Extra fee could raise $1 million for athletics

SARAH DOWNES STAFF WRITER
The UCF Board of Trustees finance committee will vote Thursday on a proposal to increase the athletic fee from $0.90 to $1.19 per credit hour. This $0.29 increase will generate approximately $1 million in additional funds for the athletic department.

These funds will be used to increase the salary for athletic positions, raise the amount for athletic scholarships in the summer, pay for maintenance of the Wayne Densch Sports Complex and hire more academic tutors for athletes, boost sports marketing on campus and enhance the athletic recruiting process.

Currently, UCF coaches are paid less than their counterparts in the MAC and Atlantic Sun conferences.

"The majority of the extra funds will go toward increasing salaries," said Steve Orsini, UCF's athletic director. "I believe in investing in people first."

According to Brian Battles, SGA executive vice president and a member of the Athletic Fee Setting Committee, the salary increases will not go directly to the coaches, but rather to the coaching positions. By increasing the pay scales, the athletic department can hire better coaches in the future and hold the current coaches to a higher level.

"The increase in the athletic fee is definitely needed," Battles said. "Sports are an important part of a college experience."

The committee intends to double the amount of money offered for summer scholarships for athletes. Already it has $100,000 in scholarship money available for the summer and hopes to match that in the increased budget.

Construction workers are beginning to build a Wayne Densh Sports Complex next to the UCF Arena, a state-of-the-art facility with a weight room, equipment room and sports medicine clinic for the 400 student-athletes.

"This facility will be important when it comes to recruiting," Orsini said. "Potential athletes want to know where they will work out when they tour college campuses."

The complex will also have

Outlook for faculty union uncertain

Come Jan. 7, faculty union will lose bargaining power

UCF faculty members remain in the dark about their financial futures because a critical method of addressing faculty issues will vanish when their union's contract expires in January.

"I am very worried," librarian Eda Correa said. "The union is the only association we have to look out for our contracts, benefits, grievances and salaries."

In the past, the United Faculty of Florida's contract allowed faculty members to collectively bargain for their needs. Its past efforts have provided full salaries for summer teaching, a set precedent for grievance procedures and a 2.5 percent pay raise for faculty members.

But when its contract expires on Jan. 7, 2003, the faculty union loses its legal bargaining power.

Renee Joel, a professor of reading and education and former president of the United Faculty of Florida, said the union's power to negotiate a contract is a right not a privilege.

"The union is the only organization that has a valid legal position to negotiate a contract," Joel said. "The union has endured the same type of frustration and would help faculty members in their negotiations."
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Peace Prize winner

Fugita Tadao

was a Nobel Peace Prize winner in 1992 for his work with indigenous people in Guatemala. During his speech at the University of California, Davis, he received honorary degrees from universities around the world.

Photo by Dave Keverian/CDF

National Briefs

BMG to offer simpler royalty system to music acts

Breaking ranks with industry rivals, Bertelsmann Music Group (BMG) on Wednesday will launch what the company calls a "fairer, more transparent" accounting system for royalty payments, a move that artist representatives say could ease the controversy over whether performers are getting cheated by their labels.

BMG, home to such acts as Carole San
tana, OutKast and Britney Spears, is the first major music company to scrap contract provisions that artists say underestimate their earnings. The move comes as lawyers in California and New York have begun to scrutinize complaints from pop stars about questionable accounting practices in the industry.

In the years ahead, BMG plans to introduce a new contract model under which the company would control an act's recording career for fewer years but share in a series of new revenue streams, including concert proceeds and sponsorships and film deals. BMG already is designing a new agreement that is expected to reduce the number of pages in a standard contract from 100 to 12.

Initially, BMG's royalty revisions are not expected to result in higher royalty payments to artists. But BMG executives say the new plan will simplify royalty computations, making it easier for artists to determine what they are owed.

None of the other four music giants—Universal Music Group, Sony Music Entertainment, Warner Music Group or EMI Group—intends to follow suit any time soon.

Congress approves 'Anton's Law'

WASHINGTON

The family of an 8-year-old killed in 1996 when an adult seat belt failed to hold him in a crash, the bill sets federal auto safety standards for children weighing more than 50 pounds, requires automakers to install shoulder belts in rear center seats, and promotes research because they faced the challenge of high cost and made poor use of their time.

Germayne Crow, a counselor at the Counseling and Testing Center (CTC), which sees many freshmen over the course of the semester. She was so impressed with the committee with the students' misdirected college challenges that they faced, she had to do something to help them. She has high grade expectations, and are usually disappointed after college.

Freshmen who put in the necessary work, like Hartle and Jocelyn Brown, fit make a smooth transition to college. Brown has no regrets about her decision to attend UC as so many freshmen do, and she was surprised when her classes because she loves her major and wants to excel in it. She has also grown fond of the campus.

"I love it here," Braun said. "It is its own little community. People are really friendly. Sure, the classes are different from high school, but you learn to adjust to them."

Both Hartle and Braun have done well in their classes, although both wish they had participated more in campus activities, especially

Fee to fund more athlete scholarships

FROM PAGE 1

offices and a meeting room for the football coaches. The money collected from the proposal fee increase will pay for a maintenance crew to keep the complex in top condition.

Since the NCAA ruled that student athletes have to show a certain amount of progress toward completing their degree with each year of college, there has been more academic pressure on athletes. The increased fee will help to fund more academic tutors for athletes, as well as extra hours for current tutors.

Part of the money will go toward marketing sports to UCF students. Some of the proposals include: providing more buses to transport students from campus to the Citrus Bowl, funding away football game trips for students who attend all of the home games, and promoting UCF athletics through giveaway items like cups and hats. These are not sold in store, but are being considered by the committee.

"The marketing proposals will really help get more support for our teams, and the support will increase the athletes' excellence," said Julie Reeves, a College of Education student and member of the committee. "A great sports team gives people something to talk about and helps get the university’s name out to the nation."

All of the above items will contribute to enhancing the athlete and track recruitment processes.

"When compared to other universities in our division, we are no closer, yet so far behind in resources to attract athletes," Orsini said.

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See Please See National on 7
TV show generates new interest in major

FROM PAGE 1

spend much of their days and weekends in a laboratory exhaustively tracking and analyzing evidence like fibers and textiles to solve crimes — not gathering evidence, analyzing it and throwing criminals behind bars in just under an hour like Midi manages to do on the CBS crime show.

While Ward knows the television show is not completely accurate and the forensics field is not quite as glamorous — briefly explaining the hours of theories and chemistry formulas she has to know before she can ever get into a forensics lab — she enjoys the fact that the field of forensics is being given its day in the spotlight.

"[CSI actors] play the role of forensics and detective, and that never happens in real life. But the show does scratch the surface," she said. "If they were to make a real movie of the forensics field, it would take hours and days to dissect everything and most people would find it really boring."

But even still, forensics is intriguing more and more students at UCF. The 29-year-old program, one of UCF's oldest, is becoming one of its biggest, boasting nearly 600 students. Back in 1974, the four-year program drew only 12 students.

UCF's program was created in response to President Richard Nixon's Safe Streets Act, originally designed to provide educational support for new crime labs in the state of Florida.

National Center for Forensic Sciences deputy director Bill McGee founded the program and spent nearly two-and-a-half years designing the curriculum and courses and gathering resources and instruments. The major has two tracks: analytical sciences, which examines things such as hairs and fibers for the purpose of recreating a crime; and forensic biochemistry, which comprises the identification of bodily fluids and DNA analysis.

Today the program still centers around evidence analysis and lab work like it did back in 1974, but it's drawing hundreds of students who believe a forensics degree will allow them to lead the kind of careers CSI forensics scientists do.

"My comment is that if you watch CSI, just forget it, because what we do and what they do only vaguely resemble each other," McGee said. "We have dozens of people a week call us up and say, 'I want to be a CSI and that's exactly what I want to do.'" Ward said. "Women are able to do this because they don't have boundaries anymore."

But she isn't convinced that forensics majors can shake the nerd stereotype.

"When you read the shampoo bottle and understand it, that's when you know you're a dork," she said.

McGee believes the program has been successful because of the quality of the students. "We have been very, very fortunate," he said. "We have attracted a body of students who can make a commitment to the profession."

While McGee and the forensics department are considering adding a crime-scene track within the major — something a little more representative of the careers that "CSI" actors portray — the department doesn't have enough faculty members to do so yet.

"Our biggest problem is recruiting 600 students with essentially four faculty members," he said. "[Because our faculty] have to have Ph.D.s, it's very difficult to find someone with a Ph.D. who has had this kind of experience and who's willing to work in a college or university."
Board of trustees will likely work with faculty union

FROM PAGE 1
Florida, wondered what would happen when the contract expired. "The real question is who will be the employer of all the university employees in the future," Joels said.

Joels warned that if the faculty loses its bargaining power, the trends toward universities adopting a business-model style of operation, in which profits and efficiency become priorities. She said such a model emphasizes funding graduates who go directly into technical fields, like engineering, over graduates of the arts.

She said running a university according to a business-model works against students' best interests. "That kind of thinking certainly undermines humanism and certainly undervalues the students who go out into the helpinng public," Joels said.

She said although the potential exists for UCF to run itself as a business, the current administration understands students' needs. "It is hard to put a price on graduation," Joels said. "They will raise the students.'"

The United Faculty of Florida's UCF chapter has maintained a cooperative relationship in the past, according to Arlen Chase, the union's local president.

"We have not faced the problems most of the other universities have," Chase said. He said that relationship differs from other Florida universities.

"I have not seen it as a rivalry," Chase said.

Instead, Chase said he works with the current board of Trustees in a fashion that resembles a think tank more than a rivalry.

Chase said the change in January is unlikely to cause major problems. He said the correspondence with the board has been mutually beneficial and neither side wants to upset the process.

To ensure that UFF maintains its bargaining power, Chase has advocated a campaign to have 60 percent of the faculty unionized. "Under Florida law the faculty union needs a majority vote to maintain its right to collective bar­gaining," Chase has set his goal at 60 percent, even though UFF needs only 50 percent to be rec­ognized as a union, to show a substantial amount of support.

The union needs 60 percent of all Florida's public uni­versity's faculty members to join in order to give it the legal right to collectively bargain. Chase said seven of the 11 schools already have reached the goal and that a team has toured several campuses to rally support.

He said 60 percent of the UCF faculty already has joined. The biggest challenge is having employees, he said. Faculty extends beyond just professors, including a substantial amount of UCF employees, he said.

Chase has had difficulty reaching facul­ty members at UCF's branch campuses. "It's making it difficult just to find these people," he said. "If you have just about getting sig­natures this would be a done deal."

In addition to not knowing exactly what will happen in January, the situation gets com­plicated further with the pass­ing of Amendment 11.

Chase has had difficulty running a university according to a business-model, because of Florida's public uni­versity's faculty senate. He said having a faculty member serve on the board of trustees is unlikely to take effect.

The amendment establishes a statewide board of governors to oversee Florida's public universities. Joels applauded the pass­ing of Amendment 11. She hopes the new plan will better serve the students by improving the disbursement of funding to the universities.

"The oversight will help more than just Florida's colleges," she added.

"The quality of life in a state is directly tied to the qual­ity of its higher education," she said.

Gov. Jeb Bush will select most of the positions on the govern­ing board, and the kind of role the board of governors will play remains uncertain.

In addition to the members selected by Bush, a member of the faculty senate will serve on the board of governors. Chase said having a faculty member on the board lends a much-needed voice to the decision makers.

But how much of a voice UCF's faculty will have remains uncertain. Chase said although the amendment establishes a statewide board of governors, it's unclear how much power they have.

"They have the power to ignore (the union) even if we get 60 percent," Chase said. "But that is not the kind of relationship we have."

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November 21, 2002 • The Central Florida Future
College students confess — sometimes they lie

Stephen Herst
Staff Writer

Like many college students, senior Jason Hayner, 22, finds nothing wrong with lying to mom about his finances.

"In actuality I'm buried in debt," Hayner said. "But I don't want her to have to carry the burden." Hayner is not alone.

Most college students lie about money, relationships, sex or alcohol according to a study by the University of Virginia. College students in that study reported that they lied in about half of the conversations they had with their parents and in 28 percent of conversations they had with close friends.

The lies told by the students varied greatly in their nature and scope. Some lies told by students in this study were minor, such as telling a parent they got home from a night out several hours earlier than they actually did.

Others were more serious, like telling a parent they were doing well in classes, when they were actually failing.

However, Rich McLaughlin, of the UCF Counseling and Testing Center, believes that sometimes, in certain situations, students have good reasons behind their lies.

"I think 'lying' is a little harsh of a term in some situations," McLaughlin said. "When students are doing with something traumatic in their lives like a sexual assault or an eating disorder, they could be withholding information for any number of reasons. Everybody keeps some secrets."

Yet, students like senior Ryan Bitter, 21, still lie to their parents so they will not have to listen to parents' lectures.

"If my parents know I was drinking as much as I do, it would lead to incessant nagging," Bitter said. "If they knew about the water cooler I converted into a four-man hookah, I could be in real trouble.

However, if my parents knew about that kind of thing, especially my parents.

"High school was different," Bitter said. "I was always being quizzes about where I was going, with whom, and who was going to be there."

Senior Michelle Gonzalez, 18, were two of Ruscella's students who decided to take advantage of the extra-credit opportunity. Dressed in pajamas, the two performed the song, "Look Me, I'm Sandra Dee," from the musical "Grease" in front of their class.

"This assignment was embarrassing as hell, but worth it," Bratcher said.

Although many students participated, Ruscella was surprised that not everybody took advantage of this extra-credit opportunity.

"It's not brain surgery," Ruscella said.
Freshmen learn to balance school, fun

FROM PAGE 3

By since they live on campus and have better access to them than off-campus students.

"I wanted to focus solely on my classes and studying, but now I wish I had gotten a little more involved," Crow said.

Craw said most freshmen do not make the transition as smooth as expected. "I feel overwhelmed by all the changes that they endure.

"The majority has a problem with learning how to survive on their own," Crow said. "There are no parents or teachers telling them what to do. They have to establish their own sense of independence before they have to keep dates with family and friends back home.

Without the guidance of elders, some freshmen put emphasis on the wrong things. Freshman Kelly Williams, 18, wishes she had spent more time studying and less time playing around.

"I had fun this semester," Williams said. "As a result, however, I spent less time focusing on my classes and more time focusing on my social life. I forgot about having to maintain my scholarship for a while, and now I'm going to have to work harder in spring to keep it."

Williams approached college life differently than Hartzler and Braun, getting involved in campus life. She participated in many campus-sponsored activities and joined a sorority, she credited the sorority for helping her educationally motivated. "I would have spent less time studying had my sorority not made a mandatory study time," she said.

Off-campus students experienced many of the same things that on-campus students did. Freshman Jonathan Chung, 19, said for him, "I moved into campus life. I got involved in campus life. I participated in many campus-sponsored activities and joined a society."

Chung attended many campus activities and participated in intramural sports. His participation in campus activities affected his grades this semester. Chung said, "But in a positive way. "The [campus activities] help relieve the stress of school work."

Besides the struggle to balance work and play, Crow said, "relationship issues greatly concern incoming students. Many freshmen tend to feel overwhelmed by all the changes that they endure."

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Our stance: City takes lead; UCF should follow

On Monday, Orlando's City Council gave preliminary approval to protecting gay people from discrimination in housing and employment. The measure passed despite a "no" vote by Mayor Glenda Hood. The city is moving forward on the issue, even though the mayor turned her back on the gay community that had supported her for so long. Orlando may soon join a long list of cities, including Tampa, Miami Beach and Atlanta, which protect gays, if the ordinance passes a second vote on Dec. 2.

Sadly, by voting against the measure, Hood tried to appeal to the political higher-ups (i.e. Jeb Bush, who may appoint Hood to a cabinet position) in the state rather than the people who helped elect her. Hood seemed to care more about her political future than her political backers. By acting in her own personal self-interest, rather than in the interest of the people who have helped her serve as mayor for 10 years, Hood showed that she is merely a typical politician.

Regardless, the measure thankfully passed by a narrow 4-3 vote. Now that it has momentum, and will likely pass, UCF has no reason to drag its feet any longer on the issue of adding sexual orientation to UCF's own anti-discrimination policy. The university's administration has taken a wait-and-see approach to this issue, seemingly unwilling to take a stand until the city council votes.

President Hitt has no reason to wait any longer. He should act as a leader, and make this issue a top priority. UCF's gay population should not have to worry about this issue. Students support this measure; the faculty supports this measure. Now it's time for Hitt to do his part.

Hitt has an opportunity to take a leadership role on this very topic today at the board of trustees meeting, open to the public, in the Student Union. Hitt can start justifying the $60,000 raise that the board may grant him by pushing a measure that will make UCF a more tolerant university.

Students should attend the trustees' meeting, to voice their stand on this measure. They can also urge the board of trustees to know whether they think Hitt deserves his proposed raise. The meeting represents an opportunity for students to address the people who run UCF. Students should let the trustees know what they think of their actions and how they think UCF can improve.

Letters to the Editor

Hitt's raise could finance more pressing concerns

I can't believe that they are going to give President Hitt a $50,000 raise ($10,000 a year for Hitt," published Nov. 18, couldn't we spend this money in a more constructive way? We should return financial and monetary that students have been wasting on us since the beginning of the semester. How about $15 scholarships, a thousand dollar check? We have been waiting on better compensating the staff that keeps our campus looking at least. Let's offer free meals to our students. How about $60,000 being proposed. And how hard can this job be?

Bill D. O'Connell

The grinch who stole...

Hey, Arlen Chase. What are we going to do without a Christmas present? I'm sure you aren't going to bother to write. Now tell me you are buying nothing for Christmas (as I begin writing the Christmas story)," by Jay Marvin, published Nov. 12.

So you plan to spend Christmas with family and friends and receive several presents? And you aren't going to have any presents for the people you expect to receive presents from. It is not fair. I did see one year when you were home for your parents and you got the greatest presents, but I said I told them in advance about my no present policy and said my parents not to get me anything. Is that what you intend to do?

May I make a suggestion? What your parents would probably want is that I know this but because I am a parent and a grandparent you can't buy me a gift, then find me a toy and get it for me. It would be much better than making me yourself like you did when you were a "real" little girl and include a car to go along with them all the reasons you appreciate them.

By all means, buy your gift, but if you give one this year, give one to a needy poor people who can barely pay the rent and keep food on the table. Nothing costs for Christmas gifts for their children and are highly dependent upon donations.

Let me make another suggestion. You don't have a family with the person whose birthday we are celebrating. We are the child or the rich parents, but the most influential persons on this planet of all time. Why not read the book of Matthew or Luke from cover to cover? Consider it part of your education.

MOULDRS O'CONNOR

Please See Letters on 9
Beating the clock

MENTAL DOODLES

Christopher Arnold

Well, all, Halloween has passed and Thanksgiving's not far away. Decorations for Christmas and Valentine's Day are already up and the air's getting brisk. You know that means?

It must be time for finals.

As usual, I'm beginning to stress. Sure, I need to study.

But I also have to work. And if I miss any more classes, then their finals become a moot point. Not only do I have to do holiday shopping, but also if seems like all my friends and family have birthdays in the final two months of the year.

Yeah, I'm beginning to stress a little, but I'm not worried.

After all, I put the "pro" in procrastination.

"That's right, when it comes to putting off until tomorrow what you don't want to do today, I am king of the hill, the top dog, the head honcho of procrastination's stellar dodge, and if you will permit me, the man.

"I'm entering into the face of an impending deadline as I write this, and I'm laughing all the way. If Nike offered endorsement deals in this minor leagues, developing your personal handwriting, you could get through an all-nighter writing papers, studying for exams, rebuilding your embarrassed, neetering your dog while translating "War and Peace," or whatever other tasks you'd been meaning to do.

You also may not sleep for a few days, but that's one of the prizes you pay to play.

"Good things come to those who wait." That's right, we've got an adage. We also have a handshake I've been meaning to learn, but our slogans hold impervious to fallacy. I challenge any of you to find something that disproves this little universal truth.

"Carpe" what? OK, that is a good one.

But that's neither here nor there.

After all, haven't we all had that one paper that we just absolutely dreaded? You just knew it would be extraordinarily difficult to write, and even though you might have had a few weeks or more to prepare it, you either had other classes, work, family or wasting your time writing that stupid paper.

Besides, anyone with a library card and day planner can prepare and write a paper in that span of time, right? But only a select few are able to do so in one day. So you wait. C circle the wagons and rally the troops, because an all-nighter's on deck. You scrounge to gather resources, lock yourself in your room, and pray to the great god of writing. Caffine. He sends you his massed jugs. David and Conan, and then Jay again, to accompany you during the process. You organize: your study materials, the books you want to elite, make copious notes and attach an intravenous caffein drip. You start to type it up, but your computer "War and Peace," or whatever other task you'd been meaning to do.

So what if you show up to class in the same dishabille, day you'd worn the day before, teeth unbrushed and hair unkempt and walking amidst your very own little cloud of dirt and dust like Charley Brown's friend, "Ogden.

Welcome to the game. This is just a taste of a procrastinator's schedule when the season's in progress. Think you can handle it? Because if you value sleep over a cup of tea, you prefer media over cram from the vending machine, and if you want the time to maintain your personal hygiene, then walk away now. Go and prepare responsibly for your finals and don't try to remem ber it all in the hour before your test. Budget your time as you need it.

As for me, I feel my Picke Stick high beginning to subside. Wake me in an hour.

Columnist Christopher Arnold can be reached at chrish@ucffuture.com.
UCF GEARS UP for the ‘other’ Miami

The Knights travel to Ohio for a MAC game against the RedHawks

CHRIS BERNAERT
STAFF WRITER

Miami. In college football, name garners respect. Over the past two seasons, no other name has instilled more fear in its opponents. The record speaks for itself: one loss in three years, a national championship and perhaps another pending this year. So when UCF travels to Miami this Saturday, they can expect a tough contest and 40-degree weather.


Rather than an intra-state contest with the No. 1 team in the nation, the Golden Knights will square off against conference and division rival Miami of Ohio. But even though the RedHawks don't have quite the talent and prestige of their Florida counterpart, don't take this Miami team for granted.

"Miami of Ohio is a great team," UCF quarterback Ryan Schneider said. "Right now, they are the second-best team in the Eastern Conference in the MAC. We have to go out there and beat them. I think they came in second place last year behind Marshall.

"I'm pretty sure they should have won the game against Marshall (Nov. 12). They got robbed. They're mad, they're upset. They're going to come out with hostile intentions and we have to go out and perform well and beat them. We are going to have to prove to them that we are good enough to be in the conference. We are going to have to go out there and earn their respect."

The RedHawks come into this game as one of the best teams in the Mid-American Conference. They're reeling after a heartbreaking and pivotal 26-23 loss to Marshall, but they still sport a 7-4 overall record and 5-2 in conference. Much like UCF, they trail the Thundering Herd by a game in the East Division and Marshall has the tiebreaker over both. That means to keep any slim hope of making the MAC championship game alive, both teams desperately need a victory Saturday.

Aside from their position in the standings, the teams also have other similarities. Whereas UCF sports a potent passing offense led by Schneider, Miami possess a strong passing game led by Ben Roethlisberger. As just a sophomore, Roethlisberger has already become one of the most prolific passers in RedHawks history. He's the school's all-time career leader in completions (489) and second in passing touchdowns (46). His season numbers are just as spectacular: 2,867 yards, 61 percent passes completed and 21 touchdowns.

"Roethlisberger is a big threat," UCF Coach Mike Kruczek said. "Obviously, he can do it with that big arm of his and he can also do it with his feet. At 6-4, 230, he is also a formidable runner for him. For a kid who is only a sophomore, he's really put up a lot of numbers in a short amount of time.

"You get to sleep in your own bed. You get to eat your own food. You are in front of your fans, you're locker room," UCF Coach Meg Costa said. "I think there are so many positive factors about being at home. We just hope that we get a lot of fans out to support the girls."

Not only do the Knights (9-11, 10-1 A-Sun) have home court advantages, as the No. 1 seed, the defending Atlantic Sun champs have a first-round bye. This means they get to sit back with No. 2 seed Georgia State (19-13, 15-1) and watch the first round games.

"The boys go big," Costa said. "They have been so hard working that they do throughout the season. The season puts them in a really good position. We definitely don't want to have to play two matches in one day and three in a weekend to win it all."

UCF will play the winner of the game between fourth-seeded Jacksonville (14-13, 7-4) and fifth-seeded Jacksonville State (14-13, 7-4) for the championship on Sunday. There will be a 10 a.m. start.

The UCF men's soccer team won its first-ever A-Sun Championship on Sunday and will face FIU on Friday.

DEFENDING THEIR TITLE AND THEIR COURT

The UCF men's soccer team won its first-ever A-Sun Championship on Sunday.

"Win the A-Sun. Above all else that has been the battle cry for Bob Winberg's UCF men's soccer team this year. On Sunday, they did just that. The Golden Knights defeated Stetson 1-0 to win the first conference title in program history.

With the win, UCF advances to the NCAA Tournament where the Knights will face Florida International on Friday in Miami.

UCF's road to the championship has been anything but easy, and its fairy tale postseason has been one filled with lucky breaks and more than one well-placed shot that found the back of the net.

It began on Friday night, when the third-seeded Golden Knights took on second-seeded Jacksonville, a team that had gone undefeated this season.

"I think they respect us," UCF Coach Eric Schenkel said. "We are just as spectacular.

The Golden Knights are hosting the Atlantic Sun Championships on Friday and Saturday, which helps the players out because they get to go about their normal routines.

"You get to sleep in your own bed. You get to eat your own food. You are in front of your fans. You're locker room," UCF Coach Meg Costa said. "I think there are so many positive factors about being at home. We just hope that we get a lot of fans out to support the girls."

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Please see UCF on 15
Scala, Roberts highlight Striegler’s best team ever

Chris Bernard

Gail Striegler, UCF’s women’s basketball head coach, can sympathize with her counterpart for the men’s team, Eric Schott.

When she arrived four years ago from Stephen F. Austin in Texas, Striegler inherited a team beset by graduation and injury. Much like UCF’s men’s squad, which returns just five players from last season, Striegler barely had enough bodies to field a team.

“My first two years I kind of went through some stuff with a little bit harder talent, she said. “I opened up a foot injury. I’ve lost some kids along the way, but the core has stuck with us.”

The core has grown over those years, from a 9-20 team in Striegler’s first year to an early favorite in the Atlantic Sun this season. For the first time in her tenure, the Golden Knights have a group of experienced upperclassmen to go along with a strong group of recruits and second-year players.

Eight players return from last year’s squad, which went 9-20 in the regular season but reached the A-Sun Tournament.

And what a team.

Scotland, Roberts highlight Striegler’s best team ever

The Golden Knights completed their two-game exhibition season Friday with a 58-55 win over the Houston Cougars.

Playing a team with just eight players available, UCF was able to round out its rotation from the floor in the first period and cruised to a 52-2 halftime lead. With the game never in doubt, head coach Gail Striegler used the opportunity to take out minutes for her deep team.

Twelve players received at least 10 minutes of playing time and nine got at least 15 minutes.

Guard Marvellous Washington paced the team with 15 points off the bench. Forward Erin Paige and freshman guard Celeste Hudson each had 12 points and forward Adrienne Billings had 10 points and five rebounds.

For Houston, Demetria Richard had a double-double with 15 points and 14 rebounds. And Renee Bellamy scored a team-leading 17 points.

The previous Sunday UCF dropped a contest against the NWHL, 70-68. Midway through the first half, the All-Stars went on a 30-0 run that blew the game open and took a 37-2 lead into the half. In the second half the Golden Knights outscored the All-Stars 47 point to 30 percent, but couldn’t get close enough to turn the game around.

Washington again led the Knights with 10 points, while Billings had 10 as well along with a team-high eight rebounds. Center All Roberts had 11 points. Betty Lenox and Jennifer Jordan both had 17 points for NWHL, while Terrell Roach and Tracey Reid each had 10.

For the Knights, Striegler said. “I think we’ve got a lot of enthusiasm,” Striegler said. “Shayla goes hard all the time. That says a lot to me. I think she’s going to be a great player for us. As a freshman she’s really stepped up and done a good job. Not just playing but leading.

Still, other newcomers will see plenty of action as well. Hudson, a transfer out of Lyman High School in Alamosa Springs, has drawn great praise from Striegler. The coach promises to play them all with varying degrees, while at the same time not putting too much pressure on them as they get adjusted to the college game and life.

“You don’t want to put too much on a freshman’s shoulders because all freshmen are going to have their ups and downs throughout the year,” Striegler said. “They’re not used to playing as long as a season, they’re not used to being as physically cut off your arm and they have off-the-bas­

keball-court stuff with a little bit harder school.”

For now the team will be in the steady hands of the veteran pair of Scala and Roberts are both entering their second year with the team after graduating all-conference honors when Scala, an experienced senior guard, transferred to UCF from Palm Beach Community College. She was named Second-team All-Conference by the Atlantic Sun Conference.

Senior guardogen has been named to the Atlantic Sun Preseason Team. Though she had back surgery in the off-season, she has steadily improved during pre-season practice and should be ready come opening night. Her role is pivotal to how far the team can go.

“I think we have a really good chance of winning the conference tournament," Striegler said. “Every team in our league believes they can win.

Roberts, a sophomore, got named to the All-Freshman Team after an impressive first season. She averaged 8.7 points per game and a team-leading 6.0 rebounds. But her shot blocking ability stands out. She assisted 76 on the season, far and away the conference leader. That led her to being one of the top rebounders in the Sun Conference.

Based on that performance, Scala has been named to the Atlantic Sun Preseason Team.
Speraw faces challenge with only 5 returning players

Tom Alexander

"Each and every year it’s a new team," said UCF men’s basketball coach Kirk Speraw.

In no year has a statement like that been more true than this one. Just a few short months ago, the UCF Golden Knights were the team to watch. Now, they win away from playing for the Atlantic Sun Conference Championship and an automatic bid to the NCAA tournament. As short as those months have been, they have been eventful ones for this program.

Twin brothers Stephen and Joey Graham, two of UCF’s top four scorers and marquee players, left UCF in the offseason for Oklahoma State, dealing a tremendous blow to Speraw’s squad. That loss has many thinking UCF can’t possibly have a season like they had last year. The Golden Knights have been picked to finish fifth in the new South Division of the A-Sun in the pres­season poll, ahead of Stetson.

But the team is confident that they can prove those who count them out wrong. The Knights return two starters from last season and four seniors, including standout guard Ray Abellard and forward Ed Dotson. With a large quantity of newcomers, the returning players will have to take charge, Speraw said.

"Some people are going to have to have good seasons for us," Dotson, Ray Abellard, Al Miller, Josh Bodden, Martin Boyd are going to have to really carry the load early on in the season," Speraw said.

Abellard and Miller will provide a veteran presence in the Knights’ back­court, but Boyd should also see time there as well. The position where UCF will be hardest hit will be at center, where the graduation of Paul Reed leaves a pretty big hole to fill. Right now three players will try and fill that role. Dotson, Bodden, and junior college transfer Roberto Morentin. At 6-feet-9, Morentin will provide some size in the paint. With Miller and Abellard seeing increased time together, size and something to carry the load here early on in the season, Speraw said.

UCF will have to count on its new­comers to produce very quickly if they are to succeed. The loss of Jason Travis, the Knights’ three-point sharp shooter off the bench, but two true freshmen. Trey Linheke and Marcus McGee, will be able to fill those shoes if they can adjust to the college game fast enough.

The Knights have a tough road ahead of them. In addition to an always­difficult conference schedule, UCF will also take on some big-name out-of-con­ference schools. In fact, UCF starts the season on the road in Annapolis, Md., to take on Navy this Friday. They also play Florida A&M on the road (Oct. 7), and the Knights’ road schedule ends with a trip to Little Manhattan to play Big 12 opponent Kansas State.

Before beginning their conference schedule in January, the Knights have a three game homestand in which they will host Gulf Coast, the Citadel, and, most notably, the Miami Hurricanes on Dec. 27. UCF opens its home schedule against Niagara at 7:30 p.m. Monday.

UCF picked to finish second in A-Sun South Division

From Page 12

Washington, a junior, led the team in scoring last season averaging 11.1 points per game.

Turnover turn around

Last season UCF had a prob­lem with turnovers, losing the ball 207 times. That trend continued against NWBL, where the Golden Knights turned the ball over 187 times.

But against Houston they took much better care of the ball, losing just eight turnovers.

"We definitely have to take care of the ball better," Stringer said. "I think that’s the key point. There’s no reason we should be having as many turnovers as we had in the exhibition game the other night because we have lot more solid guards." Freshmen show potential

Stringer has talked highly of freshman point guards Hudson and Shayla Smith all preseason. In the two exhibition games, both players showed why.

Smith dishes out nine assists, got five steals, scored eight points and grabbed six rebounds in 21 min­utes of the bench against NWBL. She started against Houston and had six points, five assists and two steals in 21 minutes.

Hudson scored 12 points and had two steals in 15 minutes as reserve versus Houston.

Fellow freshmen Claudia Johnson and Shelby Weber also played solidly in those games in lim­ited minutes. Johnson, a guard, had 13 points combined in the two games and Weber, a forward, had nine points, five rebounds and three steals all together.

The last freshman on the squad, guard LaShay King, played just four minutes against NWBL and not at all against Houston.

"I think all the freshmen are going to play a part in the season that we have this year," Stringer said. "I think Celeste and Shayla are going to get a lot of minutes. The other three are going to get minutes depending on the different people that we play." Around the A-Sun

In addition to UCF guard Jessica Scala, Georgia State’s Rizza Rogers and Angelina Miller, Florida Atlantic’s Tamia Flores and Troy State’s Tasha Hartman make up the Atlantic Sun Preseason Team.

Rogers was also named Preseason Player of the Year.

Both the coaches and the media polls pick Georgia State to win the North Division and repeat as conference champs. Belmont, Campbell, Jacksonville State, Sanford and Gardner-Webb were picked to finish behind them in both polls, respectively.

Florida Atlantic was the choice by both parties for the South Division, followed by UCF-Troy State, Stetson, Mercer and Jacksonville.

UCG signs five

Continuing their outgoing in recruiting the Golden Knights signed five high school standouts to letters of intent. That group includes: center Courtney Small (Charlotte, N.C.), forwards Kounta Miles (Dania) and Celeste Stall (Troy State), junior guard Shayla—are (Staten Island, N.Y.), and guards Shae Slade (St. Petersburg) and Angelina Miller (Winter Park, Fl.).
**Senior Jessica Scala is a major reason for the Golden Knights’ turnaround**

**Chris Bernhardt Staff Writer.**

If Jessica Scala had her way, she probably would have had major back surgery in the offseason, multiple injuries didn’t keep her from playing last year. So why didn’t she go under the knife, full force?

"Coach is always putting her out of drills, (Scala) gets upset," teammate Erin Paige said. "She’s a gym rat down to the core. ‘Oh, we’re on the line again,’ I’m like the first one on the floor, so you can’t run.

Such has become the calling card of Scala. For all her crisp passes and sharp shooting, her toughness impresses people as much as anything. Despite dealing with a back injury and a severely sprained ankle, Scala moved into the starting lineup of the Golden Knights’ 30 games last season and started 29 of them. Now as she embarks on her second and final season at UCF she hopes her body can hold up enough to carry a deep Golden Knights squad to prominence.

"I’m getting better everyday. About 70-75 percent is where I’m around right now," Scala said.

That much out of her, especially about injuries, is a lot. She’s soft-spoken in interviews when she speaks at all, and clearly isn’t very comfortable with all the attention she receives. But her play speaks for itself. The 5-footten. she played for the first time in her career last year after transferring from Palm Beach Community College and instantly quickened the pace of the Golden Knights offense. She averaged 19.5 points per game, good for second on the team. She grabbed 5.5 rebounds per game, third best on the team. She dished out 116 assists, nabbed 64 steals and nailed 45 percent of her three-pointers, all team-bests.

She clearly established herself as the most versatile player on a Golden Knights team that finished 17-13, its first winning season in three years under Coach Gail Strieger. "She brings a lot of things," Strieger said. "If you ask anybody in our conference, they would say she’s the one number reason we had a turnaround last year. That’s just because up until that time we really couldn’t get the ball up the floor and get to a more up-tempo game. And Jess a great job of getting the ball where it needs to be and she’s done a lot of opportunities for her teammates."

"And when she does pass, hopefully she’ll have a little better luck connecting with her teammates. Last season some of the Golden Knight’s players had problems matching and holding onto their quick strikes. That contributed to her 120 turnovers. Minimizing mistakes has become a team-wide goal, and as a year of playing with UCF’s experienced core should help."

"They’ve been a lot better about that this year," Strieger said. "The post players have really been doing a nice job of keeping their heads up and being ready for the pass and the guards have had a year to play with her and I think they know what to expect out of her."

Regardless, her simply being on the court at least 70 percent will send a message to the team as a whole. That free flow of wanting to go out all even when hurt impresses not only the younger players but the most veterans of teammates.

"Some days you can tell she’s kind of in pain, but she’s not going to complain," said Paige, one of team’s longest tenured players. "She’s heart and soul."
UCF loses regular season game to Florida International

FROM PAGE 10

crashed UCF 1-4 earlier in the season. It would take a score from one of UCF’s bench players, Junior Chris Bernhardt, and after Jacksonville tied the game with just over seven minutes left in regulation, the Knights won in overtime on an own goal. A UCF throw-in bounced off a Jacksonville defender and into the Dolphins’ net to end their season.

The Golden Knights would move on to face four-needled Stetson in the next day for the Avian Championship after Stetson knocked out top-seeded Mercer. Bad weather postponed the game until Sunday when the two long-time A-Sun rivals would battle once again.

The two teams fought a titanic struggle in the first half and went into the break scoreless. Just over two minutes into the second half, UCF senior forward Freddy Koyagialo scored off a pass from freshman Billy Dufino, and the Knights held on to win the championship they were favored to win before the season even started.

For the Golden Knights made the All- Tournament team, including tournament MVP Eric Vasquez, freshman goalkeeper Ryan McIlroy, Junior Baliane and freshman Sean Pablo Giraldo in the second half of this season. UCF has had a different hero nearly every week, with goalkeeper Pablo Giraldo in addition to this squad’s unbelievable heart and chemistry, will be what it needs to take the conference’s automatic bid to the NCAA tournament and go farther than any UCF men’s soccer team has in years.

To get there the Golden Knights will have beat Florida International, which beat UCF on Nov. 10, 2-1, but the Golden Knights scored their two goals unanswered in the second half, momentum that the team feels carried it through the conference tournament. The winner of Friday’s match will travel to Dallas to play Southern Methodist on Nov. 27.

UCF loses
regular season
game to Florida
International

RYAN FLINN
Hang time

Punter Ryan Flinn has made the best of his limited opportunities at UCF

CHRIS BERNHARDT
STAFF WRITER

When you’re a punter for UCF life can have a lot of twists and turns. The Golden Knights have that high-octane offense that tends to go zero-to-60 from half-to-half. In the first half you could be playing punters inside the one. In the next you could be watching the whole game from the sideline.

Such was the case for Ryan Flinn in UCF’s 31-26 victory over Kent State last Saturday.

“Me not playing to good for us. I’d like to not play as much as I have,” Flinn said. “It’s all about field position. I’ll do my best to get it down as close to the goal line as possible.”

At times this season that potent and veteran UCF offense has sputtered. At other times the inexperienced defensive players have had trouble keeping teams from running them over. The Golden Knights have gone through problems on kick returns and coverage, and even true freshman place­kicker Matt Prater has walked a fine line between spectacular and inconsistent.

Yet one thing has remained constant: Flinn.

The senior has been nothing short of great for the Golden Knights this season, booming kicks from deep in UCF territory or delicately placing them inside the oppo­nent’s 20-yard line. On 34 punts this year, he has 1,419 yards and an average of 41.6 yards per kick. He has a long of 61, yet has put the opposing team inside his own 20 six times.

“He’s been the biggest surprise I’ve had in a while,” UCF Coach Mike Macenka said. “I’ve known Ryan since he got here, obvi­ously and we put him on scholarship last January. I didn’t have any questions about his game toughness and mental approach to the game, being able to handle the crowds, but he’s answered it in spades, really, and done a great job.”

Though this kind of production shouldn’t seem that unusual for a senior, Flinn doesn’t qualify as an ordinary senior. Though part of the team for the past five seasons, he came into the year with only five career punts. The reason: four-year starter Javier Boerergil blocked him. Though Boerergil’s deep punts and place kicking duties, his specialty was the punt. He ranks second in school record book with 1,200 career punting yards. His 41.0 average ranks third. All that combined to keep Flinn on the bench.

Although the job isn’t always difficult but out playing Flinn didn’t have a scholarship. That meant he had to pay his way through school, while finding time to attend class and prac­tice. During the summer he worked close to

UCF leads the MAC with 37.4 net yards per punt on Ryan Flinn’s 41.6 yards per kick.

50-60 hours a week at a telephone research company back home in Fort Myers. He also tutors computer science for athletes dur­ing the season and depended on teams to pay off his rent. At one point he said he was close to donating plasma.

“I had a tough time when I came here financially. There was a couple of times that I was thinking about transferring and that’s not a good, quit and get a job,” Flinn said. “But every­one else told me to stick with it. Javier was actually one of them that was real close to me and said just stick with it, it will be worth it in the end.”

And he was right. Staying has turned out well worth it for Flinn and the Golden Knights. Yet he still has the difficult task of filling Boerergil’s kicking shoes. As a senior last year, Boerergil averaged 45.3 yards per punt, the third best season in UCF history.

Clarity Flinn has come through. As a team UCF leads the MAC in net punting with a net 37.4 yard per punt average. That’s more than a full-yard over the next closest
more, he is mechanically as sound as there is. He is also very smart with what he does with the football. So he is going to be a tremendous challenge. Strength-wise and delivery he is every bit as much as Dyson (Leftwich). And he has got more mobility. You’re looking at a guy in two years who could be the No. 1 pick in the country simply because of his athleticism and the way he delivers the football.”

The Rodfawfs are also plenty capable of running the ball. Veteran Cal Murray has been in and out of the lineup all year with injuries, but Luke Clemens has filled in nicely. The Junior has 99 rushing yards and an eye-popping 18 rushing touchdowns. He’s also a formidable pass catcher out of the backfield, with 25 receptions. Clemens will still start if Murray returns, but if both are available then Miami will have an extremely dangerous ground game.

One last offensive weapon at Miami’s disposal is place-kicker Jared Penegghan. The most accurate kicker in the MAC this season, he hasn’t missed a field goal since last year. He has connected on 16 straight attempts, a conference record.

On defense, Miami doesn’t lose ground on paper. They give up over 400 total yards per game. Miami’s run defense isn’t good, allowing 120 yards per game. Even worse, Miami’s passing defense ranks among the worst in nation, as it gives up 273 yards per game in the air. Facing the highly ranked Golden Knights’ passing offense, that’s a very bad news.

Yet the Rodfawfs’ defense has stiffened up when it mattered. It can’t handle the Florida offense, but it’s giving up 227 yards per game in the air. Facing the highly ranked Golden Knights’ passing offense, that’s very bad news.

The Rodfawfs have stiffened up when it has had to. Miami is the best in the conference in redzone defense and third down conversions allowed. They are a lot more blitz and play more man coverage than before. This year, they have a multitude of different looks that they can present, they can come with the blitz.”

Even with the beautiful pass rush, led by defensive end Matt Edwards (nine sacks) and linebacker Matt Birkhold (five), Miami has 23 sacks, though they’ve also allowed 25 sacks on the other end of the box. The Rodfawfs have a huge question mark, the school suspended defensive coordinator John\n
UCF plays winner of JU-JSU

In order for UCF to get a second chance at Jacksonville, the Dolphins have to get past the RedHawks. The Dolphins beat the Gamecocks 3-1 back on Oct. 18, but JSU won its last five conference games.

“Jacksonville State is playing very well right now,” Culver said. “I think that’s going to be a very good match and very much a battle. Jacksonville State has a new coach and he’s done a fantastic job with the program in the short period of time.”

Jacksonville and JSU face off at 7 p.m. on Saturday in Jacksonville. Both teams are looking to win the second game at 7 p.m. The championship game will be Saturday at 1 p.m.
Every little tip helps pay their way

Every little tip helps pay their way

Kristin Davis:
TIME WRITER

The majority of students who work at service-oriented jobs like senior Nicole Biscuiti, 22, usually rely on tips from customers to financially support themselves.

She even recently received a $10 tip for a $2 check.
Senior Eric Stewart, a 22-year-old waiter at TG&J Fridays, makes an average of $85 to $100 in tips per shift. If his customers don't tip him at least 20 percent, he feels they didn't do his job right.

There was even one customer who was very grateful and left a $100 tip for $50 at home. A customer like that.

Kenny Toombs, the president of the Juggling Club at UCF, practices a non-conventional style in which he uses an acrylic sphere all over his body.

Please See Psychology on 19

I enjoy the repetitive motion and performing in front of people. I'm a showoff.

--Kenny Toombs

Mike Blakeley:
STAFF WRITER

Students juggle careers, families and classes on a daily basis, but now they can learn to juggle the old-fashioned way like graduate student Jason Burdick.

Burdick started the UCF Juggling Club three years ago so he could learn how to juggle better. Now, as its president, he teaches 20 to 20 students every Thursday afternoon in the lobby of the engineering building.

"I want to make it so everyone can learn in about an hour, that's the goal," he said.

He puts together instruction booklets and teaching methods on how to juggle for his students. He measures reaction times, accuracy rates and correction ranges to come up with a system to teach juggling.

"I'm in this industrial engineering program, I have to make a system," said Burdick.

However, Burdick is not the only one who uses this process. Psychology professor James Brophy, over the past eight years, has required his students to learn how to juggle for his general psychology class.

This active learning helps them understand how stress affects performance, how practices can change behavior and how their minds work. Brophy said. Students are also required to write a paper about juggling and take a juggling exam in front of the class.

"At first students grumble a lot, but by the time they finish they are really glad they did it. Some people just learn better while they're moving."

Brophy not only sponsors the UCF Juggling Club, but helps recruit members as well since almost half of the club's members join because of his class,
EIGHT DOLLAR DINING
A 'Fusian' of food and fun

Donna T. Schuman Staff Writer

For many college students, dining out usually means a trip to the drive-thru or wings at a sports bar. However, Fusian Japanese Eatery offers a delicious alternative for under $8.

The restaurant is decorated with oriental-style drapes and butterflies hanging on the walls. As customers enter the restaurant, they can hear the soothing sound of various water fountains and Japanese instrumental music through the dining area.

Fusian is primarily a sushi bar and offers more than 40 types of sushi rolls. Students with school spirit can even order the UCP roll, which consists of sashimi, cucumber, mayo and seed.

However, customers have other options to choose from, such as the Chicken Teriyaki combo, a favorite of the non-sushi eaters, said owner and executive chef, Jeff Lam.

The restaurant has gradually adjusted their prices to accommodate student's budgets. "We raise more to our regular crowd, which is the college students," Lam said.

Fusian also offers coupon specials at various times and during the off season. The restaurant's happy hour does not offer specials on drinks, even though beer and wine is served there, but instead consists of sushi rolls for $1 from 5:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Customers are encouraged to show off their best singing voices every Saturday night at 10 p.m. for Fuse's karaoke night. Some songs are even sung in various languages. It's a lot of fun for everyone, Lam said.

But Fusian is not always filled with the melodic sounds of its guests. During off-hours, the atmosphere at Fusian is extremely friendly and relaxing, even for first timers.

"I don't realize they are sup-posed to leave a tip because in..." Poole, 41, also a server at Fusian, added.

"I tip someone, I get a certain amount of respect at Fusian. Lam said. "I don't feel like I'm getting ripped off." Poole said.

"I tip them more than..." Poole continued.

"I don't expect tips..." Poole added.

"I give from my heart," Lam said.

Nevertheless, tips are not every tip she receives, she still appreciates every tip she receives, she still appreciates.

Freshman Kelly Morrell, 19, also related.

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Psychology professor works with club to help students juggle

From Page 17

said Burdick.

"I would have never even thought of learning how to juggle if it weren't for that class," said 18-year-old freshman and the Juggling Club's historian, Lynette Kidwell.

Brodphy's teaching methods are more effective than just reading from a textbook, Kidwell added. "The class is certainly more memorable," she said.

However, the club's vice president, 18-year-old freshman Kenny Toombs, has his own reasons for juggling.

"I enjoy the repetitive motion and performing in front of people," he said. "I'm a showoff.

"The students have already demonstrated the ability to make the necessary parts to create one, Burdick said.

Burdick has nothing but confidence that he can teach students how to ride this unicycle and juggle at the same time.

They practice old tricks and learn new ones, such as how to unicycle, walk and contact juggle, which is when a juggler rolls a glass ball across his/her arms and body.

The contact jugglers have to take off all their jewelry to do it right. Many of the times, we end up practicing later than planned because nobody has a watch to keep track of the time, Burdick said.

Brodphy already has plans to invite the club to perform in his class next semester. Burdick hopes to schedule future performances in the student courtyard and add stunts, such as an organized unicycle ride and a human wheel.

Burdick was even inspired to create a geared unicycle that can go up to 20 mph because of a project a team of engineering students did.

The students have already demonstrated the ability to make the necessary parts to create one, Burdick said.

Burdick has nothing but confidence that he can teach students how to ride this unicycle and juggle at the same time.

"I'm sure the students at our school could do it."
What’s News--
In Business and Finance

Consumer Spending Reasses Respects Some

Fears about a major slowdown in consumer spending have proven to be unfounded, for now, adding new hope that the economy, while weak, isn’t slipping back into recession.

In October, shoppers increased their spending on clothing and many other retail goods. The Commerce Department said retail sales excluding automobiles rose 0.7%, far better than what most economists had been expecting. The gain was led by a 4% increase in spending in clothing stores, as the coldest October in years helped make up for weaker sales of winter clothing earlier in the season. Auto sales fell 1.9% after a 5% decline in September. Including autos, retail sales were flat in October, after a 1.3% drop in September.

The weak economy has put many households in a financial pinch, but thanks to downward price pressures customer satisfaction with a wide range of products and services is edging higher, in large part because consumers feel companies are offering better values, according to researchers at the University of Michigan. The university’s Surveys of American Customer Satisfaction Index edged up during the three months ended in September from 72.1, from 71.3 in the second quarter and from 72 a year ago, the biggest jump back into recession.

Many prices are falling due to the weak economy and international competition in some industries. Some economists worry this could lead to a bout of deflation, in which prices and wages fall in tandem, leading the economy into an extended recession. But the Michigan gauge remains very positive, responding positively to the low price environment.

Business Spending Improves Slightly

The outlook for business investment appears to be improving, but business spending is still likely to be weak through the end of this year.

The GfI Group Inc., a political and economic consulting firm, said the latest preliminary reading of its quarterly index of business investment improved to a minus 25 in the fourth quarter from minus 37 in the third quarter.

An index measure of minus 33 or lower suggests that business fixed investment is contracting in the current quarter. An index reading between zero and minus 33 indicates growth, but at slower rates than the historical average of 5%. Results greater than zero indicate above-average business investment.

The minus 25 reading is consistent with a 1.2% increase in business investment in the fourth quarter from a seasonally adjusted, annualized basis.

Antitrust Suit Hits Visa, MasterCard

Visa and MasterCard undertook a decade-long effort to discourage the use of rival debit cards in favor of their own more-expensive versions, driving up costs for retailers and consumers, newly unsealed court documents show.

Depositions and internal company memos depict the companies as paying banks millions of dollars to curtail rival debit-card transactions, demanding that merchants take their debit cards or lose access to credit-card sales, and even trying to disguise their debit cards so merchants couldn’t tell them from credit cards.

Thousands of pages were unsealed in a massive federal antitrust suit seeking damages from Visa USA Inc. and MasterCard International Inc., the world’s biggest credit-card issuers—by the nation’s retailers, led by Wal-Mart Stores Inc. The suit alleges the two biggest credit-card issuers-by the biggest credit-card issuers-took a decade-long effort to seal court documents show.

Depositions and internal company memos depict the companies as paying banks millions of dollars to curtail rival debit-card transactions, demanding that merchants take their debit cards or lose access to credit-card sales, and even trying to disguise their debit cards so merchants couldn’t tell them from credit cards. Merchants are doing their part to create a sense of urgency.

Sales clerks at Express, a division of Limited Brands Inc., were handling customers quickly and balking good for 29% discounts—deals that expire as early as Nov. 27. Kids’ store Zany Brainy, a unit of POS Inc., has offered scratch-off coupons good for savings of 10% to 50%—as long as the books, dolls and games are snapped up by Nov. 24th.

But even stores offering no discounts, such as boutiques owned by Coach Inc., are getting their share of preseason shoppers. “We are finding that consumers are shopping earlier than last year,” says Lew Frankfort, chief executive, who noted that the company’s strong October sales had set the first half of November. Sales of certain gift items, like small "bratid" purses, were running about three times ahead of last year, he said.

According to an annual shopping forecast from market research firm, Please turn to Next Page

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UCF undergraduates have unique opportunities that provide a smooth transition to graduate school.

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So Deck the Halls Already

As Retailers Slash Prices, Shoppers Hit Mills In Early Holiday Rush

By SHIRLEY BRANDS

una's sleigh is getting an early lift.

For weeks now, retail prognosticators have preached concern about the holiday selling season. A fragile economy, low jobs, and a possible war with Iraq have led to predictions of one of the weakest holiday buying seasons in recent memory.

But determined shoppers hit the malls last week well in advance of the traditional holiday shopping kickoff, the Friday after Thanksgiving.

Consumers said they had good reason for battling foul weather, long lines, and half-empty parking spaces at major malls.

At the Garden State Plaza Mall in Paramus, N.J., shoppers armed with coupons crammed the mall’s entrances to Macy’s and J.C. Penney Co., where "sale" and "discount" signs were both abundant and daunting. They found early sales and promotions at Macy’s, a unit of Federated Department Stores Inc., J.C.

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According to an annual shopping forecast from market research firm.
What's News

In Business and Finance

Continued from Previous Page

Roxxio to Acquire

Assets of Napster

Is Napster coming back?

Roxxio Inc. agreed to acquire the assets of Napster Inc. for stock and cash valued at more than $5 million, a deal that could revive one of the best-known names in Internet music.

The deal still needs to be approved by a bankruptcy-court judge, and there is considerable doubt whether a new Napster could ever achieve the popularity the music-downloading service boasted two years ago. Roxxio, a maker of personal computer software for recording music, video and other data onto compact discs and DVDs, wouldn't say how it plans to use Napster's assets, which include the Napster brand name, intellectual property and some technology equipment.

Poor Coffee Quality

Spurs Control Effort

Coffee prices are at their lowest level in decades. So why does so much of the coffee you buy taste so bad?

Failing global prices should be a push for consumers: better beans at cheaper prices. But this year, coffee makers are increasing the quality of beans in their ground coffee for high-quality beans, according to

the International Coffee Organization. Quality has gotten so poor that in recent weeks, the ICO is issuing new rules requiring coffee-exporting countries to improve their product—or stop selling it.

Analysts say many of the best-selling supermarket brands have replaced the high-quality arabica beans they used to buy from regions like Colombia, Guatemala and Costa Rica, with low-quality beans from other countries. Vietnam, for instance, now the world's No.1 coffee producer, grows some of the cheapest and lowest-quality beans in the world.

Odds & Ends

Norton is cutting more than 2,400 jobs and plans a restructuring charge of as much as $600 million as the copier company continues to cut costs...

Nissan Motor Co. said its net profit rose 25% in its fiscal first half, boosted by improved sales volume and continued cost cuts.

By Jay Herbsey

Census Campus will not appear next week due to the Thanksgiving holiday.

At COLLEGEJOURNAL.COM

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BACK TO SCHOOL!
THURSDAY NIGHTS