Although he is small, he'll be havin' a ball, as he waits for you, with all the other Whos.

**View from a Who**

*Seussical the Musical* opens tonight

By Summer Hunt

Everyone remembers the Dr. Seuss books. And now, those cherished childhood books are coming to life in the form of *Seussical* the Musical, Jacksonville State's spring musical. And yours truly takes her place in the story on the speck that is Who, the tiniest planet in the sky, as the she-Who decked out in the red and black.

The trip to Whoville has been one I'll never forget, and I have met many characters both on- and off-stage. I had always wanted to be a part of the musical magic at JSU, and Seussical seemed as good a time as any. It's been a grueling two months of vocal rehearsal, dance practice and on-stage acting, but the end product is one of which all participants will be proud.

"[Deciding on the show was really a faculty effort," said director Eric Traynor. "We all sit down every year, and banter about different ideas for the musical, and Seussical was brought up. We thought it would bring in a large audience and be something to appeal to everybody."

Traynor is no stranger to storybook tales, having done such shows as Little Red Riding Hood, The Tortoise and the Hare, and The Emperor's New Clothes. For several years, he had his own professional children's theatre in North Carolina, and it only seemed logical that Traynor would direct Seussical. However, he hopes that the children and adults alike will enjoy the musical.

"There are some important allegorical concepts in the musical, even to the point of dealing with issues of war and taking care of each other," said Traynor. "It addresses many things that we attribute to our humanity, which we are proud of, but we often dismiss, it seems."

Who would have ever imagined that Dr. Seuss characters would be able to deliver social messages to both children and adults alike? Anything is possible, and that is evident to all those involved in the show.

"The musical deals with issues that need to be addressed in a way that is easy for children to understand," said Lauryn Brook Smith, a member of the Who child population.

"It's really about acceptance," said mischievous monkey Shell.

The story is a sort of mish-mash of all the beloved books. Our story begins with Horton (played by Scott Van Patten Jr.) hearing a Who in the deep, dark jungle of Nool. As the tiny dust speck that is the planet of Who blows by, Horton hears the mayor of Whoville (Russell Reeps) calling out for help.

As Horton reaches out to the Whos, he is berated by all of those who inhabit the jungle of Nool for talking to a speck of dust, namely the Sour Kangaroo (Daria Johnson). The trio of purple monkeys known as the Wickersham Brothers (Galvin Allredge, Andy Cayse and Kaitie Shell) pick on him and eventually steal the clover that is protecting the little Whos and their tiny town. I won't ruin it for you, but chaos ensues, and there is much trouble on Who.

*See View from a Who on page 4*

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The Cat in the Hat leads Seussical characters in the opening number (top).

Sour Kangaroo (top right) taunts Horton and his little pink clover.

Horton the Elephant (bottom right) searches through a pool of cloyers "100 miles wide" to find the tiny little Whos.

All photos by Toni Merriss

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JSU grad killed in Iraq
Where there's a Sparkman, there's a dormitory fire

By Laura Moorman
The Chanticleer Staff Writer
and
Chris Yow
The Chanticleer Web Editor

Sparkman Hall was evacuated by police and firefighters Tuesday night when a fire alarm was set off in an upper floor. The fire started in the dormitory at around 6 p.m. Two fire trucks and an ambulance, along with numerous Jacksonville city and University police cars, were present at the scene.

Residents were standing in front of the building speculating about what might be happening inside. Brian Ayers, one of the RA's on the 7th floor, reportedly heard the fire alarm and alerted the unsuspecting residents of his floor. According to Ayers, he ran down the hall knocking on doors to let the residents know they needed to evacuate the building immediately.

Police and firefighters were unable to determine the exact room the fire was in because it was not reported to proper authorities. However, they quickly narrowed it down to floors seven and eight, where they began searching. It took them approximately 30 minutes to search every room on those two floors. Shortly after the firefighters began leaving the building, and the fire was no longer a threat.

In an official statement made by University Police, second shift supervisor Brandon Singleton said that the fire was initiated by a hot plate. He also requested that in the event of a similar incident, it be reported to the proper authorities immediately.

State of the University

By Chris Lundy
The Chanticleer Sports Editor

Student Government Association President Mardracus Russell has a vision of progression for Jacksonville State University. His cabinet has ensured a successful presidency, but he does not want the student senate to relax in the final months of his term.

Russell began his speech by welcoming Jacksonville State University President Dr. William Meehan. Also in attendance were Student Life Advisor Debbie Taylor, Assistant Director of Student Life Eddie Wynn and members of the Freshman Forum.

Russell was pleased to announce the hard work and dedication of his senators. So far this year, the senate has passed 65 bills and six resolutions, including a resolution to set up a wireless system on campus and to open a 24-hour computer lab to ensure students access for their educational needs at any time. He recognized the authors of the resolutions, Senator Tyrone Smiley and Senators Paul Wilson and David Jennings, respectively.

Russell was also content with the work of Senator Destiny Mayberry, who is the author of the allocation bills. Through her hard work, she has made certain that organizations on campus follow proper procedures to receive the necessary funding needed to assist with events and miscellaneous campus functions.

Russell continued recognizing his staff, thanking Vice President of Student Affairs Allison Land for her Food Drive project and her ongoing work with the Organizational Council.

More importantly, Russell addressed his satisfaction in the students. Projects such as the Old School Mixer have helped the Lee High School band in their uniform needs, raising $2,500. The SGA has raised a total of $12,200 for the institution in Huntsville, Ala.

He was also happy to announce the attendance at the JSU basketball game versus Tennessee State, which moved the Yell Line to the stands. It was the largest crowd in recent Gamecock history. Russell also announced Russell in the stands and cheered our team to a 72-64 victory on a national stage, which shows that we are no longer the best kept secret in Alabama.

Russell wants to continue this trend of student dedication at Higher Education Day.

“Last year was a huge turnout for us,” said Russell. “Of the schools in attendance, Jacksonville State had the highest amount of students present, and I want to see that again on April 5.”

Russell articulated his admiration and respect for the upcoming elections and members of Freshman Forum. His vision is to see them continue the tradition his cabinet has displayed during his term.

“We are dedicated to experience, dedication and commitment in the Student Government Association,” stated Russell. “I want to continue this tradition with next year’s staff so that we can deliver better future for current and incoming students at Jacksonville State University.”

During the closing of his speech, Russell announced the unveiling of three new positions, Secretary of Internal Affairs, Secretary of External Affairs and Executive Assistant. Russell appointed Senator Destiny Mayberry Secretary on Internal Affairs and Senator Tyrone Smiley Secretary of External Affairs. Senator David Jennings was appointed to the position of Executive Assistant.

President Russell is beginning his campaign to encourage students to attend Higher Education Day, which is April 5 in Montgomery, Ala.
On the Brink Southern Writer’s Conference

By Jessica Summe
The Chanticleer Editor-in-Chief

The annual On the Brink Writer’s Conference, held Feb. 10 at the Houston Cole Library, featured seven southern writers who traveled to JSU to share selections from their new works and interact with fans.

After an introduction from Dr. Steven Whitton and Ms. Judith McKibbin, session one began. The first session consisted of writers Nancy Grisham Anderson (Wrestling with God: The Meditations of Richard Marius), Howard Bahr (The Judas Field) and Thomas Lakeman (The Shadow Catchers). This was Bahr’s second time speaking at the conference; he was “honored to be here again,” and referred to himself as “a bad penny.”

Deborah LeBlanc, who was scheduled to appear to speak about her new work, A House Divided, was unable to attend due to a family emergency. After session one, a short but informative general question-and-answer session was held between the audience and the three authors.

Then, before lunch, the authors sat down to sign books for attendees at the conference. Many of the featured writer’s works were available for purchase from The Alabama Booksmith right there in the library. This is the second conference we’ve been to,” said JSU graduate student Megan Smith. “We know some people on the board (the On the Brink Committee), and they invited us to come meet the authors,” added fellow graduate student Tony Mills. “It was a lot of fun, and we just kept coming back. It’s a great opportunity to learn the real personalities of the people and not just how they portray themselves as authors.”

Smith and Mills were both hoping to sit next to J. Wes Yoder during the lunch, where audience members had a chance to sit beside the authors of their choice. “We heard he’s a really cool guy, a laid-back kind of an author,” said Mills.

After the lunch, session two began with author Jack Pendervis (The Mysterious Secret of the Valuable Treasure). Pendervis opened his reading by declaring that his table at lunch “was the most awesome.” Charles J. Shields, the next author to speak, outlined his struggles in writing Mockingbird: A Portrait of Harper Lee.

“As a change of pace, the next to speak was Natasha Trethewey, a poet who read several selections from her latest book, Native Guard: Poems.”

The last author to speak was Yoder, who read a bit from his first novel, Carry My Bones. However it wasn’t the selection he had originally planned on. Having spent some time living in this area (“I don’t think I would have written this story if not for Chatham County”), Yoder had planned to read from the middle of his novel, but since the love interest was named after a girl he was in love with here in Aniston, he read a part from the beginning of his work instead.

Another question-and-answer session followed Yoder’s reading, then the event closed around another bout of book-buying and book-signing.

Editor’s Note: Hey, everybody. It’s your friendly local Editor-in-Chief here. Listen, all of us here at The Chanticleer are seeing a disturbing trend. At school sponsored events like these, we’re finding that, for the most part, the only students attending these things are Chanticleer reporters and students trying to score some extra credit. Just wanted to let you all know that these events are held for YOU, to enrich your college experience. Most of these events are free or discounted for students...the people who set up these events want you to come. I had a blast at both On the Brink conferences I attended (where else can I harass published poets at lunch?), and the Alabama Association of Historians event was extremely interesting and informative (loved the women and violence lectures). In no way does the campus shut down after class is over. This is where the interesting stuff happens -- after class. So instead of complaining that nothing ever happens in Jacksonville and blowing lots of money traveling to Atlanta or Birmingham, take a quick glance at the Newswire on the JSU website and see if you can’t find something that catches your eye. Who knows? Maybe you’ll go and actually start enjoying your education.
Motown Review 7 p.m.

JSU Basketball (A)

Seussical 7 p.m., Stone Center

Dixon Idol

By James Burton
The Chanticleer Staff Writer

The stars came out last Thursday and put their singing skills on the test for the first annual Dixon Idol competition.

Kiyon Daniels, Emma Cahill and Quinn Bergfield were selected to be the collegiate version of the Fox show's judges, and each donned the respective name of Randy, Paula and Simon as well.

There were three prizes: Best Male Vocalist, Best Female Vocalist, and what they called the Booby Prize. Each winner was to receive a gift certificate for a meal at Guthrie's, the new chicken restaurant.

The first to perform for the judges was Dave Lucas with his rendition of The Eagle's "Desperado," which went over quite well. Up next was Lauralee Peek and her version of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow." Ben Haynes followed up with "More than Anyone" and received a large round of applause. Once Haynes had finished, it was time for the Chanticleer's very own Kevin Brant to go up and sing "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus," which was something else, to say the least.

Ironically enough, soon afterwards, Luke Diehl got up and performed a Sinatra-styled version of Slayer's "Skeleton Christ." As it turns out, the performance was indirectly dedicated to fellow Dixon resident Wesley Todd, who used to be an RA at the Wesley Foundation.

Following that spectacle, Travis Davis shocked listeners in his singing debut with "It Is Well." He seemed nervous but he got up there and gave it his all, nonetheless.

Nathan "George" Swinlar went up and performed the classic known as "The Phonebook Song" in which he picked up a phone book and sang a bunch of the names with an operatic voice.

Sunset Rose gave her rendition of Tina Turner's "Proud Mary," accompanied with Turner's famous fast dance moves and spastic hair. After skipping numerous verses, she awaited judgment. Paula/Emma had nothing but praise and suggested she enter a dance competition. Simon/Quinn, in his all-knowing wisdom, simply said, "If it were a dance competition, I'd still say no."

There was also Max Panner, who took on the task of performing The Man in Black's "Folsom Prison Blues." Afterwards, Simon/Quinn asked, "Johnny Cash is dead, right? Good, because he'd be pissed off."

Then there was Cecilia "The Penguin" Bliney, who performed "I Did It Again" after which Simon/Quinn showed her a diagram: "This is the puppy of good singing. You are the car that ran over it." She then responded to Simon/Quinn, "But you can teach me!" Simon/Quinn also told another contestant that he had heard women in labor who sounded better, and these comments just marked a few of the pearls of wisdom that Simon/Quinn had to give to the contestants.

The last person to go up was Shannon Brigger, who performed a fantastic rendition of "Dreaming of You." Not only did she receive a partial standing ovation, she received the one thing that was almost never heard: praise from Simon/Quinn.

While the judges left the competition area to deliberate, Swinlar went back up to perform "The Ballad of Bilbo Baggins" during the intermission. After he was done, Dave Lucas got up and did "Joy to the World" in which the entire audience joined.

The judges soon returned having made their decision. The winner for Best Male Vocalist was Ben Haynes, and Shannon Bridges last-minute audition earned her the Best Female Vocalist award. Finally, Diehl received honors for the Booby Prize.

"I was really holding back," said Simon/Quinn after the contest. "I feel like I got jipped, but that's okay. God has a plan for me," said Bliney about not earning the coveted Booby Prize.

15 Thursday

JSU Basketball (A)
Motown Review 7 p.m.
Seussical 7 p.m., Stone Center

16 Friday

Seussical 7 p.m., Stone Center

17 Saturday

Preview Day
JSU Basketball (A)
Gamecock Rugby, 1 p.m. behind Pete Mathews Coliseum
Seussical 7 p.m., Stone Center
Anniston Museum, 27th Annual Black Heritage Festival 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

18 Sunday

Seussical 2 p.m., Stone Center
Anniston Museum, Songs of Love Resound: Concert, 3 p.m.

19 Monday

Guest Lecturer: Congressman Arthur Davis
10 a.m., Houston Cole Library

20 Tuesday

Soul Food Night, Cafeteria, 4:30-7 p.m.
"Step Afrika!," TMB 7 p.m.
Balancing Your Debt Workshop, TMB, 3-4 p.m.

21 Wednesday

JSU Basketball (H)
Seussical 7 p.m., Stone Center

22 Thursday

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Now hear this...

By Summer Hunt
The Chanticleer Copy Editor

As someone who uses her cell phone every day, even instead of a house phone, I understand and appreciate the value and importance of a mobile phone. I know that there are some people out there who say that they hate them or wish they'd never gotten theirs, but not me. I love mine; I never leave home without it, and I feel terribly disconnected if I don't have it on me at all times. It is my communication tool, my camera any way I want.

However, I must stop right here and say that there are certain rules that go along with possessing a cellular phone. Recently, I have found myself in several situations in which I want to turn around, r'sp said miracle invention from a person's ear and smash it on the ground into a million little pieces.

Some places are sacred when it comes to using a cell phone. I happen to think that the library is still one of those places, right up there next to churches and hospitals. (Probably church is first purely because of the God thing.) It still amazes me that people think that their conversation is so contained just because no one can hear the voice on the other end of the line. It's all whispered words and silent glances in the hospital until someone pulls out their cell phone.

Cinematic Disaster of Epic proportions

By Nick Lehwald
The Chanticleer Senior Reporter

So funny, you'll forget to laugh. Epic Movie, the latest screenplay by the comedy writing duo Jason Friedberg and Aaron Seltzer, is certainly an epic. A disaster of epic proportions, that is. Created by two of the six writers of the Scary Movie series, one would expect some degree of creativity and originality. Sadly, we expected a little too much.

The movie, in its entirety of 86 minutes, only extracted about one minute of hilarity. It was basically one retread joke. While it did a good job of making its characters seem like mindless tools, it did not do something that is important to comedy movies. I am trying to think of what that was... oh, it's on the tip of my tongue. Oh, I remember. It did not make me laugh.

It certainly did try, however. Even to the point where they dragged a joke out for five whole minutes, trying to find some funny angle on an unfunny subject. Beating a hobo with a stick would have been funnier than watching this movie.

Although they tried, the writers of this movie could not tell a good poop joke to save their lives. And I tried to laugh, I really did. When the White Bitch, played by the voluptuous Jennifer Coolidge (of Stifler's mom fame), offered to take Edward, ever-Indian Kal Penn (of Van Wilder fame), to her White Castle, I laughed. But that was only because Harold and Kumar is one of my favorite stupid movies. Right up there with Half Baked, The Warriors and Talladega Nights. That and when they made fun of Tom Hank's hair from the Davinci Code; I laughed at that. So, to recap, I laughed through a total of about an hour and a half minutes in an 86 minute movie.

Many of the jokes told were as predictable as your girlfriend's period, and about as pleasant, too. Willy Wonka's magic river of chocolate was turned into the river of poop. Samuel Jackson's infamous line, "I have had enough of these g'd amn snakes on this mother (censored) plane" was beaten to death faster than Dave Chapelle's Lil John impression. Mr. Tumnus' house was turned into an episode of "Crips" that even I wouldn't watch. Honestly, their interspecies erotic jokes lacked laughs.

All in all, I should not have been as surprised as I was. Usually, I can laugh at even the dumbest of movies, mainly at just how dumb they are. But this movie just left me sitting in my seat, wishing I had bought more popcorn. If I hadn't paid $5, I would have left. Thank God that was all I paid, otherwise I would be calling Regency pictures and asking for that hour and a half of my life back. Save your money folks. The Departed came out on DVD this week; rent that. I would, I just won't...
Valentine’s Day is a day to celebrate love. A day to be with the one that you love or the guy that was available for the night. You have the flowers, the candy and maybe a nice romantic evening along with your partner. It’s just the two of you in your bedroom watching The Notebook. You know how the story goes . . . one thing leads to another. He whispers in your ear, “Can you sign this contract agreeing that we can have sex?” Wait. What?

Sounds ridiculous, right? Unfortunately, this might become a true story for several college and professional athletes. In the famous Kobe Bryant rape case, a 19-year-old girl claimed that Kobe forced himself on her, but he claimed that it was a consensual agreement. What really happened? No one but those two really know, but because of many cases just like this one, the whole subject is a debate for several athletes across the country.

The idea of pre-sexual agreements probably sounds good to the male athletes who are approached by girls every night, but leaves the question, how would it work? According to an article in the Chicago Tribune, the agreement would operate like this: a contract would be drafted with a list of all the sexual acts the other person agreed to, then you both would sign the contract making it legally binding that both of you went into intercourse consensually. Sounds easy enough, right?

Well, according to Court TV, anchor Lisa Bloom told “ABC News” that she doubts the contract would really be legally binding. In particular, the problem would stem from the clause that refers to the partner promising not to change his or her mind. Even if the person signs the agreement but when it comes down to it wants to back out and say no, it would still be considered rape.

Earlier last year a poll was given in Sports Illustrated about pre-sexual agreements. When the results came back, sports figures as a majority, shared that they thought it was a good idea and that it could spread throughout the industry. In the Chicago Tribune, Stephen Jackson of the Atlanta Hawks saw it as a matter of protecting one’s self. “People look at us as targets and try to get what they can out of us,” said Jackson.

Now, you ask, how could anyone look at such an intimate act as sexual intercourse as just a contract? Well, like several songs in today’s society, there is a clear distinction between love and sex. And it is not a secret that many of the college athletes get more than a scholarship to colleges. Many of them are greeted by a “welcoming committee” who are willing and able to give these athletes whatever they want.

Many people are left wondering who would actually be in the mood to have sexual intercourse after you have to sign a contract agreeing to perform certain sexual acts? It is one thing waking up the next morning to someone you met in the bar last night. In that case, at least you can blame it on the alcohol. It is a whole other matter to know that you have signed a contract, with everything you did or agreed to do, waiting to be brought before a court of law if there is any question about it.

Now pre-sexual agreements are even being brought into marriages. Many prenuptial agreements include clauses with different sexual acts you partner would agree to perform. I guess in a world where half of the marriages end in divorce, nothing is considered sacred anymore. If you really think about it pre-sexual agreements could be thought of as signing away your body.
The whole story is narrated by the jubilant Cat in the Hat (Coty Cockrell) who weaves himself into the story wearing more hats than one.

"Initially, it was overwhelming to take on such a role as the Cat in the Hat," said Cockrell. "But after rehearsals, it became very liberating. It was sort of like a blank check - I was free to make it out however I wanted to."

There are several side stories, including that of Miss Gertrude McFuzz (Sam Adams) who tries (at first) unsuccessfully to win the attention of Horton the elephant. Mayzie La Bird (Charonda Brown) attempts to help Gertrude and her sad little one-feather tail, and she distress Horton from his clover conundrum when she incites him to sit on her egg (which is in her nest in her tree) as she flies off on vacation. Enjoying the story outside of it and in it is Jojo (Holly Rice) the mayor's son who thinks such large thinks that they get him in trouble. The Bird Girls (Kristen Taylor, Eranika Wray and Alia Johnson) serve as a sort of Greek chorus, explaining the happenings all along the way.

"The Bird Girls are part storytellers," said Taylor. "They function almost as one character."

Some of the biggest stars with arguably the most stage time are the costumes.

"The costumes would have to be my favorite part of the show," said Taylor. "They really add depth and personality to all the characters."

Animals in the jungle are not your typical zoo creatures as they are decorated with brightly colored fur and stylish accessories. There is a salsa dancing lion, a motorcycle maven zebra and sassy water buffalo babe.

"The costumes have really been an evolving process," said Freddy Clements, costume designer. "The characters are more of costumed creatures than just the animals that they portray. For example, we know they aren't really monkeys, so it was either to play around and put them in vests and such. We went through and tried to come up with character types for each character."

The Whos may be small but they take up a lot of space with their wide costumes and even bigger personalities. Donning brightly colored wigs and eccentric fleece costumes, they are the Who's version of the Dr. Seuss parade. There are the Who-vids, the Who-ma-jings and the Who's what-its. "They're the most fun to work with," said Cockrell. "I can't wait to see them live!"

The Whos are not the only ones who are having fun. "I love working with the kids," said Thompson. "They're just so energetic."

"I've never done anything with the drama department. I knew that I wanted to try out for this musical this year, and I was excited when I found out it was Seussical," said Teri Young.

Various scenes from JSU's Seussical the Musical.

All photos by Toni Merriss

New Restaurant Opening - Oxford
Hiring Begins Wednesdays, Fall menu 14th
Blades. “We added foam padding and fur by the final standings after the championships. This is determined by the final standings after the 11 sectional held across the country this past weekend.

“All the floating fur was definitely a challenge,” added Clements.

One thing that is required of all that plan on attending at least one performance of Seussical,” said costume designer Randy Young.

Some students were very active within the drama department but had yet to do a musical.

“This is my first big show onstage,” said Jessica Serrett, who plays the role of Thing 1. “I’m really excited, I think it's all coming together nicely, and I was excited when I found out it was Seussical,” said Teri Young.

The Jacksonville State University Rifle team completed their regular season this past weekend with a win in the NCAA Sectionals Saturday afternoon.

Shooting a smallbore score of 2304 and an Air Rifle score of 2348, giving them an aggregate of 4652, JSU topped OVC foe Murray State for the ninth time this season and the dominant University of Kentucky.

The top seven teams in the nation go to the NCAA Championships. This is determined by the final standings after the 11 sectional held across the country this past weekend.

“We went to Murray this past weekend and beat the people that we needed to beat to advance,” stated freshman Phillip Huckaby. “We are still working on our weaknesses as a team, but we were focused and mentally prepared for this match.”

After finishing their competition on Saturday, the Gamecocks felt strong enough that their scores would hold up against Kentucky and Tennessee-Martin, who were not completing the competition until Sunday.

The Wildcats have been a major factor in the NCAA rankings and were just a few points ahead of JSU before the weekend. With JSU beating them by 11 points, they will be ranked third going to Colorado Springs for the championship and just four points behind Army.

In Air Rifle, Huckaby had a comfortable lead and took the number one slot with a 593, followed by teammate Michael Dickinson who fired 589, good enough for second place. They were followed by brothers Joseph (583) and Jonathan Hall (583).

In Smallbore, Dickinson tied with Jen Pason of Kentucky at number one with a 582. Joseph tied Cameron Hicks of Murray for third with a 581, while Huckaby and Jonathan fired 571 and 570, respectively.

“We knew that it was time to step up and this win gave us more confidence as a team,” commented Huckaby.

This coming weekend, JSU looks to defend their back-to-back OVC Championships and take on the conference in their own backyard.

“We are continuing to practice hard and do the things that we need to do,” stated Huckaby. “We welcome the rest of the OVC to JSU and cannot wait to get the match underway.”

The OVC Championships are set to begin on Saturday with the smallbore competition being held at Rowe Hall and the Air Rifle competition being held in the Kenneth Hall Annex.

So, come out and learn a few new things as the rifle team looks to defend their OVC Championship.
Double header, double the fun

By Chad Hoffman
The Chanticleer Senior Reporter

Many may have doubted, but the young ladies of Jacksonville State Softball continued to win in convincing fashion this past weekend as they swept the Hornets of Alabama State on Sunday afternoon.

Head coach Jana McGinnis stated at fan day that the newcomers were going to have to make an impact immediately, and they did just that. The Gamecocks (2-0) would not let up and had to use the mercy rule in both games as they blew past Alabama State (2-2) 10-1 in the opening game and 9-0 to close out the series.

In the opener, the ladies got on the horse and went to swinging the bat early as they scored five runs in the first inning and never looked back.

Redshirt freshman Ciara Wesen saw her first at bat come with a home run that sailed over the center field fence. She led the way, going 4-for-7 with a pair of doubles that tied her with Melinda McDonald for the school record of 49 in her career. The Bolton, Ontario, native drove in three runs and was followed by teammate Jackie Jarman who drove in four runs and hit a walk-off home run in the night cap to seal the wins.

The pitching staff was not to be left behind either. While the ladies performed well in the batter’s box, those in the circle were breathing sighs of relief.

Junior transfer Karla Pittman got the start in the first game and only allowed one hit through her three innings of work. The North Canton, Ohio, native and transfer from Eastern Oklahoma State earned her first Division I win in the circle and credited her defense.

“I was a little nervous in the beginning with new coaches, new teammates, and a new crowd,” stated Pittman. “The defense worked really hard behind me and it is a relief to know that they are there to help no matter what the outcome may be.”

Junior Kelly Raw came in for relief and allowed one run on one hit. The change up was a little high, and Hornet Amber Smith took advantage and sent it over the fence for the lone run of the game.

Raw was not discouraged and kept the heat coming. In two innings of work, she sent three back to the bench and relied on the unmerciful defense to get them out of the game.

“It was a team effort and we were pumped,” stated Raw. “The newcomers are working hard and have a great career ahead of them at JSU. The hard work paid off and it showed on the field.”

Sophomore transfer Melissa Dowling got the nod for game two and got in the groove fast. In all six innings of work, she only allowed ASU three hits and struck out five.

“I wanted to get the first pitch under my belt,” commented Dowling about her Gamecock debut. “I have been inconsistent in practice, but the encouragement from teammates and the strong defense behind me really helped. The little things are what count, and they made the difference for me today.”

While Jack State performed well on both sides of the ball, they are still bettling themselves as they prepare for the Gamecock Classic this weekend.

The two-day event will bring South Alabama and Belmont to the friendly confines of University Field.

On Saturday, JSU will take on South Alabama at 12 p.m. and then turn to play Belmont at 2 p.m. The two visiting teams will play the first game at 10 a.m. that morning.

On Sunday, the Gamecocks will take on Belmont at 12 p.m. and South Alabama at 2 p.m. Admission to all games is free.

Last possession puts away Tennessee Tech

By Chris Lundy
The Chanticleer Sports Editor

Another last possession game, another last possession win.

Jacksonville State leaned on the starting five, and they proved why in the final 24 seconds of the game. Guard Nick Smith pulled a trey from the right corner but missed the shot. However, he was fouled by Eagles guard Amadi McKenzie, sending Smith to the charity stripe to shoot three shots. Smith stayed calm at the line and hit all of his shots, pulling JSU (7-18, 5-11 OVC) within one point of Tennessee Tech (14-11, 10-6 OVC).

The Eagles attempted to get another shot off to slightly increase their lead, but guard Belton Rivers was unable to capitalize. His shot bounced off the rim, and forward Courtney Bradley, who came up limping earlier, grabbed the rebound to give the Gamecocks one more chance to win the game.

Following a timeout, the Gamecocks ran the same play which gave Smith the open shot.

“We knew if we ran the same play, we had options based on what we previously saw,” said head coach Mike LaPlante. “(Will) Ginn could dish it out to Smith again if his man came in on him, or if two players came at Ginn, he could pass it to Bradley for the easy lay in. If they remain stationary and Ginn has a one-on-one, then he can take it himself and hopefully make the basket or draw the foul.”

With the various options available to them, Ginn did what he does best as a point guard. Driving from the top of the key, Ginn looked but saw no one open. He took his man to the right side of the basket and made his layup but did not draw the foul. His basket put JSU up 72-71 but gave the Eagles five seconds to make something happen and leave Pete Mathews with a win.

McKenzie, who fouled Smith earlier, had a chance to redeem himself. Driving to the hole, he attempted to draw the foul off of JSU’s Bradley or Amadou Mbojdi. McKenzie went up, but the long arms of Mbojdi blocked the shot as it went up.

McKenzie’s teammate Anthony Fisher caught the block and tried to put up another shot with three seconds left but was unable to make a shot.

Despite shooting 36.8 percent the entire game versus Tennessee Tech’s 42.4 percent, Jacksonville State still capitalized in the bench points category. Guard Erik Adams contributed 15 of JSU’s 17 points, but the Gamecocks were led by Bradley with 20 points on the night.

“I feel better coming off the bench,” said Adams. “In fact, I prefer coming off the bench because I can add the extra spark we need.”

Jacksonville State heads to Eastern Kentucky in hopes for a season sweep over the Colonels, then head to UT-Chattanooga in the ESPN Bracketbuster game. They return to Pete Mathews Coliseum on Feb. 22 to take on the Eastern Illinois Panthers.

Eagles fly...
Should athletes be banned from all-star festivities based on in-season altercations?  

YES

Carmelo Anthony, Ron Artest, Kobe Bryant, Ricky Williams, Sammy Sosa. What do each of these sports figures have in common? Each of them is an all-star in their sport, and each one has done something on or off the field to bring a negative light on them and their team.

Anthony and Artest got into fights. Williams failed numerous drug tests—not to mention he left the country for a year to continue using that drug. Sosa corked his bat, and Kobe had sex with a white girl—what was he thinking? I think that pro athletes who have been involved in a problem, whether on or off the playing field, should not be allowed to participate in all-star functions.

Think about this, what if Melo just decides to deck Dwayne Wade and knocks him unconscious. Then say, consequently, Wade isn’t able to play in the regular season after that for a while. By having someone who has previously been a problem participate in an all-star game, it can result in the possibility of injury to someone and leaves a franchise without an all-star player.

Let’s say that Sammy Sosa uses a corked bat during the MLB All-Star game? Is his two-run home run not going to count if they find out later? No. But then the National League gets home-field advantage in the World Series and the American League has a justified argument. No matter how stupid that rule has turned out, this just fuels the fire.

NO

Ok, so Ron Artest shouldn’t have entered the stands in what is now known as the “Malice at the Palace,” but some good punches came out of it (nice right, Stephen Jackson). And Sammy Sosa knew what he was doing with the corked bat. As for Ricky Williams, his addiction can be fixed inside or outside the United States.

But take for example Carmelo Anthony, who’s the current leader in points per game in the NBA, and Shawn Merriman, who finished the NFL season as the reigning sack leader. Both Anthony and Merriman were suspended for on-court and off-court altercations. Anthony was suspended 15 games, while Merriman was suspended four games. Despite their setbacks, they are still big figures in their respective sports and works hard to get back to the status they had.

Anthony’s suspension came at a time when he was the leading NBA scorer. His 15-game hiatus proved to be nothing. Anthony came right back and captured the title, averaging nearly 28 points per game entering the all-star break.

Merriman, despite his 4-game suspension, led the NFL regular season with 17 sacks. Merriman had the option to appeal but took responsibility for his actions and served the time. Merriman’s decision to serve showed accountability and respect for his fellow teammates. Coming off his suspension, Merriman’s hunger only led him to sack more quarterbacks and help his team advance to the playoffs.

Some athletes throughout history have done illegal things and had run-ins off the field. Their results put them in the hall of fame based on their sport or credentials, despite the incidents they were involved in.

My point is that athletes are suspended during the season to level the playing field. Their money is taken away and so is the chance at any awards or post-season recognition. The hard work of Anthony and Merriman shows the love and dedication they have for the game, and both came out on top. Yes, Merriman was allowed to participate in this year’s Pro Bowl but fell short in the Defensive Player of the Year category. And yes, after not wanting to add him to the all-star weekend, NFL commissioner David Stern added Anthony to the Western Conference roster.

So yes, if players are suspended, and they put in the time to get back to the status they once had, then add them to the all-star games and let them continue to prove why they are among the elite in their respective athletics.

And down the line, when there are bigger issues facing the national and international scene, who will really care if Kobe Bryant had sex with a white girl? (Except for his wife, that is.)

Eagles fly high over Gamecocks

By Chris Lundy  
The Chanticleer Sports Editor

Starting a game in a 9-0 hole is not the way to win, and missing the first six team shots is not adding to the winning cause. The Gamecocks learned the hard way en route to an 85-69 defeat against the Tennessee Tech Golden Eagles on Thursday, Feb. 8.

After an Ashley Boykin 3-pointer, JSU found a way to get back in the game. Boykin also made a layup, while LaTonya McKinney fed an assist to Cobie Carlisle. It seemed as if the Gamecocks (7-18, 4-12 OVC) would not give up their lead, but LaTonya McKinney led a 15-8 run against the Eagles (10-15, 9-7 OVC) lead 22-17 with less than eight minutes left in the half. However, Tennessee Tech would not give up their lead and allowed the Gamecocks to put up four points while scoring 14 of their own. At the half, the Eagles put Jacksonville State in a huge hole 33-45.

In the second half, the Gamecocks could not find a way to get back in the game. With less than 17 minutes left, Ashley Clay put up a shot after grabbing the rebound to pull within seven points of the Eagles. Tennessee Tech’s Megan Lyons hit a jumper to push the lead up to nine, but McKinney came right back down to pull it to within seven with less than 15 minutes to go. Unfortunately, the two 7-point leads were as close as the Gamecocks were able to reach. The Eagles were able to stretch their lead as much as 17 twice, at the 12:38 mark and with 47 seconds left to play in the game. The 17-point deficit became 16 at the end of the game, but it was enough to send JSU into panic mode for the final spot in the playoffs.

Boykin, who came off the bench, led the Gamecocks with 17 points. Following Boykin was Courtney Slaughter with 11 points, while McKinney added 10 of her own.

The Eagles were led by Blair Bowens, who also came off the bench with 21 points. Center Kristina Tyler contributed 18 points, while guard Kendall Cavin put up 16 points and Lyons added 13 of her own.

"It started from the beginning," said head coach Becky Geyer. "They did a good job of taking it to us and attacking, and we couldn’t get back in the game."

The Gamecocks return to Pete Mathews Coliseum on Feb. 22 to host the Eastern Illinois Panthers. Tip-off is at 5 p.m., and the game can be heard on the radio with Mike Parris on 91.9 FM.
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<td>A &quot;Sweet&quot; Taste of the Grove mixer</td>
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<td>&quot;VIP ONLY&quot; Parent's Day at the Grove</td>
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