

Student turns jewelry-making hobby into business
In Living, page 5



Basketball teams prepare for battle
In Sports, page 6

An editorially independent newspaper

SIDELINES

Middle Tennessee State University

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Murfreesboro, Tenn.

MTSU rated below NCAA average

By Colby Sledge
Sports Editor

The Middle Tennessee football team is the worst in Division I-A in retaining scholarship athletes and keeping them eligible until graduation, according to a new NCAA study released Monday.

The Blue Raiders received a score of 802 out of a possible 1,000 points on its Academic Progress Rate, a new statistic administered by the NCAA that ties athletes' academic perform-

ance to scholarships. A score of 925 or above signifies a passing rate, although some schools fell short but were not flagged as APR-deficient.

"We knew it was coming," MTSU President Sidney McPhee said. "We knew what we needed to do. The coaches understand that [the players] not only need to play well on the field but perform well academically."

The women's track team also performed poorly, scoring an 829. The MT athletic program

received a total score of 899 points, just shy of the 900-940 range the NCAA suggests schools aim for during this preliminary two-year period.

Although the low scores will not result in any immediate penalties against the school, the renewed emphasis on academics could result in future losses of scholarships.

The athletic program remains confident, however, that it already has a plan in

See APR, 8

Academic Progress Rate of Middle Tennessee Sports

(out of possible 1,000 points)

Sport	Score	Sport	Score
Men's Golf	1,000	*Women's Basketball	923
Women's Volleyball	983	*Men's Basketball	920
Women's Soccer	972	*Men's Outdoor Track	911
Baseball	967	Women's Outdoor Track	829
Softball	957	Football	802
Women's Golf	944	MTSU Overall APR	899
Men's Tennis	941	Average Division I-A APR	944
Women's Tennis	941		

*Sports within NCAA's "upper confidence boundary" of 925 or above

Senate passes same-sex marriage measure

Staff Reports

The Tennessee State Senate overwhelmingly passed a proposal for a constitutional amendment that would define marriage as one man and one woman.

The measure passed 29-3 Monday evening.

The House version, HJR 0024, passed the Finance, Ways and Means Committee yesterday and has been referred to the Calendar and Rules Committee for consideration before the full House.

Tennessee already has a Defense of Marriage Act which prohibits same-sex marriage; however, this amendment would ensure the state does not recognize homosexual marriages or civil unions made in other states.

If it passes the House, voters will have the opportunity to vote on the proposed amendment on the November 2006 general election ballot. ♦

Roll Call

See how the senators voted on page 3.

Quiz showdown



Photo by Jay Richardson | Photo Editor

(Left to right) Andriy Miller, Chance Mysayphonh, Jared Stiefel and Argie D. Miller of the Gamma Iota Sigma team won last night's MTSU Quiz Bowl by beating out the Raiders for Rationalism with a final score of 11-5.

Evangelicals play major role in state's electorate, poll says

By Dana Owens
Staff Writer

Evangelical Christians play a major roll in Tennessee's political atmosphere, the Spring MT Poll of 2005 shows.

The findings upheld the notion of conservative beliefs among Tennessee's evangelical Christians and also showed their opinions on current political issues.

Robert Wyatt and Ken Blake, director and associate director of the MTSU biannual poll, said they wanted to see the effects of evangelical Christians on politics.

The results, Wyatt noticed, were interesting. The poll found that while many evangelicals supported President George W. Bush in

the recent elections, they did not expect him to solve the political agenda.

Rather, they hoped he would create a "more favorable climate" for Christians, Wyatt said. According to Blake's research, evangelicals believe president Bush will "improve morality, secure divine favor and increase belief in God."

Fewer believed the president will be able to solve moral, political issues such as ending restrictions on school prayer, allowing the display of the Ten Commandments in public places or outlawing abortion.

Both Blake and Wyatt commented on the role evangelicals played in the president's re-election.

Blake noted a pattern in which white evangelicals were the president's chief support base.

According to Wyatt, Tennesseans tend to vote on symbolic issues. He also noted the South's political past of voting along Democratic partisan lines.

Blake said the Republican Party has only recently gained control of the South because it has built up an alliance with conservative Christians who are becoming more evangelical Christians.

"What always surprises me is they are very conservative on symbolic issues but have a populist perspective on government,"

See Poll, 2

What Evangelicals said...

• Fifty-three percent of evangelicals said that Bush's presence in the White House will cause other people to take religious faith more seriously.

• Sixty-one percent of whites in Tennessee approve of the way Bush is handling his job as president and among these, 69 percent of white evangelicals approved of his performance.

• Another statistic in the MT Poll showed that 60 percent of evangelicals believe Saddam Hussein was involved in the attacks of Sept. 11.

• Similar to the results of the MT Poll, an exit poll conducted by the Associated Press in November of last year found that 53 percent of Tennessee's electorate identified themselves as evangelical Christians and three out of four of them voted for Bush.

Source: MT Poll

Developmental studies brings academic success for Alpha Theta inductees



Photo by Rachelle Morvant | Chief Photographer

Katie Warren, president of Alpha Theta, an honors society, is pursuing a master's degree in sports management.

By Kim Peer
Staff Writer

Alpha Theta, the MTSU chapter of Chi Alpha Epsilon, inducted 37 new members on Feb. 26.

"We are proud of these students who have demonstrated that with the provisions of academic assistance like developmental studies, they have the ability not only to succeed but to excel," said Marva Lucas, interim chair of the Developmental Studies Department.

New members, who started college under an academic assistance pro-

gram, maintained or exceeded the 3.0 grade point average for at least two semesters.

"We are very proud of our new inductees," Alpha Theta President Katie Warren said.

The induction ceremony took place in the Keathley University Center Theater with family and friends in attendance. A slide show of the inductees was presented.

"The distinction that participation in this honor society brings speaks positively about the importance of the academic program that made this opportunity possible," Lucas added.

Besides personal academic achievement, inductees are recognized at graduation and a cord and pin designated to their GPAs, Warren added. A diamond pin represents a 4.0 GPA; an emerald, 3.75 to 3.99; and a ruby, 3.5 to 3.74.

"The students of Alpha Theta significantly impact MTSU because their numbers up the graduation rate and retention," Carla Hatfield said.

Hatfield founded the chapter in 1998 and now serves as a faculty adviser and adviser for the Academic

See Honors, 2

Durham's office. Durham began with installing a production system and televisions in the Capitol Foyer outside House chambers for over 100 students and handicapped people who cannot get to the House gallery due to a rather steep stairwell.

"People could be in the foyer and could see what was going on, so that was the initial benefit that people saw," Durham said.

The production system includes five cameras in the House chambers and two cam-

See Televised, 3



Sidelines will not publish on Thursday, March 3.

Opinions 4 • Living 5 • Sports 6 • Classifieds 7

Lectureship to bring notable speakers to campus

By Casey Phillips
Staff Writer

The new Paul W. Martin Sr. Honors College Lectureship will bring two respected lecturers to campus each year to help connect students with the leaders of a variety of fields.

General Hugh Shelton, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Bill Clinton and George W. Bush administrations, will be the speaker at the inaugural lecture to be held at noon on April 13.

Philip Mathis, the interim dean for the Honors College, said the lectureship was funded

by Lee Martin with \$20,000 a year in honor of his father Paul W. Martin Sr.

Mathis said he expects to bring speakers to campus of a caliber normally associated with Vanderbilt and other leading universities in the country.

"My staff and I worked on a proposal that would bring on the two most outstanding lecturers possible each year from the leaders of all walks of life," Mathis said. "We want students to be able to meet, listen and speak with leaders, not just read about them."

Media relations director Tom Tozer said the committee to

select the upcoming lecturer for each semester includes the Dean of the Honors College, the Associate Dean, Lee Martin and an undergraduate honors student representative.

Although tickets are free, this initial lecture in the State Farm Room of the Business and Aerospace Building is limited to 65 seats. Mathis said future lectures will be held in larger locations, and lecturers will speak more than once during their visits.

Mathis said this lectureship is not intended to be a replacement for the current honors lecture series but a program to

support and enhance it.

"This lectureship is in no way a result of a failing of the faculty lecture series," Mathis said. "We've had excellent attendance to the honors lecture series; we already have faculty members who would be the big speakers on other campuses around the country."

This first lecturer is expected to set the stage for a list of speakers who spark interest, not just among students but within the community as well.

"For Gen. Shelton, we have people from all around the area asking to come to the event," Mathis said. "But it is an honors

college function, so our first priority is to the honors students."

Mathis said future speakers will come from a variety of fields, not just the military. Every speaker will have something to say that will be especially meaningful to a particular interest group. Joshua Davis, a freshman aerospace major and a participant in the campus ROTC program, said he plans to attend Shelton's lecture, citing the importance of interaction between military leaders and college students.

"It's extremely important," Davis said. "A gentleman like Gen. Shelton knows the impact

that college people have on the military. Gen. Shelton is the kind of man that can make them realize how important their vote is and how it affects so many lives and the lives of soldiers."

Mathis said he hopes the lecturers will build student's self-confidence by putting them in contact with flesh-and-blood examples of the leaders they are learning about.

"When students get a chance to talk to leaders or just ask a question, it is an important factor, I think, in the building of a young person, a young leader's life." ♦

Senior Gift Scholarship established, graduates will benefit

By Kristin Hall
Editor in Chief

The way a student dresses for graduation ceremony illustrates a lot about that individual. Many students have cords and ribbons that designate membership in honor societies and other organizations.

But this May graduates have the chance to add another special designation to their graduation robes: a Senior Gift pin.

The Development Office will be calling seniors who are graduating in May to raise money for a graduate student scholarship.

Those who donate will be able to show off their school pride with a special Senior Gift pin at graduation.

Karen Daniel, coordinator for annual giving, said that many universities have similar senior gift campaigns, but this is the first year for MTSU.

"As they are entering the workforce, we hope they will realize what the university has given them and return the favor," Daniel said.

The money raised will go into a new graduate scholarship called the Senior Gift Scholarship, and recipients will know that their undergraduate peers provided the money, Daniel said.

"I think so few people know how few scholarships exist on the graduate level," Daniel said. "Here's a chance to give back to your very soon-to-be alma mater and to help an individual."

Daniel said that the office has a tentative goal for the scholarship, but "the focus is on participation, not money raised."

Daniel said that she hopes this campaign will start two new graduation traditions: giving back to the university and sporting a Senior Gift pin at graduation. ♦

Dean's father's foundation, Indian student group directly fund relief for tsunami victims in India

David S. T. Driver
Staff Writer

It started as a usual Christmas day for Dean Anantha Babbili of the college of Mass Communication when a tsunami destroyed his former homeland in Southern India.

"It took a full seven days for us to find out our family was fine," Babbili said.

Although his and his wife's families survived, Babbili knew others who were not as lucky.

"We did not have any human loss in our family," Babbili said. "But we know of people who are

missing, like church workers."

Now Babbili is continuing a family charge to help the victims in accordance with the Indian Student Association.

His father, the late Rev. Babbili Prabhudas, was a bishop for the Church of South India.

Prabhudas started a foundation reaching out to those individuals with leprosy and malnourishment through the church.

Dean Babbili's father passed away in 1996, but since then, his work has inspired his friends to reach out.

Babbili and his father's circle

of friends created a foundation to continue efforts in the region.

The foundation shortly dealt with its first disaster.

On January 26, 2001, India was celebrating its Republic Day when an earthquake killed some cities into rubble, turning 20,000.

Currently, the death toll from the Indian Ocean Tsunami is more than 140,000, including 10,000-12,000 from India.

The foundation is now working with the Indian Student Association on campus to raise money for victims.

Survivors need drinking

water and healthy food as many children are orphaned and families are displaced, Babbili said.

"Tentatively, we had decided to go through my father's foundation as far as fund-raising," Babbili said.

Babbili's foundation is a non-profit organization, which sends the funds directly to churches in the region to send immediate help without the bureaucracy.

Students interested in helping out can contact Paul Watson of the Indian Student Association. ♦

Honors: Warren hopes for national members

Continued from 1

Center.

"Our first group only had six people, and now we've grown to 170 members," Hatfield continued. "Most of them end up making the dean's list, graduating, becoming leaders in their communities and even attending graduate school."

Warren is a success story her-

self. She was inducted into Alpha Theta in February 2003 and has since graduated from MTSU with a degree in public relations and is now pursuing her masters in sports management and helping out the honor society in any way she can.

Other inductees were unavailable to comment.

Warren said that she hopes to bring members to the nation-

al level soon.

Other officers of Alpha Theta include Barbara Murray, vice president, and Holly Fitzgerald, secretary.

Chi Alpha Epsilon was founded in 1989 by Elbert Saddler at West Chester University in Pennsylvania. A university psychologist and counseling coordinator for the ACT 101 Program, Saddler

identified eligible students to form the first national chapter for developmental studies. Saddler once said the society is unique because it is "able to reward both improvement and accomplishment."

There are now 120 chapters established across the United States. ♦

Poll: Christians believe Hussein evil, Hyatt says

Continued from 1

Wyatt said.

More interestingly, the poll shows that Tennesseans do not go to church or pray more often than other states.

The difference, Wyatt said, is that people in Tennessee are more public with the beliefs, not

"bigger believers."

Wyatt theorizes that since Hussein is from the Middle East area that conquered Israel, many Christians associate the dictator as being "evil."

In a post-Sept. 11 speech of January 2002, Bush expressed a similar mindset when he first used the term "axis of evil" in

reference to nations including Iraq and Iran.

In the poll, evangelicals were defined as "born-again Christians" found as sub-groups of many different forms of Christianity.

They were determined by questions including the notion that the Bible is the actual word

of God, the belief that Jesus will return to earth and a personal history of encouraging others to accept Christ as their savior.

According to the research, these questions correlate strongly with evangelical beliefs held by evangelicals. ♦



Got a hot news tip?

E-mail us at 898-2336

MTSU Student Affairs announces the 2005 Dean Judy Smith Scholarship Award

Description: The Dean Judy Smith Scholarship Award is given to a student who is an active participant in one or more of the following areas of campus life: social sorority or fraternity, cheerleading squad, Student Programming/Special Events, Student Government Association (executive, legislative, or judicial branch), or CUSTOMS (new student orientation).

This student must have completed at least 30 hours credit in residence at MTSU and have a cumulative grade point average of 3.00. (Because of the terms of this award, graduating seniors are ineligible.)

Applications are available in the Office of Vice President for Student Affairs, KUC Room 212.

Application Deadline: March 25, 2005

If you have any questions about the application process or the scholarship award, please contact Jennifer Lane in the Office of Vice President for Student Affairs at 898-2750.

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Applications SGA: 2005

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If you are a leader, enjoy MTSU's traditional Homecoming, enjoy large Philanthropy projects and are looking for a way to get involved in a big way on our campus, the Student Government Association is now accepting applications for committee positions as well. If you are interested in any of these positions please fill out an application in the SGA office located in KUC 208 or for information call 898-2464.

Applications due Wed 23 March 2005

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art, science, music, etc. activities
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special activities
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\$20.00 registration fee
\$18.00 weekly additional children
\$7.00 daily additional children



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Roll Call:

The Senate voted 29-3 to pass a constitutional amendment banning same sex marriage

YES:
 Mae Beavers, R - Mt. Juliet
 Diane Black, R - Hendersonville
 Jim Bryson, R - Franklin
 Tim Burchett, R - Knoxville
 Charlotte Burks, D - Monterey
 Sidney Chism, D - Memphis
 Jerry Cooper, D - Smartt
 Rusty Crowe, R - Johnson City
 Ward Crutzhfield, D - Chattanooga
 Raymond Finney, R - Maryville
 David Fowler, R - Signal Mountain
 Jamie Hagood, R - Knoxville
 Thelma Harper, D - Nashville
 Douglas Henry, D - Nashville
 Roy Herron, D - Dresden
 Doug Jackson, D - Dickson
 Bill Ketron, R - Murfreesboro
 Tommy Kilby, D - Wartburg

Rosalind Kurita, D - Clarksville
 Don McCleary, D - Jackson
 Randy McNally, R - Oak Ridge
 Jeff Miller, R - Cleveland
 Mark Norris, R - Collierville
 Curtis S. Person Jr., R - Memphis
 Ron Ramsey, R - Blountville
 Steve Southerland, R - Morristown
 Jim Tracy, R - Murfreesboro
 Lt. Gov. John S. Wilder, D - Mason
 Michael R. Williams, R - Maynardville

NO:
 Steve Cohen, D - Memphis
 John Ford, D - Memphis
 Joe Haynes, D - Goodlettsville

ABSENT
 James S. Kyle, Jr., D - Memphis

Televised: Pilot program launched in Covington

Continued from 1

eras in the committee room where budget hearings hold. There is generally a three-person production team: one for graphics, one who controls the cameras from the production booth and a producer of sorts who chooses and changes cameras in use during the session.

The state began live streaming and archiving video in 2002 at the legislature's Web site, www.legislature.state.tn.us.

In 2004, Durham's office started a pilot program in Covington and got positive results, so the program was launched to most of the state's cable companies this year. Comcast, Charter Cable, STC Holding, Adelphia and Time Warner are all carrying the sessions.

In addition, tapes are sent to Volunteer State Community College in Gallatin and Dyersburg State Community College in Dyersburg for replay on those school's cable channels.

Currently the sessions are not broadcast live on cable; they are taped and sent to the various cable companies.

Durham added that he had spoken with MTSU President Sidney McPhee to discuss putting sessions on one of MTSU's

channels, adding that McPhee "offered to help any way he can."

Rep. Kent Coleman, D - Murfreesboro, who was involved in helping to get the proceedings televised, said it benefits people who "don't have the means or the ability to watch [session] on the Internet."

"The House leadership has been doing its best over the last several years to make this whole process open to anyone that wants to view it," Coleman said.

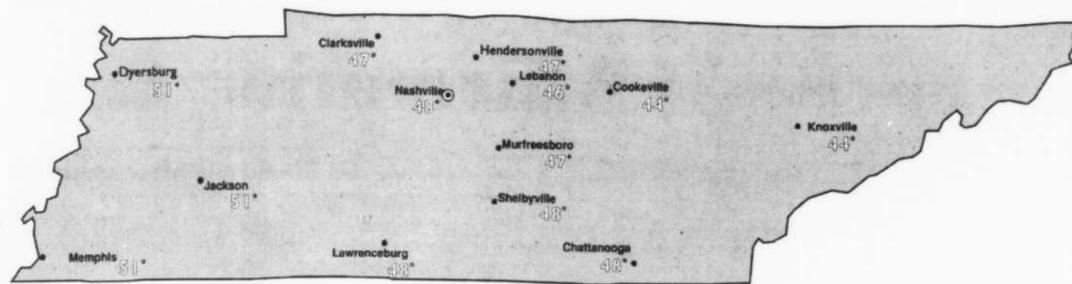
Coleman said constituents have given positive feedback on the system and that having the sessions available online has also made it easier for him to get informed, such as watching reports from department commissioners and avoiding asking questions that had already been addressed.

"I have a better idea of what the presenters are talking about and less of a learning curve," Coleman said.

Stacey Burks Briggs, executive director of the Tennessee Cable Telecommunications Association, said in a press release that its members "are proud to be a part of this important time in the history of our state; never before have citizens been able to sit in their living rooms and watch the House and committee hearings." ♦

Tennessee Weather - Wednesday's Highs

From the Associated Press



Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
50° ▲ 34° ▼	43° ▲ 33° ▼	50° ▲ 40° ▼	56° ▲ 37° ▼	58° ▲ 36° ▼

City council considers new shopping centers

By Dana Owens
 Staff Writer

Imagine a clean, modern courtyard filled with people mingling around a central fireplace and intermittent fountains. A live band plays the people can dance to and a vendor walks between them selling roses. This is the portrait Councilman Doug Young painted when describing the shopping center he hopes to see recreated in Murfreesboro in the near future.

Along with six other city officials, including Mayor Tommy Bragg, Young recently returned from a conference held by the International Council of Shopping Centers in Phoenix. According to Young, the conference was a workshop for layout ideas and an opportunity to see original concepts in shopping centers.

Toby Gilley, a councilman and also a member of the Planning Commission, described the outdoor malls they studied in two different

styles, both embodying a main-street feel. The first of which, he says, is the "lifestyle" layout with condominiums and hidden parking garages atop stores that face wide sidewalks and cobblestone, tree-lined streets. The second he described as an "open air" shopping center featuring amphitheatres, courtyards, fountains and outdoor dining.

According to Gilley, the centers would attract upscale stores such as Banana Republic, Crate and Barrel and Restoration Hardware.

Aside from vastly improved shopping, the new mall would also mean jobs for many MTSU students in restaurants and retail. Young says he believes the Stones River Mall would also benefit from the new center and attract crowds of its own.

Both Young and Gilley commented on the project will bring in a tremendous amount of revenue from sales tax dollars. Gilley noted that the more

money generated off of sales tax, the less the city has to rely on property tax to fund its budget.

No definite plans have been reviewed yet, but the council has seen preliminary plans of one type of shopping center. Gilley doesn't expect the plans to be reviewed seriously until mid-March.

"There are still a lot of hoops to jump through," Young said.

Young also made note that projects of this scale are typically done in phases. He said the entire project, once started, may not be completed for another five to seven years, though he is optimistic about it getting underway within the year.

Three separate companies are currently being considered to build the new shopping center on private land off Thompson Lane.

The site will soon be easily accessible with the completion of the Manson Pike Interstate

24 interchange.

Though excited about the new shopping center, the city officials are considering it's options carefully.

"You only get one shot, so you want to make sure it's modern, sharp-looking and meets consumers expectations," Young said.

The shopping mall will be privately owned, but since it is in the Gateway Design district, the plans will still be subject to the close scrutiny of the city. Gilley explained the fact that the new center will not be like a strip mall and will fall under the strict ordinances and restrictions that also affect the Gateway Design project.

The ongoing Gateway project is a 350-acre area that is being developed for offices, conference centers, hotels, residence and retail. Gilley described it as being a "gateway" to the city of Murfreesboro. ♦



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From the Editorial Board Graduation important to all, including athletes

According to the NCAA, MTSU isn't graduating enough of its athletes. We suspect they're right. The NCAA rankings put our football team in dead last among Division I-A schools.

The university owes its student athletes an education. MTSU shouldn't be in the business of hiring professional athletes to play football for four years while they pretend to get an education.

The NCAA's rankings make it seem that this is the case. But, it should be noted that football player's actually graduate at a better rate than the rest of the student body. This is not a student athlete problem. This is an MTSU student problem. As the university has grown by leaps and bounds, it has had a hard time keeping up with that growth. Students have been pouring in, and no one can keep track of them.

No one sure to check on a student's progress. No one makes sure they are graduating.

The athletic department has programs in place to help its athletes. These programs are far more extensive than those available to the general student body.

Nonetheless, the university still doesn't measure up to national standards.

The school has pledged to a lot more money to help more student athletes graduate so that we can measure up to NCAA requirements.

But, what about everyone else? It's good to see student athletes getting the help they need, but student-athletes at MTSU obviously need some help, too.

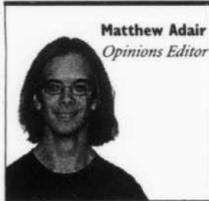
MTSU has increased its admission requirements, which should help the graduation rate in a few years. More help like that given to our student athletes is owed to the rest of the students. Just because you can't play a sport doesn't mean you don't deserve a little help.

In time the university will catch up with its tremendous growth. As MTSU grows larger and larger, it has the opportunity for greater success. At the same time, when we fail, it will be more significant, more public and more embarrassing.

MTSU will have to deal with its problems like the graduation rate quickly, before they grow out of hand. Hopefully, the administration will be able to do so. ◆

From the Opinions Editor Education better solution than execution for minors

Justice is fair, justice is blind; as a culture, we have many expressions for how the authority of the law is meted out fairly based on the severity of the crimes people commit. At the same time, however, our country has been faced with the dilemma of how to administer punishment to young people who break the law.



Matthew Adair
Opinions Editor

Yesterday, the Supreme Court narrowly decided to bar execution from handing down the death penalty to minors who commit violent crimes, overturning a 1989 decision that allowed 19 states to execute juvenile murderers.

The matter of the death penalty is a difficult one to handle. Some would argue that is a fair and equal punishment to those who deliberately take the lives of other human beings, while others would say that applying the principle of "an eye for an eye" is inhumane, and that the state should never take a person's life, no matter how heinous a crime they may have committed.

When it comes to youth, however, the Supreme Court was right to spare teenagers from the penalty of death. In the majority decision, Justice Anthony Kennedy said that society must acknowledge that "emotional imbalance" may often affect the mind of a young person who commits a crime.

Even for those who know exactly what they have done and were perfectly in their right minds when they took their victim's life, we, as a society, must acknowledge that it would be a waste of life to let someone we have the potential to change for the better. Programs like Florida's Program for At-Risk Students, where incarcerated teenagers are allowed to tell students about their experiences behind bars, have been found to significantly deter teens from breaking the law. After all, why commit a crime when you know the life that potentially awaits you, a life of endless limitations and restrictions?

Teenagers should be treated as adults, but it is best for our country to stress education and reform over a lethal injection. We have the potential to create a better generation of people than the one that came before, to reform children who would have been thought unredeemable in previous ages. It would be a shameful waste to destroy that opportunity. ◆

Matthew Adair is a sophomore art education major and can be reached at matt.adair@gmail.com.

Affirmative action policy racist

It is fair for one race to receive special preference over another.

It is fair and just for a university, corporation or other institution to discriminate among those it admits or hires on the basis of race, and to give one race favorable status over another. If necessary, it may relax the standards applied to one race and harden the standards to another, so that too many people of "undesirable" skin color won't overrun the institution.

Since an equal standard applied to all people might allow the brighter or more talented members of an undesirable race in laws, quotas and double standards are applied to ensure that an institution's population exists in a certain, desired racial proportion that is considered fair, just and moral.

Remarkably, this is how we define equality today; in a way not that different from the way we might have defined the Jim Crow laws 50 years ago.

As pointed out in *Sidelines'* own front-page article last

Beyond Your Expectations



Anthony Davis
Staff Columnist

Wednesday, the differences between the percentages of each ethnic group in the community, versus representation at MTSU are, in each case, less than 5 percent. Nevertheless, although they never actually state it, it is clear what the Department of Multicultural Affairs intends to do: give more special preferences to students of desired races, and discriminate more against those of whom they feel there are too many.

That is the nature of affirmative action. Concocted, not in the spirit of the civil rights movement of the 1960s, but in that of the radical leftist movements of the 1970s and '80s, it is a system that's rather, not racial equality, but rather, racial vengeance. It is a

cynical and twisted system that, in practice, creates an artificial, phony kind of diversity. It is one that, having been achieved through deliberate and systematic discrimination against an entire group of people on the basis of race, is totally meaningless and worthy of contempt, not praise.

Besides hurting white males, its obvious target, affirmative action creates a demeaning and patronizing attitude in the workplace or classroom towards those who are supposed to benefit from it. It is difficult to gain any respect or advance in a position if peers and superiors believe the position was achieved due to skin color and gender, rather than individual qualifications or merits. The system also harms society by encouraging a culture of victimhood and entitlement, legitimizing and strengthening existing racial divisions, and, ultimately, worsening interracial jealousy and hatred. Conservatives, who are frequently denounced as racists for opposing affirmative action, most often only, seek color-blindness and

equality under the law. They do not need to be preached to by who have always desired, and still do desire, the perpetuation of racial discrimination.

Equality is not a concept that can be legislated through statutes or quotas. It is a state of mind. It has to do with the way people perceive and treat one another, and it can only exist when all people are treated equally, regardless of race, gender or any other discriminating factor.

Indeed, all people who seek true equality should refuse to classify themselves by race at all; it is a meaningless and artificial concept, one with no genetic or biological significance whatsoever. Before achieving true equality, society must first learn to be color-blind, and to judge each other, "not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." ◆

Anthony Davis is a junior electronic media communications major and can be reached at ald3d@mtsu.edu.

No excuses: take some responsibility for actions

Excuse, excuses; everyone has one when they are faced with explaining their own actions. It's hard for people to say, "I'm sorry, what I did was wrong, and I take responsibility for my own behavior." Instead, people have millions of reasons why they had to do what they did. When, really, they didn't have to do anything.

We can take responsibility for the good things we achieve, but when we do something wrong, it was someone else's fault. It is harder for us to give people credit for helping us to achieve than to lay blame on people.

We can be so selfish sometimes. Some examples are, "I was drunk so I got into fight," or "I am sorry, officer, for speeding, but my boyfriend just broke up with me." Everyone has a bad day every now and then, but you shouldn't use your emotions or another action to explain away the new problem you caused.

Look at it this way. Suppose you have a cold. Most people would not cough all over everyone just to give some else a cold. If someone was in pain, why would they want to cause others pain? It makes no sense at all.

Excuses are for small children that don't want to get into trouble with their moms and dads. Adults should be able to handle the consequences that they may be faced with. Adults take responsibility for their own actions and feelings. That is what real, mature adulthood is. Are you an

Kacey's Corner



Kacey Hercules
Staff Columnist

adult yet?

I think in this world, we still have grown babies running around causing pain and trouble to others. Then, they excuse their behavior away.

Use their behavior to grow up. Take the smelly diaper of excuses off, and put some big boy/girl underwear on. Everyone hates the gross smell. A complain brings.

We are all human. We all make mistakes. We are not perfect. If we can keep this in our minds, I think it will be easier to say "I'm sorry" for the things that we do.

The reason "I'm sorry" doesn't mean anything is because we put an excuse after it. Then, we never change our behavior. Excuses are empty words to the hearts that you may have broken. I challenge you to let the words "I'm sorry" mean something where, it belongs. ◆

Kacey Hercules is a junior social work major and can be reached at kah2x@mtsu.edu.

Letters to the Editor

Tennessee senate moving backwards

To the Editor:

The state of Tennessee has once again left me completely disgusted and disappointed. ("Gay marriage bill to sail through senate", Feb. 28) Our country places a high premium upon the amount of time spent premeditating an act, and indeed it does shame our opinions about the difference between an angry, impulsive person (which we all are from time to time) and a psychopath. It is with this in mind that I am forced to consider this state's repeated codifying of its hatred into to law to be more than just a heinous misstep.

We, as citizens and as human beings, have a responsibility to come to terms with the fact that others may have different belief systems than us, and that while we may hate the beliefs or choices, we cannot hate the people themselves. It is becoming more apparent with every year I spend here that Tennessee is only continuing its long history of intolerance and backward politics. Each time Tennessee does something like this, it adds another chapter to a book which has slowly grown to paint this state as a derelict, devolving cesspool of ignorance and outright hate.

Now unable to openly demonstrate its hatred of racial, ethnic, and religious minorities, (and you can thank activist judges for that one) Tennessee has channeled its contempt toward gays and lesbians via this legislation.

I used to think it was my civic duty to remain in this state, and try and fight the good fight — one vote at a time. But now, having watched Democrats and Republicans alike either promote this legislation or flop around on the ground like fish, I have lost all faith in both parties and especially in this state. Every time Tennessee pulls a backwards, ignorant maneuver like this, I think of just one more educated person throwing their arms up in the air and moving away. That might explain why this legislation has made it this far.

David Caudill
Junior, Communication Disorders

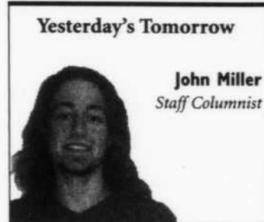
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Credit cards pose dangerous trap for college students

Like many of you, I can go to the mailbox on any given day and find numerous credit card applications. I never knew so many people named Discover Card and American Express wanted to be my friends.



Yesterday's Tomorrow

John Miller
Staff Columnist

Credit card companies are willing to offer anything from "free" T-shirts, pizza and spring break trips to anyone willing to fill out an application. Although I'm sure they all have our best interests at heart, what are the real motives that drive these businesses to offer these "free" goods and services? Simply put, these financial institutions know that college kids are not the best with money, and they stand to gain significantly from us.

A few days ago, my friends and I discussed our experiences with credit cards. While most of us had successfully navigated the financial waters, there are always those one or two people whose ships have sunk. As Americans, we are significantly more in debt today than a generation ago. Credit cards, high car payments and mortgages are driving more and more people closer to bankruptcy. Though for most people, this could be avoided with better financial planning.

In this society that gears itself increasingly towards instant gratification, eventually everyone will have to realize that the "buy now, pay later" philosophy might not be the best option. Most everyone has a friend who used his or her credit card unwisely. At 18 or 19, it is easy to think, "It's OK to buy this now. What bad could come from me buying a few more CDs, maybe some new furniture, or why not be nice and buy pizza for the entire dorm floor?" Eventually, though, those bills become due.

On the other hand, there are ways to use credit wisely. Credit can be used to buy cars, homes or that 85-inch plasma TV you have had your eye on. There are, in essence, three levels of credit: Good, Bad and No credit. No credit can almost be worse than bad credit at times. Without credit, you cannot rent a car or a house, much less buy one. So, how does one get good credit?

First off, no one really needs more than two credit cards. Having five platinum cards is only going to invite trouble. In reality, every time you fill out a credit card application, your credit score goes down. Your credit score is what financial institutions use to judge how much money to lend you and at what percentage rate. When selecting a card, always try to find the one with the lowest Annual Percentage Rate. The difference between a few points can cost you a lot of money. Anything over 20 percent is ridiculous. Most people should be able to get an APR of 15 percent or lower.

After selecting a card, remember to use it wisely. Don't go and buy a \$2,000 bedroom suit or a big screen TV just because there is enough room on your credit limit Diamond Discover Card. One way to build good credit is to pay off purchases immediately after the bill comes. Also, it would seem common sense, but do not miss any payments. Doing so hurts your credit score, can make your APR default to over 20 percent and incurs a non-payment fee of at least \$25.

Managing credit wisely is an essential skill to learn while in college. If used correctly, credit can help you along life's journey. On the other hand, it can also feel like a prison if it is misused. By the time we graduate college, we should be able to stop depending on daddy's hard-earned money and find a real job. With that, most people will want to buy a new car or a home. However, relying on credit cards during college can seriously inhibit your ability to do so. Remember not to live outside your means; sometimes it is better to work and save rather than just buying and charging. ◆

John Miller is a senior political science and French double major and can be reached at bigharf@comcast.net.

Get in touch with us.
Get online.
<http://www.mtsusidelines.com>
slopinio@mtsu.edu

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*denotes member of editorial board

Middle Tennessee State University
1301 East Main Street
P.O. Box 8
Murfreesboro, TN 37132

Editorial: 898-2337
Advertising: 898-2533
Fax: 904-8193
www.mtsusidelines.com

Student turns jewelry-making hobby into business

By Audrey Scruton
Staff Writer

From athletic intramurals to academic club meetings, most MTSU students find extracurricular activities to keep them busy outside of class. But junior marketing major Amy Gifford has turned her after-school hobby into a full-fledged business.

Gifford, a self-described crafty and creative woman, recently launched her own unique line of modern-meets-vintage original jewelry under the design alias Glory Alice.

"There are never two pieces that are the same," Gifford says. "I use different materials all the time and try to come up with unusual combos. I even used dryer sheets once to make beads."

Gifford tries to create jewelry that she herself would love to wear.

"All of my products are a reflection of myself, and I try to think about whether or not I would love to wear it," she says.

A jewelry enthusiast from a young age, Gifford began creating pieces in high school.

"I started out with really simplistic things, and then moved on to more complicated pieces as I got older," Gifford explains.

Gifford used several different sources in naming her design line Glory Alice.

"The name is a combination of the northern lights, aurora borealis, and my favorite Letters to Cleo album, *Aurora Glory Alice*," Gifford explains. "It's also my initials spelled backwards, if you want to look at it that way."

Now Gifford is working on starting a "grass roots" movement with her jewelry, concentrating on getting her foot in the door of the jewelry industry.

"There are a few things left I have to figure out — mostly legal issues," Gifford says. "I need a business license and I want to be able to buy supplies wholesale and have my own trunk shows and everything like that."

So far, Gifford has taken two major steps toward her goal of shipping her jewelry across the nation. Her products can now be purchased locally at Sugaree's in Murfreesboro, and she was recently on the craft Web site Cut+Paste.com as a partner in crafts.

MTSU foreign languages major Sarah Johnson said she would definitely



Amy Gifford's display at Sugaree's on Lytle Street has gained her a fan base in the Murfreesboro area.

Photos by Rachele Morvant | Chief Photographer

be interested in seeing some of Gifford's work.

"I absolutely love jewelry, and I'm always looking for different pieces that are pretty and one of a kind," Johnson says. "You don't always want to wear the same thing everyone else has."

Staci Higdon, owner of Sugaree's, emphasizes the unique style of jewelry Gifford creates.

"All of her designs are different from each other, and she brings in something new every week," Higdon says.

According to Higdon, Gifford already has a following of fans.

"There are people who come in to the store just to see Amy's jewelry, and we have other people who have seen

someone wearing it and ask specifically for it," Higdon says.

"Those were two really big steps for me in the right direction as far as getting my name out there," Gifford says. "And I also have some boutique prospects in South Carolina that I'm really excited about."

The next step Gifford plans to take is to start a Web site.

"I really want to create a Web presence for myself and for Glory Alice," Gifford says. "That way, if I begin selling my products in different states, then people can log on to one central location to get information."

Balancing a full class load, other activities and starting a successful busi-

ness can be overwhelming at times, Gifford says.

"But I had a professor once who said that the more stress you have, the harder you should work," she says.

Gifford admits to following that philosophy.

"I definitely work hard on my jewelry," she says. "I don't have a dining room anymore — all of my craft supplies have taken over the room."

Gifford credits her jewelry business as one form of stress relief, not a stress inducer.

"Working with my jewelry is fun and relaxing, and everything else just seems to get done somehow," she says.

Gifford hopes that her business

inspires other crafty young women to start their own projects.

"There really is an resurgence of young, creative women right now," Gifford said. "I would love to start some sort of group to organize them all and give them an outlet for their creativity."

Higdon believes Gifford will go far with her jewelry.

"She is a very talented individual with an extremely unique sense of style," Higdon said.

Glory Alice jewelry can be purchased locally at Sugaree's at 113 W. Lytle St. Items cost from \$16 for earrings to \$20 for necklaces. ♦



College exploits wanted for book

By Jean Bentley
The Daily Free Press (Boston U.)

(U-WIRE) BOSTON — A national contest running until May allows students at Boston University and on campuses nationwide to submit their collegiate exploits for inclusion in a Random House book due out next spring.

Stories selected from the contest and submissions from www.collegestories.com, a Web site created by Wake Forest University graduates Derek Pittman and Ben Applebaum in 1999, will be featured in the book.

Pittman, who is working on the book with Applebaum and one other colleague, is in charge of advertising sales and story editing for the Web site.

"For the first year or so, we were pretty much begging and pleading with our friends to post stories on our Web site," he said.

A 2001 article in *Entertainment Weekly* brought the Web site national attention, Pittman said.

"After that we were approached by people who wanted to represent us for a book," he said.

Although they considered turning the site into a book before, Pittman said "it kind of just fell in our laps."

The group's deal with Random House began in June 2004.

By completing their manuscript by the end of the summer, Pittman said there was time to add student-submitted stories to the book, due out in spring of 2006.

The book, tentatively titled "Class Acts: 101 Most Amazing College Exploits," will include "a sampling of different types of stories," including stories about fraternities and sororities, study abroad, roommates and spring break excursions.

"Basically we're trying to solicit the best of each of these categories of stories," he said.

College of Communication freshman Marysa LaRowe said she would submit a piece to the website if she "had a really funny story or something crazy happened."

"Just having a collection of things like that would be really entertaining," she said.

Many students said they would visit the site out of curiosity.

"I'd go just to see how other people are living their college lives," School of Management freshman Parita Patel said. "I'd have to see what the other stories are like before I considered submitting one of my own."

College of Engineering sophomore Christian de Kam said he already had "a story in mind."

Although the Web site attributes students by their school, the book will credit them by name, Pittman said.

However, LaRowe said the

publication of student names could lead to undesirable notoriety.

"I think it should remain anonymous," she said. "You could get into some trouble with that."

CAS freshman Christine Bath said whether or not a student would want their name printed should be dependant upon the individual, "because there are some stories people wouldn't want their names tied to."

But CAS senior Andreas Vignakis said he thought most students would want their names published.

"I imagine some people printed with their stories if they're submitting them in the first place," he said, citing the thrill of seeing their names in print as a motivation for students to submit stories.

But the allure of celebrity stories is stronger with other students.

"It depends on the price, but I might buy the book just for fun," de Kam said. He said stories from celebrities would get more people to buy the book.

While the book will include stories from students at universities across the country, Bath said stories about BU students will garner the most attention.

"Who cares if something cool happened in Michigan," she said. "We want it to happen here." ♦

SPORTS

6 ◆ SIDELINES

Wednesday, March 2, 2005

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Blue Raiders will likely meet Cardinals in Coliseum

By Mark Emery and Colby Sledge
Staff Writer and Sports Editor

After securing a three-game football contract with Maryland last week, Middle Tennessee officials have tentatively agreed to a contract with Louisville that will bring the Cardinals to the Coliseum on Sept. 23, 2006.

"This is a good move for the university," President Sidney McPhee said. "We will play the first game of the series at Tennessee. Any time you can get a program like Louisville to come to Tennessee, I think that is a major accomplishment."

McPhee said that he made a few phone calls to some contacts at Louisville to possibly get something worked out. He

then gave the responsibility to interim athletic director Diane Turnham to finalize the deal.

"I'm sure he called in some favors from some people he worked with in the past," Turnham said.

"Being able to sign some of the big deals, it's all about relationships: who you know, who you've worked with on different committees ... and certainly Dr. McPhee's seat on the [Division I] Board of Directors makes him very visible across the NCAA."



McPhee

McPhee served as associate university provost at Louisville earlier in his career.

As part of the yet-unsigned contract, MT will play Louisville at the Coliseum in 2006 before traveling to Papa John's Cardinal Stadium in Louisville in 2007 and 2008.

According to McPhee, bringing the Cardinals to Murfreesboro wasn't really an option.

"It was a revenue issue," McPhee said. "Louisville could bring 25,000 fans on their own. Size was a factor in getting the game to be played at the Coliseum."

There was also a little luck involved, according to Turnham.

"[Louisville] wanted us to come up

there next year, and that didn't work out, so we just kind of threw the offer out there," Turnham said. "Sometimes when you ask for it, you get it."

Although the game will be played at a neutral site, McPhee said it would still count as a home game for the Blue Raiders. Turnham said she is currently working with the Nashville Sports Council in order to confirm the date and plans.

"We have found [the Sports Council] to be very receptive," Turnham said. "I think they're very excited about the Louisville deal, and we all hope we get it nailed down and in concrete in the next few weeks."

The contract also includes an invitation for the MT men's basketball team

to play in the Cardinals' Billy Minardi Classic on Dec. 20-21.

A Louisville official that the contract has been made out, but nothing has been signed.

"We're just trying to work out the financial details," Turnham said. "We know that will be an issue, but we're confident that all of that can be worked out. It's just a matter of everybody getting together and ironing out those last-minute details."

Last season Louisville defeated Boise State 44-40 in the Liberty Bowl, the team's seventh straight bowl appearance. The Cardinals finished No. 6 in the country and will move into the Big East Conference for the 2005 season. ◆

Basketball teams prepare for battle



Photo by Jay Richardson | Photo Editor

Marcus Morrison has emerged as MT's third-leading scorer this season.

Blue Raiders like this year's parity

By Jon Leffew
Assistant Sports Editor

After finishing the 2004-2005 regular season with a win against Florida International, the Middle Tennessee men's basketball team is preparing for the upcoming Sun Belt Conference tournament.

The Blue Raiders will look to return to the SBC championship and clinch a bid in the NCAA tournament.

"I like our team," MT head coach Kermit Davis said. "I think there are six or seven teams that have a legitimate chance at winning the tournament, and I definitely think we're one of them."

This year's tournament, which will be held in Denton, Texas, will begin Friday.

At 1:30 p.m., the West No. 4 seed, South Alabama, will take on the East's No. 5 seed, Florida International.

Mario Joints leads the Jaguars in points per game with 16.9.

Ivan Almonte leads FIU in several categories, including ppg (17.6), rebounds per game (9.9), assists per game (3.3) and steals per game (1.4).

The winner of this game will take on the East's No. 1 seed, the University of Arkansas-Little Rock.

Brandon Freeman leads the Trojans with 16.3 points per game.

At 5:30 p.m. on Friday, the second men's game of the tournament will feature the East's No. 4 seed, Arkansas State, and the West's No. 5 seed, North Texas.

The Indians are led by Dewarick Spencer, who averages 18.9 points per game.

The Mean Green are led by Leonard Hopkins, who averages a team-high 17.9 points per game.

The winner of this game will face the



No. 1 seed from the West, Denver, on Saturday night.

Yemi Nicholson leads the Pioneers with an average of 18.7 points per game, while Rodney Billups, a senior point guard and the younger brother of Detroit Piston Chauncey Billups, leads the SBC in assists per game, with 6.9.

MT, the No. 3 seed in the East, will play in the tournament's final game on Friday.

In this contest, the Blue Raiders will square off against the West's No. 6 seed, New Mexico State.

Seniors Mike Dean (14.4 ppg), Michael Cuffee (14.2 ppg, 7.4 rebounds per game) and Steve Thomas will look to lead the Blue Raiders throughout the tournament.

"I think that our team is playing its best basketball right now, which is a good sign, and hopefully we can continue that," Davis said.

NMSU will look to improve upon an SBC regular season schedule in which the team won one game. Duane John leads the Aggies with 14.2 ppg and 5.3 rebounds per game.

"What they [NMSU] have done, they have struggled throughout the year, but they have put together some very good halves," Davis said. "They haven't really put together a whole game, but they have really good guards, and that scares

See Parity, 7



Photo by Rachelle Morvant | Chief Photographer

Patrice Holmes has led the Lady Raiders all season with 14.4 ppg.

Lady Raiders ready to defend title

By Jori Rice
Staff Writer

The Middle Tennessee women's basketball team will defend its title later this week in the Sun Belt Conference Tournament.

MT (19-8, 11-3 SBC) is the No. 3 seed from the East Division going into the SBC Tournament. The Lady Raiders have defeated every team in the SBC.

MT is one of three teams that has 11 wins in the SBC. This is the first time in school history the Lady Raiders have had 11 wins in the SBC.

"I feel good about going into the tournament," MT head coach Stephany Smith said. "The season is not over. The regular season is over. We still anticipate a lot of basketball to play."

MT is looking for victories in the SBC tournament, and the team will look for several players to contribute.

One of the key players is Patrice Holmes. Holmes averages 14.4 points per game, which makes her MT's leading scorer.

Holmes was also named 2004-05 SBC Preseason Player of the Year. She is first in career steals at MT (299) and third in assists (411).

Tia Stovall helps Holmes a great deal. Stovall averages 13.2 ppg and is one of the leading rebounders with 5.7 per game.

Krystle Horton comes in with an average of 11.3 ppg. Horton is tied in first place in rebounds with 5.7 and is also second in steals with 2.1 per game.

Another player who contributes a great deal is Chrissy Givens. Givens averages 10 ppg and is second in assists with 3.1 per game. Givens is also the third player in first place in rebounds



with 5.7.

"We have a lot of momentum going into the tournament," Horton said.

Meanwhile, Western Kentucky (19-8, 12-2 SBC) clinched the SBC regular season title for the third straight season. WKU Crystal Kelly leads the Lady Hilltoppers with 19.2 points per game, and Tiffany Talbert Porter adds 17.6. Leslie Logsdon also averages 16 points.

Arkansas State (18-9, 11-3 SBC) ended its season undefeated at home with an 11-0 record at the Convocation Center.

Adrianne Davie leads the Lady Indians with 14.6 points per game, and Ali Carter adds 14.1. Rudy Sims averages 12 ppg.

Arkansas-Little Rock (9-3, 3-11 SBC) is currently on a five-game losing streak. The Lady Trojans are led by Jocelyn Love with 17.5 points per game. Alicia Cash adds 14.7 points per game.

Florida International (17-9, 7-6 SBC) has beaten WKU and MT. FIU is led by Tomova Milena with 19.4. Milena is also the leader scorer in the SBC. Eva Makela is the second lead scorer for the Lady Golden Panthers with 10.8 ppg, and Laquetta Ferguson adds 10 ppg.

For the West Division, Anna Petrakova, who averages 16.8 points per game, leads Louisiana Lafayette (20-8, 10-5 SBC).

See Title, 7

Mean Green, Indians end MT track title streak

By Katy Hamlett
Staff Writer

MT's track squad placed third overall at the Sun Belt Conference Tournament, marking the first time the Blue Raiders were unable to snag the title in four years.

North Texas and Western Kentucky took the top two spots, respectively, on the women's side.

"It really was just a matter of getting points here and points there," MT head track coach Dean Hayes said about North Texas. "They didn't have a lot of events that were real big for them. They piled up a lot of points the first day, but last year they did the same thing, and we were able to catch up to them."

NT's second place finish in the 5,000-meter run, one of the last events of the day, sealed the Mean Green's victory.

MT's only first-place finishes were held by women's squad members Candace Robertson for the 55-meter hurdles, Kishara George for the her 54.58 second run in the 400-meter dash, and the women's relay team, who clocked in seven seconds in front of second-place finisher Florida International.

In addition to owning one of the few first places for MT, George went on to place second in the 200-meter dash with a lifetime best of 23.99 seconds and assist the Lady Raiders in clinching the relay title.

"In the 400, 200, high hurdles, we won by a wide margin. Those three events were very big for us," Hayes said. "Kishara did a great job."

The Lady Raiders also saw several other personal best times, including Meagan Byrd in the weight throw.

"It was a great throw. You get your lifetime best, but you get beat. What am I supposed to say? You can't argue that," Hayes said about Byrd's performance.

South Alabama and host Arkansas State finished first and second, respectively, for the men's side.

"South Alabama has a player, Tony Okello. He can do anything," Hayes explained. "They rode that, he was the star of the show. They had a few other good runners, but he's how they won it."

Okello earned first place finishes in the mile run, 3,000-meter run and 5,000-meter run for the USA Jaguars.

MT had several near-top finishers on the men's team, including VanTonio Fraley, who took second place in the 55-meter dash, clocking 6.37 seconds to take second place in the event.

"Fraley took second in the 55 and ran his lifetime best for fourth in 200. He really ran it well. He's had trouble running curves indoors but put that behind him for this one," Hayes

See Defeat, 8

Blue Raiders finish season with win

By David Hunter
Senior Staff Writer

The Blue Raiders couldn't miss a shot as the 2004-05 regular season came to a close. Middle Tennessee's men basketball team picked up a key 91-81 road win over Florida International on Monday.

MT had five players in double figures in the win. Fats Cuyler led the way with a career-best 20 points.

"We shared the ball and got everyone involved, and when we do that, we can be a good offensive basketball team," Cuyler said to MT Media Relations.

Michael Cuffee had 19, while Bryan Smith added 12. Mike Dean played and chipped in with 12, and Marcus Morrison had 10.

The team shot a red-hot 49 percent from the field (27 of 55), and nailed 53 percent (10 of 19) of its three-pointers. It was the fifth consecutive game that MT has scored 80 or more points. The last time this happened was in the 1990-91 season.

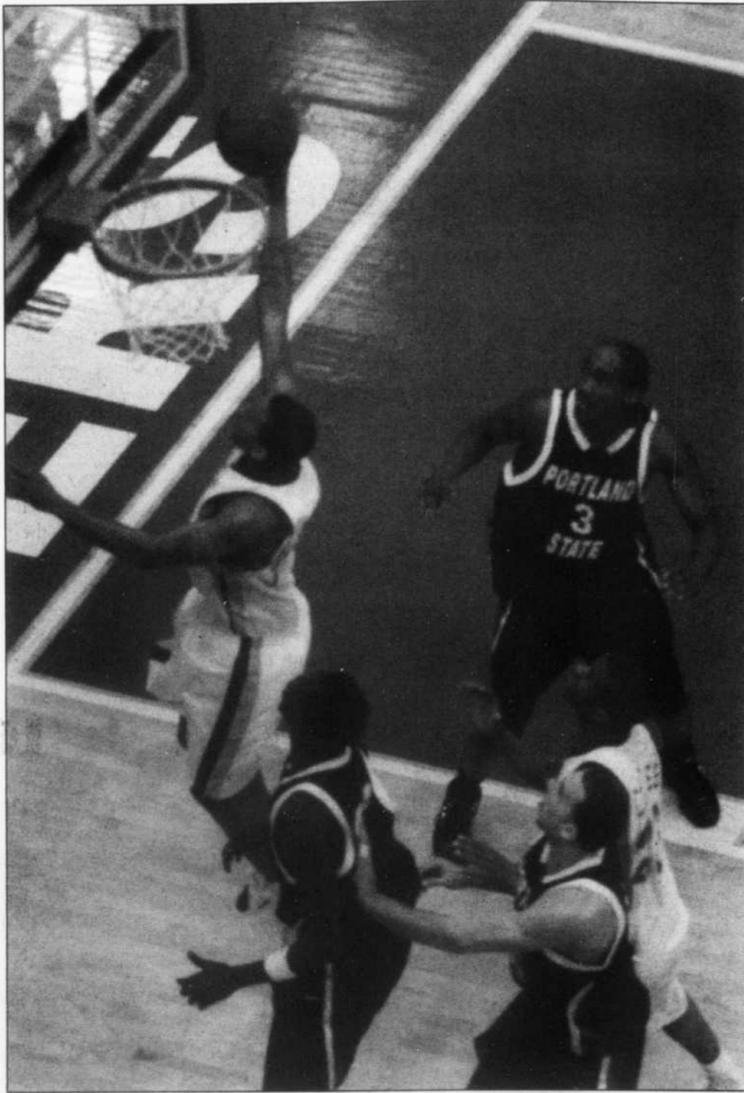
MT finished the season with an 18-11 (7-7) record and clinched the No. 3 seed in the Eastern Division. The 18 regular season victories are the most since the 1997-98 campaign.

The Blue Raiders will face the No. 6 seed out of the West, New Mexico State, on Friday night at 8 p.m. in the first round of the Sun Belt Conference Tournament. The winner will take on No. 2 West seed Louisiana-Lafayette on Sunday in the next round at 9 p.m.

The tournament will take place at "The Super Pit" in Denton, Texas, on the campus of North Texas. The finals will be next Tuesday. ♦

File Photo

MT's Mike Dean scored 12 points in a 91-81 win over FIU on Monday.



Parity: Blue Raiders like chances in wide-open field

Continued from 6

you."

If the Blue Raiders can defeat the Aggies, they will face the West's No. 2 seed, Louisiana-Lafayette, on Sunday.

Tiras Wade leads ULL and is second in the SBC with 19.7 ppg, while Brian Hamilton (13.7), Orien Greene (11.6) and Dwayne Mitchell (10.3) also score in double figures for the Ragin' Cajuns.

Sunday's first game will feature the final two SBC teams, No. 2 Eastern seed Western

Kentucky and No. 3 Western seed New Orleans.

Anthony Winchester, a junior guard, leads WKU with a team-high 18.1 ppg average.

The SBC's leading scorer, Bo McCaleb, leads the Privateers and the Sun Belt with 22.6 ppg.

After the opening rounds, semifinal matchups will begin Monday. The championship will be held on Tuesday at 8 p.m., with the winner clinching an automatic bid for the NCAA tournament. ♦

Title: Lady Raiders hoping to return to NCAA Tourney

Continued from 6

New Mexico State (18-9, 4-11 SBC) features Trecha Kennedy. Kennedy leads the Lady Aggies with 10.4 points per game.

New Orleans (2-25, 2-13 SBC) is led by Le' Della English, who averages 12 points per game.

North Texas (14-13, 9-6 SBC) has Erika Bobo, who leads the team with 12.8 ppg, while Venice Adams leads Denver (6-21, 4-11 SBC) with 11 ppg.

South Alabama (13-14, 7-8 SBC) has JoAnna Williams, who averages 10 ppg.

The tournament is set to take place on the campus of the University of North Texas at the Super Pit and also at Texas Woman's University.

Semifinal action in the tournament will begin on Monday, while the SBC championship will be played at 3 p.m. on Tuesday.

The Lady Raiders will look to defend their title, which would guarantee a spot in the NCAA Tournament. ♦

Baseball team begins homestand

By Jonathan Hutton
Staff Writer

The Blue Raiders (2-2) begin a three-game homestand against Southeastern Louisiana this weekend beginning Friday at 3 p.m. at Reese Smith Field.

Middle Tennessee's outfield has been producing offensively in the first four games. Center fielder Todd Martin leads the team with a .500 batting average, a .588 on-base percentage, and a .714 slugging percentage. He is followed by right fielder Marcus Taylor,

who is hitting .429 with a .529 on-base percentage.

Third baseman Nate Jagers leads the team in runs scored (5) and runs batted in (6).

Freshman left fielder Nathan Hines is the only Blue Raider to steal a base in the first four contests.

This weekend's pitching rotation will feature the same starters on Friday and Saturday as previous weeks, but MT Coach Steve Peterson says to look for a new starter on the mound Sunday.

"Right now Eric Blevins will go on

Friday, Matt Scott on Saturday and it's TBA on Sunday," Peterson said as he was preparing for tonight's game at Belmont.

Tyler Copeland will start tonight against Belmont and will not be available for his usual Sunday start. The

See Homestand, 8

Photo by Jay Richardson | Photo Editor

Blue Raider third baseman Nate Jagers leads the team in runs scored and RBIs this season.



STUDENT BALLOT

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APR: Middle Tennessee football, women's track fall short

Continued from 1

in place to raise APR scores across all sports.

"Last year we started meeting on how we could improve our graduation rates and our retention rates," interim athletic director Diane Turnham said. "The committee Turnham led, along with other individuals across campus, came up with a new program called our Academic Game Plan."

That plan, according to Turnham, focuses on student-athletes' potential in the classroom even before they officially become Blue Raiders.

"We have to seek out those student-athletes who want to participate on the field and in the classroom," Turnham said.

Turnham listed the addition of two staff members to the Athletic Academic Enhancement Center as another vital part of raising graduation and retention rates.

Turnham also pointed out that many schools had their own problems — indeed, 56 percent of Division I schools had at least one flagged program, and that statistic grew to 66 percent in Division I-A.

Only two Sun Belt Conference schools, Arkansas State and North Texas, did not have at least one sport flagged by the NCAA.

"Except for a very few, every institution in America had some areas they needed to improve in," Turnham said. "Ours hap-

pened to be football."

But the MT football team was especially poor, finishing 14 points worse than the next lowest school in Division I-A, San Jose State.

MT head football coach Andy McCollum did not return repeated calls from *Sidelines* seeking comment.

Also, despite the athletic program's insistence that MTSU is ahead, the school is behind its competitors in the Sun Belt and the state.

Although the school's overall score of 899 was close to the NCAA's "safe zone," that score placed Middle Tennessee near the bottom of the Sun Belt. Only two SBC teams, Troy and New Mexico State (which will move to the Western Athletic Conference in the fall), scored worse.

Among the 11 Tennessee schools assigned scores, MTSU received the worst overall score. Vanderbilt finished at the top with a 970 (954 in football), while three other Tennessee schools finished below the 925 mark.

UT-Knoxville earned a 945, including a score of 920 for its football team, which was not flagged by the NCAA. The University of Memphis earned a 941 overall and a 960 in football, the best of the four I-A football squads in the state.

The news wasn't all bad for Middle Tennessee, however. In fact, the football and women's outdoor track squads were the only two programs the NCAA

flagged for significantly missing the mark.

The men's golf team received a perfect score of 1,000, and the women's volleyball team also scored high with a 983. The Blue Raider baseball squad easily met its mark with a 927, and both the men's and women's basketball teams were deemed sufficient with scores of 920 and 923, respectively.

This year's APR serves as a warning to schools and programs under the 925 mark in hopes that university presidents and athletic directors will work to improve retention and graduation rates.

"It's going to take a couple of years to make significant changes, but the good news is that these numbers are kind of a test run — they let you know where you are, and they're giving you time to correct them," Turnham said.

If schools do not improve after next year's numbers, however, the programs in question will be assessed to see how many "0-for-2" athletes they have — athletes that have left in the most recent term and would have been academically ineligible had they returned.

Programs with these "0-for-2" players will be assessed penalties up to 10 percent of the team's financial aid limit. In headcount sports, regardless of amount, are counted as one scholarship against the maximum 308 the school can offer, the penalties would be rounded up to the next

whole number.

For instance, in men's basketball, which offers up to 13 scholarships, the maximum number of scholarships lost would be two. Football, which offers as many as 85 scholarships, could be hit with as many as nine revoked scholarships.

The real threats come, however, if the school does not improve after four years, when larger losses of scholarships, postseason bans and even restricted membership could come into play for chronic underachievers. Turnham plans on having Middle Tennessee's problems solved well before then.

"While we may not completely get it turned around by next year, we know we're going to make progress and that this is a four-year process," Turnham said. "While I'm not happy with all of our numbers, I do feel good about the fact the coaches know where we are, and they're working to improve it."

Ultimately, however, Turnham said, the school's improvement depends on the improvement of the players wearing the Middle Tennessee name on their jerseys.

"When I was a coach here, I used to go into parents' living rooms when I was recruiting their daughters and guarantee them that their daughter would graduate from MTSU," Turnham said. "I can't guarantee that. Only one person can guarantee that: the student-athlete." ♦

APR of Sun Belt Conference Schools (as of March 2, 2005)

School	Overall Score
*Western Kentucky	967
*Denver	962
North Texas	951
*Florida Atlantic	934
*South Alabama	933
Arkansas State	930
-----925 Passing Rate-----	
*Florida International	910
*New Orleans	908
*Arkansas-Lafayette	900
Louisiana-Lafayette	899
Louisiana-Monroe	899
Middle Tennessee	899
Troy	895
New Mexico State	877

*did not play I-A football in 2004

APR of Div. I Tennessee Schools

School	Overall Score (I-A Football Score)
Vanderbilt	970 (954)
East Tennessee State	968
Belmont	961
UT-Knoxville	945 (920)
Lipscomb	944
University of Memphis	941 (960)
Austin Peay	935
Tennessee State	925
Tennessee Tech	924
UT-Martin	918
UT-Chattanooga	913
MTSU	899 (802)

Homestand: Starts Friday

Continued from 7

Belmont game was cancelled on Tuesday and will be made up today at 3 p.m. at Greer Stadium.

The Bruins are 6-2 with wins over Tennessee Tech and Boston College. In their last game, they claimed a victory over Illinois State 4-2.

Josh Moffit will make his first collegiate start against the Blue Raiders. Moffit has made one appearance this year and has a 9.00 earned run average.

In four games played, the Blue Raiders have five home runs, seven errors and 26 runs batted in.

MT's best inning has been during the fifth, in which the Blue Raiders have scored 10 runs while giving up none to their opponents.

The Blue Raiders will look to defend their home field against Southeastern Louisiana (5-5),

who travels to MTSU from Hammond, La.

Rob Territo, who is batting .406 with 13 hits and eight RBIs, leads the Lions.

Territo is followed by Steve Clevenger, who has 10 RBIs and three home runs.

The speed on the team comes from Randy Roth, who is five for five in stolen bases.

The Lion pitching staff is giving up an average of almost five runs per game.

Pitcher Bernard Robert is 2-0 in four appearances this season, has not given up a run and has 13 strikeouts in as many innings.

Risley St. Germain is another talented pitcher in the SLU rotation, who has 20 strikeouts on the year.

After today's game against Belmont, the Blue Raiders open their series with SLU on Friday at 3 p.m. at Reese Smith Field. ♦

Defeat: MT fails to extend streak to five

Continued from 6

said. Alex Pruitt, NCAA qualifying freshmen, tied with Arkansas State's Shawn Aronson for first in the high jump, but Aronson earned the first-place points for inching Pruitt out in misses.

The Blue Raiders were unable to pull together a first place relay finish but had a close second-place finish.

"We don't have our regular mile relay team, but we did a good job," Hayes explained. "The mile relay ran well. They got beat a few days off."

After a few days off, the team will begin practice outdoors to prepare for the next leg of the season.

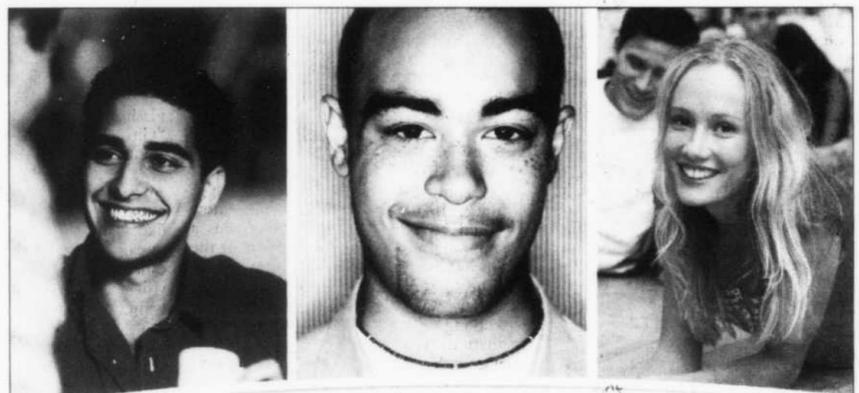
"The next step is just to go outdoors and see what we can do," Hayes said. ♦

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Sports Briefs

News from around Middle Tennessee



Compiled by Colby Sledge
Sports Editor

Durham wins Lady Moc Classic

Middle Tennessee freshman Taryn Durham became just the third medalist in school history yesterday with a wire-to-wire victory in the Lady Moc Classic in Lakeland, Fla.

Durham's 54-hole score of 222 (6-over) gave her a two-shot win over Rollins College's Ulrika Ljungman. The outright victory was the first for a freshman in MT history.

As a team, the Lady Raiders finished second with a three-day total of 916, 15 shots behind repeat champion Rollins College. James Madison finished third with a 930, while Augustus State was fourth with a 934 and host Florida Southern placed fifth with a score of 944.

"This was a great way to get the spring season started," head coach Rachael Short told MT Media Relations. "The girls came out and executed pretty well. We struggled a little bit in the wind during the second round, but other than that, I was pleased with our effort in the first tournament."

MT's Maggie McGill, who had six birdies and an eagle during the tournament, tied for fifth with a 227 en route to her fourth career top-10 finish.

Senior Kristin Lynch earned a 229 to finish ninth, while Jamey Dillard tied for 32nd with a 241. Jenny Kim completed the scoring with a 242 to tie for 34th.

Men's golf team finishes eighth

The Middle Tennessee men's golf team shot a final-round 301 to finish eighth out of 14 teams at the Tulane Invitational. The Blue Raiders had a 54-hole score of 906 on the par-72 English Turn Golf and Country Club.

Notre Dame and UNC-Wilmington tied for the win with an 893, but the Fighting Irish won the event on the first playoff hole. Southern Miss and South Alabama tied for third with 895, while Mississippi and Tulsa tied for fifth with 897.

MT's Kenny Green and Patrick McLennan tied for 19th with 226. McLennan had the best Blue Raider round of the day with his second straight 74.

Notre Dame and UNC-Wilmington tied for 31st, while Josh Nelms had a 229 to tie for 34th. Blake Bivens completed the scoring for the Blue Raiders with a 232 to finish 44th.

The Blue Raiders will next compete in the Dick Whittecoff/USF Invitational in Tampa, Fla., on March 4-6.

Stovall named Player of the Week

Middle Tennessee junior forward Tia Stovall was named the Sun Belt Conference Player of the Week yesterday after posting her first double-double of the season in a win over Western Kentucky.

Stovall scored 21 points and 10 rebounds last Thursday to give her the third double-double of her career. Stovall was 8-of-15 from the field and had seven offensive rebounds in the 79-55 win.

Against Florida International on Saturday, Stovall scored 14 points and six boards. She averaged 18.5 points and 8.0 rebounds in the two contests and has averaged 17.0 points and 6.5 rebounds in her last four games.

The Lady Raiders begin defense of their Sun Belt Tournament title Friday against New Orleans in Denton, Texas.

Hockey team loses in conference championship

The Blue Raider hockey team fell to Wright State for the second straight season in the Great Midwest Collegiate Hockey Conference Championship on Sunday.

Middle Tennessee lost 4-3 to Wright State, who will continue on to the national tournament in the American Collegiate Hockey Association. ♦

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Classifieds

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1998 Red Toyota Tacoma Prerunner, TRD package, snow tires, brushguard, AT, CD stereo system, tinted windows, bucket seats, bed liner, extended cab. \$8,990. Call Skyye Medley (615) 596-8912.

1991 Suzuki Intruder 750. Very dependable, ridden daily. Windshield, saddlebags, black. \$2100. Call Jay at 569-2413.

2000 Chrysler Concorde LXI: silver with charcoal interior, one owner; purchased new; excellent condition. Call 615-563-2399 or 898-2623 for more info.

1988 Chevy Blazer for sale. Great condition. 4x4, 4 dr. \$5,500 obo. Need to Sell!! 931-592-2494.

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2000 Honda Civic EX; 2 door coupe; 5 speed; 101K miles; red; sunroof; one owner; excellent condition; all service records; \$6950; Call John 615-566-9352.

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Female roommates to occupy new 2BR 1BA cottage. Private entrance, 2 blocks from MTSU. \$365 each per month, includes heat and air, water, electricity, cable and internet. \$500 deposit, 1 year lease, no pets. 615-364-1004.

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The Anointed Ladies of Alpha Theta Omega Christian Sorority will be hosting an informational for undergraduate and graduate students. The informational will be Sat. Feb 19, 2005 at the KUC. Call Alisha Vaughn at 615-893-1012 for info.

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Subleser needed for room in 2 bed apartment at Campus Crossing. Less than actual rent, will pay \$100 of each month's rent or first month when you move in. Fully furnished, high speed internet, own bathroom, shower, 24 hour computer lab and fitness room. Next to greek row. Call Mark 901-487-2716.

Room available for sub-lease in a 3 bed apartment for a male at Campus Crossing. For info call Campus Crossing about apt K-203.

Female roommate needed. University Gables. 1bd/bath in 4bd apt. Fully furnished, 24 hr internet, pool, fitness room, w/d. Rent is \$5K (utilities included). Will give \$200 or pay half rent. No Deposit. Call Evelyn @ 615-631-6220 or email emm2q@mtsu.edu.

Sub-leser needed for apt. at Campus Crossing. Less than actual rent!! High speed internet, fully furnished, own bathroom, free transport, shuttle bus to school, 24 hr. computer lab and fitness center. Call Mark 901-487-2716.

3 bd/2 bath, looking for one more roommate. Rent is \$325 plus utilities. No pets. Very close to Campus, on Beu St. Living room, dining room + kitchen, fully furnished, w/hardwood floors. Call Nichole @ 419-0802.

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New NCAA academic statistics have some schools steamed

By Michael Marot
AP Sports Writer

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — The NCAA had barely released its first report on teams' academic progress when the complaints began.

"We'd be remiss if we didn't express at least some concern that there are any number of flaws in this methodology," Oklahoma athletic director Joe Castiglione said.

At Oklahoma, the baseball, wrestling and men's and women's indoor track teams scored lower than the 92.5 percent mark.

"They're going to get a lot of waivers," said Gerald Gurney, Oklahoma's associate

athletic director for academic affairs. "Any system that creates such a bureaucracy that you have huge numbers of waivers and very few people understand, you have a problem."

At Maryland-Baltimore County, the men's indoor track team scored an extremely low 600 — a figure athletic director Charles Brown had already told NCAA officials was wrong.

"To be considered well below the cutline is very embarrassing and it hurts our recruiting," Brown said. "It's extremely upsetting that the NCAA released something when they know there are some flaws. This is an honors institution."

The three sports that could be most affected are football, baseball and men's

basketball. The NCAA estimates that 25 percent of football programs, 23 percent of baseball teams and 19 percent of men's basketball programs could face scholarship losses.

Football, baseball and men's basketball were the only sports with averages below the 925-point outline. Baseball teams averaged 922, while football and men's basketball were at 923.

The most problematic programs that appeared in trouble were the men's basketball teams at Fresno State and Baylor. Fresno State received a 611, while Baylor scored 647 — a figure affected by the transfer of several players after the 2003 shooting death of Patrick Dennehy. Only one of those

players remains on the team.

"If it were necessary to consider a waiver, we would do so," Baylor athletic director Ian McCaw said. "Hopefully at this point, our program is in good academic condition, and it won't become an issue for us."

McCaw also said he wouldn't contest the numbers that were mailed to schools last week.

But some numbers appeared inaccurate to university leaders, and there appeared to be more problems with the track calculations. Houston's women's cross country team and the men's indoor track team at Eastern Michigan and Seton Hall all scored zero.

NCAA officials acknowledged dur-

ing a conference call that errors might have occurred or there might be just one athlete on those teams.

Schools can submit amended forms in March, with results expected to be released in April.

Monday's report indicates how schools are doing, based on data collected from the 2003-04 academic year. No penalties will be enforced until data from the 2004-05 school year are included.

Schools are expected to be notified in December of the final results, and programs must take the penalties as early as possible. Some schools could opt to take their punishment in the fall if they expect penalties. ♦

Elections

SGA: 2005

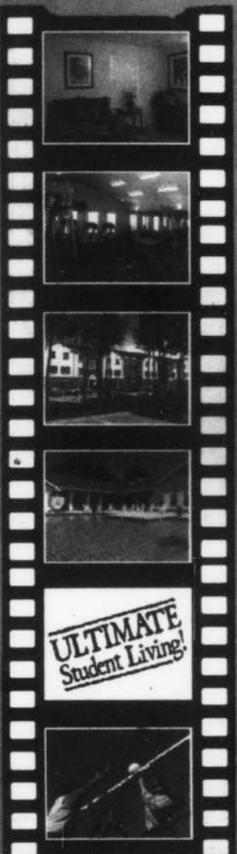
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