

The Crimson White

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MAP to charge to unlock cars

Technology difficult to bypass without professional assistance

By Patty Vaughan
Contributing Writer

Students who locked their keys in their car were never a problem for the Motorist Assistance Program (MAP), but due to advanced technology, it can now cost a great deal to get those keys out.

With the technical advancements in cars, the price of damaging the cars has gotten too high for MAP, said Ronnie Robertson, director of Transportation Services.

"Vehicles that students and faculty bring on campus have become more complicated, so the locking systems on the vehicles become almost impossible to unlock," Robertson said.

MAP has teamed up with two new vendors to be able to unlock cars, Robertson said. However, since they are now working with professionals there is a fee of \$45 in order to get into the cars.

"We regret that there is a fee, but that is what the professionals charge. It will be cheaper for the individual in the long run because of the damage occurring to get into the car through just MAP," Robertson said.

Before the holiday break, MAP decided to carry out the process of finding professional locksmiths to unlock cars around campus. Robertson added that this had been an ongoing situation that needed to be rectified.

Robertson said, if one person comes to MAP to unlock their car, they will immediately get on the phone with the professional locksmith and try to locate where the car is and what kind of car the person owns.

"We make sure that contact is made with the owner of the vehicle and the professional before we get off the telephone," Robertson said.

Also, if it is after hours, MAP will request for security sources to accompany the owner of the vehicle and wait for the locksmith to arrive.

Robertson wanted to emphasize the service of MAP will remain the same for students and staff, even though they cannot physically unlock cars anymore.

Students, faculty and staff on campus may contact MAP at 348-0121 (8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday) or 348-5454 (4:30 p.m. to 8 a.m. weeknights and weekends) for free motorist assistance if you need to have a battery jumped, have run out of gas or need air in your tires.

Web Exclusive

Lifesouth seeks donors for awareness month

By Christy Roach
Staff Reporter

January is not only the kick off of a new semester at the University of Alabama, but this month has been deemed Blood Donor Awareness month.

Ashley Smith, a district director at Lifesouth said that only one in 10 Americans donate blood regularly. She said 60 percent of the population is eligible to donate blood, but of that only five percent do.

For the rest of this story, check out: www.cw.ua.edu

GYMNASTICS



CW | Drew Hoover

Junior Ricki Lebegern is one of 11 returning gymnasts for Alabama this season. In addition to Lebegern, a three-time SEC Champion, the sixth-ranked Crimson Tide also returns three other Junior All-Americans.

Gymnasts open season at Auburn

By Jason Galloway
Senior Sports Reporter

As the gymnastics edition of the Iron Bowl kicks off the Crimson Tide's season today, recurrent adversity will, one way or the other, be overcome.

Auburn's hardships are perhaps more obvious, as the Tigers will attempt to snap the infamous 95-meet losing streak to Alabama that has planted a choke hold on the Tide's in-state rival since coaches David and Sarah Patterson took over the Alabama program in 1979.

For the Tide, the nagging disappointment of ending last season with two falls on the balance beam at the NCAA Championships combined with numerous preseason injuries led to start this year leave preseason No. 6 Alabama with something to prove as well.

Of the three gymnasts who produced top-8 individual finishes at the NCAA Championships last season, one of them is out, and another will be limited for the Tide's opening meet with Auburn.

See **GYMNAST**, page 6

Parking facility coming on time

By Drew Taylor
Senior Staff Reporter

Construction on Tuscaloosa's new intermodal facility has been on schedule, despite a few days of rainy weather, said City Engineer Joe Robinson, and most of the structural concrete work has already been complete.

The facility, which began construction in April, will attempt to fix the parking problem that many Tuscaloosans deal with on a daily basis, in addition to catering to University students.

The facility will feature 460 parking spaces, including some reserved areas on the ground floor. With this exception, the rest will be free to the public.

There will also be driveways for pickup on the west side of the facility, in addition to a possible shuttle bus from the facility to the AmTrak railroad station, located at 2105 Greensboro Ave.

Robinson said that the ground floor would have office space for the Tuscaloosa Parking and

See **PARKING**, page 2



CW | Drew Hoover

The intermodal facility at 23rd Ave and 6th St. remains under construction.

Bryce patient's art shown nationally

By Victor Luckerson
Staff Writer

At nearby Bryce Hospital lives a man who has called Bryce home for more than half a century, who has created art that has been featured at a national museum and who may be the oldest man in the

United States.

Frank Calloway is a resident at the Alice Kidd Nursing Facility located at Bryce Hospital. According to general hospital records, Calloway was born July 2, 1896, which would make him 112 years old and the oldest person in the country. However, no birth certificate

exists to prove Calloway's age and recently people claiming to be Calloway's relatives have asserted that the man is in his nineties.

"Mr. Calloway's official age is unconfirmed," said John Ziegler, a spokesman for the Alabama Department of Mental Health and

Mental Retardation.

The details of Calloway's younger days are hazy. His father worked on a railroad while his mother was a very skilled quilt maker. Calloway came to Bryce Hospital in 1952. He enjoyed farm work and

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UA weather TODAY



Saturday 58°/29°
Thunderstorms

Sunday 52°/29°
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BCS National Championship



Florida's Major Wright (21) hits Oklahoma's Manuel Johnson on an incomplete pass during the first quarter of the BCS Championship NCAA college football game Thursday, Jan. 8, 2009, in Miami. The Gators won their second BCS Championship in three years 24-14 over the Sooners.

AP

The Crimson White

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Standing Tall



CW | Alden Jones

Members of the Air Force ROTC class "Air Force Leadership Laboratory" pose for a portrait outside of the Bryant-Denny Stadium Thursday afternoon.

GRE, LSAT loom

University helps students with exams

By Patty Vaughan
Contributing Writer

The GRE and the LSAT exams can be extremely daunting for students preparing to take them, however, the University has provided assistance to enable students to be well prepared physically and mentally for these exams.

The graduate school has teamed up with Kaplan, a testing service, to help students at the University.

According to Carl Williams, the Director of Graduate Admissions, Kaplan comes on campus in February and will do free practice testing for the GMAT, GRE and the LSAT. There is a prediction of probably about 500 to 600 students who will attend the practice sessions, Williams said.

"We encourage students to take the practice exams before, maybe take it junior year so they can retake in time so they don't miss any

deadlines," Williams said. In September, the graduate school also puts on preview day and there is a special session on preparing for the exams, Williams said. They offer a seminar and encourage every student to take a preliminary free practice exam for each test. Each test is scored and evaluated, and each student is contacted with tips on what they need to focus on to do better.

"We don't want students to wait. They may have to retake and they should always take a test three to four months in advance just in case," Williams said.

The Center for Teaching and Learning also provides videos, guides and books for students to practice with. Through the center, Richard Livingston, assistant director of learning enhancement for the Center for Teaching and Learning, also provides a seminar every semester to prepare for the MAT.

"Students need to learn to practice for the test and be able to not waste time and finish the test, and be confident that they're pacing themselves correctly. They'll do 20 percent

better," Williams said. Advisors will help students by giving them guidelines on practicing, giving them practice materials and advising them to go to the graduate offices for more help. They also advise them to go to the Center of Teaching and Learning for more assistance.

"Some students want to take the test to get scholarships or fellowships. There is always a reason to take the tests," Williams said.

According to Williams, students need to contact testing services on campus to find out when each test is given early in their junior year to prepare for the exams in order to be on time for applying to graduate schools.

"Practice for the test and finish on time, spot trick questions because that's where you get the edge. Students need to practice, practice, practice," Williams said.

To learn more about when the practice tests are available, one can contact 1-800-CAPTEST to find out more information. Also, to contact testing services to find out when exams are being given call (205) 348-6760.

Students meet Ron Paul over break

By Kellie Munts
Contributing Writer

At 10 a.m. on Dec. 29, a group of UA students entered the office of former presidential hopeful Ron Paul, unsure of exactly what to expect from their visit with the famous politician.

Bradford Patterson, a senior majoring in economics and philosophy, said he has been impressed by Ron Paul's consistent values since December 2007.

When a friend suggested driving to Clute, Texas, the location of Paul's Foundation for Rational Economics and Education office, Patterson didn't hesitate to make the call. A few short weeks later, Patterson found himself sitting directly across from a man renowned for his policies

"It's a once in a lifetime opportunity to meet an honest politician and have him tell you the truth, even if it hurts."

-Jared Vaughn, a junior majoring in geology

and political opinions. "We were the ones making the meeting formal because we were all so nervous, but he kept it really casual by asking questions about where we were from, and what we were interested in," Patterson said. Jared Vaughn, a junior

majoring in geology, said he was thrilled to have the opportunity to meet Paul.

"It's a once in a lifetime opportunity to meet an honest politician and have him tell you the truth, even if it hurts," Vaughn said.

In a situation that could possibly become overwhelming, Patterson said he felt completely at ease.

"You'd really think that it would be a larger than life experience because he's on TV all the time, but he's a really personable guy," Patterson said.

In addition to the personal conversations the group had with Paul during their visit, they were also able to talk to him about his role in the political world. The consistency Patterson said he had always been impressed with remained obvious during their meeting with Paul, Patterson said.

Patterson said the group he went with wasn't the only group of people interested in meeting with Paul. Patterson said the reason there are daily requests for meetings with Paul is very clear.

"The thing that attracted me to him is simple. He's principled, and there's no other candidate in the election who has been more consistent in their beliefs," Patterson said.

Patterson said he thinks there have been a lot of hypocritical tendencies in the political world, but he strongly

believes Paul has an allegiance to his beliefs. Because of Paul's strength in his opinions, Patterson said he believes that many formerly

"It's amazing. He's 72 and that's very old by most people's standards. But he's so animated because he loves what he does, and I think that's what helps keep people young."

-Bradford Patterson, a senior majoring in economics and philosophy

politically apathetic citizens have been encouraged to take action.

"There are people coming out of the woodwork who have never been involved politically who support what Ron Paul stands for," Patterson said. "Politics can tend to be a charade, but he's proven himself because he has a long track record, and because of that people trust what he says."

Vaughn said he was influenced by his experience in meeting Paul because of the impact Paul had on his political views.

"The highlight of the trip was meeting him face to face because he has basically shaped my political views at this moment," Vaughn said. "It was great to be one-on-one with him in a non-political setting."

Paul continues to serve in the Texas congress, and shows no signs of leaving

the political arena in the near future. Patterson said he is impressed with Paul's vitality and passion to continue working toward his political goals.

"It's amazing. He's 72 and that's very old by most people's standards. But he's so animated because he loves what he does, and I think that's what helps keep people young," Patterson said.

He said he thinks his opportunity to meet Paul greatly

impacted him in many ways, and the trip only confirmed his favorable opinions about the political leader.

"I was able to connect what I've seen in the news to reality. It was interesting to stop and think that he's made an entire career out of politics," Patterson said. "He stands for what he believes but is willing to not get elected rather than say something he doesn't stand for."

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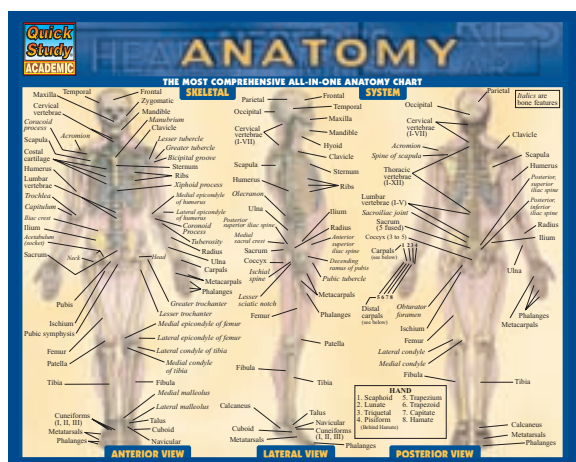
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Delayed Theatre Tuscaloosa show now playing

By Kelsey Stein
Senior Lifestyles Reporter

The cast and crew of "Miscast: A Musical Mishap Cabaret!" spent late August perfecting the plans for their fall show, set to debut the first weekend of September.

What they didn't plan for was Hurricane Gustav. Shelton State Community College, the venue for Theatre Tuscaloosa productions, served as a hurricane shelter after Gustav ravaged Louisiana, delaying the show's debut by four months.

Director Tina Fitch and musical director Leslie Poss proved their resilience by rearranging the entire show and reassigning parts in preparation for its belated debut.

Finally, the cast and crew, ranging in age from 6 to nearly 60, can perform the show that they have long awaited, kicking off the tenth anniversary season at Shelton State's Bean-Brown Theatre.

"Miscast" is a musical revue where the actors play roles in which they would never be cast, crossing the boundaries of gender, race, size and shape," Fitch said.

A steady stream of musical theatre songs, from the well-known to the relatively unfamiliar, comprises

the show, which Fitch described as a "sampler platter of musical theatre."

The acts range from business women flaunting briefcases while singing the parts of girls in the orphanage of "Annie" to a young man performing the heart-wrenching love ballad of a "Dreamgirls" heroine.

"The focus is the song, not so much the production," Fitch said. "We're wanting to really celebrate the music."

As the customer service specialist for Theatre Tuscaloosa, Jill Parsons has been crucial to the performance of "Miscast," managing many organizational aspects for the weekend of the show and even performing in it herself.

"It will be good, old-fashioned fun," Parsons said. "Everyone in the audience is encouraged to sing along, whether their neighbors will enjoy it or not."

University of Alabama students, staff and graduates, including both Parsons and Fitch, are involved in the production of "Miscast."

Willie Williams, a third-year graduate teaching assistant and acting pedagogy, has acted in UA theatre productions such as

"The Heiress," as well as several Theatre Tuscaloosa productions.

"Theatre Tuscaloosa has a community feel," Williams said. "It isn't always actors who are trained through an educational program, but instead you find really seasoned actors who truly love theatre, not for the money or publicity."

The show will take place at the Martin campus of Shelton State Community College in the Bean-Brown Theatre at 7:30 p.m. on Jan. 9 and 10 and at 2 p.m. on Jan. 11. It will run between an hour-and-a-half to two hours with no intermission.

Ticket prices are \$22 for adults, \$17 for seniors and \$10 for students.

What: Theatre Tuscaloosa presents "Miscast: A Musical Mishap Cabaret!"

When: 7:30 p.m. tonight and Saturday, 2 p.m. Sunday

Where: Martin campus of Shelton State Community College, Bean-Brown Theatre

Price: \$10 for students, \$17 for seniors, \$22 for adults



Above: Autumn Fuller performs the song "Little Girls" from the musical "Annie" as part of Theatre Tuscaloosa's presentation of "Miscast: A Musical Mishap Cabaret."

Left: Jenny Ryan performs the song "Get Me to the Church on Time" as part of Theatre Tuscaloosa's performance of "Miscast: A Musical Mishap Cabaret."



NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

Students look to 2009 as a fresh start

By Josh Hedrick
Lifestyles Reporter

As the clock ticked its last seconds of 2008, many students inhaled their last drags of cigarettes, frantically savored their last cookies and put their practice of sleeping through 2 p.m. classes behind them.

A new year always brings about resolutions of self-improvement or commitments — some kept throughout the year, many not — and for UA students, this year is no different. Whether kicking a nasty or expensive habit, getting healthy and thwarting the freshman 15 (while it's

still the freshman 8) or even proving to skeptical parents that last semester was just a fluke and that you "really can do much better than that," all students can seize the new year and look towards a happier, healthier and more productive 2009.

"I want to stop worrying about the things I [can't] control, do something nice for someone every day and, of course, try and work out more."

— Ana Garcia, senior, marketing and advertising and public relations

"My resolution is to give more.

There are so many ladies in the world and I want to give them all something."

— David O'Brien, sophomore, education

"Lose weight, get healthy and find the girl of my dreams... Hopefully."

— Shane Slaughter, sophomore, marketing

"Read the Wall Street Journal everyday and quit smoking."

— Zach Narvaez, senior, finance and Spanish

"Not to talk bad about people

and call them fat."

— Christen Dorsa, sophomore, business

"Get a job, if I can find one."

— David Gilchrist, freshman, business

"To grow my business and not lose sight of why it was started."

— Josh Cain, senior, general business

"Not to drink every day, be good about going to class and make at least two A's."

— Joe Hill, junior, psychology

"Spend less time sleeping and being lazy."

— Mark Hale, junior, computer science

"Quit smoking and question some of the things I've always thought to be absolutely true."

— Evan Beattie, sophomore, English

"I want to spend less money, mostly because I have less than last semester. That means eating out less and smoking less."

— Rob Maxwell, sophomore, accounting

"To find my future ex-wife."

— Cole O'Connor, junior, political science

"I plan to study more and spend at least 5 hours a week in the library."

— Jonathon Howard, junior, operations management

"I resolve to help my fiancé out a little more in planning our wedding."

— Adam Mestre, 1st year law student

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CRIMSON TIDE GYMNASTICS

Dennis eyeing championships

By Will Barry
Senior Sports Reporter

Alabama junior Morgan Dennis already has her name in the record books after two years competing for the Crimson Tide, but this year's results could take her to a new level.

In her freshman year, she was the 2007 NCAA Floor Exercise Champion, making her the sixth Alabama gymnast in school history to win an individual national title as a freshman.

Her freshman campaign earned her All-American status in the floor exercise and a second team All-America in the all-around.

"When Morgan competed as a freshman and won that national championship, she primarily viewed herself as a vault and floor exercise specialist," head coach Sarah Patterson said. "And now, I think the challenge is from last year and now this year [is] Morgan's an all-arounder.

She's the leader of our team, and I think so her role has changed and I think how she views herself has changed as well."

It wasn't long after she displayed her skills in Coleman Coliseum that the 5-foot, 2-inch star from Westampton, N.J., was being compared to Alabama's four-time NCAA Champion Ashley Miles.

"I mean, I'm already in my junior year and I know by her junior year she had already won three [National Championships] and I only have one," Dennis said. "But I mean, I'm still proud of my accomplishments so far."

Last year, she repeated as an All-American in the floor exercise and added second team All-American honors in the all-around and uneven bars.

Dennis recognizes what she has to do to make sure that her part is fulfilled so that the team can accomplish their goals.

"I anchor the floor and vault and just last year I started anchoring beam, and so now I feel that the coaches have trusted me enough to take that position," Dennis said. "I have to use my confidence and kind of spread it amongst

the other girls so that we can all stay calm and just work as a team throughout the line-ups and everything."

With one NCAA title under her belt, Dennis' junior year presents her with an opportunity to bring Alabama its fifth NCAA Championship.

"I think this is the best team that I've been on as far as talent and potential," Dennis said.

Dennis is the main event in the floor exercise in the eyes of many fans who look to Dennis to put on a show.

"I think everyone does wait for her to come," Patterson said. "I think they wait for her to step up because she has the biggest and the highest tumbling. It's very difficult, and I think that's a fun place to be in."

Another individual NCAA Championship may not be too far away for the junior All-American in 2009.

"I think she's a very determined young woman," Patterson said. "I think she also has a very strong sense of character and I think those things coupled with a lot of talent help her go in so many different directions to achieve success."



CW | Drew Hoover

Junior Morgan Dennis may be the most decorated gymnast on the squad, but this year she's looking for more team success. After a disappointing sixth place finish last year, Dennis and the rest of the team aim for a better finish.

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Freshmen look to make immediate impact

By Laura Owens
Contributing Writer

Unlike other sports such as football, basketball and baseball, gymnastics is a sport where it is not unusual for a freshman to start in a meet right from the very beginning. The Alabama gymnastics squad added six new freshmen to the roster, three of which, Ashley Priess, Geralen Stack-

Eaton and Caitlin Sullivan, will compete this weekend at Auburn.

"For some of them, they're very nervous," head coach Sarah Patterson said. "They haven't been in a college setting. They haven't necessarily seen a college gymnastics meet, and to go up against one of our biggest rivals in state, that's huge."

In order to prepare the

freshmen for the upcoming meet, the team has been practicing 20 hours a week, where Patterson introduced the girls to pressure situations they may face.

"We had a balance beam intrasquad where we didn't do great. We came back at 7:30 that night to do it again, and then we did awesome," Patterson said. "Hopefully, those situations will prepare us for this later on."

From all of her years of experience, Priess said she is also confident the team will do very well against their in-state rival on Friday.

"In however long I've been doing gymnastics, we've been training for those types of scenarios," she said. "Through lots of sports psychology, I pray deeply to God every night, we just have to go out there and stay calm, and if we just do what we do in practice, we'll be fine."

Priess said she already knew the girls before coming down because her older sister was on the squad a few years prior. It was not just that familiarity with the rest of the team, however, that she said drew her to Alabama.

"It helped to have my sister down here just because I was familiar with the program, but the coaches, the whole program here is what really drew



CW | Drew Hoover

With injuries to key members of the squad, freshmen Geralen Stack-Eaton (left) and Ashley Priess will be asked to make an immediate impact.

me," she said. "There was something about the atmosphere and their attitude about coaching that was so enthusiastic and positive and different from my former training environment that I really wanted to be a part of."

Another part of the atmosphere at Alabama is the intensity surrounding the Alabama-Auburn rivalry. The gymnastics team will kick off their season against their in-state rival tonight.

"It's cool that Alabama has those rivalries because it only makes us better," Priess said. "It makes every program [better] when they have that type of relationship, so it's exciting and nerve wrecking, but

I think if we can use it to our advantage, it will only help us in the long run."

The meet against Auburn is only the beginning of a very promising season for the freshmen. Three-time SEC Champion Ricki Legebern has complete confidence in the newest members.

"I definitely see them making a big impact," Legebern said. "As the season goes on, we will have the injured people coming back in, but until then, we will send our freshmen out there and build their confidence. They have some big skills that once they're confident, we will put into our routines later on in the season."

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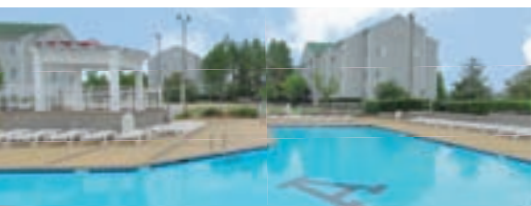
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GYMNAST

Continued from page 1

Sophomore Kayla Hoffman, who placed fifth in the vault, underwent shoulder surgery in the offseason and has yet to fully recover, while junior Kassi Price, who finished eighth in the uneven bars, will only compete in one event in Auburn today.

"I think right now that depth is everything because we're using all of it," Sarah Patterson said. "We have the largest team we've had in years, but we've had numerous gymnasts that have had some difficulties and challenges physically that they have had to overcome."

Although Alabama's sixth place at the NCAA

Championships last season did not satisfy the expectations of possibly winning it all, it was the Tide's 24th top-6 finish in 26 consecutive national championship appearances, and Alabama returns five All-Americans to this year's team.

Junior Morgan Dennis, the other of the three top-8 individual finishers from last year's Championships, followed up her victory in the floor exercise her freshman year with an impressive fourth-place finish at last season's championships.

"Right now, we're just trying to go out there and get a good start to the season and build our confidence from there," said junior Ricki Legebern, the 2008 SEC Vault and Balance Beam Champion.

"Once we get our people returning from injury, we will have a good team."

Along with All-Americans Hoffman, Price and Dennis returning, Alabama has a talented slew of six incoming freshmen to provide much needed depth until the Tide can regain its health.

"We're going to see people who have not necessarily played a major role step in and contribute right in the beginning of the season," Patterson said. "I think we're going to be a lot better as time goes on."

Alabama must deal with the pressure of prolonging the unprecedented streak against its arch-rival without some of its top gymnasts tonight, but Patterson said she looks forward to capturing something more than just victories over Auburn this season.

"Regardless of injuries, situations, whatever happens, the goal is to get us to a place where on the last night we're competitive for the national championship. I think whoever's on our roster, whoever's healthy, it doesn't really matter. At the end, somehow we have to find a way to do that."

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CRIMSON TIDE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Tide's comeback falls short

UA Athletics

The Alabama women's basketball team cut a 26-point deficit to four, but No. 24 Vanderbilt was able to hold on to win 85-76 Thursday night in the Tide's SEC opener.

Freshman Erika Russell netted a career-best 25 points including 15 from three-point range. Both the Tide and Commodores move to 12-4 on the season.

"The first half was not the team we have watched go out and compete and play hard," head coach Wendell Hudson said. "It was not our basketball team; it looked like somebody else out there playing in the first half."

"But at the same time, we grew. This team went out and fought hard. They didn't give up. I am just so proud of this basketball team and the effort they gave in the second half."

Alabama had five players reach double digits in scoring led by Russell's 25. Sophomore guard Varisia Raffington dropped 16 points, sophomore forward Tierney Jenkins added 11 and sophomore guard Alyson Butler contributed 10.

Junior forward Courtney Strauthers earned her first double-double of the season with 12 points and 10 rebounds while point guard Dedrea Magee dished out a career-high ten assists. Vanderbilt was led by senior Jennifer Risper with 17 points.

Russell connected on a three-pointer to open scoring and give the Tide a quick lead. Alabama continued to stay in front until Vanderbilt junior Merideth Marsh buried a three of her own to go ahead 9-7 at the 16:19 mark.

The Tide kept it close over



CW | Norman Huynh

Alabama guard Erika Russell stands on her toes looking for an open teammate.

the next six minutes until the Commodores put together a 26-8 run to end the half. Vanderbilt headed into the break with a 25-point advantage, 47-22.

Alabama scored the first two points of the second frame off a pair of free throws from Jenkins, but the Commodores responded with the next four point giving Vanderbilt's its largest lead of the game at 26.

The Tide gradually chipped away and put together a 20-6 run midway through the half to pull within eight points with

12:50 remaining on the clock.

The Commodores scored the next six points gaining another double-digit lead, but Alabama would not give up. The Tide formulated a 13-2 run to come within four points of the lead.

Raffington was responsible for seven of the 13 points during that stretch. Vanderbilt went on to score seven of the last nine points scored in the game to pick up the win.

Next up, Alabama travels to Baton Rouge to face LSU on Sunday at 2 p.m.

Sloppy, choppy game leaves Florida as BCS champion

By Ben Walker
The Associated Press

MIAMI | Tim Tebow gave Florida the jolt it needed, and the Gators toughed out a second BCS title in three years.

Their 24-14 win over No. 2 Oklahoma in a choppy, sloppy affair Thursday night made them a national champion. But it likely did little to quiet fans of Southern California, Utah and Texas, all of whom already claimed the top spot.

The high-scoring shootout between Heisman Trophy winners never materialized. Oklahoma's Sam Bradford couldn't score from in close and Tebow threw two interceptions, as many as he had all season.

Tebow, however, shook off two miserable throws to rescue the top-ranked Gators (13-1). He drove them to the clinching score — he took two hard steps toward the line, jumped and zipped a 4-yard touchdown pass to David Nelson with 3:07 to make it 24-14.

Percy Harvin returned from an ankle injury and dashed for 122 yards on only nine carries. His 52-yard gallop set up Jonathan Phillips' 27-yard field goal early in the fourth quarter for a 17-14 lead.

Tebow added to the title he helped the Gators win in 2006 with a rout of Ohio State and, one season after winning the Heisman, brought home another trophy.

"Tebow, just call him Superman," Harvin said.

National champs, indeed! The Associated Press will release its final poll early Friday morning.

Tebow was picked the game's most outstanding player, running for 109 yards. His passing wasn't so precise — 18-for-30 — yet it was his sheer will that kept coach Urban Meyer's



AP Photo

Florida's Tim Tebow yells to his teammates during the fourth quarter of the BCS Championship NCAA college football game against Oklahoma in Miami on Jan. 8. Florida defeated Oklahoma 24-14.

team going.

It was the third straight national title for a team from the Southeastern Conference, and marked the Sooners' fifth straight loss in a BCS game. Oklahoma (12-2) set a modern record for scoring this season and put up at least 60 points in its last five games, yet never found its rhythm.

Bradford, who beat out Tebow for the Heisman, was a disappointing 26-for-41 with two interceptions. Like Tebow, he's going

to explore his potential for the NFL draft — not exactly the performance he wanted.

Tebow struggled throughout the first half, his lone highlight a 20-yard touchdown pass to Louis Murphy for a 7-0 lead early in the second quarter. Bradford came right back with a swift 65-yard drive, capped by his 6-yard TD toss to Jermaine Gresham.

Florida's defense, rather than Tebow, Harvin and its speedsters on the other side of the ball, kept the Gators close.

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