Fire leaves Sigma Nu homeless; police seek arsonist

By Benjamin Cunningham
The Chanticleer Editor in Chief

An early morning fire gutted the Sigma Nu house during final exams last month, leaving the fraternity homeless. No one was injured.

Neighbors reported the blaze to the Jacksonville Fire Department in the early morning hours of Dec. 7, and a crew of about eight firefighters rushed to the house, at the corner of Mountain Street and Spring Avenue, at about 2:25 a.m., said Jacksonville Fire Chief Mike Daugherty.

According to Daugherty, witnesses said the fire started on a porch on the Spring Avenue side of the house. “(The) people there in the neighborhood that reported the fire ... said there was a couch burning there on that end.

“We did a cause and origin investigation on it here from our department,” Daugherty said, “and after we established that’s where it came from, and based on the stories of the people that reported the fire, it was turned over to the police for criminal investigation.”

Jacksonville police are investigating the fire as a case of arson, said Jacksonville Police Investigator Mike Denton, based on witnesses’ claims that a fire was set on the same porch earlier in the week, allegedly by members of another fraternity. Members of Sigma Nu put fire out and did not report it to the fire department, according to reports in the Anniston Star.

Even if either fire was set by members of a campus fraternity, Denton said he didn’t think they were acting on behalf of their organization, but that it was an individual or individuals acting on their own, who didn’t know what consequences would result. “I feel strongly that the fire wasn’t meant to burn the whole building down,” he said.

Police have questioned several students and are hoping to talk to more now that classes have resumed. Denton said he’s “99.9 percent sure” the fire is a case of arson. “A couch doesn’t set itself on fire,” he said.

While he’s confident the fire was intentionally set, Denton said the investigation doesn’t look promising. “All we know is it was no accident,” he said.

“Proving who did it is another problem.”

Andrew Covington, who was president of JSU’s Sigma Nu chapter at the time of the fire, said that while the group is saddened by the loss of their house, they’re also relieved. “The big thing is we’re just glad one was hurt. Luckily no one was living in there at the time.” He said the fraternity was renovating the residence portion of the house, which is why it was unoccupied when the house burned.

Covington also said the fraternity’s actual losses were minimal. “Being a fraternity house we didn’t really have a whole lot of things of major value in there. Actually, we were very lucky in that the one room that was really intact was our TV room. And we got our big screen TV out of

Barnes & Noble becomes latest JSU campus bookstore leaseholder

By Stephanie Pendergrass
The Chanticleer News Editor

Nationwide bookseller Barnes & Noble recently moved into JSU. The company took over JSU’s campus bookstore, located on the 2nd floor of the TMB, on Dec. 3 of last year.

According to the bookstore’s manager, Randall Stephens, the bookstore has been leased out to private bookstore companies for approximately the last 10 years.

The last company to have a lease on the bookstore was Wallace Bookstores Inc. and as Stephens said, they “went bankrupt back in the summer.”

According to a University press release, “Wallace started an online bookstore ... and like many dot-com companies, it failed. Wallace Bookstores Inc. then had to file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy due to the loss of money in their online investment.”

When this happened, the University came along to stabilize the situation, “so that the students wouldn’t be affected,” Stephens said, “so the students could get their books.”

Stephens explained that the University then put the bookstore back up for bid and Barnes & Noble got it. He added that this was a decision by the corporate office.

Changes within the bookstore may be noticeable later, due to the new ownership, but as Stephens said, “It won’t happen overnight.”

According to the manager, “Everything’s continued pretty much the same.” He went on to say, “Probably in the next six months or so, we’ll see some changes.”

Stephens explained that the University and students should benefit from the change in ownership because Barnes & Noble will bring about access to more products.

The changes the bookstore experience would not necessarily be in textbooks, but “probably in a better selection of product merchandise,” such as gifts and clothing, according to Stephens.

Stephens also explained that there may be pricing adjustments in the future, but that depends on sales and the store’s competition.

According to its Web site, barnesandnobleinc.com, Barnes & Noble is currently “the nation’s largest bookseller, employing more than 32,000 booksellers in approximately 900 stores.”

The company also has locations in 49 states under the names Barnes & Noble and B. Dalton.

Its Web site also reports that Barnes & Noble is a Fortune 500 company. In March of 1997 Barnes and Noble began its online business and according to barnesandnoble.com it currently has one of the world’s largest Web sites, in which customers can purchase books, magazines, music, software, posters and other various products.

According to AOL’s Investment Research, Barnes & Noble’s total annual revenue will end at approximately $4.4 million for the year 2001. Since 1996 the company has almost doubled its total revenue. In that year the company ended with $2.4 million.

Stephens explained Wallace Bookstores had “financial problems for the past couple of years” and the change to Barnes & Noble should be a good one.

“I think it will be a lot better for the University and the students in the long run,” said Stephens.
SGA appoints new senator, discusses events

By Stephanie Pendergrass  
The Chanticleer News Editor

At the Jan. 10 meeting of the SGA, several senators were appointed to new positions within the SGA and upcoming events were discussed.

Senator Tim King was appointed Chaplain. Senator Zach Kilgore became President Pre-Tempore and upcoming events were discussed.

Another topic discussed at the meeting was a desire for a prescription plan for students at the University. Senator Buddy Rodgers said, “[The] doctors [at the infirmary] are volunteering time to help us out. That’s great. I really appreciate that.” He then went on to say however, “I think we need a prescription plan.”

JSU currently has an insurance plan for students, but lacks a way to help pay for prescriptions. Rodgers thought this kind of plan would be beneficial to students.

In other announcements, Joy Boyd, 2nd vice president, said that MTV’s Road Rules will be appearing at JSU in March. The television show will be going to 13 college campuses to hold its challenges for the season, and JSU was chosen as one of the locations.

JPD seeks leads in bank robbery

By Benjamin Cunningham  
The Chanticleer Editor-in-Chief

Jacksonville Police are at a standoff in their search for a man who robbed the Jacksonville branch of SouthTrust Bank last week, after missing the suspect by just minutes in the woods behind the bank.

The robbery took place at about 12:20 p.m. on Jan. 2 at the SouthTrust branch on Pelham Road South, near Wal-Mart. Police said a lone man asked a teller to empty the money from her drawer. He then fled with the money into the wooded area behind the bank.

Jacksonville Police Investigator Mike Denton said officers recovered a hooded navy-blue jacket, green-plaid scarf, and gloves worn by the robber in the woods, not long after the robbery. He said witnesses told police a man entered the Wal-Mart parking lot from the woods, got into a vehicle and left shortly after the bank was robbed. Police believe this man is the robber.

Denton said police are hoping other witnesses in the area at the time will be able to provide them with a better description or other information. Police are currently working on this description: a 5-foot-10-inch white male, 140 pounds, with shoulder-length, sandy-blonde hair, “sort of rough-looking.”

JPD is investigating the crime jointly with the Federal Bureau of Investigation. FBI agent Kim Freeman said no arrests have been made, and no suspects have been identified.

Anyone with knowledge of this crime is urged to contact JPD at 435-6448, or to call Calhoun County CrimeStoppers at 238-1414.
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Jacksonville briefly a winter wonderland

By Stephanie Pendergrass
The Chanticleer News Editor

Jacksonville saw its first snow of the winter and the new year last Wednesday and Thursday. While the city had some snowfall, other areas around the state and throughout the South faced larger amounts of snow and harsher weather conditions.

Calhoun County got its first glimpse of snow around midday on Wednesday and continued to see flurries into Thursday morning. According to the National Weather Service, the county's forecast for Thursday included a 30 percent chance of snow and a drop in temperature to around 20 degrees that night.

NBC13.com reported that the area between Interstates 85 and 20, along the border of Georgia had the greatest accumulation of snow in the state. Three inches of snow was the most reported in Alabama. Jason Kopish, of the Calhoun County Emergency Management Agency, said that Jacksonville did not have a report for the amount of snowfall it received last Thursday. The two closest areas that did have reports were Weaver and Oxford.

Kopish said that Weaver's report was less than an inch and Oxford had a report of less than 2 inches of snow.

Kopish also explained that no real emergency situations took place on Thursday. "The road department got out pretty early ... I believe they started out around 4 in the morning, sanding the bridges and overpasses and any places that were reported on the roads whose there was patchy ice."

NBC13.com also reported that some secondary roads across the state were a major concern due to the weather and that parts of I-459 and I-65 were closed. "State troopers reported sections of I-65 north and south of Montgomery were hazardous, with icing on bridges," according to the Web site.

Alabama State Trooper Brent Thomas said that in Calhoun County 14 car accidents occurred on the day it snowed last week. This number is a count from the areas outside the cities in Calhoun County.

Again on Monday, parts of the state experienced snowfall. Although it was a light dusting, some counties, not including Calhoun saw more snow as it fell along with misting rain in the morning hours on Monday.
JSU “lucky” to have Center Stage; winter color guard to start fifth season

By Jennifer Dickie

The Chanticleer Staff Writer

Thoughts of cutting funds swept through the Jacksonville State Center Stage Winterguard this year, but it failed to dampen their spirit or capability to perform at top notch.

Luckily, the lack of funds was just that, a thought. “Due to our wonderful University President, Dr. Meehan, the JSU winter guard will continue to be funded for at least another year”, said Rodney Bailey, founder and co-director of the organization.

“It is a fit organization, worthy of school funding, said Bailey. “We recruit students from all over the country. We offer opportunities to guard students who may not be able to obtain the same chance elsewhere.”

The JSU Center Stage Winterguard was established in 1998 to enhance the Marching Southerners field guard, and to increase enrollment at Jacksonville State. With membership higher than ever this year, the winter guard looks forward to various local and national competitions as they perform to “Gloria” by John Rutter.

“We have a very good chance,” said winter guard member Justine Rowley. “We have the largest guard ever with more talent than ever. We look forward to competing and performing at our best.”

Rowley is a member of the regular season color guard as well as the winter guard. “I came to JSU from Portland, Oregon, in order to be a part of the winter guard,” said Rowley. “We start in January and go every other weekend until April. We stay very busy and it is a lot of work, but it is all worth it.”

The winter guard is an independent organization, meaning that they get school funding, but have members from all over. Members must enroll at least as a part-time student during the spring semester for liability purposes, but some members also attend other schools and just come here to perform, according to Rowley.

“This is going to be our best year yet,” said Bailey. “We had the highest turn out for auditions we have seen. Forty students came out and we accepted 24 of them. Thirty are the maximum allowed.”

JSU’s Director of Bands Kenneth G. Bodiford and Bailey, co-directors of the program, are both JSU graduates and keep the progress of the University in mind. The winter guard is a tool used to recruit students from all over the country.

The Center Stage Winterguard is a way to incorporate a rare art form into the state of Alabama, according to Bailey. “There are only about nine organizations in the state, and JSU is the only one to compete in the national competition,” he said.

“An opportunity to be a part of this organization can help members access a high paying color guard job in the future.

“JSU is lucky to have it, and we are lucky to have Meehan approve it for a while longer,” said Bailey. “Hopefully we will be able to continue for a long time.”

The initial goal for the guard was to compete in several circuit shows, four regional competitions and to finish at the Winterguard International World Championships in Ohio. Unfortunately, limited funds cut the initial 1998 season short.

The guard was only able to compete in four circuit shows, one regional and the Southeastern Colorguard Circuit Championships. During that first season, the guard took no lower than third place at every circuit show, was selected as a South Regional Independent-A finalist, and ended the season with a fourth place finish at the Southeastern Championship.

In 1999, the guard grew from 11 members to 19. They took first place in every show in the Southeastern circuit, and won the WGI South Regional where they had finished fourth the previous year.

The 1999 season ended at the Winterguard International World Championships in Dayton, Ohio, where they were selected to be Independent-A finalists finishing 12th in the world.

In 2000, the guard took second place at the Southeastern Colorguard Circuit Championships. At the Winterguard International World Championships in Milwaukee, WIs., they were again named Independent-A finalists with a 13th place ranking.

With this history behind them, this year’s guard is looking forward to a winning season.
In Our View

Not-so-special session

After last month’s special session of the Legislature called by Gov. Don Siegelman, there’s good news and bad news.

“The good news is that we have avoided proration and there will be no school cuts,” Siegelman said at a news conference after the session finished.

“The bad news,” he said, “is that the Alabama Legislature chose to raise taxes on people who make phone calls instead of forcing giant corporations, who pay no taxes, to pay their fair share.”

The governor called the 12-day special session, which began Dec. 4, to raise $160 million to prevent a second-straight year of education budget cuts.

In the session, Siegelman offered a tax plan to do just that. Part of his plan was a privilege tax bill, which would have raised $40 million per year by taxing companies who do business in Alabama. According to his administration, only the wealthiest 2 percent of multi-state corporations would have felt the gradual tax increase.

But the senate didn’t like that bill, so they developed a “compromise” tax in a coalition with the House, which passed 28-1 in the Senate. Members of the senate seemed to believe that the people would have to pay, no matter whom was taxed.


What Preuitt’s saying is that we should make taxes simpler by cutting out the middleman. Instead of charging businesses taxes on the money they make off the people of Alabama, Preuitt and his fellow legislators want to take the money directly from the people.

That probably sounds like a great idea ... if you’re the CEO of a company doing business in Alabama.

The new burden of telephone tax comes upon the citizens of Alabama in two ways.

First, the state’s tax on cell-phone bills will increase from 4 percent to 6 percent.

Second, a new 6 percent tax will be placed on out-of-state long-distance calls.

Then, perhaps meant as something worthy of praise, the tax on monthly phone bills for hard-wired phones and in-state long-distance calls will drop from 6.7 percent to 6 percent. But, according to the Decatur Daily, on a phone bill of $50, this would decrease the bill by just 35 cents.

The bill was then passed and as Siegelman said he would, he vetoed the phone taxes. The House and Senate then overrode his veto.

So we have been saved from another year of proration and that’s great. But our telephone taxes have all been changed to an interesting percentage: 6 percent on cell phones, 6 percent on out-of-state and 6 percent on in-state long distance - 666.

Ditch your stereotypes and come together

Stereotype: a previously defined “understanding” placed on people with the slightest similarities so that all will be in groups and easy to comprehend and overcome.

To not be bothered with the intricacies of each and every person we meet, must we cope with the intimidation and self doubt by stereotyping? It’s an easy way out perhaps, but it is never right - especially now.

Our country has come together better because of the events of Sept. 11. In this act of togetherness, we should all try to toss some preconceived notions to the wind.

People who look alike, dress alike, enjoy similar activities, etc., have throughout history thronged together for support. It’s all about self-esteem and reassuring oneself that his views are correct because other people have the same.

What happens when folks stick strictly to their own group though are upthrust noses at others, which brings out competition, ridicule, prejudice and stupidity.

I know that it seems like a lot of trouble to reach out your hand to “different” people because of the threat of rejection and the challenge of having to adjust some personal stereotypes, but why not?

A good comparison to make for this idea is to a dance floor.

What’s the best kind of dance floor at a club? A warm one. Warm because everybody smiles at each other, passes their water bottle to comrades with thirst, doesn’t hog the floor nor ridicule anyone’s dance or lack thereof.

A cold dance floor is one on which people strut and try to out-dance each other by taking turns of fancy dips, bops, spins and jumps with a triumphant thrust of the chin above arms folded below a holier-than-thou grin. I’ve even seen a cold floor where two gentlemen seemed to be at a draw, so they lifted up their shirts to see who had more muscles.

On a cold floor, people stand apart and give how-dare-you looks if you smile at them and push and grimace, having no respect for anybody else’s dance.

While conforming to the stereotypes one has been given and finding power in your group’s stance, isn’t society like a cold dance floor?

I try to see people as people, but what I’m shown are jocks, Greeks, alternatives, geeks, blacks, whites, yellows, reds, etc. and why?

I read some articles in “Essence” magazine of how Black America is dealing with the events of Sept. 11. Black America? What happened to simply America?

Because of our country’s history of prejudice, many stereotyped colors and religious groups had to stick together and fight for equality, of course, but am I excluded from a contemporary group because of the color of my skin?

I believe it’s a hard — but better — action to see people as people, and more so now as fellow Americans. It’s not good to judge anyone before you talk to them based on their possessions, or the color of their skin or any style they seem to portray.

In witnessing many parts of America, a bit of the world and from talking with many foreigners about life, you know what? People have a hell of a lot in common. We all need to recognize that on a local level.

The new year should be a time for everybody to stop frontin’, so to say; a time to drop your eliteness, color, fears and ego long enough to let other people see you as a fellow person, fellow friend and fellow American.
By Benjamin Cunningham
The Chanticleer Editor in Chief

number was more important to us than any of the others. To know that an overwhelming majority of students trust what we print means a lot.

Still, that other 8 percent troubled us. We went through the answers of those who said we weren’t reliable to see what reasons they’d written. They ranged from concerns about our circulation to the highly constrictive “It sucks.”

By far, the most common reason given for doubting our reliability was bias. Several respondents said they felt the newspaper was too opinionated. Even though only 8 percent actually said we’re not reliable, we’re taking their comments seriously.

We’ve always strived to keep our news reports as objective as possible, but we’ll be looking at everything one more time this semester to make sure we’re as fair as possible in our coverage.

Readers should keep in mind, though, that by their very nature, the columns in our Opinion section and the reviews in the Features section represent the opinion of the writer. In the case of the “In Our View” editorial in the Opinion section, the opinion presented is that of the staff, and is the newspaper’s official stance on the topic at hand.

In other good numbers, 99 percent of respondents felt The Chanticleer was easy to read and 95 percent felt we rated a three or better on a scale of one to five on accessibility.

Other numbers were not as good as we’d hoped. Just 31 percent of respondents said we were their main source of information about current events at JSU. That put us in second place behind professors and word-of-mouth, which 51 percent said was their main information source.

That’s a number we hope to change by improving communications with student leaders and University departments, to make sure we’re on top of what’s going on. In the coming weeks, look for event calendars in our pages to keep you abreast of what’s happening.

Only 5 percent of respondents said they use The Chanticleer’s Web site to read about current events. We think this may be because not many students are aware that we publish the paper online.

We have what we feel is a superior Web site for a college newspaper. We hope you’ll think so too. You can find it on the Web at http://www.jsu.edu/chanticleer. The site is updated each week as we publish the paper version and an archive of all of last semester’s stories and photos are there as well.

We also asked the survey takers what The Chanticleer should add to its pages. Leading the list, 24 percent said they’d like to see more national news, and 24 percent said they’d like to see a classified ad section.

In response, we’ll start using more stories from our subscription to the KRT Campus service, which allows us to run timely and in-depth stories on national and international issues from some of the nation’s best newspapers, owned by the Knight-Ridder-Tribune company. And a new classified ad section is in the works.

As always, if you see something in The Chanticleer that you disagree with, please feel free to send a letter to the editorial staff. You can send those through campus mail to The Chanticleer, Room 180 Self Hall. Our postal address is The Chanticleer, 700 Pelham Rd. N., Jacksonville, AL 32265. You can also e-mail your letters to jsu-chanticleer@hotmail.com.

Of course, you don’t have to disagree with us to write. We’ll print your letters even if you tell us you like what we’re doing, or if you’re not seeing something in the paper you think should be there. Your comments on issues of the day are always welcome too.

So, this semester, look for a few small changes to your campus newspaper, but mostly look for our staff to try to maintain the reputation for reliability we’ve already earned. Thanks, and keep reading.

Has he got caller ID? Maybe telemarketers could find bin Laden

By Jill Porter
Knight Ridder Newspapers (KRT)

Osama bin Laden may very well be dead, despite the videotape of him that was aired on Al-Jazeera television last week. But — dead or alive — he doesn’t seem any closer to being caught than he was when we set out to find him two months ago.

His ability to keep his whereabouts secret is a feat perhaps more mind-boggling than invading and attacking imperceptible America. Sure, the network of caves in the Afghanistan mountains is as intricate as the pathways in hand-stitched lace. But it still seems surreal that something as primitive as a cave can offer protection from our highly sophisticated methods of surveillance, much less from hundreds of soldiers breathing down your neck.

Think about it. Osama bin Laden has evaded detection in a world in which:

• Our every move is tracked by databases, monitors, cameras, microphones and paperwork trails, and our every thought endures in the e-mail afterlife.

• Our every identifiable idiosyncrasy, from our choice of video rentals to our medical profiles, is afoot in the information ether, ripe for exploiting by credit-card companies, catalog distributors and other commercial predators.

• We’re so detectable that machines can recognize us by voice, touch, heat or our mother’s maiden name (even our telephone can tell another telephone that we’re on the line).

• We’re such a part of the public domain that not only can’t we hide but we can be stolen. Someone else can steal our identity and have more fun with it than they’re having by buying things we’d never buy for ourselves.

But bin Laden manages to evade us still. Maybe we should be more creative in our mission. Maybe we should put telemarketers on bin Laden’s trail. I’m sure they’d find him the minute he sat down to dinner. Or maybe we could hire little children, who’d burst in on him the minute he decided to have sex with his spouse.

Sure, other heinous criminals have avoided capture and arrest over the years. Everyone on the FBI’s Most Wanted list, for instance, is the object of an intense manhunt. One fugitive has been on the list for 20 years, another for almost that long.

But most long-sought fugitives are known only to their would-be captors. They could live next door to us for years without having their cover blown. And they could be anywhere in the world at any time, making an intense manhunt problematic.

But Osama bin Laden? He’s tall, bearded and ignominious. He couldn’t disguise himself without the help of a plastic surgeon. He certainly couldn’t live among us without detection. And at least we know in which corner of the world he’s hiding. We’ve tracked his radio transmissions and traced his trail to the area of Tora Bora. We’ve narrowed our search to the caves in the nearby hills.

But still no bin Laden.

The videotape bin Laden released last week is no doubt meant to reassure the terrorist faithful that he’s still alive. But it’s also meant as a taunt to us, a reminder that he’s outsmarted us once again — so far anyway.

If it’s unfathomable that Osama bin Laden breached the security of the most powerful nation in the world, it’s even more so that the most powerful nation in the world can’t breach his.

ABOUT THE WRITER
Jill Porter is a columnist for the Philadelphia Daily News. Readers may write to her at the Daily News, 400 North Broad St., Philadelphia, Pa., 19130, or via e-mail at porterj@philad news.com.

Meredith Ray Elementary Ed. Junior

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Located in the Mediplex East next to Jacksonville Hospital
Come and play at JSU’s newest production “Cabaret”

By Danni Lusk
The Chanticleer Features Editor

You walk into a dark, musty room furnished with minimal tables and chairs with a small stage positioned at the front. Sultry music suddenly fills the room and the lights fade up revealing several minimally-clothed dancers, all outfitted in corsets and garter belts with hauntingly sexy makeup splashed across their hollowed faces. Welcome to the cabaret.

This year, the JSU Drama Department has chosen to do a musical which has graced the stage of Broadway several times and always brings in a crowd. It’s called “Cabaret” and it has everything anyone craving a good time could need: sex, power and love.

Set in Berlin at the early rise of the Nazi party, “Cabaret” introduces us to an American writer named Cliff Bradshaw. “It’s essentially a story of an American who is a writer who comes to Berlin and is thrust into this strangely horrible atmosphere,” said drama department professor Dr. Wayne Claeren. “And since he’s an outsider, he’s able to perceive things that some of the people that are wrapped up in it are not aware of.”

Bradshaw soon meets an English singer at the cabaret named Sally Bowles and things heightened from there. In addition to the love story that is created between Bradshaw and Bowles, other characters add more story lines to the play. “The play has a lot of dimensions and a lot of significance in addition to the sheer excitement of the musical atmosphere,” said Claeren. “The songs are very melodic, singable and danceable, and coupled with the moral statement the play is making, it’s a very powerful show.”

The symbolism behind each character in the play is tightly woven together with the time period in which the play is set, according to Claeren. “One of the memorable characters of the play is the Emcee, the master of ceremonies at the club, who is this seemingly overly-friendly and engaging show biz personality,” he said, “but you can sense beneath this veneer a real wickedness, an evil, that is rather symbolic of the whole Nazi party.”

Visitors are drawn into the club just as citizens of Berlin were reeled into believing in the Nazi party. With the gizt and glamour of singing, dancing, drinking and sex filling the cabaret, people are led to believe that the club will solve all their problems, just as the Nazi party claims to take all their troubles away, when in fact it only causes more trouble in their lives.

“People can be seduced by that kind of thing on a personal level, but also that’s what the Third Reich was doing to the whole country,” said Claeren. “They were saying, ‘Forget your troubles, we’ll take care of everything.’ And with all their flags and banners and their Nuremberg rallies (they) won people over by the millions just like this little cabaret wins people over into a situation that seems to answer their problems but really only makes them worse.”

When choosing what musical to perform this year, Claeren considered the fact that the play has been produced on Broadway several times and has won the Tony Award for Best Musical. “It’s the only show that I think of that has won all of its categories,” said Claeren. “It’s a show that has a lot of dimensions and a lot of significance.”

“Cabaret” captures the audiences’ attention with flashy Kit Kat Dancers and the colorful character Emcee.

Miss JSU Pageant celebrates its 20th beautiful year

By Danni Lusk
The Chanticleer Features Editor

The Miss Jacksonville State University Pageant is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year and big plans are in store for the show.

Former Miss JSUs will be gracing the stage of the Leone Cole Auditorium on Jan. 12 at 7 p.m. as well as the JSU Show Choir and last year’s Miss JSU, Jayme Johnson, according to Student Activities Director Terry Casey.

Miss JSU is a scholarship pageant that provides full tuition for one year and $1000 cash to the winner. The competition is divided into four sections: interview, talent, swimsuit and evening gown. The judging follows the same style that is used in the Miss America pageant.

Because the Miss JSU pageant is a member of the Miss America organization, the winner of the pageant will go on to compete in the Miss Alabama competition on June 15 at Samford University. “Miss Jacksonville State is the preliminary competition for Miss Alabama for women in this area who are enrolled at the University,” said SGA Director of Publicity Robert Hayes.

The Miss America Organization is a “not-for-profit corporation established solely to provide contestants with the opportunity to enhance their professional and educational goals, and to achieve those pursuits with the assistance of monetary grants and awards,” according to the Miss America Organization’s Web site. Miss America Organization is the largest provider of scholarships to women in the world.

In 2000, at the local, state and national Miss America competitions more than $40 million in cash and tuition-based scholarships were made available, according to the Web site.

This year, along with the winner receiving an award, the first runner-up will receive one semester of paid tuition and the second runner-up receives $500, according to Casey. The talent competition winner receives one semester of paid tuition and the swimsuit competition winner will get $100. “The thousand dollars we give the winner is to help her compete in Miss Alabama,” said Casey. “That’s the only money we give [her].”

In addition to the awards given by the University, Miss JSU also receives gift certificates, tanning packages, free gas, oil changes and savings bonds from local sponsors. Each winner is also given a gift from Griffin’s Jewelers. “One reason Miss JSU gets a care package with the gas and things like that is because she has to do so much travelling,” said Hayes.

Miss JSU’s responsibility is to act as a spokesperson for the University and for her platform, according to Casey. Prior to the competition, the eight contestants choose a platform they will promote during the competition. Platforms can range from breast cancer awareness to environmental concerns.

“She is just a spokesperson for JSU when we need her,” said Casey. “She will have a platform which she’ll go out and promote which helps get our name out there. Anything anybody wants her to do, wants her to help be a hostess for, she can do that.”

Last year, the University received the award for Best Large School Pageant at the Miss America awards ceremony which was held at last year’s Miss Alabama pageant. “That is the highest award we can win in our category,” said Casey.

“Educational advancement, achievement and public service,” according to the Miss America Organization Web site, “continue to be the primary objectives of the Miss America Organization in the face of changing roles for women in American society.”
Moulin Rouge not exactly a Bohemian rhapsody

Review by Abbey Herrin
The Chanticleer Staff Writer

What do Nirvana, Bohemians, whores and the year 1900 have in common? Not a damn thing, you might answer. Surprisingly, however, these are just four of the elements present in “Moulin Rouge.”

“Moulin Rouge” tells the story of Christian, (played by Ewan McGregor) an aspiring young writer who moves from London to Paris in order to become part of the “Bohemian Revolution,” a Renaissance-like movement that actually did occur in Europe in the early 1900s. He joins a community of actors, artists and other creative misfits, hoping to find his niche in the world.

Christian stumbles upon an eclectic group of artisans, including the pint-sized artist Toulouse Lautrec and a narcoleptic Argentinean. The group aspires to write a great musical and perform it throughout Europe.

Intoxicated from drinking absinthe (a drink laced with opium) the men wind up at the infamous nightclub/whorehouse, Moulin Rouge, where they sell the musical to a respected duke.

It is on this visit to the Moulin Rouge where Christian encounters Satine, the most beautiful and seductive prostitute of them all, played by Nicole Kidman.

Christian and Satine fall in love, but not without ample complications from the ever-present duke, who pines for Satine’s affection at any cost. The rest of the film focuses on the love affair between Christian and Satine and the measures they take in order to preserve that love.

The plot might seem mundane, but the film contains several features that make “Moulin Rouge” worthy of watching, particularly the songs featured in the film. Although the film is set in 1900, songs from modern times are used. A group of prostitutes belt out “Smells Like Teen Spirit” by Nirvana in one scene and The Police’s “Roxanne” in another.

Writer, producer and director Baz Luhrmann puts some pizzazz to the story as well with some interesting touches. When Christian, Toulouse and the Argentinean take shots of absinthe, we see their hallucinat-ed visions of Tinkerbell.

Another aspect of the film that has validity is the major theme it conveys. The young Bohemians, or “Children of the Revolution” as they are referred to, live by a creed that above all, truth, freedom, beauty and love should prevail. Christian embraces this motto, and even risks his life to abide by it.

Aside from these unexpected additions, “Moulin Rouge” is somewhat horrible. Tom Cruise probably left Kidman after viewing this film. She and McGregor are mediocre as Satine and Christian, and the supporting cast is lackluster. John Leguizamo is the only standout; his portrayal of Lautrec is a refreshing oasis in an otherwise barren desert.

Weakness of acting and story aside, “Moulin Rouge” has some merit in the music and clever shooting. It may not be a masterpiece of cinema, but it is an interesting viewpoint of the Bohemian scene.

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Steve Osbourne, who has worked with acts like U2 and New Order, produced the Starsailor debut album. It almost sounds like it was recorded in a live setting on a stage in some small town bar in England. One reason for this is probably the fact that the band is famous for their powerful live performances. “Love Is Here” is very much an acoustic rock record.

This four-member band consists of a lead guitarist/vocalist, a keyboardist, a bass guitarist and a drummer. The voice of lead singer, James Walsh, is very reminiscent of Thom Yorke from Radiohead. The band’s influences range from rock bands like Oasis, The Charlatans and The Beatles to acoustic singersongwriters like Neil Young, Bob Dylan and Jeff Buckley. These influences can be heard very clearly in Starsailor’s music.

If you like British rock mixed with a bit of an indie rock and a lot of acoustic guitar and keyboards, then you are not going to get much closer than Starsailor.

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Starsailor
Love is Here

Review by Jordan Brewer
The Chanticleer Staff Writer

Starsailor, a new band straight out of the U.K., has arrived with their debut album, “Love Is Here.”

The titles of many rock bands’ albums rarely have anything to do with the albums’ content, but that isn’t the case here.

The title, “Love Is Here,” is an almost perfect summary of the album’s content and direction. The songs are very melodic and have great depth to their lyrics.

Starsailor ride the “Pain is Beauty” bandwagon alongside acts like Staind and Tori Amos. However, Starsailor’s music is totally different in style and sound.

Songs like “Poor Misguided Fool” and “Alcoholic” almost depress the listener but have a certain element of truth and emotion to them, making these songs beautiful. Even though the CD booklet does not contain the lyrics to the songs, the second page contains a poem that sets the albums mood.

“Left my sweet soul beneath the bedclothes / I’m not coming down / Walls have ears / but no one hears / When nobody’s around.”

Even though the poem is somewhat hard to understand, you can hear that the writer is feeling a great deal of loneliness and pain. Their songs about love, hope and redemption tell very emotional stories and seem to come from a very deep place.

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 statements, fresh social activities and added home enjoyment. Pace for a long journey. Over the next two weeks roommates and relatives may be more vulnerable than expected. Encouragement will help. Don’t hold back.

Cancer (June 22-July 22). Before Thursday previously silent colleagues will notice your personal appearance or make surprising social comments. Try not to blush. Over the next four days the private lives of friends and lovers will likely be made public. Some Cancers, especially those born early in July, may also encounter an unexpected flirtation from an older business associate. Social ethics may still be unclear. Wait for assurance before taking risks. An emotional week: avoid serious discussions.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22). Recent differences of opinion may now be resolved. Before midweek watch for loved ones to accept rare proposals or strained forthcoming finances, career conflicts between loved ones to argue over minor details and fast disagreements will be resolved. Recent romantic or home doubts may now be revealed to be more complex than originally thought. Find honest arguments, fresh social activities and added home enjoyment. Pace for a long journey. Over the next two weeks roommates and relatives may be more vulnerable than expected. Encouragement will help. Don’t hold back.

Sagittarius (Nov. 23-Dec. 21). Long-term relationships will now begin a phase of reflection and evaluation. Early this week expect loved ones to contemplate new home situations or review recent career goals. Some Sagittarians may also experience the return of an old friend or a series of oddly sentimental moments between old lovers. Romantic clarity will arrive before early February. Stay alert and watch for subtle signals. After Saturday rest and enjoy quiet activities. Energy may be low.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 20). The moodiness of loved ones may bring powerful insights before midweek. Recent romantic or home doubts may now be revealed to be more complex than originally thought. Find honest ways to discuss and clarify your feelings. Key issues may involve past finances, career conflicts between spouses or delayed family decisions. Others may now make quick judgments and hold strong opinions. Remain dedicated to long-term goals and minor disagreements will be resolved.

Aquarius (Jan. 21-Feb. 19). Social pleasures will be satisfying before Thursday. Although work demands are now high, spend some extra time building social and romantic harmony. Over the next few days many Aquarians will be offered a rare astrological opportunity for renewed love, shared intimacy and quick social increase. Remain open to all emotional growth this week; it’s time to improve and celebrate key relationships. Five weeks of strained home relations and low energy are now ending: enjoy! Pieces (Feb. 20-March 20). Tell friends and relatives exactly what you think this week. Honesty and clarity will now be rewarded with improved relations or progressive discussions. Some Pisceans may still encounter reluctance from long-term lovers or older family members. If so, expect pessimistic attitudes and sullen moods to change significantly by early next week. After Saturday pay close attention to home finances and personal spending. New debts or budget considerations may soon arrive.
Kid Rock
Cocky

Review by Peter Bradberry
The Chanticleer Staff Writer

“If it looks good, you’ll see it; if it sounds good, you’ll hear it; if it’s marketed right, you’ll buy it; but... if it’s real, you’ll feel it.” That quote is directly from the mouth of Kid Rock. One can only guess at the origin of this quote and what possessed him to place this as the first thing to be seen along with a double middle finger as one opens the case of his latest album “Cocky.” Possibly, it could be that he has pulled a huge joke, and whoever buys this CD is the butt of the joke. This CD is the biggest piece of crap that I have personally picked up in a long time.

One of the songs that should be banned for eternity would be the track, “Cocky.” He brags about his big corn-fed mid-western hoes, his strippers, his acres of land back in the woods and just in case you were playing the numbers game, his 15 million sold.

“Tracker Anthem” opens the disc asking, “Who’s in the house, who’s in the house?” Kid Rock hails from “The Sticks” claiming to be “The early mornin’ mother f***** stoned pimp of the nation.” This track, like almost exactly half of the disc, is one heavy guitar riff after another.

The other half is one step away from an extremely foul-mouthed Garth Brooks. In “Picture” he shares country-crooner duty with Sheryl Crow. They play lovers remembering each other while the other is away. Kid Rock, is “filling up on cocaine and whisky / wish I had a good girl to miss me” while she is “filling up on heart-aches and cheap wine.” They both have to put each other’s pictures away while they are lying next to some one else. This is not a disc I would take home to Mom. Kid Rock seems to have gotten even more foul-mouthed in this disc.

If you liked his last CD you might like this, but it’s not for everyone. It has more of a country edge to it. The final quote in the liner notes follows: “To the fans and true music lovers, hang in there, we’re comin’ to a town near you soon! And the Kid’s gonna make everything all right! - Kid Rock.”

If this is the crap that he will bring out on the road I don’t believe he can make it all right.

Cabaret: from page 9

been performed two times before already in the department. However, despite the two previous productions of “Cabaret,” the play was chosen to go on stage this year because of many events that are occurring in today’s world. “Part of the reason for doing it now is that, given the situation we’re in now, in terms of terrorism and violence in the world and how these strange, violent people are able to win converts to their evil causes,” he said.

“You look at this play and it shows you how the Nazis were able to take over a whole country,” said Claeren. “And it’s a very insidious kind of revelation. Even in a musical setting, the play has this depth to it and this understanding that is very timely, even though it takes place back 70 years ago and deals with events that we can parallel with today’s world.”

“Cabaret” premieres on Feb. 14 and will run through Feb. 17 at the Stone Center main stage. Tickets, additional information and show times are available through the box office at 782-5648.

“The play, since it was first done back in the 1960s, has become one of the real standard musicals because it’s got a wonderful musical score and has this very serious, powerful story to tell,” said Claeren, “as well as some little touches of humor.”
Gamecocks gained some confidence over the holidays

Staff Reports

The men’s basketball team began the season very rough, but seemed to get in a rhythm over the Christmas break. They went 2-2 with wins over Central Florida and Samford, but fell to Florida Atlantic and Jacksonville University.

Coach Mike LaPlane and the Gamecocks began the break with a 74-69 win over Central Florida on Dec. 17.

“Poonie” Richardson tossed in a career-high 17 points and Omar Barlett finished with a career-high of his own, 16 points, to lead the Gamecocks to victory over JSU at home-opener at Pete Mathews Coliseum.

Josh “Sleepy” Perry tied his career-high with 15 points and five rebounds, while Jay Heard finished with 10 points and seven rebounds as JSU had four players to score in double-figures.

In a game that saw 15 lead changes and six ties, the Gamecocks finished the game shooting 51 percent for the game.

The two teams battled back and forth through the first 15 minutes, before UCF went on a 6-0 run to build a 30-23 lead with 3:32 left in the first half after Ray Abellard hit a pair of free throws. The Golden Knights held a 34-30 lead at the intermission.

The Gamecocks went on a 9-0 run to open the second half and took a 39-34 lead after Barlett scored a jumper to start the second half. The two teams battled back and forth for most of the half, but couldn’t stop the Owls from leaving “The Pete” with a 74-71 win in front of 1,152 fans.

Florida Atlantic, which trailed 56-45 with 10:06 left in the game, had a 45.7-yard average per punt, the second best in all of I-AA football.

All-Americans by the magazine.

The American Football Team last month. The Gamecocks began the season with two conference losses, but won their first conference loss of the season with a 59-57 win at Seibert Hall last Wednesday.

Barlett scored a career-high 19 points and Heard also tossed in a career-high with 15 points to lead the Gamecocks to their first win at Seibert Hall since Dec. 14, 1974, and the first road conference win of the season.

“This is a great win,” said LaPlane. “Our kids never gave up and fought all the way till the end. We put together a complete 40-minute game tonight.”

The Gamecocks finished the season 52.2 percent from the field, which was their best shooting performance of the season. JSU also had a season-low 11 turnovers, while forcing 15 turnovers.

The Gamecocks began the game with a 20-12 lead and seemed to be running away with the game early on. The Bulldogs fought back to build a 29-24 lead at the half after shooting an amazing 55 percent from the floor.

JSU fought hard in the second half and was able to keep the lead for most of the half, but couldn’t stop Samford and Chris Weaver as they went on a 17-4 run with 9:08 to go in the game.

The Gamecocks took the lead after going on an 11-0 run of their own midway in the second half before the Bulldogs tied the score at 57 with 55 to go in regulation.

Heard got the crowd on their feet after he scored the game winner with :22 left and then stole the Bulldogs’ inbound pass with :04 to seal the win for JSU.

“I’m proud they didn’t give up,” said Heard. “It bounced straight up so I grabbed it.”

The Gamecocks concluded the break with a heartbreaking 69-67 loss to Southern Mississippi after going on a 17-0 run in the second half.

“This was a tough, hard fought game,” said LaPlane. “Our kids got in there and fought the end. I’m proud they didn’t give up.”

The Gamecocks did everything but give up after trailing 16 points with 7:47 in the game. They then scored 17-straight points to take a 63-62 lead with 2:25 left.

Barlett tied the score at 67 with :42 left in the game.

The men’s basketball team will be back in action tonight when they host Belmont. Tip-off is set for 7.

Jacksonville State States and Holleman to soccer staff

By Anthony Hill

Former Jacksonville State standout Wendy Holleman was named as a new assistant coach for the Gamecock soccer team last month.

Holleman, who concluded her career in 2000, played a key role in the Gamecock defensive scheme for four straight years and was also a team captain.

Head soccer coach Lisa Howe had a feeling the soccer team was missing an element. Well, the missing piece simply fell into place while Howe was jogging one morning.

“She said that it just came to her one morning while she was jogging,” said Holleman. “She just told me that she thought I would be a good fit for the program and a good coach.

“I got my degree in education and I didn’t think that I would be doing this, but it could very well be the best thing to happen to me. I’ve always thought about being a coach. I hope that this will lead to even bigger things for me,” said Holleman.

“The thing I like about Wendy is that she already has time invested in our program and she is also dedicated to JSU, as a former player and an alumnus,” said Howe.

The Dallas, Tex. native started 64 games and played a total of 73 matches during her career at Jacksonville State. She was a third-team All-Atlantic Conference selection in 1999 and was named to the TAAC All-Academic team during her final two seasons.

Holleman earned her undergraduate degree this past semester and she also coached a co-ed soccer team under the Jacksonville Parks and Recreation Department.

“We didn’t do too well, but I had a lot of fun,” said Holleman. “I like working with kids and I feel like I gained a lot of experience.”

She also works at various regional camps for the Olympic Development Program and is involved with the Alabama State team.

Her primary duties as Gamecock assistant coach will be recruiting, coaching the defense and administrative work. She’s also responsible for administrative work for the University’s team camp.

“She compliments me very well and I feel sure she will continue to be an asset to our program,” concluded Howe.
One on one with “Thrrill:” Nckell

By Anthony “Thrrill” Hill
The Chanticleer Sports Editor

Nckell Copeland is more than the point guard on the women’s basketball team. She’s a role model. She’s a very good player, an entertainer, friend, and a very good student. She’s a two-time academic All-American and maintains a 3.6 GPA. Did I mention that she’s the starting point guard for the basketball team and a dedicated STUDENT? Nckell is already a member of the JSU Scholar Athletic Hall of Fame. She knows how to manage her time and make something of it. She’s got to be a true student-athlete, playing the ball on the court either. Nckell has been the starting point guard for two seasons and is also second in the JSU record books for most steals in a single season. She’s the type of player that can take a team all the way if she would learn to DRIVE to the hole more.

Thrrill: What’s going on Miss Nckell?
Nckell: I’m coolin’. Just chillin’.
Thrrill: I hear you. What’s going on with the team right now? You guys had such a good season and then seem to have fallen since then. What’s going on right now?
Nckell: I couldn’t even begin to tell you what’s going on with us right now. All I can say is that it has been a lot of mental lapses. We start off good and lose or we start off bad and play better, but not finish a team off. We simply aren’t playing 40 minutes of basketball.

Thrrill: How’s your confidence right now? The team has never been worse after a 10-game losing streak before.
Nckell: I’m just trying to stay positive. Coach Austin has been talking with me a lot lately. If I go down then everyone else will probably follow. So, I’m just trying to stay positive. My confidence isn’t that high right now, but it’s not too low either.

Thrrill: That’s good to know. It looks like the team plays well for a half, whether it’s the first or second, and simply not finish a team off. What’s it going to take to get the team to play two halves of basketball?
Nckell: (Pause.) I don’t know. I believe that we just need to be more focused for the games and understand that it’s going to take 40 minutes of playing to win. Coach says that we’re time watchers. We don’t start playing until about 10 minutes or so to go in a game. We start to think, “Man, they’re gonna beat us.” We just need to go out and play every minute as it’s the last minute.

Thrrill: Do you think our team could play with the level of intensity they display? Just the level, not more. Can’t we stop? Nckell: It could happen when we get everyone to play on the same level and get eager to win. I don’t think that anyone could stop us if we just played better.

Thrrill: Name one player or player that you model your game after or wish you could be more like?
Nckell: No.
Nckell: Allen Iverson. He just has so much heart. He simply carries his team with his leadership and intensity. He can’t be stopped.

Thrrill: You look like you’re looking to shoot the ball more this season. Have you changed your game a little during the off-season?
Nckell: That’s something I have to work on. I shot a little shot. Coach says that I need to look to score more and attack the hole. I’m always looking to pass the ball.

Thrrill: Were you a scoring animal in high school. You guys only lost three games your senior season and you were the main player.
Nckell: Yeah, I was a shooting a lot in high school. (Both laugh.) The coach had to tell me to pass the ball. (Laugh again.)

Thrrill: Why change up now?
Nckell: I don’t know. I guess that I’m supposed to be the ball handler. I worked on my shot a lot. I shot a lot. Coach had to tell me to pass the ball. (Laugh again.)

Thrrill: Why change up now?
Nckell: I don’t know. I guess that I’m not going to blame the ball too much. That’s just part of being a point guard, you need to look for your scorers. But, I do need to attack more. My intentions were to play shooting guard this year, but it didn’t quite work out that way. (Laughhs.) Heather (Shepard) does a great job backing me up though.

Thrrill: What did you think when you saw Heather for the first time?
Nckell: Before I saw her play, I just thought that she was short. I thought that she would be too small to play at this level. Everybody was shocked after we saw her play her first game. I said, “I want her to back me up.” (Both laugh.)

Thrrill: Who’s your favorite teammate? Is there one player that you would talk to more than any others?
Nckell: No, not really. I’m kind of on my own this year. I’m cool with everybody, but I try not to be in any kind of social circle. I’m working with this team and simply not finish a team off. Nckell: That’s good. What’s up with Amanda Tyus? She always looks like she’s in a bad mood or something.

Thrrill: She’s so hype and excited. Sometimes she’s just angry that coach got on to her. She just gets like that sometimes.

Thrrill: Do you sometimes wish that you had trained to play basketball in Georgia?
Nckell: (Pause.) Yeah, sometimes. I know a lot of Georgia State’s players and I stand with some of the parents and they think that I should’ve stayed in Atlanta. Like my father said, “I’m where I’m supposed to be.” I enjoy the school and the coaches here. We just have too much talent and the mental lapses. We simply aren’t playing 40 minutes of basketball.

Thrrill: More than likely, yeah.

Thrrill: Enough about that stuff. What do you want to talk about?
Nckell: I’m going to focus on. Me and my sister are working on the same thing. I’m working with this team and simply not finish a team off. Nckell: That’s what you do during your free time?
Nckell: It’s more than a hobby. I hope to drop a CD in the next couple of years. I’m getting ready to make a record label in Atlanta right now. So, maybe it will be out by my graduation date of 2003.

Thrrill: That sounds all right there. When was the last time Coach Dana Austin made you laugh?
Nckell: Was the last time Coach Dana Austin made you laugh?

Thrrill: Me and coach laugh everyday. We’re very cool off the court. She still yells at me more because she knows I can take it more than anyone else. But, we’re cool off the court.

Thrrill: Is there a team comedian on the squad?
Nckell: (Laugh.) Tasha loves to imitate coach Austin. She has that deep Alabama accent and Tasha can sound just like her. It’s pretty funny.

Thrrill: Is he? Is there someone on the men’s team who you wouldn’t mind going out with on a date or something?
Nckell: Yeah, I’ve been waiting on POONIE (Richardson). He’s been playing around, so I guess we’re going to have to publish it in the newspaper. (Both laugh.) He’s the cutest player on the team.

Thrrill: Let’s do some free association, Allen Iverson.

Nckell: Fine.

Thrrill: Marietta, Georgia. (Nckell’s hometown)

Nckell: Home.

Thrrill: Michelle Alford. (Assistant Sports Information Director)

Nckell: My best friend.

Thrrill: Lisa Leslie. (WNBA player)

Nckell: I don’t care for her.

Thrrill: Alecia Keys. (R&B singer)

Nckell: One of my favorite artist.

Thrrill: Mrs. Patrice Copeland. (Nckell’s mother)

Nckell: Mother, my guide and my love of my life.

Thrrill: What do you see yourself doing after your basketball career?

Nckell: Music. That’s what I’m going to focus on. Me and my mom are talking about starting our own label called Mad Entertainment. That stands for mother and daughter entertainment. I just want to do something with music. If I’m not rapping, I want to do something to help somebody else’s career.

Thrrill: That sounds really good. Good luck with that. Well, that will just do about it. I appreciate this Nckell and good luck with the season as well.

Nckell: All right. See you later.

Former JHS stand out to play volleyball for JSU

Staff Reports

The JSU volleyball team is presently without a head coach, but was still able to sign Michelle Tippets, a former four-sport standout at Jacksonville High School.

She attended Brigham Young in the fall, but decided she missed sports and pursued a chance to play volleyball again.

“Afier high school, I thought I was burned out on sports, but I soon found out I missed it so much,” said Tippets. “I couldn’t even bear to go to the volleyball games at BYU.”

Tippets also played basketball, soccer and softball for JHS, but her signature sport was volleyball. She played for the Eagles for five years and was named The Anniston Star’s Player of the year in 2000. She is the sixth Calhoun County native to play for the Gameday since JSU moved to Division I in 1995.

“I am really fortunate to be able to play somewhere that my family can go to the games and watch me play,” said Tippets.
The holidays weren’t very festive for the women’s team. Heck, the beginning of the season hasn’t been too enjoyable for head coach Dana Austin and the Gamecocks. The basketball team hasn’t won a game since its season opener against South Alabama.

The Gamecocks (1-10, 0-4 A-Sun) dropped three straight games over the Christmas break. They fell to the University of Alabama, Campbell and Georgia State.

JSU battled hard to try to get on the winning track against the Crimson Tide, but turnovers seemed to be the difference in the 72-53 defeat over the Gamecocks at Pete Mathews Coliseum on Dec. 18.

Both teams struggled with handling the basketball, but somehow Alabama was able to outlast JSU to up its mark to 6-3 on the year.

“That’s one thing about these SEC schools,” said Austin. “If you make one mistake, they’re going to score on it. You have to play a near-perfect game to beat an SEC team.”

Alabama didn’t have to play a perfect game to beat JSU. They committed 22 turnovers, but still never trailed in the contest. Monique Bivens came off the bench for the Tide and led all scorers with 18 points and six rebounds. Shondra Johnson and Sparkle Smith each had 15 points.

For JSU, Latasha Mathis had her second consecutive game in which she scored in double-figures. The junior from Marietta, Ga., had 11 points to pace the Gamecocks. Alabama built a 14-point lead with just under 13 minutes to go in the second half before the Gamecocks cut the lead to six with 6:21 left at 59-53. However, the Gamecocks would not score another bucket and the Crimson Tide took control. Alabama outscored the Gamecocks 13-0 down the stretch.

“We had some opportunities where we turned the ball over inside,” said Austin. “It (the lead) went from six to 12 in a matter of three possessions. We quit scoring and they stepped up and started scoring.”

“I think that our major problem is we get into too big of a hurry,” said Mathis. “We need to slow down. If we just see what we’ve got and pass when we should pass, our turnovers will cut down and I think we’ll start winning.”

Well, the Gamecocks decreased their turnovers, but were unable to shoot effectively during their game against Campbell as they fell 65-61 at “The Pete” last Thursday.

It was JSU’s first game in 15 days and the rust showed. The Gamecocks scored a season-low 19 points at the break and trailed by as many as 12 in the opening half. Despite going 9-of-26 from the floor in the first half, the Gamecocks only trailed by a 26-19 margin.

JSU fought back in the second half to trim the lead to one on four different occasions in the waning moments. The last time JSU cut the lead to one came with 47 seconds left in the game when Shanika Freeman hit a jump shot. The basket trimmed the lead to 62-61, but Campbell’s Carrie Emory would reel off three of four free throws to halt any hopes of a JSU comeback.

“We had a slow start and couldn’t redeem ourselves,” said Austin. “We just dug ourselves into too much of a hole. It was the worst half we’ve played.”

“We just didn’t play 40 minutes,” said Mathis, who recorded a career-high 16 points to lead the Gamecocks. The only other player to score in double-figures was Freeman, who chipped in with 10 points and seven rebounds.

The Gamecocks concluded play over the break with a shootout with Georgia State. Well, it was shootout until Georgia State went on a 12-0 run in the second half to leave Jacksonville with a 61-57 win over the Gamecocks last Saturday.

With 8:40 left in the second half, the Gamecocks tied the game at 39 off a bucket by Freddricka Embry. Georgia State would buckle down on defense and not allow another Gamecock basket until the 5:11 mark when Freeman broke the drought with a two-point basket to make it 51-41.

JSU would cut the lead to eight with 2:06 left at 55-47 on a shot by Laura Baswell, but that would be the last time JSU would score. Baswell also had a season-high 10 points on the afternoon.

The women’s basketball team now stands at 1-10 (0-4 in the Atlantic Sun Conference). The Gamecocks will return to action tonight when they host Belmont. Tip-off is set for 5. The men’s contest against Belmont will follow at 7.

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