the gym, even on off days, and that ethic has rubbed off on his teammates, who might want to spend their time off doing nothing.

“Even during summer in the off-season, Rob is the first to admit his mistakes — except when Digger comes around.”

“I’ll say, ‘Come on, where have you been?’ You’re making me look bad on TV!” Phelps said.

Kurz then tries to hide until Digger leaves.

“He usually gets on me after a bad game, so if I see him in the training room after a loss, I’ll just try to sneak right by because I know he’s got something to say to me,” Kurz said.

But when the pressure is on late in the game, Kurz is always front and center willing to take a big shot or make an aggressive move to make something happen.

“Any sous-marinere year we felt the pressure in close games like, just like a father would. He keeps everybody together. As a leader, Kurz is a little different in the locker room. He’s a steadying force. His ethic is kind of contagious.”

Hillesland was saying, ‘You can’t win the close games, and we almost allowed it to get to us to the point where it affected us late in games,’” Kurz said. “After experiencing that, we knew we couldn’t win like that. We had to be fearless and willing to take the shot even if it means it’s your responsibility if you lose that game.’

Even if Notre Dame’s season ends prematurely and Kurz graduates without seeing the Sweet 16, the relationship he’s developed and the help he has offered to the underclassmen ensure that his mark on Notre Dame’s basketball program will last for years to come.

“He is someone that everyone likes being around and he respects and treats everyone the right way, and I think people really respect him because of that. I feel lucky to have become so close to him. He’s been a part of our lives for two years, and we’re like brothers now.”

Contact Chris Hine at
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Injuries slow Orange quest for NCAA berth

Young Syracuse team in the midst of crucial eight-game stretch

By FRAN TOLAN

Notre Dame has a chance to damage — if not burst — the bubble of NCAA hopeful and Big East rival Syracuse when the Orange visit Notre Dame Sunday.

Syracuse defeated No. 8 Georgetown last Saturday but fell to No. 18 Louisville Monday. The team is in dire need of another resume-building win before Selection Sunday.

The Orange are in the midst of a month-long stretch in which seven of their eight opponents are or have previously been ranked this season.

Syracuse (17-10 overall, 7-7 Big East) has fought hard to remain in the thick of the Big East race. The squad lost junior guard Eric Devendorf to a season-ending knee injury in a 125-75 victory over East Tennessee State on Dec. 15. Devendorf averaged 17 points per game in 10 games this season but has been confined to the bench for the entirety of Big East play.

Notre Dame point guard Tory Jackson of Saginaw, Mich., played on an AAU squad with Devendorf, who is from neighboring Bay City. Jackson said he has rarely watched Syracuse play since his former teammate was sidelined.

"I really haven't seen that much of them, truth be told," Jackson said.

"After my friend got hurt, I really haven't watched them too much," Jackson said. Devendorf also has difficulty watching the Orange play as they attempt to make a late-season run.

"I talk to him a lot and it hurts," Jackson said. "It kinda gets under his skin because he sees he can't really help them out."

Orange freshmen Donte Green and Jonny Flynn have shouldered much of the load to keep Syracuse competitive in Devendorf's absence. Green averages 17.6 points and 7.4 rebounds per game while Flynn drops 15.2 points per contest. They've been hurt with a couple injuries but they're getting more experienced as the season goes on.

"They've been hurt with a couple injuries but they're getting more experienced as the season goes on," Jackson said.

After my friend got hurt, I really haven't watched them too much," Jackson said.

Zach Hillesland Irish forward

Syracuse's RPI, which measures the team's competitiveness against its competition, is 59. Along with the contest at Notre Dame, Syracuse has remaining games against Pittsburgh, Seton Hall and Marquette to impress the NCAA Tournament committee.

But Notre Dame captain Rob Kurz said the Irish are just as hungry as the Orange for strong conference wins.

"It's obviously gonna be a critical game for them but at this point in the season, it's a crucial game for everybody," Kurz said. "The top four Big East teams are awarded byes in the first round of the conference tournament and the Irish (19-5 overall, 10-3 Big East) now sit in fourth place.

On a national scale, Notre Dame has the No. 21 RPI, which would take them on the outside for an NCAA Tournament seed between five and seven if the postseason were to begin today.

"We're fighting for our lives to get an NCAA tournament bid and obviously to get a first-round bye in the Big East tournament," Kurz said. "So, I mean, to say that they have more to play for than us is wrong but it depends on how you look at it because we feel like we have just as much, if not more, to gain.

Kurz said the Irish will focus on shutting down Syracuse's top scorers, who he feels can catch fire at any time.

"The main thing for us: They obviously shoot a lot of threes and they have some young athletic guys," Kurz said. "The key for us is gonna be how well we defend them."

Hillesland said the Irish know what this game means for Syracuse and will try to match the intensity of the visiting Orange.

"I'm sure they relish the opportunity to get another resume-building win, to come in here and add to the win they got against Georgetown," he said. "We're expecting a very focused team to come in here and certainly we'll be focused as well."

Contact Fran Tolalan at ftolan@nd.edu
"Juno" should leave with Best Picture

Best Supporting Actor
Javier Bardem ("No Country for Old Men"). Give it up, people. Javier Bardem. He won the PGA, the Globe, the SAG, and every other award in every foreign country or American city's film society. He is viciously perfect in "No Country for Old Men." There really is no other person to give it to.

Best Supporting Actress
Cate Blanchett ("I'm Not There"). Amy Ryan is brilliant in "Gone Baby Gone." Her complete and blainted portrayal of the hopeless and disastrously self-destructive mother of a kidnapped girl is frustrating and divine. She should win, but Blanchett will take it. She can't walk into the Oscars with two nominations and walk out empty-handed. The woman is a chameleonic force that must realize she is nominated for playing Bob Dylan and the Queen Elizabeth I. Tilda Swinton has been gaining accolades for her job in "Michael Clayton." But I think it will be Blanchett.

Best Animated Film
"Ratatouille." The movie is just too good. No one can topple the animation monster that is the precious union of Disney and Pixar. Any other non-Pixarific year, "Persepolis" would win. The unique film, based on a comic book about a girl growing up in Iran and then being educated in Europe, manages to be touching and political at the same time. At a film festival or internationally "Persepolis" would win, but at the Oscars, Reyna, the irresistible cooking rat, will reign supreme.

Best Original Score
"Atonement." The movie is simply beautiful. The director of "Pride and Prejudice" once again gives us a movie in which every frame could be a painting. This is the "beautiful" category, and "Atonement" is just that. "No Country" and "Diving Bell" are worthy competitors, but it would be a shame to ignore the film that is specifically made to strike the eye.

Best Actor
Daniel Day-Lewis ("There Will Be Blood"). Signed, delivered, he's yours. The man will easily go from black gold to pure gold on Sunday. He's already picked up the SAG, the Globe and the BAFTA. He performed as only Daniel Day-Lewis can. The man makes a movie every three years or so and this last one was in 2005 and then "Gangs of New York" (2002). I say give him the Oscar now and convince him to keep making more. Johnny Depp was great, but his is only a novelty nomination.

Best Actress
Marion Cotillard ("La Vie en Rose"). I will admit, I wish with all my heart it was Ellen Page for "Juno," but I'm afraid her movie wasn't in the nomination. Her performance was perfect, and I don't know a teenage girl who wasn't touched by how true she was. But alas, Marion Cotillard will walk away with this one. "La Vie en Rose" has been a huge international success. Cotillard has already got the BAFTA and a Globe, which she won for musical/comedy, not even where the film should have been - in the drama category. If she does lose, it will be to Julie Christie. But here's hoping for Page.

Best Adapted Screenplay
"No Country for Old Men." It's really a bit of a split here, with "No Country" and "Diving Bell," and then of course, "Atonement." "No Country" is a masterpiece, "Diving Bell" is a jewel and everyone I've talked to adores "Atonement." This really could go any of three ways, but since "No Country" is going to lose for best picture, I'm pegging it for screenplay. Hollywood has a bit more love for its own film than a film in French or a British film.

Best Original Screenplay
"Juno." Diablo Cody, bless her little ex-stripper heart, gave us one of the most iconic stories this side of "Napoleon Dynamite." With an effortless indie feel, the screenplay faced teenage pregnancy head-on, danced around the precarious topic of abortion and left audiences feeling great. This nearly impossibly good feat has racked up the awards, and everyone in the audience will smile contented when Cody walks up to accept what is rightly hers on Sunday. This is where the Academy will recognize the little-indie-that-could.

Best Director
Ethan Coen and Joel Coen ("No Country for Old Men"). Even though Julian Schnabel brought home the Globe for "The Diving Bell and the Butterfly," Hollywood has a tendency to stick close to home, and this director's specific choice to film in French won't hold. "No Country has already received the BAFTA for best directing, and the Coens Brothers received the top honor from the Directors Guild of America. Though heavy on nominations, this is one of the few categories "No Country will win.

Best Picture
"Juno." Why not? It was everything a movie should be. It was funny, touching, but most of all it was real. It was a story that was more than just well done, and at the end of the day that is what we should be looking for as the best picture of the year. It was simple, not overwhelming, and it made you think. The quirksiness of the film overpower ed the story. It wasn't gimmicky, it wasn't predictable, and it wasn't contrived. It was honest. "No Country for Old Men" and "There Will Be Blood" are hard-hitting in their push for Oscar glory, and "Atonement" has Oscar drama written all over it, but "Juno" is just good enough to topple them all.

Everything else would end up in the annals of Oscar history, with an "oh, yes, yes quite good," and eventually begin to grate. But in ten years I do believe I will still sit down to watch "Juno." Will it win? Probably not. But it should.

Lastly, keep an eye out for Kevin O'Connell, coming up on his 20th nomination, this time for sound mixing for "Transformers." After a series of close losses, it should be about his time to come home with a win.

Overall, this Academy Awards should be one of the most memorable shows in recent history. There have been so many good films that are deserving of an Oscar that the competition should make for a great cere mony.

Look for the favorites to come home sporting some new bling, but don't be surprised if there is more than one upset.

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

Contact Stephanie DePrez at stephdepr@umd.edu
Walker’s three pushes Hurricanes past Thrashers

Flailing Flyers lose ninth straight at the hands of San Jose; Satan’s late goal lifts Islanders 1-0 over Tampa Bay

Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. — In the con­gested Southeast Division, one sustained stretch of solid play could make the difference between winning the division or missing the playoffs.

After the Carolina Hurricanes over­whelmed the Atlanta Thrashers 5-3 Thursday night, Carolina coach Peter Laviolette hoped the Hurricanes are in the middle of such a spurt.

"This is a team of six where I’ve really liked the way we’ve played," Laviolette said.

Even after losing captain Rod Brind’Amour to a season-end­ ing torn ACL on Feb. 14, the Hurricanes are 4-1-1 in their last six to cut out what was once a comfortable five-point lead in the Southeast.

With the victory, the Hurricanes extended their divi­sion lead to four points over the second-place Washington Capitals and five over the third­place Thrashers.

Carolina is also 5-0-1 in its last six home games.

"This time of your year, you’ve got to look within your own stall and say, ‘I’ve got to bring what I’ve got tonight to help out.’" Carolina’s Scott Walker said. "That’s what everybody’s been doing. I think everybody’s been doing a great job.


Eric Perrin, Mark Recchi and Todd White scored for Atlanta.

Thrashers goalie Kari Lehtonen had one of his busiest nights of the season, making 41 saves. Twenty-one of those came in the first period when Carolina carried the play, out­shooting the Thrashers 21-5.

One thousand twenty-two square meters to the Notre Dame campus, additional cost. Parking lot surveil­ lence is nobody outside of our locker room that is going to make a difference," Philadelphia coach John Stevens. "It’s up to each guy to make a difference.

"This is a pretty much rock bottom turn now," Flyers captain Jason Smith said. "We better turn things around quickly now or we’re not going to be in a good spot.

Jonathan Cheechoo scored his 17th goal for the Sharks, who snapped a five-game losing streak. Evgeni Nabokov made 26 saves for San Jose.

Islanders 1, Lightning 0

This New York Islanders vic­ tory had it all: spotless goal­ tend­ing from Rick DiPietro, timely scoring from Miroslav Satan, and blissful quiet from Chris Simon.

The Tampa Bay Lightning never stood a chance.

Satan snapped a scoreless tie in the third period and DiPietro stopped 32 shots for the New York team, who worked their way back suspended forward Simon and won their sixth straight victory over the Tampa Bay Lightning on Thursday night.

DiPietro was perfect in snap­ ping the Lightning’s 10-game road run of earning at least one point (7-0-3). He blanked Tampa Bay for the second time this season despite New York missing key injured defensemen Brendan Witt, Andy Sutton, Bruno Gervais and Chris Campoli.

"Good living and good play­ing. I’m not sure what it is,” Islanders coach Ted Nolan said. "Ever since the Islanders broke a seven-game skid on Feb. 12 with a win against Philadelphia, they have been unstoppable.

New York is enjoying its best stretch since another six-game winning streak from Dec. 21- 31, 2003, and has climbed back into the Eastern Conference playoff chase.

Simon returned from a record-30-game suspension levied by the NHL against him in December for his skate stomp on the back of the leg of Pittsburgh’s Jarkko Ruutu.

Simon took his first shift 2 1/2 minutes into the opening peri­ od, alongside rookies Blake Comeau and Frans Nielsen on the Islanders’ fourth line, and heard a few cheers and louder boos when he hit the ice and touched the puck.

There were no boos.

"The most important thing is that we won,” he said. “My teammates have been so support­ ive and have been great to me. I can’t control what other people think and how they react. I respect that they have their opinion, and I’m just going to keep working hard in gaining them back.”

The Observer accepts classifieds every business day from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Notre Dame office, 804 South Dining Hall. Deadline for next-day classifieds is 3 p.m. All classifieds must be prepaid.

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Cleveland acquires Wallace in deadline deal

Ben Wallace, right, was traded to the Cleveland Cavaliers along with Wally Szczerbiak in a three-team deal that sent Larry Hughes and Drew Gooden to the Bulls.

Associated Press

Cleveland — LeBron James finally got some help to win an NBA title.

In an 11-player trade involving Cleveland, Chicago and Seattle, the Cavaliers acquired center Ben Wallace from the Bulls and forward Wally Szczerbiak from the SuperSonics, two players to possibly get James and the Cavs through the Eastern Conference and back to the finals.

Cleveland general manager Danny Ferry, unable to finalize major deals in the past, pulled off a colossal one as the clock ticked down in the final hours before Thursday’s 3 p.m. deadline.

The Cavaliers sent guard Larry Hughes, forwards Drew Gooden and Cedric Simmons, and guard Shannon Brown to Chicago, one of the game’s top inside enforcers, and forward Joe Smith.

Cleveland acquired the sharpshooting Szczerbiak and guard Delonte West from Seattle for forwards Ira Newble and Danny Marshall.

The Cavaliers will also get Chicago’s second-round pick in 2009. The Cavs acquired the pick in 2009.

The deal caps a busy month of trades around the NBA as several stars, including Shaquille O’Neal, Jason Kidd, Shawn Marion and Pau Gasol, were dealt to new teams. The Gasol swap triggered an arms race of sorts among the Western Conference’s top squads, while this one could have a big impact at the top of the East.

Plagued by injuries this season, the Cavaliers are nine games behind Detroit in the conference top squads, while this one could have a big impact at the top of the East.

Ben Wallace, the Cavaliers are getting a defensive intimidator. But Big Ben will give them little or nothing on offense. He was a disappointment for the underachieving Bulls, who might get him free. Or maybe not, or they could get him when they do.

Cleveland signed Wallace to a four-year, $60 million contract in 2006. He has two years remaining on that deal worth roughly $30 million.

IN BRIEF

Candace Parker forgoes senior season at Tennessee

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. — Candace Parker, the Tennessee National All-America forward who made dunking in women’s basketball almost commonplace, ended all the speculation.

Parker, the first woman to win a national slam dunk contest, will skip her senior season at Tennessee for the chance to play professionally.

“Parker said Wednesday. "I’ve been blessed with great coaches and teammates, an outstanding education and the best women’s basketball crowd support in the country. I will miss Tennessee, but I am eager to take this next step in my career.”

The redshirt junior will graduate at the end of this season and plans to participate in the summer Olympics.

Memphis faces Tennessee in battle of powerhouses

TOM — (AP) — Volunteers used to mean bragging rights within Tennessee. Come Saturday night, this usually non-incremental state rivalry, struts across the national stage.

No. 1 Memphis hosts No. 2 Tennessee — the 38th game between teams ranked Nos. 1 and 2 but only the fifth time the teams are from the same state.

"These 1-2 matchups are usually reserved for Tobacco Road or some place in Indiana or Ohio," Tennessee coach Bruce Pearl said Thursday.

"And the fact that it’s in Tennessee is something that I think all high school basketball players and high school coaches and different folks that love basketball in the state of Tennessee are certainly proud of.""}

Cincinnati and Ohio State played each other twice in the 1960s as No. 1 vs. No. 2, and Duke and North Carolina met twice in the 1990s.

Slugger Howard wins arbitration case

CLEARWATER, Fla. — Everywhere Ryan Howard turned, people wanted to dig into his pockets.

Howard’s bank account just skyrocketed like one of those home runs he deposits into the upper deck. Baseball’s best bargain finally will be getting big bucks.

Howard won his salary arbitration case against the Philadelphia Phillies on Thursday when he was awarded $10 million, the highest figure given a vel­

"My reaction is mostly relief," Howard said. "It was an interesting process. Anyone who look at it, it’s a win-win because it’s a substantial raise."

Howard made $900,000 last year and $255,000 during his MVP season in 2006, but Howard became the first player to win in six arbitration cases
Irish forward Luke Harangody shoots during Notre Dame's 82-70 win over Pittsburgh Thursday in the Joyce Center.

By EUGENIA ALFONZO
Sports Writer

The Irish will be tested this weekend as they travel to New York to defend their Big East conference title for the third year in a row.

Even though the team has been qualifying members for the Championship since the film and Gold invite from the beginning.

"We worked quite hard last week," Irish coach Joe Piane said. We worked quite hard last week, so we've been tapering down to let the kids who have been hanged up recover.

The Irish have achieved over 45 qualifications for the championships since December.

"John Cavanaugh is ranked first for the 800-m race," Piane said. "Also, Justin Schneider is ranked first for the 60-meter, 4 x 400-meter relay, and 4 x 800-meter relay are excellent as well."

The Irish hope that the well balanced structure of their team will give them an advantage as they head into tough competition at the New Balance Track and Field Center this weekend.

Each event has some real quality in it and we've got to score points in a lot of them," Piane said. "The 60-meter rare is going to be an important event because Georgetown is ranked first and second."

The 60-meter isn't the only event in which the Irish will face a challenge.

"The mile should be real good to watch along with the throws," Piane said. "Really every event will be good to watch."

The Irish are prepared to face off against Connecticut, Louisville, and Georgetown, forming four of the biggest contenders for this year's championship.

"There's four teams that could win it, and we're certainly one of the four."

Joe Piane
Irish coach

Failure to capture individual titles in 2007 led to second place finish last year. Connelly's outlook for the team this weekend is simple. "Right now the goal is to go in there and have each of the 24 women who will compete try to compete as well as they can and come away feeling that they did all they could to help the team," Connelly said. "In this sport you can't control what the other person or team does, all you can control is your own effort."

Contact Alex Barker at abarker1@nd.edu

ND WOMEN'S TRACK

24 to compete in conference tourney

Failure to capture individual titles in 2007 led to second place finish

By ALEX BARKER
Sports Writer

In the book of numbers, Notre Dame has the edge. Last year in the closely contested Big East indoor championships, Notre Dame finished a close second to Georgetown.

That time, the Irish had 22 athletes who qualified to participate. This year, they have 24.

Notre Dame will try to convert this advantage into better results in the form of team and individual championships.

But Irish coach Tim Connelly is not as concerned about improving the team's overall finish as much as he is routing for better individual results from his athletes. Notre Dame's failure to capture individual titles in 2007 doomed the team's chances.

"We're really not sure what to expect team-wise, as there are a number of really strong teams that should be in the hunt to place high," Connelly said. "To be honest, we really focus more on each athlete doing her best and contributing all that they can to the team effort."

The Irish have a slew of athletes who are favorites to place well in their respective events.

First among them is Anna Weber, who will look to continue her dominance in the weight throw and the shot put. Weber has set school records in both events and has already qualified for the NCAA meet in the shot put.

A reigning All-Big East performer, Mary Saxer looks to participate. This year, they have already qualified for the NCAA meet.

Meanwhile, Alyissa Hasan has a strong chance to win the Pentathlon; she has already qualified for the NCAA meet.

The Notre Dame runners — led by Joanna Schultz, Cora Daymon, Natalie Johnson and Kelly Langhans — hope to find more success in the running events than the Irish had last year.

Connelly's outlook for the team this weekend is simple. "Right now the goal is to go in there and have each of the 24 women who will compete try to compete as well as they can and come away feeling that they did all they could to help the team," Connelly said. "In this sport you can't control what the other person or team does, all you can control is your own effort."

Contact Alex Barker at abarker1@nd.edu

HARANGODY SMASH

Irish forward Luke Harangody shoots during Notre Dame's 82-70 win over Pittsburgh Thursday in the Joyce Center.

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regular rate is equal to the Prime Lending Rate (in effect on the day of the introductory period) MINUS 0.75%, which is at 8.00% for 6 months.

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Contact Alex Barker at abarker1@nd.edu

HD ON THE OBSERVER

Irish hurlers compete during the Blue-Gold Invitational on Dec. 7, 2007 at the Loftus Center.

WU YUE/The Observer
Duke overcomes doubles loss, downs squad

By DAN MASTERTON
Sports Writer

Notre Dame could not hand undefeated Duke its first loss of the season, as the No. 8 Blue Devils beat the Irish 4-3 in Durham, N.C. Thursday.

Kylene Rielley and Cosmina Ciobanu started the match strong with an 8-5 doubles win, and Kalli Kristik and Kristen Rafael clinched the doubles point for No. 15 Notre Dame (6-3) with an 8-6 victory.

Even with the doubles point in hand, Brook Buck and Kelsey Tefft, the No. 3 pair in the nation, made a strong showing, completing a sweep of the doubles matches with an 8-4 win.

Duke stole the momentum back, however — Gidanzu and Katie Potts dropped the first two singles matches, each by the score of 6-3, 6-1.

Kristik responded for the Irish by winning a hard-fought match over Duke’s Amanda Granson, 6-1, 7-6 (7-3). Granson pushed Kristik to a tiebreaker in the second set, but Kristik overcame Granson’s rally to tie the match at two.

The Blue Devils answered back when Tara Taylor and Tefft defeated Buck 6-3, 6-4. Ayer’s victory put the pressure back on Notre Dame, and it was up to Rielley and Tefft to win both the remaining matches.

Rielley pushed Duke’s Reka Zsilinszka to three sets, but the No. 13 singles player in the country won the third set convincingly. Zsilinszka’s 6-2, 3-6, 6-1 victory won the match for Duke.

The Irish finished strong as No. 59 Tefft fought her way to an upset victory over No. 16 Ellahe Zareh. Tefft rallied after losing the first set to improve to 10-1 in singles play on the dual season. Her 5-7, 8-6, 10-7 win made the final score 4-3 in favor of Duke.

The Irish will have to put this loss behind them quickly — two more elite opponents loom on this weekend’s three-game road trip. The tough stretch continues today as the Irish travel to Winston-Salem, N.C., to battle No. 19 Wake Forest (2-1).

The Demon Deacons have not played in 19 days, but they will try to shake off the rust and avenge a 7-0 loss to Notre Dame last year.

The all-time series is tied 9-9, but the Irish have won three straight. They will look to make it four in a row at the WPU Indoor Tennis Center at 3 p.m. today.

Contact Dan Masterton at dmastert@nd.edu

Irish junior Katie Potts returns a volley during Notre Dame’s 5-2 win over Ohio State on February 14 in the Eck Tennis Pavilion. The Irish lost to Duke 4-3 Thursday.

By KATE GRABAREK
Sports Writer

The Irish will look to rebound after falling short at the ITA National Indoor championship this past weekend when they play Purdue at home Sunday. Notre Dame (8-3) fell 4-0 and 5-0 to No. 8 UCLA and No. 12 North Carolina, respectively at the Indoor Championship but managed to defeat No. 16 Penn State 4-2.

“I was disappointed in the loss on Sunday,” Bayliss said. “We underestimated them. They played an inspired match against us and Butler on Saturday. They are one of the top eight in the nation. I didn’t feel all of the guys played their ‘A’ games.”

While the Irish struggled as a team, junior Brett Helgeson provided a bright spot in Seattle. He has carried a heavy load in singles play.

“Brett won the one match that he finished,” Bayliss said. “He had the match point against UCLA, and could have had three wins if they hadn’t ended the match.”

Another standout on the weekend was freshman Daniel Stahl. Bayliss said that Stahl has continued to surprise the coaching staff, and that his strength lays in his ability to put pressure on people from the back of the court.

Bayliss also noted that Purdue and the Irish have similar lineup styles.

“We both have good top of the lineup players,” Bayliss said. “They are an improved team. They have a very talented No. 1 singles player in sophomore Branko Kuzmanovic.”

Kuzmanovic, a native of Serbia, is a force at the top of the Boilermakers singles and doubles lineup.

“He has pushed a lot of the top players,” Bayliss said. “They also have a new second singles player in sophomore Slavko Bjelica.”

Bayliss also praised Purdue’s coach Tim Madden and noted that the Boilermakers will be feisty and competitive.

The Irish will try to pick up the five match win streak they were on before heading to Seattle last weekend. The match is set to start at noon at the Eck Tennis Pavilion.

Contact Kate Grabarek at kgrab01@stmarys.edu

North Dining Hall will be CLOSED Saturday, February 23rd, 2008 for Notre Dame’s Scholarship Fellowship Benefactor Dinner.

We apologize for the inconvenience.

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By KATE GRABAREK
Sports Writer

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We apologize for the inconvenience.

Irish attempt to boil Purdue

By KATE GRABAREK
Sports Writer

Notre Dame will be hoping for a strong showing against the Boilermakers this weekend. The Irish fell 5-0 to North Carolina in the final round of the consolation bracket.

“I was pretty disappointed with the loss on Sunday,” Bayliss said. “We underestimated them. They played an inspired match against us and Butler on Saturday. They are one of the top eight in the nation. I didn’t feel all of the guys played their ‘A’ games.”

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Contact Kate Grabarek at kgrab01@stmarys.edu

THIS WEEK IN #21 MEN’S BASKETBALL SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 24TH @ 2PM VS. SYRACUSE CELEBRATION OF 1978 FINAL FOUR TEAM EARLY ARRIVING FANS WILL RECEIVE A COMMEMORATIVE POSTER
**ND SOFTBALL**

**ND to play 2 in Gainesville**

By SAM WERNER  Spokes Writer

“Following days in the desert, the Irish seek water. A week after splitting four games in the Kajikawa Classic in Tempe, Ariz., Notre Dame will find a little hydration at the Aquafina Invitational tournament in Gainesville, Fla. Notre Dame will play a doubleheader today, facing Gardner-Webb at 11 a.m. and North Florida at 1:15 p.m. Irish coach Deanna Gumpf’s squad will then go up against unbeaten No. 7 Florida on Saturday. "Florida has a great pitching staff and they’re hitting the ball out of the park," Gumpf said. "They have a great pitching staff and they’re hitting the ball out of the park."" At 14-0, the Gators are off to their best start in school history.

"The goal with [Florida] is to win a big game," Gumpf said. "We’ve got to go in and make their starters work. We’ve got to go in and make their starters work.

**SMC BASKETBALL**

Belles try for rebound at Olivet

By MEAGHAN VESELIK  Sports Writer

After a nine-point loss to the No. 1 Hope on Saturday, Saint Mary’s is back on the road tonight, as it takes on Olivet in MIAA play. Saint Mary’s has showed consistence in the MIAA, but it is always striving for improvement on the road. The Belles shot 40.3 percent from the floor, going 81.8 percent to win a big game.

"We’ve got to go in and make their starters work. We’ve got to go in and make their starters work."

**WOMEN’S LACROSSE**

Irish travel to Ohio State to take on rivals

By ANDY ZICCARELLI  Sports Writer

Last weekend marked two important events for Notre Dame. The Irish notched two goals in their 22-10 win over Canisius — a tie for the school record for most points scored in a game. More importantly, Sunday’s 16-4 win over Duquesne marked the 100th victory in the history of the program, all of which have been under the direction of coach Tracy Goyne.

"It’s been since the beginning," Goyne said. "It’s been since the beginning."

"I think they deserved those honors," Gumpf said. "Katie, offensively, was on fire for us and came through big in situational hitting. Bargar did a great job off the mound for us.

Heading to Florida is just another trip for Notre Dame, as this week’s trip to travel from Tempe back to campus, down town to Gainesville — a total trip of more than 2,500 miles. Gumpf said she wouldn’t let the team be affected by the travel. "It’s in our mental state," Gumpf said. "It’s going to affect us if we let it affect us and it won’t affect us if we don’t let it affect us.

"We do the best when we’re at home, but when we hit the road it’s softball time."

Deanna Gumpf Irish coach

**THIS WEEK IN SPORTS**

**EARLY ARRIVING FANS WILL RECEIVE IRISH HOCKEY STREET SIGNS ON FRIDAY AND IRISH HOCKEY ICE SCRAPERS ON SATURDAY**

**#9 HOKEY vs. Ohio State**

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Win a pair of flights on Allegiant Air

Free admission for ND, SMC, HCC Students with ID

Friday, February 22, 2008
BASEBALL

Irish open season this weekend with four games

By FRAN TOLAN
Sports Writer

It might be hard to believe con­sid­er­ing the gloomy Notre Dame weather, but the Irish open their season with four games this weekend.

The squad will leave behind the frigid Indiana winter to compete in the Clearwater Invitational at Jack Russell Stadium in Clearwater, Fla. The Irish are slated to host tournament host Liberty today before playing a double-header Saturday and fin­ish­ing up against Albany Sunday.

Irish coach Dave Schrage said the end of the three days, you with the Irish and, despite posting a 28-28 record, he said the sea­son is a good opportunity to gauge his team’s progress since the event is a good opportunity to

season with four games this weekend with four games this weekend. The Irish will face Liberty down behind right-hand­ed ace David Phelps, who posted a 1.88 ERA last season.

The game begins at 1 p.m., Schrage said Liberty should be the most formidable

team of the three the Irish face in the tournament.

“They’re ahead of everybody a little bit because they’ve just been outside,” Schrage said. “And they’re usually one of the best three teams in the Big South [con­ference] anyway... They’ll be a good squad.”

The Irish will look to shut Liberty down behind right-hand­ed and David Phelps, who posted a 1.88 ERA last season.

On Saturday, Notre Dame will play a day-night doubleheader, with a game against Iowa during the afternoon then a nightcap against Albany. The Irish will face Albany again on Sunday.

Schrage said he is not necessar­ily concerned with the team’s record this weekend, saying instead he hopes the Irish treat the trip as an opportunity to improve.

“We don’t go into it saying, ‘I want to win four’ or ‘I want three,’” Schrage said. “The biggest thing is just play good and get better every day down here. You get the younger kids, get them some experience, test the nerves out and see where we’re at.”

Contact Fran Tolcan at ftolcan@nd.edu

MEN’S LACROSSE

Undefeated team to host Nittany Lions

By GRIFFIN DASSATI
Sports Writer

Even though Notre Dame is 1-0 behind Penn State, Irish coach Kevin Corrigan isn’t worried about his team’s record.

“Obviously there’s only two possible situations at the start of the season,” Corrigan said Thursday, “You’re either 1-0 or 1-0.”

Schrage said he expects a good

showing from his team this week­end.

“It’s always an adjustment, I think, just the depth perception and the background with being outside,” he said. “But I think we’re a little bit better than we were last season.”

In the season’s opening game, the Irish will take on Liberty today at 1 p.m. Schrage said Liberty should be the most formidable

out of 0-1. The ranking isn’t worried about his team’s record.

“When Notre Dame first played DePaul on Jan. 22, Irish coach Muffet McGraw called her squad the “worst defensive team in the Big East.” How things have changed.

Over No. 14 Notre Dame’s last six games — a five-game win streak ended by a 37-31 loss to No. 5 Rutgers on Tuesday — it has only allowed 60.2 points per game. McGraw credited the improvement to a change from a mostly man-to-man defense to an exclusive zone scheme.

“We need to clear the ball well and counteract their athleticism. There are a lot of chal­lenges in a game like this.”

These are two team’s first game against Penn State, Irish coach Kevin Corrigan isn’t worried about his team’s record.

“We need to control the tempo of the game and have the best defense in the Big East,” he said. “We’ve been stepping up and doing things.”

ND WOMEN’S BASKETBALL

Squad ready for DePaul rematch

By JAY FITZPATRICK
Assistant Sports Editor

When Notre Dame first played DePaul on Jan. 22, Irish coach Muffet McGraw called her squad the “worst defensive team in the Big East.” How things have changed.

Over No. 14 Notre Dame’s last six games — a five-game win streak ended by a 37-31 loss to No. 5 Rutgers on Tuesday — it has only allowed 60.2 points per game. McGraw credited the improvement to a change from a mostly man-to-man defense to an exclusive zone scheme.

“We were really pleased with the defense against Rutgers, and I have not been most of this sea­son. I am really happy with the zone,” she said.

The defensive improvement is even more impressive consid­ering the amount of injuries the Irish have had to deal with so far this season.

“Allie Quigley took over the game the last night against (Georgetown). She seems to be playing like a senior who is refus­ing to let her team lose. She is carrying the team,” McGraw said.

The Irish have their own senior who has taken over the team this season. Charel Allen leads Notre Dame in scoring for the second straight year, with 14.3 points per game. The senior guard also has 63 assists and 25 steals.

“Charel is a unanimous first team Big East player this year,” McGraw said. “She has been our go-to player for almost four years.”

Sophomore Ashley Barlow has given Allen help offensively, but McGraw said that she is more of a behind-the-scenes player than Allen.

“She does a lot of dirty work and a lot of little things,” McGraw said. “She will shoot some late threes, but Charel still gets the first look.”

Tipoff is at 2 p.m. on ESPNU.

Contact Jay Fitzpatrick at jfitzp@nd.edu

THIS WEEK IN SPORTS

MEN’S SWIMMING & FENCING MIDWEST CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIP

ALL DAY Fri-Sat, Feb. 22-23 STARTING AT 8AM
In the wake of one of the worst natural and humanitarian disasters ever to visit American shores, nearly 600 African Americans were airlifted to the almost entirely white state of Utah without knowing where they were going. Desert Bayou seeks to examine whether two cultures can come together in a time of utter chaos, or whether their differences prove too great a challenge to overcome. In their own words, evacuees of Hurricane Katrina tell how they survived the storm-of-the-century and out of the rubble ended up at a military installation in the desert of Utah. With interviews from recording artist Master P, celebrity Rabbi Shmuley Boteach, evacuees, political and military leaders, and community and social figures, the questions of race, politics, and religion hurtle toward each other in this truly American story: a story of loss and reunion, sorrow and rebirth, anger and rejoicing, but most of all, a story of hope.

Director Alex LeMay will discuss his film and answer questions from the audience following the first screening. LeMay is an award-winning feature film and broadcast director. Over his 14-year career, he has directed a number of acclaimed feature films, as well as provided commercial media for some of the world’s top-tier companies.

Friday, February 22, at 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. in Browning Cinema, DeBartolo Performing Arts Center

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Jackson continued from page 24

"I tried to cross over and I lost the ball because the ball was so slippery and my hands are so small — I ain't got big man hands," Jackson said. "I ended up getting it back — I thought I lost it — and I spun because the (defender) tried to cut me off. I just ended up spinning and I saw a wide open basket."

Jackson's bucket began a 22-6 run that turned the tide of the game and gave the Irish a 75-64 lead with 1:50 remaining in the contest. The spurt was capped off with two free throws by junior forward Ryan Ayers, who had drilled a 3-pointer two minutes earlier.

"I told [Ayers] to be more aggressive offensively," Luke Harangody said.

"McAlarney scored 13 of his 15 points in the second half," Harangody said. "That put even more in it for me."

"That was a huge (3-pointer) up top," said Mike Brey, Irish coach. "When I got my first good look of the second half, I just put it up and it went in," said McAlarney. "I'm kind of a rhythm player. If I hit one, I know that kinda gets me going a little bit and makes me feel good, helps me get into a rhythm on both ends of the court."

Brey said he was pleased that McAlarney never stopped hunting for shots.

"The one bomb he took to kind of break their backs, that wasn't a great shot but I loved that he took it because of the belief," Brey said.

"But the Panthers could not close out Notre Dame as most of the Joyce Center fans stood and cheered throughout the second half. The Irish notched their 35th straight home win in front of the boisterous crowd.

"It was the Loudest I ever heard it get in there tonight," Harangody said. "That's a great thing to have. It definitely helps a lot."
OSU
continued from page 24
appearance at the Joyce Center two weeks ago, when the Irish were outplayed by Ferris State in a 5-3 loss and 2-2 tie. Before that series, the Terriers were on a three-game record and hadn't lost in the Joyce Center since its second home game — a 3-1 loss to then-No. 5 Denver on Oct. 19. "This league is a lot better than people give it credit for," coach Jeff Jackson said. "Just because Ohio State isn't in the top eight of our standings doesn't mean they're not a good team. You really can't take anybody lightly in this league — that's just way it is, especially this time of season when everybody's jockeying for playoff position. If you're just a little bit off, you're going to beat.

Trace the Buckeyes' (10-21-3, 6-16-2 CCHA) poor record, they have shown their dangerous potential with CCHA wins over No. 1 Michigan and quality clubs like Bowling Green and Alaska. A team with a lot of talent that's obviously underevaluated, so the scary thing is if they start playing the way they can, they're a team that's going to run into good goal-tenders," said Jackson, who was pleased with his team's ability to get to the net throughout the Alaska series. "But we're not clicking as well as we'd like to be right now. If we were, we'd be scoring six goals a game."

Buckeyes goalie Joe Jackson and sophomore Jackson calls "one of the best young goalies in the country," presents another stall backup to thwart the Notre Dame attack.

The biggest thing against all goalies is just trying to move it across the crease on them," junior left wing Garrett Regan said. "It's just bringing it to the net as much as possible, as well as keeping screens and tips in front — if he can't see the puck, he's not going to be able to stop it."

With just one regular season home contest remaining after Thursday night's 71-58 with Battier that separated the one-year anniversary of the empty net and the Rockets shot 81 percent from the field, the Rockets scored 20 points in the fourth quarter. Landry had 19 points.

"We lost a couple of guys that were well-liked around here, well liked in the locker room," Rafer Alston said. "I've got to go out there and play basketball, but you've got to go out there and play."

In Miami, the NBA's worst team playing in its first game since the All-Star break, has just nine wins and has lost 25 of its last 26 games.

The Heat got 33 points from Dwayne Wade, and Shawon Marion added 18 points and 10 rebounds in his fourth game with Miami since being traded from Phoenix in the Shaquille O'Neal deal.

The Rockets lost comfortably most of the way and were ahead by 11 before Carl Landry wowed the crowd by putting his arms out as if he were taking it to a dunk from that dunk that made it 98-90 midway through the fourth quarter, Landry had 19 points.

"That 's the business side of things," Antell said. "It's pretty much like the Stanley Cup. It's as good as it gels."

Contact Matt Gamber at mgamber@nd.edu

Zahm
continued from page 24
tried to put it off the rebound. Rowland said, "We had two shots at it, and I finally put the third one in."

Zahm nearly answered after that rebound, but Keuris Antell stuffeted another attempt and kicked up the momentum on the Dillon side until a pair of Big Red penalties gave the Zambies a man-up advantage for about 18 straight minutes through the hall.

With just a few seconds remaining, an over the extended play coverage, Conor McNamara, a Carroll resident, received a textbook pass from sophomore Tim Thayer, who was stationed behind the net. McNamara blew the shot right by Kearns from eight feet, knotting the score at one and frustrating the Big Red bunch.

"They just kept up the intensity and didn't commit stupid penalties," Landry said. "We took too many cheap shots, and it costs us.

Three minutes later, sophomore Greg Antell — another Carl Landry regular — backhanded in a 98-90 lead to 20 points in the fourth quarter and came up with the collision limping on his surgically repaired left knee. Battier was called with the foul.

He appeared OK after a time-out and made both free throws. The scare had to have been one and frustrating the Big Red when after a steal, Luther Head found a wide-open McGrady, who had 10 assists, got back on track after struggling with poor shooting in his last five games to post his first 20-point game since Feb. 4.

The Heat went on a 10-4 run, capped by a 3-pointer this time, to open third quarter and cut it to 66-58. McGrady got the first five straight points to push their lead to 13 at 71-58 with 7 minutes left in the quarter.

Miami had the lead to eight points two more times in the third, but each time the Heat couldn't put down a small run to get the advantage of the empty net and the Rockets shot 81 percent from the field, the Rockets scored 20 points in the fourth quarter. Landry had 19 points.

"So hopefuly I can stay healthy," Antell said. "I have to go out there and play with all my heart, everyone. It's pretty much like the Stanley Cup. It's as good as it gets."

"Did I give a good sound byte there?"

Contact Matt Gamber at mgamber@nd.edu

NBA
Houston beats Miami for tenth straight win

Associated Press
HOUSTON — The Houston Rockets' 10th straight win was somewhat bittersweet. Tracy McGrady scored 23 points and Yao Ming added 20, but the Heat's 100th victory was Miami's second straight loss. The Heat had lost a franchise record and hadn't lost in the Joyce Center since its second home game — a 3-1 loss to then-No. 5 Denver on Oct. 19. "This league is a lot better than people give it credit for," coach Jeff Jackson said. "Just because Ohio State isn't in the top eight of our standings doesn't mean they're not a good team. You really can't take anybody lightly in this league — that's just way it is, especially this time of season when everybody's jockeying for playoff position. If you're just a little bit off, you're going to beat.

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Basketball

A double shot of T-Jack

Jackson's double-double leads team to victory

By FRAN TOLAN
Sports Writer

Tory Jackson is a mere 5-foot-11
But he played as if he was a foot taller than that Thursday as Notre Dame came from behind to beat Pittsburgh 82-70 at the Joyce Center.

In a matchup between the two best rebounding teams in the Big East, the Irish point guard grabbed 13 rebounds in go with his 16 points and five assists.

“He’s got great athletic ability and strength and he’s got such a will about him and heart,” Irish coach Mike Brey said. “He’s a winner. He really serves as a inspiration.”

Notre Dame trailed 58-53 with just over eight minutes to play when Jackson took the ball coast-to-coast for a layup. The sophomore appeared to lose control of the ball but managed to keep his dribble and spin through two Pittsburgh defenders before converting the basket.

Irish sophomore guard Tory Jackson goes for a layup during Notre Dame's 82-70 win over Pittsburgh Thursday. Jackson had 16 points and 13 rebounds.

Hockey

Irish return home for OSU

Icers take on Buckeyes in two games at JACC

By MATT GAMBER
Sports Writer

The Irish return home this weekend for a two-game set with conference foe Ohio State — and after last weekend’s trek to Fairbanks, Alaska, the Joyce Center has never seemed so appealing.

“We’re pretty excited to get back home and get our crowd back on our side,” said junior right wing Erik Condra, who leads Notre Dame with 33 points this season. “We need to get four fans excited about coming here and get ourselves excited about coming back home and dominating here.”

With a win in either tonight’s 7:35 opener or tomorrow’s 7:00 p.m. finale, the Irish (12-10-3, 14-7-3-1 BIG EAST) can clinch fourth place in the CCHA, which comes with a bye and a guaranteed home series in the conference tournament that begins March 7.

INTERHALL HOCKEY

Zahm upends Dillon to claim championship

By MATT GAMBER
Sports Writer

Before the puck was even dropped for Wednesday night’s Interhall hockey title game — before Dillon even stepped onto the ice for warm-ups — Zahm had set the tone.

With its serious (well, as serious as Interhall gets) approach, which included professional-style jerseys, an organized pre-game routine, and a rowdy fanbase, the Zahmies were able to outlast the defending champions, 3-1 by scoring three unanswered first-half goals.

“We’ve been a second-half team all year,” said Zahm junior goalie Chris Hall, who made 17 saves to lock down the win. “I think our depth was really a key, and we were able to bounce back and keep throwing new guys out there. They had two rotating lines … eventually, you’re going to get tired.”

The teams played a fast-paced but scoreless first half, during which Zahm fired 19 shots, including five straight on one power play, at Dillon freshman netminder Sean Kearns, who managed to keep his dribble and spin through two Pittsburgh defenders before converting the basket.

Irish sophomore guard Tory Jackson goes for a layup during Notre Dame's 82-70 win over Pittsburgh Thursday. Jackson had 16 points and 13 rebounds.

FOOTBALL

New coach says blitzes fit with ND

By BILL BRINK
Sports Writer

Despite facing questions about his defensive style meshing with defensive coordinator Corwin Brown’s 3-4 scheme and his affinity for the blitz, the only doctrinal tidbit John Tenuta revealed in his introductory press conference Thursday was his strategy for sneaking into the football stadium at Ohio State.

“I never got caught,” Tenuta said with a proud smile. “For six years they couldn’t catch me.”

Tenuta, who joined the Irish as the new assistant head coach/defense on Jan. 31 after serving as the defensive coordinator at Georgia Tech for six years, will coach the linebackers next season. He arrived in South Bend Monday and has been working with the linebackers, but said he’s not sure exactly what he has to work with.

“I’ve watched film of him,” he said. “But, I mean, that’s a tough question after four days. I’ve got...