Students wounded in shooting

by Katrina Oliver Thomas

A twenty-year-old Jacksonville State University student was assaulted at Park Place apartments Monday April 7. An unknown male was also the victim of a gunshot wound to the right arm.

As Scott Dorsey was pulling into the apartment complex, he noticed four black males walking from the area near the Physical Plant. “I did not think anything of it. As they got closer, I saw the guns,” says Dorsey. One of the assailants asked Dorsey if he knew someone who may live at Park Place. When Dorsey said no, one of the assailants pulled out a 9mm semi-automatic pistol and ordered him to get down on the ground. The assailant briefly turned his back to Dorsey. Dorsey was about to run when he was struck in the back of the head with what he believes was a gun. After regaining consciousness, he heard two gunshots and then ran across the street to the Coliseum to call the police.

According to Dorsey, the suspects went into a downstairs apartment looking for the shooting victim, a fight ensued and someone was shot. Upon arrival at the scene, the police found the victim at the Kappa Alpha fraternity house with a gunshot wound to the right arm. The victim has not filed a report with the police and no arrests have been made.

“They were wearing ski masks,” says Dorsey. He was able to give a more detailed description of one assailant to the police. Dorsey was examined by the Jacksonville EMS personnel and released. As of now Jacksonville police have witnesses but no suspects.

Students lobby for higher education

by Thomas Webb

At Tuesday’s Higher Education Day in Montgomery, Jacksonville State was represented by a group of about twenty students and faculty. The centerpiece of this event was a rally held on the steps of the State House to show support for those who oppose Governor Fob James’ plan to cut funding for higher education. Sponsored by the Higher Education Partnership, this rally featured speeches from many prominent figures in Alabama government on the importance of higher education in Alabama.

Before the rally, however, the delegation from JSU had refreshments in a downtown Montgomery office building. The group was met by University President Harold McGee, JSU Trustee Pete Mathews, and Senator Doug Ghee. Ghee spoke for a few moments before leaving to attend a committee meeting. He thanked the group for their show of concern for higher education.

After walking down the street to the State House, the group from JSU joined the growing crowd, which included groups from the University of Alabama, Auburn University, the University of Montevallo, the University of West Alabama, the University of South Alabama, and University of Alabama-Birmingham.

The attentive group of students was addressed by Lieutenant Governor Don Siegelman, the President Pro Tem of the state senate, an official with the Alabama Retirement Systems, state legislators, and the president of Auburn's student government association.

When the speakers had finished, many of the students went into the State House to talk with their senators and representatives. Some of the students from JSU even See Students page 3
UNC proposes early classes

by Colleen DeBaise

College Press Services

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. -- Early morning classes. Friday tests.

What some students consider the bane of their existence might become the rule at the University of North Carolina, where administrators plan an unusual approach to combat alcohol abuse.

The campus' Substance Abuse Task Force recently studied ways to discourage excessive drinking at North Carolina and considered a top "party school." While some of the task force's proposals are conventional—such as substance-free residence halls and alcohol-free social events—others could prove to be eye-openers to students who are used to sleeping in.

For instance, the task force suggests in its report that more early-bird classes and end-of-the-week exams might put a clamp on weekend partying.

Aaren Nelson, student body president, admits that some students are intrigued by the recommendation, which the university now is planning to implement. Overall, however, the report "has been handled pretty well" by the 24,000-student body, he said.

The 39-member task force, comprised of students, faculty, staff, alumni and trustees, started meeting last August, three months after a UNC fraternity fire killed five students and injured three others. Autopsies revealed that four of the five victims were drunk, although investigators said it was uncertain whether they could have escaped if sober.

"Alcohol and drug use are national problems that are not unique to college campuses," Nelson said. "Increasingly, we are seeing that the problem begins well before students arrive at college."

Mohan Nathan, UNC's incoming student body president, said he agrees that students don't arrive on campus and become "sucked into drinking."

That's why he doesn't agree with all of the task force's suggestions, Nathan said.

"I'd like to see a greater emphasis on educational programs and enforcement of alcohol laws," he said. "I'm concerned that a lot of the recommendations deal with symptoms of the problem, rather than the problems themselves."

Nelson, who served on the task force, said the early morning classes are designed to provide structure in students' lives, especially for freshman enjoying new-found freedom. The report does not specify whether the university should make the classes mandatory, but states that they are "advisable."

The report also encourages professors to give more Friday tests to "keep students aware of the total academic week and the seriousness of academic purpose of this institution."

Nelson said he is concerned that morning classes might put a burden on "folks that work" in the morning. "What if you want to take your classes in the afternoon?" he said.

Also, students in general seem to be "not functioning well at 8 o'clock in the morning," he said. "That's not when we're at our best."

Although he voted for the proposals, Nelson said he didn't know whether they will effectively prevent alcohol and drug abuse. "I hope we do some tests and focus groups prior to implementing them," he said.

A freshman, Barbara Dean, said the report sounds like a good idea because "people do get trashed," especially during their freshman year.

"I don't like early morning classes, (but) if they think it's going to have a good effect, I'll get up," she said. "I don't know if it will work or not, but I think it's neat that someone's trying stuff."

A better solution would be for more fraternities to declare themselves substance-free, freshman David Jernigan said. He noted a recent decision by the national fraternity Sigma Nu and Phi Delta Theta to ban alcohol in all chapter houses.

However, as far as the report's suggestions are concerned, "it probably wouldn't hurt to try," he said.

SPJ hosts public forum on local news coverage

by Phil Attinger

News writer

On March 26, the JSU chapter of the Society for Professional Journalists held a public forum on the effectiveness of local news coverage. Representatives from FOX 6, NBC-13, ABC 33/40 and The Anniston Star gathered at Self Hall to answer questions from students and professors about how local news works, and how it meets the pubic's needs.

Local stations and newspapers frequently find out how well they're serving the public from letters, phone calls, or first-hand comments.

Phil Cox of ABC 33/40 stressed the need for stations to get feedback from their viewers: "Some of the most valuable (audience) research involves no money, but time."

Most of the forum members say that the best feedback is still from talking, directly with their audience.

Most local media work to includet national stories in their news coverage. The Anniston Star says it tries to have more local stories and leave most national news to the likes of CNN and local television, but TV also draws a line.

"We use CNN as a resource," explained Gary Stokes, General Manager of NBC-13 in Birmingham. "We aren't competing with CNN but with other news sources in this region. If I can get something on CNN it's prime time reserved for their best stories."

"There are some stories seen at ten not seen at five, or handled differently because of the audience."

"Gary Kelly"

handle my own backyard, I'll let CNN handle the world."

At the television stations, decisions on airing stories involve the time of day or the prospective audience. More graphic stories might appear on a later newscast, while more family oriented news might appear earlier. Available resources also make a large difference.

Depending on the station, certain rules apply to various news situations, even at the cost of ratings. FOX 6, for example, will not run stretcher shots of the recently deceased, and any dead bodies at a scene must be covered.

Stokes explained how he as both a newsman and a father must give strong consideration to when or if a graphic news video airs.

Gary Kelly, News Director at ABC 33/40 said, "There are some stories seen at ten not seen at five, or handled differently because of the audience." On questions of taste Kelly and his news staff will ask people outside of the newsroom in order to get a more objective opinion.

The Anniston Star says the front page is the "prime time" reserved for their best stories. According to Cerrin, important local or regional stories can, and do, bump national stories off
JSU students Iman Al-Zoubie, Michael Page, Andy Burroughs, Russell Reid, Thomas Baucom, Chris Carpenter, and John Gulotta participated in the 1997 Model Arab League held in Savannah, Georgia March 20-22. The JSU team represented the country of Saudi Arabia and was coached by Dr. Thomas Baucom from the Department of Physical and Earth Sciences. Iman Al-Zoubi was chosen as the most distinguished delegate on the Palestinian Affairs Committee. Dr. Baucom says the JSU’s overall performance was excellent. Students interested in participating next year should contact Dr. Baucom for more information.

SPJ from page 2

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The state legislators showed uniform support for the full funding of higher education, saying that it was vital for the future of the state. Some of the students left questioning the sincerity of the politicians.

“If their sincerity was in any way linked to their actions, I’d be very impressed with the outcome, but as of right now it seems like a bunch of empty talk,” said JSU student Ryan Kruzinski. He did however think that the rally was effective because it shows the state legislators students are aware of what is going on.

Another JSU student, Amanda Witherspoon, agreed with Kruzinski’s assessment of the rally’s effectiveness. “I think it will definitely spark in their minds whenever they are deciding not to cut funding to higher education, because they see these college students out here...rallying for higher education.”

SPJ from page 1

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Students from page 1

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Who should “prune” the higher education tree?

The following editorial is the result of a collaborative effort between The Auburn Plainsman, The Crimson White, The Hornet Tribune, The Charger Chronicle, The Chanticleer, The Kaleidoscope, The Alabamian, and The Tropolitan. This editorial is being published this week across the state by college and local newspapers by the Alabama Collegiate Newspaper Assosiation.

Fob James has some strange ideas about education.

During his Feb. 4 State of the State address, James said he wants to “prune” ten percent of the higher education budget in order to save $100 million a year from higher education funding. He has also proposed closing nine of the state’s 16 four-year colleges.

But does Fob James really care about higher education? Several instances suggest he cares very little. At Auburn, the governor, as the ex-officio president of the board of trustees, only shows up to meetings on matters of personal preference and political power. In his same capacity at the University of Alabama, he shirk his specified duties as governor. If this is how he treats the state’s two largest schools, what can Alabama expect of him in regards to the other 14? Indeed, it seems the governor regards higher education as a fly buzzing in his face that he must swat or ultimately exterminate.

Can Alabama stand for this?

Of course there are problems with higher education, but the “pruning” — more like slashing and burning — that James intends to implement is not the answer. Does James have the right to say what schools should be closed and what programs should be cut when he has such an obvious disinterest in higher education — sitting behind his big wooden desk in the lavish state house while university educators are pounding chalkboards? Does James have the right or should those in the classrooms every day be able to determine their fate?

Above all else, there is not need to close any four-year institution in Alabama. Each school has its own distinctive accredited programs which others do not. Each school has its own distinct tradition and history. Most of all, there is no need to close colleges and universities because all of Alabama’s schools are well attended. Alabama needs more education, not less.

There are, however, mergers and consolidations that could make higher education in Alabama more efficient while maintaining the integrity of the system. Educators, not politicians, are better equipped for this task. The governor has proposed putting all of the state’s four-year institutions under two systems headed by the University of Alabama and Auburn University. This plan, or a variation of it, may be workable. Under Auburn, schools with emphasis in veterinary medicine, engineering and agriculture could be grouped. Alabama could encompass schools focusing on art, business, and medical science. Two systems would cut administrative “fat” without affecting the quality of education.

Of course, this would mean combining weaker programs with their stronger counterparts. But rather than lawmakers, the respective administrators, who know which programs are weak and which are strong, could effectively “prune” the higher-ed plant without killing it.

The people who know how to “prune” have recently formed the Higher Education Partnership, with the potential for representing higher education much in the way the Alabama Education Association represents K-12. The first-hand experiences of university presidents and others who deal with issues of higher education on a day-to-day basis provides greater depth of insight and understanding when faced with these difficult and complex issues. Through a small voice now, this group has potentially could have the voices of alumni, boards of trustees, national fraternity and sorority chapters, institutional faculty and staff and even students ringing through the state house halls on issues close to the higher education community. Although this group is still young, these are the sorts of people who should be driving education, not Fob James.

No discussion of higher education should be conducted without the mention of K-12 education. For too long lawmakers and lobbyists have pitted K-12 and higher education against one another when actually they should be complementary. Politicians create this artificial conflict to draw attention away from the real problems plaguing both higher ed and K-12: the lack of an adequate property tax. The state and municipalities should adequately fund K-12, but traditional means can produce that funding through local property taxes. This would alleviate the state’s burden of having to supplement inadequate funding at the local level and would provide an outlet to allow more appropriate funding of our state’s colleges and universities.

Many local school systems suffer from abysmally low property taxes and an apathetic electorate that consistently votes down modest tax increases for the welfare of their area schools. Alabama should set a minimum millage rate of at least 20 mills, that would double the current minimum. The politics of farming and forestry, however, have prevented this increase in the past. With an acknowledgment of the need for increased revenue and an eye toward the reality of Alabama politics, the state should implement a graduated tax increase. Lawmakers could allow the increase to occur over a period of 15 years for private citizens and 30 years for corporations. The graduated property tax would give schools, eventually, what they need without draining the pockets of Alabamians.

Without the realization that the entire education system in Alabama is suffering, and without a firm dedication by lawmakers, administrators and citizens to end this suffering, it will not matter who “prunes” the tree of higher education, or K-12 for that matter, for the tree will be dead.
**What is your favorite 1997 Spring Break memory?**

---Compiled by Tamara Miles

"Going to Stone Mountain with relatives I hadn’t seen in more than seven years"

Stephanie Crossman, Freshman

"Watching quarters drop from a slot machine then using the money for a succulent seafood dinner"

Gina Thubodeaux, Junior

"What memory?"

Lane Millwood, Freshman

"Having the time to read three books for pure pleasure alone and spending time with my five-year-old daughter"

Melanie Jones, Senior

"My family and I went on vacation to Savannah, Georgia and my dad got a two parking violations, which is ironic because he always warns me about my speeding."

Clay Sparks, Freshman

"A friend of mine had a baby so I was busy running back and forth to the hospital in Anniston during the break"

Rajman Dangol, Senior

"I was able to put all my books down, tell my boss that I wasn’t able to work for the week and I slept all week long."

Cher Bernard, Senior
Determined to keep heating bills to a minimum, Ken had the contractor install a placebo thermostat in the new house.

“It’s just like they always say — a new car depreciates 30 percent the second you drive it off the lot.”

“You gotta be kidding! Your back still hurts?!”

“...well, the pest guy’s truck is still here. Let’s hope he’s having some luck getting rid of whatever’s been making that hideous scratching noise in the walls.”

“Well, the pest guy’s truck is still here. Let’s hope he’s having some luck getting rid of whatever’s been making that hideous scratching noise in the walls.”

“The insurance company is right. We’ve got its basic policy that covers only illnesses that begin with the letters A through G.”
It has come to our attention that the recent acceptance of so-called alternative music means that many newcomers to the scene may not be aware of the inherent rules or traditions of these bands. One such band is Boston's Mighty Mighty Bosstones. The Bosstones will be coming to Five Points South Music Hall April 13th and we feel it is our duty to educate you, the reader, on how to behave at a Bosstones show. The first section will cover the traditional rules of a Bosstones show, the second will advise you on the etiquette of not only a Bosstones show but that of any show where a pit (moshing) may occur.

So without any further ado, here is a comprehensive guide to enjoying the Bosstones live as well as properly enjoying the pit.

**ENJOYING THE BOSTONES**

This first part is targeted mainly at attire. It is a must to be well versed in attire, so this is critical; pay attention. We’ll start with suits. It is customary to wear a suit to a Bosstones show. Preferably one with plaid somewhere in the outfit. This is not entirely important, as long as the plaid is visible. It should not be difficult to at least find a plaid tie or socks or vest — anything. By the way boxers do not count...unless you go pantless.

If for some reason you absolutely cannot find some sort of plaid to go with your suit then don’t worry; there are a few ways around it. If no plaid can be found then maybe a hat can work. The donning of a “pork pie” hat or other vintage head gear is acceptable. Now the wearing of a ska pin on the lapel of the jacket is also greatly encouraged but not entirely necessary. The best is to combine the suit, the plaid, the hat, and the lapel pin. This is where the pinnacle of attire is at!

Now if you are suitless for some reason then check this out: try to abuse all resources finding a suit. If nothing comes up or if you just don’t like wearing them, then you need a few tips. This is to avoid any unnecessary pummeling of your head and shoulders. For starters just wear jeans; it’s hard to go wrong here (avoid stone-washed and the Def Leopard torn look). The simple blue or black jeans should be worn with a classic T-shirt. Be careful on your choice of logos. No NIN or Manson T-shirts have a place at a Bosstones show! Something more along the lines of Chubby Checker or Buddy Holly is more suitable. If you have a problem understanding this then just go with a solid color. It is still important however to incorporate some plaid somehow into this particular look. It ain’t that difficult.

The women have it easy. It is very very simple, wear a dress (preferably plaid). If this is not available wear at least a skirt. However pants will not be looked down upon too much.

The rules for this ever enjoyable (if everyone follows the rules) performance are quite simple. When the Bosstones take the stage it is tradition for the audience to chant “MIGHTY, MIGHTY...BOSTONES” repeatedly. Audience members are also known to do a ska two-step dance, slam dance, or even stage diving.

**RULES OF THE PIT**

Now attire is important to the pit, very important. There are many reasons for this, mainly so you don’t lose anything like a wallet or an eye.

Audience members should not wear jewelry if they plan to get into the pit. This includes earrings or other accessible piercing. The reason for this is fairly simple.

These aforementioned pieces can easily get pulled out in the pit. The whole affair will not only injure the wearer but gross out those around them! Necklaces can also be harmful. They are discouraged because they can conveniently be used to choke the wearer.

Another thing some people feel the need to wear is chain wallets. These are okay, if a little out-dated, outside of the show but should not be worn into the club. More than likely the club will not allow these wallets into the venue so the wearer of such things has three options: take the chain off the wallet and put it in your pocket until you get into the show, leave the wallet in your car, or leave your wallet at the door in the little “I’m-an-idiot-and-I’m-going-to-leave-my-wallet-here-to-get-stolen” box.

Now for the most important rules of the pit: audience performance. This covers general and specific rules for the pit. The pit can be fun, but it’s like your parents might have told you about driving...it can be a loaded weapon, very dangerous and deadly! People around here seem to be oblivious to the rules of the pit. Yes, there are rules!!! Pay attention this will help you out in the long run, trust me. If it not it will be all fun and games until you lose an ear or get a your butt kicked. Here we go:

- If someone falls down around you, pick them up. You never know when it will be your face down there.
- Do not go into the pit just to hit people. You will probably hit someone bigger than you and get laughed at while your soul is being torn out.
- If you choose to get up front, then prepare to get slammed into the guardrail. The pit will be raging behind you and you will more than likely get hit in the back a number of times.
- If this bothers you, MOVE! Do NOT do that annoying thing where you grab the rail and thrust your butt out in the attempt to move the pit back. It won’t work! In fact it will only irritate the pit and then they will hunt you down like Boba Fett on Han Solo.
- It is quite possible that someone will finish the show make sure you thank your pit protectorate. These are the people on the rim of the pit who keep the moshing from breaking out. They are also in charge of pummeling any of the rule breakers of the pit.

If you follow the rules, you will have a great time at the Bosstones as well as any other heavy shows you may attend. You have no excuse not to adhere to these rules because now you know, and knowing is half the battle.
The songs are techno-industrial and interestingly. “Come Fly With Me” is dark and trancey, using some cool flowing female vocals for the line “come fly with me”.

Fast and in your face, sometimes soft and whispering in your ear, and just weird. **Sheep On Drugs** seems to fuse old school industrial aspects into today’s techno-industrial stream and individualize it. They incorporate great samples and definitely have carved a nice niche for themselves in the Invisible line up.

**REVIEWS BY SAM DILLON**

---

**Sheep On Drugs**

“**One For The Money**”

Invisible Records

Rating ★★★★

What’s in a name? I don’t even want to begin speculating on this one kids. Duncan X and Lee Fraser are the madmen masterminds behind **Sheep On Drugs**. Before I had a chance to give the CD a spin I was intrigued by the cover and insert. For starters Martin Atkins produced this one too. The insert was the most interesting part though (sorry Martin). What I found was a four page “newspaper” called The Daily Grind. After perusing over it for a couple of minutes I was pretty much baffled. It was full of off-the-wall mock ads and articles. These covered topics of deviant behavior, heroin, and other stuff. As I was queuing but funny. Then I threw on the CD to check out the ten tracks one of which is a cover of Lou Reed’s “Waiting For The Man”.

---

**Evil Mothers**

“**Spider Sex And Car Wrecks**”

Invisible Records

Rating ★★★★★

Evil Mothers are back, causing good mothers to gasp, clutch their pearls in one hand, and cover the eyes of their children with the other. “**Spider Sex And Car Wrecks**” is the third full-length release from the San Antonio, Texas based group, sporting 13 tracks.

Besides founding Invisible Records and Pigface, executive producer Martin Atkins has worked with some of the most recognized names in the “industrial” scene. The combination of Atkins and EM seems, to me, very natural. One aspect of EM that I believe sets them apart from the pack is the extreme diversity in their style. That is where Atkins comes in. The sound/style that is created is chaotic but also very well crafted. The problem with much of today’s electronic/techno/industrial/rock is that bands rip each other off, or the concept at complexity ruins the music to mush or both. That is not the case with EM. They tear into new realms smoothly and make the listening experience exactly that: a listening experience.

“**Spider Sex And Car Wrecks**” incorporated EM tribalesque beats with a slightly more techno dance feel that we haven’t seen from them in the past. The over all mood is abrasive but from time to time they lull you into a hypnotic trance-for example track 11 and the intro of track 12- only to smack you right back out. The lyrics on the album are as dark and sharp as the music. In both aspects the songs “Something Wicked This Way Please” and “The Ready Set Die” are my favorites. The first track “Free Poison” was the only song on the album that bothered me. They could have done more with it. It is always a bit annoying when a good song is short, but it is nothing that the repeat button couldn’t fix.

This is one of those albums that forces you to listen to it over and over again. It is an overall great effort by EM. If you aren’t already a fan you will be after sampling them. These guys definitely know what good salsa should taste like….bump-bump-bump-bump, deep in the dark heart of Texas!!!

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Abbott earns 900th win against Samford

by Shannon Fagan
Sports writer

Jax State head baseball coach Rudy Abbott posted his 900th career victory against the Samford Bulldogs March 28. It wasn’t an easy task, as the game was decided in extra innings. The Gamecocks prevailed, however, to earn an 8-7 win.

The following is a summary of JSU’s games over the break.

**JSU 8 Samford 7**

Dean Friery slugged his third home run of the season on his way to three hits on the day. He had three runs to help Jax State secure the victory. Pinch-hitter Bryan Williamson came through in the clutch, going 2-3 with three runs scored. Mike Garner also contributed to the cause with three hits.

The game was tied at six at the end of nine innings, prolonging Abbott’s milestone. But the Gamecocks refused to back down. They won in the 11th inning as pitcher Jason Nunn shut the door on the Bulldogs to earn his third victory on the season.

**Samford 7 JSU 4**

The Bulldogs got revenge for the extra inning loss as Jax State could only muscle out six hits in the game. Friery and Garner each hit the ball with a doubleheader sweep of Samford.

Williamson offered his third loss of the season for the Bulldogs.

**JSU President Dr. Harold McGee presents coach Rudy Abbott a plaque in recognition of his 900th career win.**

**JSU 5 Samford 1**

Garner hit his 12th home run of the season, leading to two Gamecock runs. Roby Brooks, Wes Brooks and Bert Higgins each scored for the Gamecocks.

Pitchers Ricky Collins and Nunn combined to only allow four Bulldog hits. Collins improved his season record to 5-0.

**JSU 7 Troy State 5**

The Gamecocks powered out 11 hits against the Trojans to take a 7-5 victory. Collins earned his sixth win of the season. Garner had two hits, including his 13th home run.

**SLU 6 JSU 2**

Jax State traveled to Hammond, Louisiana Friday to take on TAAC West Division rival, Southeastern Louisiana, in a doubleheader. The first game was called after five innings due to rain.

Garner led the Gamecocks with two hits and an RBI. JSU pitcher Lee Hinkson suffered his second loss of the season.

**SLU 7 JSU 6**

After the first game delay, the rains finally let up, and the Gamecocks and Lions got the second game of the doubleheader under way. Unfortunately for JSU, the result was the same - an SLU victory.

Jax State entered the series against SLU with a 5-1 mark in conference play. The doubleheader sweep improved the Lions’ record to 4-1 while JSU dropped to 5-3.

Clarence Prothro hit his sixth homer of the season for the Gamecocks. Prothro added two more hits in the game. Wes Brooks knocked in his 12th home run and designated hitter Collins added a hit and two runs.

Nunn suffered his first loss of the season.

**SLU 7 JSU 2**

The Gamecocks hoped to salvage the last game of the series against the Lions Saturday to tighten the West Division race.

The SLU pitching staff shut down the Jax State bats holding the Gamecocks to only four hits. Williamson led the Gamecock offense with two hits. Southeastern Louisiana handed Williamson his fourth loss of the season as the Gamecocks left the state without a victory.

Jax State is 26-10 overall and 5-4 in conference play. The Gamecocks travel this weekend to Centenary for a three-game series. JSU then comes home for an April 16 meeting against Troy State at 6 p.m. The Gamecocks have an opportunity to avenge their losses to SLU when the Lions come to town for a three-game series beginning April 17 at 2 p.m.

Lady Gamecocks win 13th consecutive game

by Rebecca Matanic
Sports editor

Coach Jana McGinnis has led her softball team to 13 consecutive victories and a 10-2 record in the TAAC West Division. McGinnis’ defending conference champions are 22-7 overall.

“I think the hard work we’ve put in since January that has made a big, big difference,” pitcher Julie Kish said of the Gamecocks.

“I just tell them, you just focus on yourself and this team. If we do our job, we’re hosting the conference tournament,” she said. “I don’t like to depend on anybody.”

**Jax State sweeps Samford**

The Lady Gamecocks took a big step toward defending their conference crown with a doubleheader sweep of Samford.

“It just feel like I’m getting stronger,” Riddell said of her performance. “I feel like I’m almost totally healed,” Riddell said of the season long nagging bursitis in her pitching shoulder. “It doesn’t hurt anymore, but I keep knocking on wood.”

“Rachel pitched a really good game,” McGinnis said. “I thought the team overall did a really good job.”

After a pop fly by Jon Epler, Jennifer Harbison

Monday at University Field. Jax State over-whelmed the Bulldogs in the first game with a 5-0 victory.

“I was nervous coming back off spring break,” McGinnis said. “We hadn’t played in a week. I was worried about our rhythm, just our rhythm as a team. We hit the ball well as a team.”

Senior Rachel Riddell pitched a complete game, allowing only one hit, walking none and striking out three. The Gamecocks scored four of their eight runs in the fourth. Riddell led off the inning with a double to left-center.

“Just getting used to each other as players and each practice coming out here working together as a team, that’s helped a lot.”

Georgia State is in second place in the TAAC West with a 7-3 record. JSU and the Panthers play their remaining conference games on the road. The TAAC West Division winner hosts the conference tournament April 24-26.

“I don’t want them (the Lady Gamecocks) to take the approach, well let’s hope Southeastern (Louisiana) or Centenary beats Georgia State,” McGinnis says. “The ball is in our hands. I want to be in control of my destiny.”

**Pitcher Julie Kish starts her delivery during the Lady Gamecocks 4-0 victory over Samford**

see Softball page 11
Former Wellborn players lead Gamecocks to victory

by Ryan Brown
Sports Writer

Baseball is the ultimate team sport, and for four Jacksonville State baseball players, being teammates is all they have ever known. Roby and Wes Brooks, Drue Snow, and Cypress Hathorn all played their high school baseball at Anniston’s Walter Wellborn High School. They have all found their way to Jacksonville State University, but the paths taken have been very different.

The Brooks brothers both came to Coach Rudy Abbott’s program straight from Wellborn. “The Brooks brothers started coming to my (baseball) camp at about 7 or 8 years old,” Abbott says. “I’ve been watching them since the second grade.”

Roby Brooks, one of the Gamecocks’ seven seniors, was a three-sport standout at Wellborn, playing basketball, football, and baseball. It is baseball, though, that is his meal ticket. He was named All-County three consecutive years in baseball, and in those three years, the Wellborn Panthers won the Area championships (1991 through 1993). After leaving Coach Allen Quinn’s team, Roby saw limited action as a freshman, but took advantage of every opportunity. He hit .476 with two home runs and seven RBIs in just 21 at-bats. In the next two years, he added 13 home runs and 83 RBIs. Roby came into this season with a career batting average of .351.

“My parents are so proud of me,” he said. “It feels like high school again,” he said.

Abbott has been even more impressed with Brooks’ work in the field. “Roby’s having a great senior year,” he says, “he’s had to make some tough adjustments moving from third base to second.”

That was not Roby’s first move, though. As a sophomore, he played shortstop and made two appearances as a relief pitcher. He was voted TAAC Player Of The Week, along with Southeastern Louisiana’s Joe Labruzzo, for the week of April 1-8.

The younger Brooks, Wes, is the starting catcher for the Gamecocks this year after playing the now-departed Andy Henderson last year. Wes was also an All-County performer at Wellborn, where he helped lead the Panthers to their fifth consecutive Area title in 1995, his senior season. As a senior he hit .465 with 10 home runs.

On his first trip to the plate this season, Wes cracked a home run, but that was not a sign of things to come. The sophomore came into the three game series with Samford on March 21, hitting .247 on the season with just six home runs. He went 7-10 with three home runs in that series, and raised his average a mere 50 points.

“Calhoun County athletes can’t get any respect,” Wes says. “A lot of good ones just don’t get any looks from college.”

Brooks certainly has done his part to earn that respect. Abbott likes the idea of having brothers on the same team. “I feel like those two are my boys.” Abbott also said he would hate to have to play against either one of the two.

Drue Snow came to the Gamecocks after taking a year off from baseball. A 1995 Wellborn graduate, Drue was part of that team’s five consecutive Area championships, and had a piece in a Calhoun County championship. After earning All-County honors for Coach Ricky Weems, Drue decided it was time to put the cleats back on and become a Gamecock.

“Drue started against Faulkner and was doing well until he hurt his knee,” says Abbott. “He is important because he is our only extra infielder.”

Drue will play third base and will possibly see some time on the pitcher’s mound. He got a start at third base in the last game of a three-game series at SLU.

“It feels good playing with all the former Wellborn guys,” says Drue. “I feel like I’m at home.”

The fourth former Panther is Cypress Hathorn. The junior southpaw pitcher came to JSU from Snead State, where he was an All-North Conference player for coach Gary Leadbetter.

“It’s a lot of prestige playing for Coach Abbott,” Cypress says. “Living around here, it means more to me than someone out of state. (Playing for JSU) was always a dream of mine. I thought it would never come true.”

Coach Abbott likes his progress. “Cypress is really coming on after being hurt this fall.”

A final link is another Wellborn graduate, Coach Rudy Abbott. “Me and my brother Earl helped build the first baseball stadium at Walter Wellborn,” he says, being surrounded by fellow alumni. “Sometimes he’ll say, ‘Put a Wellborn boy in there, he can hit a home run,’” Wes Brooks said of his coach.

The one year all four played together in high school, Wellborn had a 22-5 record and advanced the second round of the State Playoffs. Roby Brooks summed it up best by saying that “it’s good to know Calhoun County can put out so many good athletes.”
and Jennifer Russo walked to load inning with a ground ball to the game 4-0 victory. Kish allowed to have each person go in their and started out hot then she went the bases. The Bulldogs switched shortstop. just four Samford hits while strick- ing out five. Freeman led the Gamecock do their part." through a kind of a drought like all pitchers, but Jax State's Teri The Gamecock bats lost some ing out five. Freeman led the Gamecock offense with two hits. The speedy outfielder easily stole second base in the third inning. She advanced to third on a sacrifice from Tucker and hustled to score on a ground ball to short by Boland. "Rhonda is hitting the ball well," McGinnis said. "In the middle of the season she was struggling. She was down about her hitting. 'She started out hot then she went through a kind of a drought like all hitters do.'" McGinnis added that although Freeman bats at the bottom of the order, it's not because she isn't a good hitter. "Rhonda is at the bottom of our line-up, it's not because of her hitting," McGinnis said. "It's because we can us her as a lead off (hitter) also. Rhonda is a good hitter."
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