Puppies sniff out student stress

by AMANDA GRAY

Wet noses warmed student hearts at the first “Puppy Days” event, held at Notre Dame’s Knights of Columbus building Friday.

The event, sponsored by student service commissioner’s Constituent Services Committee and Circle K, brought five dogs and a rabbit from the Humane Society of St. Joseph County to campus to relieve student stress, event coordinator sophomore Lizzie Helpling said.

“Because we live on a college campus, we’re isolated from ‘petable’ animals,” she said. “Talking to my friends, pets are what they miss most at college.”

More than 500 students attended the event, five times the number organizers planned for, Helpling said.

“From having a dog at home, I know how relaxing it is to pet an animal,” she said. “This gives students a taste of home and shows them the responsibilities of owning a pet just out of college.”

Student hits building, flees scene

Observer Staff Report

Police arrested a Notre Dame senior Saturday night when he crashed his truck into a vacant building at a South Bend intersection and then fled the scene of the accident.

Sgt. James Walsh from the South Bend Police Department said the crash occurred around 10 p.m. at the intersection of Eddy Street and South Bend Avenue.

“The driver overcorrected on his turn and drove into the building,” Walsh said.

Walsh said none of the evidence points to intoxication as a factor in the accident.

The student left his car and returned home. Walsh said the building was structurally sound before the crash and is now “very unstable and dangerous.”

Police arrested the student at see CRASH/page 4

Project supports cancer patients

By MEL FLANAGAN

Hundreds of students gathered in South Dining Hall Saturday afternoon to make fleece blankets for cancer patients at the annual Aidan Project.

The project, sponsored by Circle K and Knott Hall, began in 2006 when former Knott resident Aidan Fitzgerald, then a sophomore, was diagnosed with testicular cancer.

Over 400 students attended Saturday’s event. Knott service commissioner Mitchell Lopes said participants made 324 blankets and raised $2,000 from T-shirt sales, both improvements from last year’s event.

The money will be donated to the Riley Hospital for Children in Indianapolis where Fitzgerald was treated. The blankets will be donated to multiple hospitals, but primarily to Riley. Lopes said Fitzgerald developed the idea for the project after he went into remission.

“After he beat the cancer he thought it would be great if he could start something in tribute to cancer [treatment], so he came up with this project,” Lopes said.

“[He had a friend in] Circle K and lived in Knott, so he...

see BLANKET/page 5

ND police investigate attempted stabbing

Observer Staff Report

A female student attempted to stab a male student acquaintance in a Siegfried Hall room Sunday night.

The incident occurred around 8:40 p.m., University spokesman Dennis Brown said. The male student was not injured and Notre Dame Security Police was questioning the female student on Sunday night, he said.

WNDU reported that after a struggle, the male was able to take the knife and locked the girl in the room until officers arrived.

Siegfried rector Fr. John Conley deferred comment to University officials and Brown declined further comment.

At the time of publication, the students’ names had not been released and there was no information about potential charges.

Music duo heads to Uganda

By NICOLE MICHELS

This winter break, Notre Dame seniors Nick Gunty and Brian Powers will have the opportunity to combine social justice with their passion for songwriting.

After they finish their final exams, the two will head to Khindu, Uganda, to record an album with the Barefoot Truth Children’s Choir and the group, “Persuasion Discussion.”

“This project is about producing music with a message,” Powers said. “The songs that we write are going to be about what they’re going through in Uganda. The great thing about this project is that it has the potential to reach a large amount of people.

...The musical duo named itself “The Frances Luke Accord.” Gunty and Powers said they plan to pursue musical careers after graduation.

see BAND/page 5
**Question of the Day: What is your favorite type of puppy?**

- **Sean Hilson**
  - Graduate student
  - Off campus
  - "Corgies."

- **Alessia Pala**
  - Freshman
  - Welsh Family
  - "Bulldog."

- **Danielle Guilfoy**
  - Junior
  - Badin
  - "Boxer."

- **Ellie Tuminello**
  - Freshman
  - Welsh Family
  - "Shih Tzu."

- **Lauren Couey**
  - Junior
  - McGlinn
  - "Lil’ Bow Wow."

- **Margaret Archibald**
  - Junior
  - Badin
  - "Pekapoop."

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**Have an idea for Question of the Day? Email obsphoto@gmail.com**
Priest speaks on poverty and compassion in cities

By VIENNA WAGNER
News Writer

The first step to aiding the poor is to stand with them, Fr. Fred Kammer said in a lecture to Urban Plunge participants Sunday.

Kammer is the executive director of the Jesuit Social Research Institute and has worked as the president of Catholic Charities USA. The lecture, titled, “Building Justice in the Cities,” addressed breaking the cycle of urban poverty.

“Making the invisible visible is the first step to compassion,” Kammer said. “Standing with the poor is a touchstone that gives us a wisdom that comes from the poor themselves and leads us to make judgments in favor of the poor.”

Kammer said casting away these views and keeping contact with the poor is crucial.

"Think about your life and try to maintain contact with at least one person who is poor or marginalized and support one issue pertaining to the poor," he said. "Connect the face of Christ to the poor."

This practice of seeing God in the poor is a longstanding one, Kammer said. He appealed to students to follow the example of historical Israel and show their faith by helping those in need.

"In biblical Israel... the poor became a measure of Israel's fidelity to the Lord," Kammer said. "We Christians should ask the question, 'How will this affect the poor? The fundamental moral criterion for all economic policies is that they must be at the service of all people, especially the poor.'"

Kammer said once people make an initial commitment to stand with the poor, they might change the way they live their own lives.

"One of the first reactions that people have is to adopt a simpler lifestyle," he said. "This choice is a stance appropriate to students. Individuals who stand with the poor also stand with them in their career choices whether by choosing to teach in inner-city schools instead of the suburbs or doing social work in place of commercial law."

"The needs of the poor take priority over the desire of the rich," Kammer said.

Kammer said always maintaining hope is crucial, as he differentiated between hope and optimism.

"Standing with the poor can usher us into their own experience of failure and marginalization," Kammer said. "It’s therefore important for us to maintain a fundamental attitude of hope."

Contact Vienna Wagner at vwagner2@nd.edu

Fr. Fred Kammer speaks about breaking the cycle of urban poverty in his lecture on Sunday. He said standing with the poor is the first step to helping them.

He's on His way

Christmas starts with Christ

Please join us for the monthly Respect Life Mass on December 5th at 5:15 p.m. at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart. Mass will be celebrated by Bishop Kevin Rhoades of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

Following Mass, the University Faculty for Life will host a reception in the Coleman-Morse Lounge.

Follow us on Twitter @ObserverNDSMC
The project died down, and I've been trying to revive it for the last three years. Bringing it back as a project and event, especially with all these people here, is amazing,” Carlson said.

On-campus service organization Circle K volunteers support at the Humane Society, senior Jessica Choi, leader of that volunteering effort, said, “It means a lot to me that we got the Humane Society out to campus,” she said Friday. “The project died down, and I've been trying to revive it for the last three years. Bringing it back as a project and event, especially with all these people here, is amazing.”

Choi said Circle K is always looking for more volunteers to add to the group, which trains the animals for adoption by walking them and spending time with them. “In terms of volunteers, we want dedicated people with lots of love for service and animals,” she said. “They have to have a lot of time.”

For more information on the Humane Society and volunteering with Circle K, visit http://www.humanesocietysouthbend.org.

Contact Adam Llorens at alllorens@nd.edu
Saint Mary’s hosts Winter Wonderland

By REBECCA O’NEIL

News Winter

South Bend may still be void of snow, but Saint Mary’s students welcomed children from the community to a Winter Wonderland celebration Saturday.

The Student Activities Board (SAB) held the second annual holiday party in various locations around Saint Mary’s. The event for the poorly-privileged children aged live to 12. The children in attendance were invited to go from Coquillard Primary Center, a Title I school the College collaborates with, and Coquillard Primary Center listening to children’s, as well as college and dormitory performance of the Aiden Project, a children’s choir.

Sophomore Emily Murphy worked a shift with Santa Claus, helping children create picture frames for their photographs with San-

ta. “They got their picture pulled apart, which was nice. The [children] made the pic-
ture frame while the picture development,” she said. “I helped out with the glue gun because we didn’t want them to get hurt.”

Junior Megan Woodring, a member of the Special Events Committee, said in the press release that SMC semiannual holiday party purpose: to give back dur-
ing the holiday season. “Winter Wonderland stands for the aid of others.”

Contact Rebecca O’Neil at roneil01@stmarys.edu

“Seeking More?”

Consider Time with God on a Silent Directed Retreat

January 9-15, 2012

Looking for God in your life? Ready to take some time away from your usual routine for a retreat focused on silent prayer and reflection? Wondering where God might be leading you? This retreat allows for personal prayer, reflection, discernment, and spiritual growth.

For more information, please contact: Tami Schmitz at 574-631-3016 or tami.schmitz.33@nd.edu.

Contact Mel Flanagan at mflanagan@nd.edu
We throw around the term “majority” and “minority” everywhere. In any case in which we can use the term “majority,” we are implying there is a minority. This applies to spheres of race, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, ability, religion, national origin, age, etc.

Let’s focus on race. Notre Dame’s undergraduate student body is 72 percent white — no new facts here. You are in the majority if you fall into the white category. If you count in this majority, it can feel as if the invitation from any minority group doesn’t apply to you. It may even seem much less welcoming to you.

I don’t blame you for feeling left out sometimes. Notre Dame’s environment makes me feel self-conscious about how I fit into my “race” as a minority student. Interestingly, I found out that this doesn’t only apply to me and other minority students.

Many of my white friends repeatedly express similar sentiments. My white friends who belong to diverse settings back home especially find the “race” landscape to be much more exclusive at Notre Dame. One friend specifically wanted it like this: “Taking part in a minority’s event at Notre Dame feels like trying to be overly politically correct.”

These sentiments showcase why diversity is a discussion that must be taken up by both the majority and minority. They also confirm that we have a lot of work to do.

So far, Notre Dame has made many great efforts to bring diversity to the discussion. Many passionate students, staff and community members come together for the Practicum in Diversity Education to train upperclassmen for freshmen’s Contemporary Topic’s Diversity Day. Multicultural Student Programs and Services also have great support systems for the student clubs concerning diversity. Difficulties arise in trying to balance providing support for minorities while facilitating the relationship between the majority and minority. Despite the existing programs, we have more to do.

We cannot afford to forget revealing the actual dynamics that underlay the minority-majority dialogue. The first step to any problem solving should be gauging the starting point.

“Show Some Skin. The Race Monologues” formed itself on exactly this as its base; they want to start from scratch. It’s a brand new project sponsored by the Student Government and the Center for Undergraduate Scholarly Engagement (CUSE). The production “aims to provide a platform for sharing experiences on ethnicity and race to enhance our ongoing conversation on diversity in the Notre Dame community.”

They want to hear from every angle on “race.” Everyone has something to say about race, whether or not you’re in a majority or a minority. This may be someone who thinks race doesn’t influence your life at all. You may think race carves out a different space for you in society. You may feel that you don’t fall into society’s racial categories. However you feel, there is a story underneath it.

Imagine reliving those moments that made you think about race and put it down on paper. Help us to get into your shoes by describing that moment with your five senses, then share your story with “Show Some Skin. The Race Monologues.”

The event team is collecting anonymous submissions at a someskin@gmail.com and at Dr. Lucero’s office in 232 Geddes Hall until Jan. 31, 2012.

The collected submissions can be up to 500 words. The donated stories will become the production’s property and may be reproduced through performance, publication or other media.

“Show Some Skin. The Race Monologues” will take place in March of 2012. Auditions for story readers (performers) will be held in early February. Those interested in auditioning can email the team at racemonologues@gmail.com.

Whatever you think, The Race Monologues team wants to hear from you.

“You” not only implies the minority, but also the majority. Participation from the majority cannot be foregone. What’s your story? Show us some of your skin, no matter what color it is.

Edithstein Cho can be reached at echo@nd.edu.

The views expressed in this column are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer.
It's funny. There are many stereotypes at Notre Dame about the different majors available in each of the university's colleges. Engineering and Architecture are probably the most visible. Science is pretty hard. In fact, both business students you'll find at the Mendoza College of Business and Arts and Letters is a breeze.

In the business school, there is this air of superiority with regards to Arts and Letters. It seems students think we don't learn things that we will use in the real world, we are all going to get respectable paying jobs. On what earth are you going to do with a history or classics major? I remember sitting in an upper level philosophy class when my professor made a remark about how he was embarrassed that his alma mater had a business school. He jokingly said, "There aren't any business students in this class." It then hit me that many departments within the arts and business majors must reciprocate the feeling of superiority toward business majors. They probably thought they were the intellectuals, searching for the answers to the deeper questions in life. Each side judged the other, thinking themselves better.

How many times a day do we see this? We find a similar situation between people who drink and people who do not. In my personal experiences, it seems that students who drink don't really care if others choose to not. However, some students who do not drink judge those who do. I'm probably being too soft in my statement, I've seen some guys when I'm out on the weekends. When I go to church and work with community service organizations, I'm ashamed and would rather not admit it. People may feel a bit superior when my less religious friends roll their eyes when I turn on Klove (my favorite Christian radio station). I also feel somewhat foolish when my pastor asks to be friends on Facebook. What if they read for fear of what he might say?

Why do we compartmentalize our lives? Why do we judge those who behave contrary to ourselves?

Now, I'm wary of relativism. While not everything is absolutely black and white, I believe there are single right parties to many issues, there are correct and incorrect value systems.

However, in the more minor things of life, what right do we have to judge each other?

Jesus condemned hypocrisy and warned us that we will be held accountable for our actions and thoughts. Imagine you're driving down the darkest and deepest secrets — the times you broke the rules, the times you lied, your sexual life. Our Heavenly Father already knows all of this. Sometimes, I cry at the thought. So, do we really think management or sociology is a joke of a major, regardless of whether you can drink or not, just remember that we do not answer to each other.

We answer to God.

Dee Tian is a senior marketing major pursing a second major in philosophy and anthropology. She can be reached at g.danko@nd.edu

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

Christmas has taken hold of Notre Dame, and the evidence is all around us. There’s no snow, but there are more than enough red and green lights to make up for it. From South Dining Hall to dorm rooms, students, faculty and staff have stepped up and decked out campus to spread holiday cheer. Check out some of the best decorations from around campus.

Although there may be no snow dotting Notre Dame’s campus yet, Section 4A of McGlinn, left, has managed to turn its hallway into a Winter Wonderland. Right, the fairy lights illuminate the beautifully crafted paper snowflakes, bringing Christmas cheer to all who pass through the hallway.

Jordan Hall of Science has caught the Christmas bug. Its tree, right, which sits in the main hallway, is topped by a beautiful angel, top left, and decorated with gorgeous ornaments. Although Jordan sits on the far edge of campus, it’s worth the trek to check out the decorations.

Left, the Christmas tree decorates the room of juniors Kristen Kelly and Betsy Mastropieri. Right, a stocking hangs outside their door. Their room may be small, but that didn’t stop these two girls from getting a full-size Christmas tree to celebrate the holiday season.
Clockwise from the top: a gingerbread house and poinsettia plant dot the inside of South Dining Hall; a wreath garnishes the east exit; presents and garlands decorate the deli station; a present sits on the bench next to the waffle irons; a holiday village adorns the front window; the crèche graces the east exit; a display of presents embellishes an upper ledge. The workers at South Dining Hall have outdone themselves this year. From the traditional crèche above the east exit to a holiday village, even Scrooge would leave full of Christmas cheer.

From its front hall to its dorm rooms, left, Lewis Hall embodies the fall holiday mood. Its tree, right, lights up the front hallway. The dorm celebrates all the major holidays of the season.
If you’ve been following sports over the past week — and let’s be honest, if you’re reading this column, you probably have been — you’ve noticed a peculiar trend. The big story hasn’t been the mess atop the BCS standings, but it has been the NFL. It’s headed by the Packers’ utter domination of the other teams in the NFL.

The NFL’s playoff games give us some of the most drama-filled, pressure-packed moments of the season. If you love watching a great Christmas Day match-up better the Heat and the Celtics on national television. When professional basketball is at its best, with two immensely talented teams battling for a full game in front of a jam-packed arena, it is among the most thrilling experiences in sports.

There are too many regular-season games. There are too many overpaid, under-talented players. There are not enough meaningful games. There are not enough marque marquee matchups.

The problem, of course, is that professional basketball is rarely at its best.

There are too many regular-season games. There are too many teams. There are too many overpaid, under-talented players. There are not enough meaningful games. There are not enough marquee matchups.

The problem, of course, is that professional basketball is rarely at its best.

The NBA tried to fix the situation by ingful games.

If you lost the purse, please contact Katie Kohler at: Kathleen.e.kohler@gmail.com

If you or someone you love needs some help work? The top 12 teams in the league would play for a single playoff berth, and the others would go to the NBA Draft.

The problem, of course, is that there are not enough marquee matchups.

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There are not enough meaningful games.
SMC BASKETBALL

By PETER STEINER
Sports Writer

Saint Mary’s takes down Alma to earn first conference win

With a convincing 72-50 victory over Alma, the Belles snapped a three-game losing streak and returned to a .500 record in conference play.

The Belles combined a strong offense with an improved defensive effort to garner their first MIAA win this season, Saint Mary’s coach Jenn Henley said.

“I was very pleased with today’s game. I thought our defense was much improved,” she said. “I think offensively we worked the ball a little bit better than what we had in the past and we took better shots within our sets.”

The Belles (3-5, 1-1 MIAA) took control of the game early with a 25-4 run three minutes into the first half, but the Scots (1-5, 1-1) countered with a 9-1 run of their own, cutting the Belles’ lead to eight going into halftime. According to Henley, the Belles learned from this lapse in defense to pick up the Belles’ lead to eight going into halftime, the Belles proved they could play both offense and defense. Only eight minutes into the second half, the Belles had gained a 25-point lead, limiting the Scots to eight points in that stretch. With points coming from five different Belles players after the 12-minute mark, the Belles lead never dropped below 17 points.

Yet it was Saint Mary’s defense that spurred its offense, leading to 37 points off turnovers and contributing 44 rebounds that helped propel the team to victory. Senior guards Patsy Mahoney and Maggie Ronan also added 19 points and 15 points, respectively, for the Belles. Overall, Henley said she was extremely satisfied with her team’s play Saturday.

“They all played well,” Henley said Saturday. “They all worked so hard in practice, and they had a really nice chemistry out on the floor tonight.”

The Belles look to continue their strong showing and a competitive season this year.

Contact Peter Steiner at pstein@nd.edu

SMC SWIMMING AND DIVING

Dalrymple excels, but Belles fall to ninth in 10-team field

By VICKY JACOBSEN
Sports Writer

Senior captain Audrey Dalrymple led the way for the Belles again, as they closed out the first half of the season with a ninth-place individual finish at the Calvin Winter Invitation on Saturday.

Dalrymple claimed Saint Mary’s highest finish of the meet with a seventh-place finish in the 100-yard breaststroke, clocking in at 1:07.04. She also placed eighth in the 200-yard individual medley (IM) with a time of 2:25.50. “[Dalrymple] had a great meet; she just missed the NCAA qualifying time in the [200-yard] breaststroke, and she had a solid swim in her [200-yard] IM as well.” Belles coach Mark Benishek said.

Dalrymple was not the only one who earned points for Saint Mary’s (1-3, 0-2 MIAA) over the weekend. Senior captains Katie Donovan and Megan Price and sophomore Sarah Thompson teamed up with Dalrymple for the 800-yard freestyle relay, as the squad finished 16th overall with at time of 2:18.16. Sophomore Genevieve Spittert finished 16th in the 200-yard fly at 2.33.16, and junior Kristyn Gerbeth took 16th in the 100-yard fly at 1:05.03.

Saint Mary’s finished ninth in the 10-team field after racking up 47 points (the top 16 finishers in each event score points for their school). Division III member Grand Valley State led the competition with 980 points, while Indianapolis and Northern Michigan, both Division II programs, took second and third with 661 and 466 points, respectively. The Belles did outscore Alma, an MIAA opponent, who went home with just 25 points.

“I think we had a good showing. It was a little bit better than what I was expecting, so that’s always good to see,” Benishek said. “I think we’re definitely going to make some changes with our spring training, try to build a little bit more strength and help with some of the cardio level so we can stretch for a little bit longer and start shooting for the end of the season here.”

The Winter Invitational marked the Belles’ last meet before heading home for winter break.

“I know we’re going to be having the Christmas break coming up, which is always a little bit of a challenge when releasing the team and letting them go home for a while,” Benishek said. “It’s on them to keep their training while they’re at home before they report back and we begin our training at the beginning of January.”

Benishek said he’s been pleasantly surprised by his squad’s performance so far this season.

“We’re definitely ahead of where we were last year training-wise and conditioning-wise in all facets and in all individuals, so that’s good to see on our part and a great thing to have,” Benishek said. “The effort’s where it needs to be, and we’re starting to see a stronger showing and a competitive season this year.”

The Belles will return to campus in time for their training trip to Arizona from Dec. 28 to Jan. 5, before resuming MIAA competition when they travel to play Hope on Jan. 13.

Contact Vicky Jacobson at vjacobse@nd.edu
By CONOR KELLY
Sports Writer

For most seasons, Irish coach Tim Welsh wants to see evidence of his teams’ improvement by Christmas. Even this year, the time the calendar turns to December. After this weekend’s Hawkeye Invitational at the University of Iowa, Welsh has already seen that and then some.

“In this fashion that I’ve ever had a team at Christmas-time,” Welsh said. “We are looking for improvement. That’s what the fall season is all about.”

Irish head into winter break with a solid 3-3 start and a potential superfor-superstar in the making.

In the first year of his career at Notre Dame, Welsh has seen his teams’ times improving by more than eight points, sometimes in the 50-meter freestyle, and that’s where we’ve got to get better. We’ve already raced them three times, and looking at the times, there’s no question that they’re faster. But that’s the level at which we want to compete. That’s what we want to do.”

The Hawkeye Invitational also marked the last collegiate ac-tion the Irish will experience in 2011, as the team will rest and regroup before heading to Costa Rica for the Copa Coqui in San Juan, Puerto Rico, on Jan. 6.

Contact Conor Kelly at cskelly17@nd.edu

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By CORY BERNARD
Sports Writer

Reaney breaks school record as Notre Dame finishes fourth

After completing their last competition of 2011, the Irish head into winter break with a solid 3-3 start and a potential super for-superstar in the making.

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Improved Irish place third behind Michigan, Iowa

By CONOR KELLY
Sports Writer

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ND Women’s Swimming and Diving

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ND Men’s Swimming and Diving

Improved Irish place third behind Michigan, Iowa

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Sports Writer

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**Bowl**

continued from page 16

“They’re a very good defense. We’ve just got to come prepared,” Floyd said. “Florida State ... is probably the best defense we’ll play this year. They’re very athletic and fast and big, too.”

Despite watching sophomore quarterback Andrew Hendrix and sophomore quarterback Tommy Rees the starting half of its loss to Stanford on Nov. 26, Floyd said the team was excited for the second night of a series, but we had to come prepared, “Plain and simple.”

The Irish did not score their first goal of the game until they were down 6-0 with 12 seconds left in the second period, when freshman center T.J. Tynan’s powerplay slapshot beat Huskies junior goaltender Chris Rawlings. Junior left wing Nick Larson added a third period goal when he deflected a shot from sophomore defensemen Kevin Lind, but both goals ultimately proved to matter little.

“That was a disgrace to the Irish on Saturday compared to the previous night’s defeat. “It’s always tougher on the second night of a series, but we had to play with more grit, there’s no question about that, and I thought we did a better job for the most part,” Jackson said. “And the difference in the game was four-on-four and special teams, bottom line.”

Johnson was inserted back into the lineup for Saturday’s contest and performed well, tallying 13 saves and yielding just two goals against Northeastern.

“[It’s] a nice way to finish the season, to be part of the Champs Sports Bowl.”

The Irish face the Seminoles on Dec. 29 at 5:30 p.m. in Orlando’s Citrus Bowl Stadium. The game will be televised on ESPN.

Contact Sam Gans at sgans@nd.edu

Irish junior running back Cierre Wood dodges a defender during Notre Dame’s 28-14 loss to Stanford on Nov. 26.

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With responses from

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7:30 PM
Tuesday, December 6th, 2011
McKenna Auditorium at the University of Notre Dame Conference Center
**Barber**

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in terms of point scoring, that is for sure,” Piane said. “For Barber, though, her success came despite first-rage jitter.

“I didn’t think I would be able to hurdle and long jump as well as I did,” Barber said. “It all came together at the right time. I was super nervous. For long jump I was okay, but for hurdles and the [400-meter] I was freakin’ out before the race.”

Irish sophomore sprinter Aijah Ursery also captured multiple wins on the women’s side by winning the 50-meter and 200-meter dashes.

On the men’s side, freshman Christopher Giesing took the top spot in Notre Dame’s one-two-three finish in the 400-meter dash, in front of sophomore Patrick Peeney and junior Brendan Dougherty. Led by first-place finisher junior Jeff Macmillan, the Irish also swept the podium and took seven of the top eight positions in the 5,000-meter run.

Overall, Notre Dame took first place in 20 of the day’s 33 events — 11 on the women’s side and nine on the men’s side. By qualifying 25 female athletes and 35 male athletes for the Big East championships, the Irish enjoyed a promising start to their season. Piane said.

“Normally, we look to try to get 40 to 45 [qualifiers], and we ended up with 60,” Piane said. “So that’s a really good performance, a great start. It really is. “Just to put it in perspective ... Both Marquette and DePaul combined had 17 [qualifiers]. We are in pretty good shape already. There are other people that have qualified in the past that didn’t make it [on Friday], so we are going to get more qualifiers, there is no doubt.”

The Irish achieved high finishes across the board on Friday, due in part to their dedication during practice, Barber said.

“I think we were successful because of all the hard work we put in before,” she said. “Practices are not easy at all, and everybody works hard at practice and does what they are supposed to do, and that’s why it worked out.”

The next event on Notre Dame’s schedule is the Grand Valley State University Holiday Open in Allendale, Mich., on Dec. 16 and 17, an event in which only a small number of Irish athletes will participate. After opening their season with a strong showing, the Irish face a long layoff before returning to action.

“A vast majority of the team will not compete now until January,” Piane said. “This really gives everyone an idea of where they are in terms of conditioning. Whether it be what kind of shape they are in for running a distance race, or are they ready to do [throws], or jump, or sprints or hurdle well. And I think we found a lot out this past Friday.”

**Novosel**

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the paint, but made just one of 12 shots from behind the arc. “I thought Natalie was really ready to play when she came out and just took over offensively, and then she found [Devereaux] a couple times. I thought [Devereaux] had a really good game too — no fouls, rebounded and scored ... I thought those two pretty much carried us. I don’t think any of the other starters scored … I thought those two were ready to play when she came out of the game for it.”

Achonwa powered Notre Dame’s improved play Sunday, scoring a career-high 29 points and asserting Notre Dame’s presence in the post. The Irish led the Bluejays (4-3) 30-3 at one point in the first half, holding Creighton scoreless for the first eight minutes and 24 seconds of the game.

“With players like Natalie and [junior guard] Skylar [Diggins] and even [Devereaux] being such a presence, they have to guard them,” Achonwa said. “So as soon as I touch the ball, it’s almost like a golden light telling me to go to the basket. It’s really easy.”

Although Notre Dame committed 15 turnovers, the squad forced 25, leading to 32 points off those turnovers while shooting 52 percent for the game.

“We talked about energy,” McGraw said Sunday. “We had a lot of good positive energy today. We were into the game more. I think we were really flat [Friday] and we needed to make up for it.”

Notre Dame looks to extend its four-game win streak when it takes the court Wednesday at the Purcell Pavilion at 7 p.m.

**Ernst & Young**

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Contact Joseph Monardo at jmonardo@nd.edu
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THE OBSERVER
Irish senior receiver Mike Floyd makes a catch during Notre Dame’s 28-14 loss to Stanford on Nov. 26. Notre Dame accepted an invitation Sunday to play Florida State in the Champs Sports Bowl.

By ALLAN JOSEPH
Sports Editor

After two early-season losses dashed Notre Dame’s early-season BCS bowl hopes, the Irish found the next best thing at the end of the season, accepting an invitation Sunday to play Florida State in the Champs Sports Bowl in Orlando, Fla., on Dec. 29.

While it might not be a New Year’s Day game, Irish coach Brian Kelly said he was excited to see a matchup of two of college football’s most storied programs.

“I think having two teams like Notre Dame and Florida State, who have overcome some adversity earlier in the year but have come back to be playing really good football, makes for a marquee matchup,” Kelly said.

While Notre Dame (8-4) did not attain its BCS aspirations, Kelly said he is nevertheless proud of his squad.

“Anytime you open up the season you always have high expectations, and our football team had high expectations coming in. When some of the things don’t go your way, you look towards your senior leaders and how they’re going to respond,” Kelly said. “We’re really proud of this football team and the way they responded after an 0-2 start.”

The Seminoles (8-4, 5-3 ACC) won their first two games of the season before dropping three straight games against Oklahoma, Clemson and Wake Forest. Florida State rebounded to finish out the season 6-1, with the lone blemish coming in a 14-13 loss to Virginia on Nov. 19. Second-year coach Jimbo Fisher leads the Seminoles, who boast an athletic defense that gave opposing offenses fits all year long.

“They’re obviously very talented defensively,” Kelly said. “It’s going to be a great challenge for us, but one that I know we’ll be prepared for. Last year going into the Sun Bowl against Miami we had a great defense to prepare for, and we think we’ve seen some really good teams this year.”

“When you play a bowl game, these are the kind of challenges that you want.”

Senior receiver Michael Floyd said preparation will be the key to Notre Dame’s success against the Seminoles.

ND TRACK AND FIELD

ND qualifies 60 for Big East championships

By JOSEPH MONARDO
Sports Writer

It began with the bang of a gun and, when it was over, Notre Dame had begun its 2011-2012 season with a bang of its own.

The Irish qualified 60 athletes for February’s Big East championships at Friday’s season-opening meet, the Blue and Gold Invitational at the Loftus Sports Center. The invitational brought competitors from DePaul, Marquette, Bethel College, Butler and Detroit to South Bend.

In a day filled with victories for the Irish, freshman Kaila Barber captured first place in the 60-meter hurdles, the 400-meter dash and the long jump and was part of Notre Dame’s winning 4x100-meter relay team.

Although she was competing in her first ever college meet, Barber’s impressive debut came as no surprise to Irish coach Joe Piane.

“She is going to be a leader

ND WOMEN’S BASKETBALL

Peters, Achonwa lead Irish to pair of wins

Heading into its first conference game of the season against Marquette this Wednesday, Notre Dame needed a pair of double digit scores to iron out its early-season kinks.

The No. 3 Irish blew past Pennsylvania 69-38 at the Purcell Pavilion on Friday before handling Cregighton 76-48 on the road Sunday.

Despite the 31-point margin of victory, Irish coach Muffet McGraw said her squad looked flat as it took the court against the Quakers.

“I was really disappointed in our lack of energy,” McGraw said. “The team did a good job of putting up the offensive execution and the scoring. We’re just not playing competitively in certain areas.”

Led by double-digit scoring from graduate student forward Devereaux Peters (16), sophomore guard Natalie Novosel (14) and sophomore guard Kayla McBride (10), Notre Dame (7-1) outscored Penn (4-2) 42-22 in

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