

Women's Basketball falls to fifth-ranked Auburn

See www.cw.ua.edu

10 **Gymnastics faces off against defending national champs UGA**

The Crimson White

Friday, January 23, 2009

Serving the University of Alabama since 1894

Vol. 115, Issue 74

ON-CAMPUS HOUSING

Resident application due soon

By Drew Taylor
Senior Staff Reporter

DEADLINE INFO

Apply by Feb. 1 by 5 p.m.

at mybama.ua.edu

Students who would like to live on campus in the 2009-2010 must sign up through MyBama by 5 p.m., Feb. 1., said Alicia Browne, associate director for information and communication for Housing and Residential Communities. The online agreement, which has been open since October, is a different system than simply paying the initial fee to reserve a spot on the list.

"All they're doing is just indicating to us is that they want on-campus housing," Browne said. "They're not paying a deposit yet and they're not

signing a contract."

Browne said the reasoning behind an electronic agreement is so Residential Communities can have a number to analyze in addition to

See **APPLICATION**, page 3

Student union evolves, adapts

By Victor Luckerson
Staff Reporter

As a centralized hub for activities, meals and lazy afternoons, student unions have played a critical role in campus culture for more than 70 years.

The Alabama Union, constructed in 1930 as a memorial to students who died in war, was located in current-day Reese Phifer Hall. The Alabama Union served as the University's student union for more than 40 years. At a cost of more than \$250,000, which is more than \$3 million today, it was one of the most lavish and elaborate construction projects in school history.

The Alabama Union contained a red and green lounge with a fireplace, separate reading rooms for men and women, a cafeteria, a religious room

and offices for student government and campus publications. It also contained a post office, a practice room for the Million Dollar Band, and what a September 1930 edition of The Crimson White deemed "the most luxurious [on-campus] supply store in America."

The student union concept, unique among southern colleges at the time, was modeled after mid-Western universities such as Iowa and Northwestern. The Union was touted as one of the largest college buildings in the South.

"Almost everyone funneled through the Alabama Union," said Jim Ezell, a 1969 University graduate. "It was busy night and day."

Ezell said bridge games were a popular pastime in his years

See **UNION**, page 5

UA STUDENT UNION THROUGHOUT THE YEARS

1930 — ALABAMA UNION BUILDING CONSTRUCTED, WHICH IS NOW REESE PHIFER HALL

1971 — FERGUSON CENTER CONSTRUCTED IN CURRENT LOCATION, BECOMING UA'S NEW STUDENT UNION BUILDING

1974 — ALABAMA UNION BUILDING RENAMED REESE PHIFER HALL

1997 — FERGUSON PLAZA CONSTRUCTED

2003 — FERGUSON CENTER RENOVATED

2007 — CURRENT FERGUSON FOUNTAIN INSTALLED

UA students show support for Israel



Photos and story by Marion R. Walding
Photography Editor

UA students gathered at noon Thursday along University Boulevard to show their support for Israel.

Joseph Berman, a junior majoring in international relations, organized the rally to bring Israeli supporters together, he said.

The rally comes after a ceasefire that was declared unilaterally on Sunday in the Israeli offensive in Gaza that lasted three weeks.

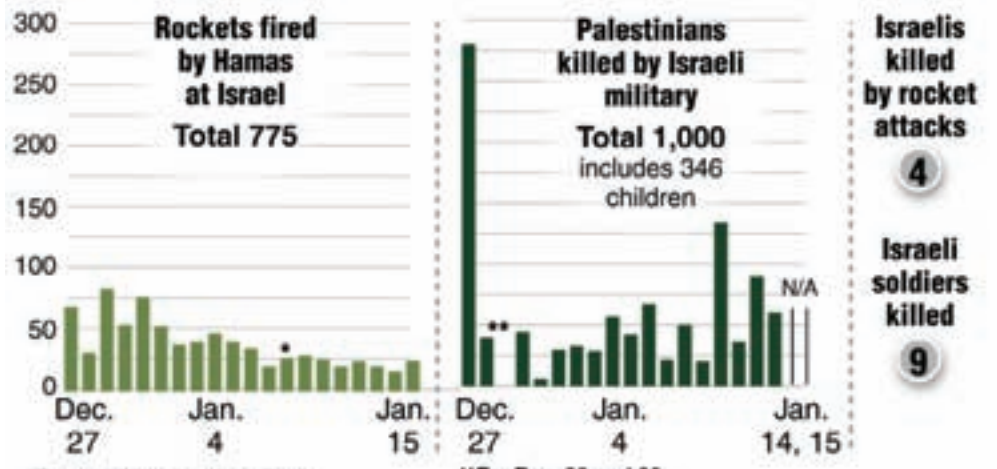
"I hope this will show the campus that there are people who support Israel," Berman said.

Renee Sharon, a freshman majoring in public relations, is an Israeli student who took part in the rally.

"My greatest hope in the world is for other people to realize Israel's right to exist," Sharon said.

Three weeks of Gaza War

Since Israel began airstrikes into Gaza on Dec. 27, then invaded Jan. 4:



*Four additional rockets fired from Lebanon
**For Dec. 28 and 29
Source: Compiled by McClatchy Washington Bureau from Israeli Police, Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Israeli Defense Force, Palestinian Fled Crescent, U.N. Graphic: Judy Treible © 2009 MCT

MCT Campus

Blackburn receives nat'l award

By Christy Roach
Staff Reporter

The Blackburn Institute began the new semester with a national award recognizing their efforts at the University. The National Association of Student Personnel Administrators awarded the Blackburn Institute the Excellence Award in the category of "Student Union, Student Activities, Greek Life, Leadership and related."

NASPA is the nation's foremost professional association for student affairs with more than 11,000 members representing 1,400 colleges and universities, according to a UA news release. Blackburn received notification of their winning the award on Jan. 12.

Marc Shook, director for the Blackburn Institute, said national recognition confirms

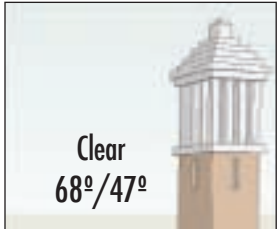
what many have already been saying about them, that they are one of the most unique and dynamic student leadership development organizations in the country.

NASPA assistant director of educational programs Joseph DeSanto said in a UA news release that the award not only honors the work of the Blackburn Institute, but it recognizes the Institute as a leadership organization that maintains high standards to which other institutions and student affairs professionals should aspire.

In order to win this award, Blackburn had to enter their application, which was reviewed by three judges with NASPA. Recipients of the award have to display some of the following characteristics:

See **AWARD**, page 2

UA weather TODAY



Saturday 49°/38°
Chance of Rain
Sunday 50°/38°
Partly Cloudy

INSIDE Today's paper

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The Crimson White

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• CONCERT: Alabama Wind Ensemble — 7:30 p.m., Moody Music Building Concert Hall

• FILM SCREENING: “The Counterfeiters,” as part of the Jewish Film/Cultural Festival presented by The Arts Council of Tuscaloosa County and Temple Emanu-El — 7:30 p.m., Bama Theatre

• FILM SCREENING: “Circumcise Me” and “Matzo and Mistletoe,” as part of the Jewish Film/Cultural Festival presented by The Arts Council of Tuscaloosa County and Temple Emanu-El — 2 p.m., Bama Theatre

• FILM SCREENING: “Bound for Glory,” “Let My People Grow” and “Noodle,” as part of the Jewish Film/Cultural Festival presented by The Arts Council of Tuscaloosa County and Temple Emanu-El — 7:30 p.m., Bama Theatre

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Send announcements and campus news to cwnews@sa.ua.edu

Applications for Outstanding Senior Award now available

Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society is sponsoring the Outstanding Senior Award, which rewards up to two senior students who have made extraordinary contributions to the University of Alabama and/or community through his or her academic and extracurricular activities. The application for the reward can be found at honorsocieties.ua.edu/awards.htm. The application is due Feb. 16 by 4 P.M. For further information, please contact Benton Atchison at bentonatchison@gmail.com.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

“The old student union was like an oasis. It was warm, friendly and people were always having a good time.”

— Jim Ezell, a 1969 University graduate

BIRTHDAYS

We want to list your birthday here. Send your name, birthdate, year and major to cwnews@sa.ua.edu. Put “birthday” in the subject line. And look for birthday greetings from us on your special day.

THIS DAY IN ALABAMA HISTORY

On this day in 1957, machines at the Wham-O toy company roll out the first batch of their aerodynamic plastic discs — now known to millions of fans all over the world as Frisbees.

Source: www.history.com

THE CRIMSON WHITE

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1,000 WORDS

Every Friday, 1,000 Words features a photo from around the University. Send submissions to cwnews@sa.ua.edu.



John Davis took this photo while visiting family two hours outside of Tuscany, Italy. CW | John Davis

CAPSTONE MEN & WOMEN

Now accepting applications!

For more information and to apply visit

bama.ua.edu/~cmw

Applications due Friday, January 30, 2009

Please deliver completed applications to 284 Rose Administration

CAPSTONE MEN & WOMEN

AWARD

Continued from page 5

relevance to institutional mission, demonstration of success in addressing student needs and/or critical campus issues and originality and creativity, according to the release.

“We submitted a paper application detailing how we met the criteria, and submitted reference letters from

“While we are truly honored to receive this national award for the recognition it brings to Dr. John L. Blackburn and the University of Alabama, we realize that our work is really just beginning.”

— Marc Shook, director for the Blackburn Institute

UA president Robert E. Witt, UA provost Judy Bonner, and Tuscaloosa City Councilman and Blackburn fellow Lee Garrison,” Shook said.

“While we are truly honored to receive this national award for the recognition it brings to Dr. John L. Blackburn and the University of Alabama, we realize that our work is really just beginning.”

Shook said they measure their success in the collective works of their fellows, and, after only 13 years, they are only in the fledgling stages of fulfilling Blackburn’s vision.

“With the continued support of a passionate advisory board, I have full confidence that the Blackburn Institute will be a force in Alabama’s communities for years to come,”

Shook said.

Kendra Key, a Blackburn fellow, said receiving the award makes her feel proud to be a part of the Blackburn Institute and motivates her to renew her commitment to the Institute, its ideals and the impact she as one individual can make on the lives of individuals not only in the state of Alabama, but throughout the U.S.

“Being a Blackburn fellow has been one of the most

rewarding experiences of my college career, and I am sure it will prove to be continually beneficial to my life beyond the Capstone,” Key said.

Key said she encourages anyone who is passionate about the state of Alabama and who has a desire to impact the world around them to consider joining the Blackburn Institute.

Shook said the Blackburn Institute is taking nominations for membership, and encourages students to apply. In order to apply, students must be enrolled at the University and will be a full-time student in 2009-2010. Students should approach a faculty member about nominating them for Blackburn. Nominations are due Feb. 9.

Crime Report

Compiled by Christy Conner Senior Staff Reporter

- JAN. 15**
- Harassing communications occurred at 12:30 a.m. at

Riverside North

- Fraudulent use of a credit/debit card occurred at 11:25 a.m. on UA campus
- Theft 2 occurred at 2:50 p.m. at the Ancillary Services
- Criminal mischief occurred at 4:20 p.m. at the Ferguson parking deck
- Theft 2 occurred at 7 p.m. at New Hall

JAN. 16

- Harassment occurred at 3 a.m. at the Ridgecrest South construction site
- Forgery occurred at 11:10 a.m. at the UA Campus Credit Union
- Theft 2 occurred at 12:59 p.m. at Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity

JAN. 17

- Public intoxication occurred at 1:30 a.m. at the parking lot behind Russell Hall
- Criminal mischief occurred at 10:45 p.m. at the Aquatic Center

JAN. 18

- Criminal mischief occurred at 4:56 a.m. at Ridgecrest East
- Burglary occurred at 10:19 a.m. at Smith Hall
- Unlawful breaking and entering of a vehicle occurred at 12:15 p.m. at the rear of Palmer Hall
- Burglary occurred at 11:30 p.m. at Lakeside East

JAN. 19

- Criminal mischief occurred at 6 a.m. at Phi Kappa Alpha
- Burglary occurred at 3 p.m. at Riverside North

Town Hall Meeting

subject:

FOOTBALL TICKETS

Tuesday, Jan. 27, 7 p.m. Graves Hall

Come discuss your ideas about Student football ticket distribution with the SGA.

sponsored by:

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

SGA

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Cobb Theatres
HOLLYWOOD 16
248-8248 • 4250 Old Greensboro Road

Inkheart
1:45, 4:15, 7:00, 9:30
Not Easily Broken
2:20, 4:55, 7:40, 10:10
Bedtime Stories
1:40, 4:05
Benjamin Button
6:30, 10:00
Unborn
2:05, 4:10, 6:40, 9:00
Hotel for Dogs
2:25, 4:50, 7:20, 9:45
Bride Wars
3:00, 5:40, 8:10, 10:25
Paul Blart: Mall Cop
1:25, 4:00, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45
Underworld
2:50, 5:10, 7:35, 9:55
3D My Bloody Valentine
2:00, 4:25, 6:50, 9:15
Revolutionary Road
2:40, 5:20, 8:00, 10:40
Frost Nixon
1:35, 4:20, 7:05, 9:50
Marley and Me
2:15
Valkyrie
5:00, 7:15, 10:35
Twilight
1:50
Last Chance Harvey
4:45, 7:10, 9:35
Defiance
1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30
Gran Torino
1:55, 4:35, 7:15
Notorious
2:45, 6:00, 8:45

Advance tickets available at www.cobbtheatres.com

Students ring in the Chinese New Year Sunday

By Karissa Bursch
Staff Reporter

The Association of Chinese Students and Scholars welcomes students of all nationalities to celebrate the Chinese New Year with food, dancing and performances Sunday in the Ferguson Ballroom.

Mi Shen, a freshman from HangZhou, China, and an organizer for the event, said in previous years the Association of Chinese Students and Scholars, was not able to hold the event on the actual day of the Chinese New Year.

The Chinese New Year changes every year depending on the Chinese lunar calendar and this year the celebration will be held on the true Chinese New Year's Eve, Shen said.

Shen said the Chinese New Year is one of China's most important holidays.

"This holiday is most important in China — like your Christmas," Shen said. "[In China], they will travel thousands of miles for this and then go back home. It's a family thing."

The Chinese New Year is a time for family members to get together, Shen said.

"Since all Chinese students are far from family, we will celebrate the festival and bring them closer to home. We want American students attending to also feel our culture," Shen said.

Yi Fan, a freshman from Beijing and the stage designer

for the event, said there will be a Chinese buffet, Chinese dancing and other performances including Taiji, which she described as "slow Kung Fu."

Fan said the Chinese New Year is not just a part of Chinese culture. It began in China but

If you go:
-Sunday, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.
-Tickets are \$7 each and will be available wednesday and thursday in the Ferg

has been embraced by Japanese and Korean culture, as well.

"Fan said she wanted students to know that the festival is not a way for the Association of Chinese Students and Scholars to make money.

"We do not hold it for money; the money is just for the food," Fan said. "Our association just wants to be friends with everybody. We want people to know the real China and the Chinese people."

The festival runs from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday and the tickets are \$7 each. The tickets were available for purchase in the Ferguson Center on Wednesday and Thursday, and can now be purchased at the door.

Students urged to attend Higher Education Day

By Amanda Peterson
Special projects reporter

The SGA Senate wants students to get a free T-shirt — at least when they sign up for Higher Education Day by Feb. 24.

At the meeting Thursday, Tyler Valeska, a senator in the College of Communication and Information Sciences, introduced a resolution encouraging students to attend Alabama's Higher Education Day on March 5.

According to the resolution, the SGA has set a goal of 400 students attending the event when college students from across the state will lobby the state legislature. Students will be excused from class if they attend.

Valeska said the UA Faculty Senate should pass a resolution encouraging professors to let students out of class. If

not, the SGA will give students letters to explain their absence to their professors, "unless for some reason you have a test or something that day," he said.

The Higher Education Partnership, which sponsors the event, prefers to have students from each state university wear the same color, so Valeska said it is important for students to sign up by Feb. 24 to get their shirt for the event.

James Fowler, a senator in the College of Commerce and Business Administration, read two resolutions to encourage the University to consider construction possibilities.

One asked the administration to look at possibilities for additional meeting space for student organizations, whether it be in the form of a new student union because the Ferguson Center is not large enough for student needs or an addition to the student union.

The other resolution asked the Campus Master Plan Committee to consider designating a vacant dirt lot behind four fraternity houses and next to Friedman Hall as a permanent parking lot. Fowler said residential students need more parking in that area because of the large number of visitors at night who fill the parking lots.

Right now, the space has no use, but Fowler said it is planned as green space. He said he thinks 100 parking spaces could fit in the area.

"There's no need of green space," he said. "We need to use it for a good use."

Fowler also introduced a resolution to encourage the Student Recreation Center to provide more lockers for daily use instead of being reserved. Few students pay to reserve a locker, so he said more students need a free daily

use locker.

Corderrol Harris, a senator in the college of Communications and Information Sciences, asked if the Rec Center had already started doing this.

"They've been doing it already," Fowler said. "They just want to see how we think things are going as students start to use it."

In response to the pro-Palestinian phrases on the Quad, Miriam Fry, a senator in the college of Arts and Sciences, read a resolution supporting pro-Israeli students.

Fry, who is Jewish, said there have been more obvious signs of support for Palestine than Israel on campus, so she wanted to show solidarity with Israel supporters.

"That is our homeland," she said. "I'm definitely hurt by all the anti-Israel stuff on the Quad."

APPLICATION

Continued from page 1

the incoming freshman class. Without a system like this, it would be very easy to run out of room for those who may want to remain on-campus, forcing them to live somewhere else.

"We want to be absolutely sure that we will have space enough space in the residence halls for students that want it," Browne said.

Housing and Residential Communities works very closely with the UA admissions office, projecting the number of incoming students for the next academic year and arranging on-campus living based on those predictions. Browne said with the addition of Ridgecrest South and the Bluff at Waterworks Landing, overcrowding should not be a problem. No projections as to the

incoming freshman class size have been made yet.

Browne said the initial agreement is the first step in the application process. After Feb. 1, students will need to pay a \$250 deposit between Feb. 3-13, in addition to a \$25 application fee. After the initial payment, the student will go through room selection, being able to view their choices online. The deadline for room selection is Feb. 16.

Browne said Housing and Residential Communities has done its best to inform students and parents alike on the application process for on-campus living, ranging from e-mails sent to students, numerous letters being sent out before Christmas break, to electronic letters from the University that parents subscribe to.

"We try very hard to facilitate students who want to move off-campus," Browne said. "We want to assist in whichever choice they are going to make."

Julie Elmore, assistant director for off-campus and greek housing, recently hosted a fair at the Ferguson Center on Jan. 14, which featured nearly 18 realtors offering options in Tuscaloosa, including H.A. Edwards, Campus Way and Cornerstone Management. In November 2008, Elmore was an integral part of a program about off-campus living called "Landlords, Leases and Legalities" at Morgan Hall, featuring guest speakers Bill Edwards, president of H.A. Edwards, and Michael Kelly, the Crimson Choice project coordinator.

"We want to be there for any question they may have," Elmore said. "We want to help them any way we can."

Elmore said another program is scheduled for the Ferguson Center on April 1, from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

For more information on both on campus and off campus living, visit www.housing.ua.edu.

the SUPE Store we've got the hoop-la!



hoop • la (hoop'la)
noun. Informal

a. Boisterous, jovial commotion or excitement.

b. Extravagant publicity.
(Think Crimson Tide apparel from the SUPE Store.)

(Think Crimson Tide souvenirs from the SUPE Store.)

Expensive inaugurations, and why we hate them

By Dave Folk and Paul Thompson

Paul: So, what did you think of the inauguration?

Dave: It kind of sunk in for me afterwards when he was signing his first executive orders. I just can't believe we actually elected a left-handed president.

Paul: Yeah, me neither. I was surprised at the cost, too. Something in the neighborhood of \$170 million, and Obama still managed to interrupt Chief Justice John Roberts during the oath. Eager, much?

Dave: You'd think for \$170 million you'd at least get a couple of practice runs in. Hell, LeBron James only makes \$40 million but he practices five days a week at least.

Paul: Are you daring to say that Obama isn't perfect?

Dave: I thought that was pretty evident when his nominee for Secretary of the Treasury wasn't giving his green to the IRS.

Paul: Speaking of elementary colors, what was with Rev. Joseph Lowery's benediction? "...When white can embrace what's right?"

Dave: Whoa, pump the brakes. He was on the schedule of events? I just thought some crazy homeless guy had found his way to the podium and Obama had waved off the snipers.

Paul: It almost seemed like that. I mean, here's an event the entire world is watching, and this guy — "Reverend" though he may be — took a racist jab at American Indians (the "Red men" according to Lowery) and

insinuated that white people have never done what is right. I'm not sure about you, but I was kind of offended.

Dave: So much for bridging the racial gaps, I guess. My favorite part about the entire event, though, was that as they were talking about how Obama was attempting to "lower the carbon footprint" of America, yet they showed the 200 motorcycle escorts accompanying him in the parade. What's wrong with like five motorcycles? Are the other 195 officers really that necessary?

Paul: I doubt it. What did they think was going to happen? DC was swarming with almost 50,000 police from all over the city and neighboring states. Obviously, they were just trying to stay warm by increasing everyone's old friend, Global Warming. I guess that 25-degree weather got old after a while.

Dave: Speaking of loads of crap, in today's economic situation wouldn't you want to maybe scale back on the extravagance? You know what, despite the nearly \$10.7 trillion deficit the U.S. faces, let's go ahead and tack on another \$170 million worth of butchered patriotic songs by Aretha Franklin.

Paul: It's nice to know that one day's worth of Inauguration festivities cost the equivalent of 3,754 average American's yearly salaries. What a great use of money, especially since the Dow Jones plunged almost 350 points that day. Just a guess, but investors didn't seem to be all that thrilled with the price tag.



Dave Folk and Paul Thompson

Dave: I feel like we're taking it a little too harshly on Mr. Obama. I want to switch gears and quickly talk about the double standard of the average liberal.

For the last eight years they have trashed everything

part of me wants to see him fail just to wipe the smirks off the Democratic party's face.

Paul: I don't know, Dave. His version of success is the antithesis of what I think is right for the country. I don't want him to succeed. I want him to fail.

"It's nice to know that one day's worth of Inauguration festivities cost the equivalent of 3,754 average American's yearly salaries."

about Bush, from his policies to his intelligence, and now that Obama is in office, dare one of us say anything negative about the man, even if it is a valid argument. I truly do wish Obama succeeds in sending the country in the right direction; on the other hand,

Miserably. If we end up with something like the "new" New Deal, we are in for a "raw deal" as Rush Limbaugh says. So no, I want his policies to fail. I don't agree with them; why would I want something I strongly disagree with to succeed?

Dave: I want what's best for

America; if it turns out 10 years down the road that his neo-socialist policies get America back on track then more power to him. Now, realistically, based on the expectations everyone has for him, and this holier-than-thou aura he has, you and I both know this first year should be unexpectedly disappointing if you're an Obama supporter. I am kind of excited to see an endless array of scandals, starting with Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich, and that helmet of hair he always has on.

Paul: So do I, Dave. I definitely want America to succeed, but I don't think Obama is the man to lead us in that direction. Given that, I just can't bring myself to wish success on the man. The New Deal didn't really end the Great Depression; that was the arrival of World War II, not the dependant underclass-creating policies we are still following for whatever reason. I'm just really not into adding more programs to FDR's laundry list of massive governmental programs.

Dave: More importantly, I don't want to see the same media coverage they gave Obama during the inauguration all throughout his four years. They literally had breaking news with every "first" he had.

"We're getting breaking news, President Obama has just taken his first drink of water out of a bottle. Remember this is the first bottle of water for the first black president."

And this is coming in off the wire; President Obama has now placed the cap back

on the water and proceeded to put it back in the cup-holder.

If you're joining us now let's fill you in, President Obama, the first black president, has taken his first sips of water and put the cap back on the bottle.

Monumental occasion, right Diane?"

Paul: Exactly. The media, at least in large part, abandoned all sense of objectivity months ago during the election. It was nice to see how that panned out now that Obama is president. I read a quote from George Stephanopoulos' wife (while she was on Oprah) saying they both burst into tears as Obama was sworn-in. Really, George? I understand that his inauguration was an historic one, but was it really so overwhelming that tears were merited? I guess that \$170 million was well spent if the ceremony caused national news anchors to cry.

Dave: I mean I've been crying since it happened, I think it's a physical ailment though.

Paul: It was certainly emotional. I wonder if any big-name national news workers burst into sobs as George Bush was sworn in? Can you say obvious bias?

Dave: Probably, but I don't think for the same reason. Well, I'm going to go pray to my Regan Shrine.

Paul: I thought I was the only one; be safe, UA.

Dave Folk is a news editor for The Crimson White and Paul Thompson is the opinions editor. Their columns regularly run on Fridays.

The inauguration and our true education

By Ian Sams

There have been 70 presidential inaugurations in our great nation's history, including several private ceremonies by presidents like Rutherford B. Hayes, Woodrow Wilson, Calvin Coolidge, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Ronald Reagan, and most recently Barack Obama. The significance of an inauguration is immense. It signifies the peaceful transition of power the United States so impressively has maintained since the time of George Washington and John Adams.

Upon taking the oath of office (the only phrase in the Constitution in quotation marks, I might add), the president "enters into the execution of his office." Undoubtedly, this event is always an historic moment, a moment when another great man (and hopefully, one day, a woman) adds his name to that

short but eternal register of Presidents of the United States.

Naturally, this week, we witnessed an especially historic one. So, it was to my disappointment and surprise that many of my friends were unable to watch the event because their professors did not allow them to view it in class or to take the day off to watch it at home.

I understand professors follow a strict schedule, often planned out day-by-day with objectives that must be met to cover the necessary course material. I also understand many of them were either disappointed that President Obama was ascending to the office or just plain didn't care.

But the bottom line is that we're not paying a lot of money to learn just material from our prospective fields. (Or at least we shouldn't be.) Education is not just learning the basics of



Ian Sams

engineering or perfecting the ability to balance a spreadsheet. It's not just reading old British works of literature or putting

together curriculum for an elementary school class. Education is about becoming engaged with the world. It's about broadening your horizons, hearing new perspectives (even if you disagree with them), and learning, just learning.

The inauguration, whether of a Republican, Democrat, or neither, should be one of those events the world watches. We have a civic responsibility to engage in our society, to participate in our national community. For a professor to disallow his students to watch the event in class or to prevent them from taking their own action to view it slaps the notion of a true education in the face.

Civic engagement is something that transcends our small amount of time here at the University. If, at a relatively young age, we can all plug into our political system, or at least

our society at large, then the future will be faced with a generation involved. Not since the Greatest Generation has the United States had a citizenry that offered less of themselves for the greater good of our nation. Now, President Obama has encouraged us all to give more and take less. He has called on us to usher in a new era of this civic engagement because our times mandate it.

We're facing great challenges, many of which the average person like you or me can't impact significantly on a daily basis. But, we can vote. And we can be informed. And we can do little things and make the "hard choices," like putting our soda cans in the recycling bin, making more responsible decisions regarding our bank accounts and mentoring young people in need of guidance.

Obama's inauguration

emphasized these principles. It emphasized our collective need to "put away the childish things" and get to work involving ourselves in our national and global community. Watching the inauguration motivated me to aspire to this unity of purpose with my friends and neighbors. To think that some professor may have caused another of my peers to miss that moment of encouragement and inspiration troubles me.

From now on, let's all care a little more. Let's "carry forth the great gift of freedom and deliver it safely to future generations" by transforming ourselves into a generation that, like the Greatest Generation, gives more and takes less.

Ian Sams is a sophomore majoring in political science. His column regularly runs on Mondays.

YOUR VIEW

Do you think the United States should support Israel?



"I don't really know much about the whole situation over there so I can't really give an informed opinion."

— Lelia Huber, a sophomore majoring in music therapy



"I don't know anything about that."

— Mike Bartlett, a sophomore, pre-med.



"I do think we should get involved but more on a political basis than a military basis."

— Randall Robbins, a freshman majoring in civil engineering and international business



"I guess with their struggles, somebody should help them."

— Vivian Washington, a freshman majoring in social work

CW | Marion Walding

Jewish Film Festival comes to Bama Theatre

By Josh Hedrick
Lifestyles Reporter

Downtown's Bama Theatre will kick off the first night of the 7th annual Jewish Film Festival Saturday night at 6 with a Jewish Food Festival and the first film of the four-day event.

The Food and Film Festival is part of the larger Jewish Cultural Festival, presented as a collaboration between the University, the Arts Council of Tuscaloosa county and Temple Emanu-El. The event is also aided by the University's student Jewish fraternal organization.

"It's a great event for the Jewish community of Tuscaloosa and the Tuscaloosa community as a whole. It's a marvelous commentary on our community that we are able to have this festival and have it be such a success," said Steve Jacobs, Temple Emanu-El's rabbi.

A food festival featuring traditional food from Jewish culture will precede the first screening Saturday night.

"Some things will

probably be familiar to students, falafels, pitas, bagels," Food Festival Chair and Hillel advisor Rebecca Rothman said. "There will be some foods that you many not have seen before, but it is all delicious. And there is so much food. It's enough for dinner."

The food selections are designed to spotlight various foods that hold special significance in the Jewish community, particularly during Jewish holidays. The menu also includes baked goods, soups and salads.

The first movie shown will be "Counterfeiters," a film the head of the Festival's Movie Selection Committee, Joanna Jacobs, said she is especially excited about.

"It's really a fantastic movie," Jacobs said. "It's a real nail biter about a Jewish counterfeiter who is captured by the Nazi's and forced to aid them in a counterfeiting scheme that could change the war."

"Counterfeiters" won the Oscar for best foreign language film in 2008 and is based on the real life events of a Nazi counterfeiting scheme to destroy U.S. and U.K. economies and will begin at 7:30 Saturday night.

Seven other films and shorts will be shown throughout the festival and will range from animated shorts, to comedies and documentaries.

"We try to get as much a variety as possible and

a mix of subject matters," Jacobs said. "Growing up in Tuscaloosa I always loved movies, but it seemed like we didn't get a lot of the films that other parts of the country did. I think it is very exciting that we are bringing those films here to the Bama Theatre. It is a chance for film fans to see those movies they wouldn't normally get to see."

The films first and foremost have to be good movies people will want to see, Jacobs said. And while the focus of the festival is Jewish culture, not all the movies are about that heritage, but feature a Jewish character.

"We want movies that shed light in some way on Jewish life, cultural or religious practices. And movies that just tell really good and interesting stories. People's movie tastes vary, but there is really something for everyone at the festival," Jacobs said.

Other movies to be shown include "Noodle," "Circumcise Me" and "Then She Found Me." Shorts include "Jewno," a short parody of the popular movie featuring the actor who played the dad in "Juno," "Let My People Grow" and "Bound for Gory." More details about the films can be found at the Art Council's Web site, tuscarts.org.

All films will be shown at the Bama Theatre, with the exception of Sunday



Filmmakers Matthew Kalman (left) and David Blumenfeld (right) pose with comedian, Yisrael Campbell (center), the subject of their documentary film, "Circumcise Me: The Comedy of Yisrael Campbell" in Jerusalem on April 28, 2008.

afternoon's matinee, which will be held at Reese Phifer Hall on the University campus.

The Food and Film Series is just one part of the Jewish Cultural Festival. The Festival also includes a special exhibit at Hoole Library "Campus Meets Town Meets All Around: Glimpses at Tuscaloosa's Jewish Community from the Hoole Library Collections," as well as an upcoming Jewish book discussion series, "The Road Not Taken," starting in February.

The Hoole exhibit features information about Tuscaloosa

and the Jewish community dating back to the 1860's to the present. It includes exhibits about student organizations, student life, the Hillel House, an exhibit on famous baseball announcer Mel Allen and much more, said Jessica Lacher-Feldman, Curator of Rare Books and Special Collections. The exhibit opened Jan. 20 and will run through April.

Tickets for the Film Festival are \$5 for students per night, including Saturday night's Food Festival. Ticket packages for the entirety of the Festival are also available for purchase.



April Epner (Helen Hunt) finds comfort in Frank (Colin Firth), the father of one of her students, as her life falls apart around her in "Then She Found Me," playing at the Bama Theatre on Tuesday at 7:30 p.m.

www.fest21.com

JANUARY 24

Jewish Film/Cultural Festival: "Counterfeiters," presented by the Arts Council and Temple Emanu-el at the Bama Theatre. Admission charged, 7:30 p.m. with opening reception (free with film ticket) at 6 p.m., call 205-758-5195

JANUARY 25

Jewish Film/Cultural Festival: "Circumcise Me" and "Matzo and Mistletoe" presented by the Arts Council and Temple Emanu-el at UA's Reese Phifer Hall. Admission charged, 2 p.m., call 205-758-5195

JANUARY 26

Jewish Film/Cultural Festival: "Bound for Glory", "Let My People Grow" and "Noodle" presented by the Arts Council and Temple Emanu-el at the Bama Theatre. Admission charged, 7:30 p.m., call 205-758-5195

JANUARY 27

Jewish Film/Cultural Festival: "Jewno" and "Then She Found Me" presented by the Arts Council and Temple Emanu-el at the Bama Theatre. Admission charged, 7:30 p.m., call 205-758-5195

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MOVIE REVIEW | FROST/NIXON

Political drama well-acted and riveting

By Peterson Hill
Contributing Writer

Ron Howard's "Frost/Nixon" is set up like a boxing match between a heavyweight and a lightweight. The contenders are Richard Nixon and David Frost, respectively. What makes this match so fascinating is what's at stake for these two men. For one it's his career and livelihood, for the other his legacy.

The film is tremendously acted by Frank Langella and Michael Sheen, and Howard can't keep up with these two. As good as this story is, he doesn't quite make it the masterpiece I was hoping for.

The movie begins with David Frost (Sheen) in the Siberia of TV work as he hosts a show in Australia. He knows little about politics; however,

he knows business and sees dollar signs in the prospect of an interview with Richard Nixon (Langella). Nixon accepts with the idea of making this a platform from which he can rebuild his legacy.

Frost hires three men to help him prepare for the interviews. The first is an old friend, John Birt, played by Matthew Macfadyen, the next is Bob Zelnick, played by Oliver Platt, and the last is James Restin Jr., played by Sam Rockwell.

As each man gets ready for the interviews, Frost searches desperately for money to fund them. No one will give him the time of day because he is only a lightweight going up against Tricky Dick. So Frost digs deep into his own pockets to get Nixon to do the sessions.

Nixon has certain rules about the Watergate

The story truly is riveting, but Howard stumbles in that first hour, which is like a wick on a firecracker — you sit in anticipation waiting for it to go, and when it finally does, it's explosive. But you still have to sit there and watch that wick burn.

segment of the interview, and Frost begins the sessions not stepping on toes. He lets Nixon go on tangents and, in turn, Nixon begins to look presidential again. The turning point comes during a drunken phone call from Nixon, when Frost realizes the severity of the situation and that, as he hired Nixon, he is more than able to interrupt him and make him answer the hard questions.

The story truly is riveting, but Howard stumbles in that first hour, which is like a wick on a firecracker — you sit in

anticipation waiting for it to go, and when it finally does, it's explosive. But you still have to sit there and watch that wick burn.

There are moments of absolute brilliance in this movie. The actual interviews are fascinating and expertly paced displays of two actors at the top of their games. The last hour of the film works like a nail-biting thriller. You will likely be on the edge of your seat watching these men confront each other. While most suspense comes from the uncertainty of outcomes,

the actors create the suspense here. Their arguments are seeped with a subtlety the rest of the movie lacks.

For some reason, Ron Howard is an Academy favorite. There is one thing — and yes only one thing — that he is great at, and that is pulling brilliant performances from his actors. Watch "A Beautiful Mind" and you will see how his direction can never keep up with the actors.

The movie surprised me because at some point I began to sympathize with Nixon,

something I would never have thought possible. There is a great line where he says, "Any mistakes I made were mistakes of the heart and not the head." It takes a true actor to be able to deliver this line with grace. Langella, with just the turn of the head or a blank expression, says more than most actors say in an entire film. But Sheen matches him blow for blow as they dance along to the conclusion of their boxing match.

And in the end you will ask yourself, "Who really won?"

'Frost/Nixon'

Director: Ron Howard
Starring: Frank Langella, Michael Sheen, Sam Rockwell, Oliver Platt, Kevin Bacon, Rebecca Hall, Matthew Macfadyen
Run time: 122 minutes
MPAA rating: R
CW critic's rating:



Bottom line: Outstanding performances and a riveting third act more than make you up for Howard's directorial missteps.



Frank Langella, right, and Michael Sheen, left, deliver strong performances as David Frost and Richard Nixon, respectively, in Ron Howard's new film about the small-time reporter's historic interview with former President Nixon.

www.rottentomatoes.com

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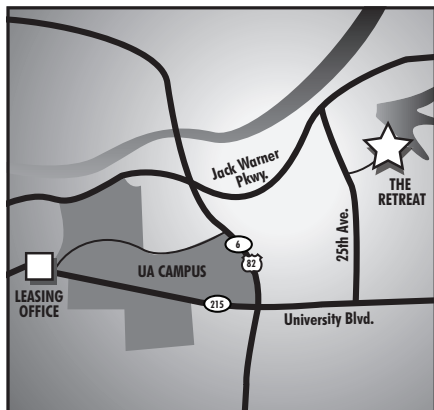
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CAMPUS DINING | BRYANT SPORTS FOOD REVIEW

Food fit for the "Bear"

By Sean Randall
Contributing Writer

Some have told me I have a bias against the fancier, more "gourmet" foods on campus, as made obvious by my preference of hot dogs over sautéed liver. Personally, I felt it was simply a dislike for liver, but in the spirit of giving "gourmet" a chance, I went over to the "mysterious" fourth and final all-you-can-eat campus eatery, Bryant Sports Grill, which has whispers of "gourmet" and "fancy" surrounding it in casual conversation by those who've never eaten there.

Connected to the Bryant Academic Building and the Bryant Residence Hall, it offers lunch from 10:30 a.m.

to 2 p.m. on Monday through Friday. Dinners are offered, but I want to discuss those specially, as they're different in nature. That's not to say lunches there aren't "special," though. While I praised Burke for its all-around tasty "comfort food," Bryant serves some of the best lunches I have had on campus during my last three years here.

Atmosphere

One of the few disappointments with Bryant is its small size. The way the tables are set up, and the lack of area, means eating a meal by yourself (especially around noon) is nearly impossible, unless you sit on one of the many "bar" seats. There are four

TVs in the eating area, which each play one of two sports channels. In certain places, you can hear both channels through the speakers, which can be odd.

There is also a more private outside eating area, though it isn't often used now with how cold it is. The chairs not at the bars have arms, which are nice, but the chairs can be noisy and difficult to move. It holds about the same atmosphere as the other dining areas on campus, with a slightly more cramped feeling.

Service

I think the employees here are some of the nicest and

able. When it comes to serving food, food is kept up with rather well, replacements for empty foods coming nearly immediately. The dishwashing area they have seems to be one of the least messy and quickest setups I've seen, and makes placing your dishes easy.

Selection

Since Bryant is smaller, the selection is proportionally smaller as well. However, it still manages to offer a good amount of food. There is a salad bar, the only one I've reviewed so far that usually has real bacon bits; two changing soup selections and a constant chili con carne; fruit such as grapes, granola and strawberry cups and a refrigerator filled with apples, oranges and pears; a hot veggie dish area for baked beans and the like; breads, usually rolls or cornbread; a grill, which has the least greasy fries I've seen on campus, burgers and often quesadillas, wraps and others; a deli, where the sandwiches are served on loaf bread; an entrée section often with pasta and a meat dish; cereal, which holds Cheerios, granola and Total; a toast making area, including jams and peanut butter; a smoothie making station; a dessert case with cakes and cookies; soft serve ice cream and the standard drink span (though smaller in flavor variety than some).

Each table holds ketchup, mustard and mayo squeeze bottles, making finding condiments easier. As for plates and the like, they do have trays here, which is good for juggling multiples of their ceramic plates and bowls. No insanely large cups, but they do offer take-out cups without request.

Food Quality

Some people are, apparently, not impressed with Bryant's smaller selection. However, the quality makes up for any sadness found in the lack of potato salad or stir-fry. It's one of the only places on campus I will eat a salad, since the others lack meat, and they have a wide selection of fresh add-ons for the salads. The selection at the grill can sometimes produce interesting and tasty items, such as Asian shrimp quesadillas, and their grill items always seem healthier than the same items at other eateries.

They also have an interesting colored dot system to show what has more health risk than others, something I can't recall seeing at other facilities. Everything seems to be consistently fresh, and the simple things like the deli meats seem almost better in quality, even if only a little. The desserts are great, and they serve the best Boston cream pie I've ever had. Occasionally, in the fruits, you can find a grape

that seems bruised, or a pear past its prime, but it's not often and nothing to fret over.

The Good

Consistent tastiness, meat at the salad bar and a general air of trying to make students healthier are definitely good things. I like that the salad bar is the first thing you see in the line, as it encourages me to eat healthier. Also, the fact that there are bathrooms inside the facility is a bonus that I've become fond of, being that I don't like having to leave the entire dining area and come back if a bathroom is needed.

The Bad

It's a little distant from my personal haunts of ten Hoon and Rowand-Johnson, and it is a little small. The difficulty of eating alone is somewhat disappointing, and, while I encourage everyone to try it at least once, I would have to suggest coming at an earlier time than noon since the crowd often leads out the door. With the limited choices, if on the rare occasion they run out of any items (such as white bread, bacon bits or American cheese), it's pretty obvious. Still, the negatives aren't overwhelming, and I suggest everyone try it at least once.

Grade: 94 (out of 100)

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It's one of the only places on campus I will eat a salad, since the others lack meat, and they have a wide selection of fresh add-ons for the salads. The selection at the grill can sometimes produce interesting and tasty items, such as Asian shrimp quesadillas, and their grill items always seem healthier than the same items at other eateries.

happiest looking ones on campus. I've watched many students trade jokes and hold conversations with some of the workers, which makes me think they're very person-

Freshmen — the first fall

By Xavier Burgin
Contributing Writer

College — the gateway to future aspirations, successes,

failures and harsh realizations.

With the passing of fall 2008, the freshman class has one semester of college conquest behind its belt. Hopefully, this will give most students a plethora of experiences readily available for Spring 2009 and beyond.

The willingness to examine the highs and lows of past endeavors represents a crucial understanding of the path ahead.

Ashley Williams, a freshman majoring in nursing, recognizes this outlook.

"I learned laziness and procrastination will not get you far, yet on the other hand I learned a lot about myself, those around me and life in general," she said.

"I would describe my first semester as eventful," echoed psychology major Ashley Benton. "I had so many ups and downs, but I would not give up these experiences for anything."

For many freshmen, the first few weeks on campus were crucial in shaping their overall attitude of college.

"I was not sure how easy it would be to make friends in college, especially from being out of state. That fear was a big part of the reason I rushed and decided to join a

fraternity," said Kaylan Gee.

Today, she remains pleased with her decision.

"Now I love it and would not change a thing," she said.

But fear was not the only emotion felt by the freshmen. Alyson Watson, a freshman majoring in biology, expressed a tenacious view of her experience at the University.

"My experiences have taught me that I need to take school seriously and that I should stop worrying about petty things as much."

-Ashley Benton, psychology major

"I was not really scared about my first semester in college because I had been looking forward to my independence, and I finally got it here at UA," she said.

Regardless of expectations, most admit their time on campus would not have been bearable without the moral support of loved ones and friends.

"Whenever I was having a bad day, I would call them

and they would encourage me all the while telling me what a good job I was doing," said nursing major Madison Mckinon.

Ian King, a philosophy and political science major, reached out to his roommates for support.

"My roommates, three of my best friends from high school, were utterly indispensable in easing my transition to college life," he said.

College can be considered a microcosm of the world soon to emerge for students. This demands certain responsibilities of students — a fact for which too many simply aren't prepared.

"Partying way too hard has been both a good and bad experience for me," said psychology and pre-med major, Andy Knowles.

While Knowles realizes that having fun is part of a rounded collegiate career, he said this practice can never become a lifetime routine.

"I learned that I'm in the real world now, and I've got to start becoming a more responsible adult," he said.

Knowles's lesson seems representative of the freshman body at large.

Watson concurred, adding her own twist.

"My experiences during the first semester taught me to continue to have faith in God, myself and the SUPE store," she said.

For Benton, the real world has already left a permanent mark.

"The only experiences that stand out to me when I think about what has shaped me in the last semester are lost friendships. My experiences have taught me that I need to take school seriously and that I should stop worrying about petty things as much," she said.

Those who say college is merely an academic odyssey missed the majority of the journey. Ask any freshman student. They may not find commonality in every aspect of their collegiate pursuit, but most will agree the quest is a conglomeration of academic, social and emotional undertakings.

"My true education comes from the life I'm exposed to," said psychology major Stephen Smith, "but [it] starts in the classroom. Word."

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MEN'S TRACK & FIELD

Team wins first meet in spring season

By NiCarla Friend
Contributing Writer

The men's track and field team began its 2009 indoor season last weekend at the Kentucky Invitational in Lexington, Ky. While en route to Lexington, coach Harvey Glance insisted that the team was fully prepared to compete. "They [were] ready. We had a lot of our athletes stay over [Christmas] break to prepare, and they seem to be a little bit more cohesive than a year ago, and we also have a lot of new faces in the program," he said. The team hopes to carry the SEC Championship torch the cross country team handed them this past season. The team took a step in that direction in Kentucky. Junior Tyson David finished first place in the mile, running 4:05.92, the sixth fastest in school history. Andrew Kirwa finished sixth with a time of 4:15.07 in the same race. Abraham Kuntingala and Stephen Payne ran in the 3000m. Kuntingala placed sixth with a time of 8:22.63, and Payne finished 13th with a time of 8:39.81. Michael Nichols and Paul Wynn both competed in the 200m. Nichols was fifth with a jump of 23-3.50, and Wynn finished seventh with a jump of 22-11.25. Michael Hughes cleared the bar as it set at 15-01.50 in the pole vault. Ray Jadusingh (21.49) and Brandon Spradley (21.71) both competed in the 200m, finishing sixth and 12th, respectively. The two made it to the two-section final, where Spradley (6.87) finished in 14th and Jadusingh (6.89) finished 17th. Freshman Aaron Stockstell made his premiere as a college athlete in the 800m race, finishing fifth with a time of 1:52.93. When asked what he believed inspired and boosted the morale of the team, Glance said, "Our distance guys have really set the stage in cross country as SEC Champs, and I know that a lot of our guys are motivated by that; and not just by what they are hearing, but also by what they are seeing, and that's very important because success brings success." With talent on the team such as Tyson David, Emmanuel Bor, Tyler Boswell and Mike Edwards, the idea of winning the SEC Championship doesn't seem too far-fetched. David is the two-time SEC champion who holds both the school and SEC record at 10,000m with a time of 28:23.01. Bor, a junior, is the 2007 SEC Champion in the mile with a personal best in the event of 4:01.63. Tyler Boswell and Mike Edwards are both high jumpers.

Boswell cleared 7-01.25 at the 2007 SEC Outdoor Championships and Edwards will be putting on the crimson and white uniform for the first time as a freshman. Edwards, an outstanding high jumper from Florida, was unable to compete before due to problems with clearing house because of issues with his high school. Another benefactor of the team is the fairly new assistant coach, Victor Houston. Houston was a track and field coach at the University of Iowa before he accepted the job as at Alabama, replacing Ron Tiffin, who is now the head track and field coach at Samford University. According to Glance, the University couldn't have found a better replacement than Houston, a three-time Olympian. "I think he brings a lot of experience because he is a NCAA champion in the decathlon event, and the areas he's coaching, the high jump and the long jump, are the ones that he caught his best scores in. He brings a lot to the table in those events. I know him very well because I was his coach when he was in college [at Auburn]." "The guys have welcomed him with open arms, and I think they have a great coach-athlete relationship. They have great respect, and that's the most important ingredient. You have to have great respect for your coach. Anytime you hire anyone new, he or she brings a 'newness' and a new attitude and a new focus. I think that's very, very important when your dealing with young people; you have to motivate, and you have to inspire and you have to lead, and he does this." The team competed against 15 teams in the Kentucky Invitational, including five top twenty squads: then-No. 4

Florida, No. 9 Louisville, No. 11 Kentucky, No. 16 South Carolina and No. 20 Georgia. The team's next meet will be the Razorback Invitational hosted by the University of Arkansas this weekend.

Emmanuel Bor is the 2007 SEC champion in the mile. He and the rest of the men's track and field team will be in Arkansas for the Razorback Invitational this weekend.

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27 Uncivilized
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33 Butter portion
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40 Letters for pipes
42 Indeed
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45 Performance grants org.
47 Lucy's husband
49 Old anesthetic
51 Hopefuls
55 Corporal
Klinger's quest
57 Reality rerun?
60 Sisters
61 Vegetable sphere
62 News article
63 French river
65 Abrupt pull
66 Clio or Erato
67 Solitary one
68 Single occurrence
69 Makes a lap
70 Casts off
71 Exploited
DOWN
1 Sacred beetle
2 Yacht basin
3 Equal to
4 Become a jelly
5 "Catch-22" star
6 Lunar prefix
7 In hiding
8 Hurler's stat
9 Sub-Saharan region
10 Toiled hard
11 Baseball's Berra
12 Cosmo rival
13 Actress Beryl
21 Kiss loudly
23 Morning moisture
25 Slugger's stat
26 Quickly, please!
29 Kitchen items
30 Bunion's location
31 Relaxing resort
34 At-home fast food
36 Arden of "Our Miss Brooks"
37 Rent out
39 Main course
41 Daughter of Ops
44 Bun seeds
46 Stupid
48 New World monkey
50 RPM word
52 Decanted
53 From that location
54 Provided capital for
56 Picks out
57 Switches to low beams
58 Sewing case
59 Crown around
64 Expression of wonderment
65 "Are My Sunshine"

13x13 crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-71 indicating starting points for clues.

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Solutions

Completed crossword puzzle grid with words filled in.

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GYMNASTICS

UA faces 4-time national champs tonight

By Jason Galloway
Senior Sports Reporter

It was the most valiant effort of Alabama's season.

The Crimson Tide lined up for its final event at last year's SEC Championships needing to spawn a 49.5 on the vault to upend the three-time defending national champions.

With no margin for error, sophomores Morgan Dennis and Ricki Lebegern flaunted career-high scores of 9.95 while freshman Kayla Hoffman extracted a 9.925 to position

Alabama for what appeared to be its sixth SEC title in school history.

"Georgia had already come over and congratulated us to win," head coach Sarah Patterson said.

The assumptions of victory were nothing more than false hope, as the ensuing final scores read: Georgia- 197.35, Alabama-197.325.

The Tide had lost by .025 of a point, the smallest possible margin of defeat in colligate gymnastics.

"We never say, 'that was

our SEC Championship,' " Patterson said. "It is what it is and you have to learn from it."

Tonight, with an additional year of experience, the No. 9 Tide will attempt to be the first team to defeat the now four-time defending national champion Gym Dogs in Athens, Ga., since Alabama did it in 2005.

"You can't think that it's a different meet," said junior All-American Kassi Price. "You have to go in there with a calm approach and treat it

like any competitor. If you try to make it a bigger deal, then you'll end up not being as comfortable, prepared and confident as you can when you compete."

The key difference from last season's team that finished second in the SEC is the slew of talented freshmen that have highly contributed to the Tide's 2-0 start this year.

Freshmen accounted for eight of Alabama's routines against Kentucky last week, and the first-year gymnasts make up half of the Tide's

balance beam team, which moved up to No. 1 in the polls this week after posting a 49.225 against the Wildcats.

"I think [being ranked No. 1 in the beam] gives us a lot of confidence," freshman Geralen Stack-Eaton said. "We just go in there and do our job and don't think about the numbers."

Alabama is led by two juniors in Dennis, who ranks fourth in the country on the vault, and Lebegern, who sits at No. 6 in the rankings in the floor exercise and 11th in the all around.

Although the Tide owns thick layers of depth and talent, everybody on its roster will face the daunting challenge of keeping up with Georgia's Courtney Kupets tonight.

Undoubtedly one of the best gymnasts in the nation, Kupets sits atop the national individual rankings in the all around and uneven bars, along with claiming the No. 2 spot in the floor exercise.

"We have to focus on 'What can Alabama do to do the best that they can?' " Price said. "You can't really pay attention to the other team as much because if you do that then you'll be like, 'Oh my gosh, they just had a great routine. I have to hit a great routine

now' and you get a little bit nervous."

It is the last situation in which Alabama can afford a setback, having to go on the road against the defending national champions, but one that has hindered the Tide throughout its first two meets still lingers.

Hoffman, who was an All-American on the vault as a freshman last year, is still recovering from offseason shoulder surgery and will not compete tonight.

Alabama has managed the ninth best scoring average in the country through the first two meets of the season without her, but with the Gym Dogs sitting at No. 4, it remains to be seen if that would be enough.

Georgia is coming off a nail-biting victory over No. 3 Utah at home on Monday in which the Utes were tied with the Gym Dogs heading into the final rotation.

"I would love to be in that situation," Patterson said. "One of the things about this meet that has always been good is both teams step up and do a great job. In terms of the competitiveness, I think that both teams definitely step up to the plate."

The action between the top 10 teams will begin at 6:30 p.m. in Stegeman Coliseum.



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Caitlin Sullivan performs on the balance beam. CW | Drew Hoover

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