Jacksonville State University professor and cyclist Carmine DiBiase, along with members of the North East Alabama Bicycle Club, have added a new addition to the Henry Farm Park in Jacksonville. Starting in May of 2010, DiBiase and others began to construct a bike trail in the 34 acres of land behind the park. The crew finished in late July, leaving a 2.5 mile trail that is now open to the public.

DiBiase has been cycling seriously for about 5 years.

"I started because for my health," DiBiase said. "I then fell into a really great group of people."

Since then he has become the faculty advisor for the JSU bike club. He also is a part of the NEABC.

"I really enjoy mountain biking, even though I’m new to it," DiBiase said. "It’s safer and it’s a much more intense workout."

DiBiase feels that other mountain bikers in the area will enjoy the new trail, especially because it is accessible from the Chief Ladiga trail.
THRILLER AGAINST OLE MISS BRINGS NOTORIETY

Jacksonville State got a lot of media exposure after the Gamecock defeated the Ole Miss Rebels in a double overtime thriller last weekend. Quarterback Coty Blanchard's four-yard touchdown pass to James Shaw in the fourth quarter was the freshman's first career touchdown and Shaw's third-career touchdown catch. Sports media channel ESPN ranked its as its Play of the Week.

Book rentals pique students' interest

From news reports

JACKSONVILLE - A semester's worth of college textbooks can weigh enough to cause shoulders to ache, and cost enough to squelch the prospect of a spring break trip.

But that might soon change.

Two evolving means of acquiring college textbooks — downloading digital editions and renting instead of buying — are growing in popularity across the nation. The first has been available to Jacksonville State University students since at least 2003, and the second might become available in the not-so-distant future.

"We see both these as a significant trend," said Jade Roth, with Barnes & Noble College Bookstores. She serves as the vice president for books and digital strategy for the company, which operates the on-campus bookstore at JSU, where students return to class this week.

Barnes & Noble, which operates a total of 637 college bookstores nationwide, had piloted rental programs at just 25 locations last year. Because of the popularity at those locations, the company expanded the rental program to about 300 stores this fall, and Roth expects the program to continue to grow.

International Student Organization at JSU has its annual picnic at the Jacksonville Community Center.

Details Page 2

inENTERTAINMENT

Coming to college is an exciting time for many people. It's a time of new beginnings. On Aug. 19, 2010, a new beginning started for me -- I moved into the new Stadium Towers Residence Hall. -- Kevin Brant

Story Inside

Marching Southerners will perform in London on New Years Day.

Story Inside

CHRIS BANISTER GOLF CLASSIC

Luz Armijo-Fernandez of Jacksonville State University's women's golf team makes a putt during the Gamecock-sponsored Chris Banister Golf Classic recently.

Photo by Kevin Brant / Staff
GAMECOCK EXPRESS

At the beginning of the 2009-2010 academic year, Jacksonville State University began its first transit system, the Gamecock Express. As part of the university’s ongoing plan to increase and improve service, the Gamecock Express system is reviewed continually and routes are adjusted in order to accommodate the needs of the campus community.

Below is the complete text of the new transit brochure for the 2010-2011 academic year. Also included is a link to the brochure containing updated route maps that can be printed for your convenience.

Please note that you may track the Gamecock Express in real time at http://jsu.transloc.com.

An iPhone app is also available. For details, please click here.

Our Mission

Gamecock Express’ mission is to provide safe and reliable transit service to Jacksonville State University. The system operates Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. (with limited night and summer service) each semester, but is idle during university holidays, semester breaks and weekends.

Is there a fee to use Gamecock Express?

Your tuition payments include costs associated with Gamecock Express. Jacksonville State University students with a valid JSU ID card have unlimited access to Gamecock Express routes. JSU faculty and staff with a valid JSU ID card have unlimited access to internal campus routes.

Gamecock Express

Transit Office
(256) 782-3600 Monday – Friday
7:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.
12:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

JSU Police Department
(256) 782-5050

The Lost and Found

Unloading Your Bike
- Tell the driver that you need to unload your bike.
- Move the support arm down and lift your bike.
- Please fold up the rack if it is empty.

Safety and Convenience
- Do not enter a street or chase a bus in an attempt to board after the driver has pulled away from the pedestrian stop.
- Plan to allow ample time for transportation to and from class by considering traffic congestion, bus connections (if needed) or other possible delays.
- Use of tobacco products and open containers of alcoholic beverages are strictly prohibited on the buses.
- Please allow riders to exit the bus before you board.
- Radios without headphones may not be played on the buses.
- After exiting the bus, use caution and allow the bus to pull away before you cross the street.
- Pets are not allowed on the buses, except for service animals approved under the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Unlike regular school buses, traffic is not required to stop for Gamecock Express buses.
- While riding the bus, do not stand in the stairwells or ahead of the white line.
- If you are standing while riding the bus, maintain a firm and secure grip on the handrails.

Find Your Bus Route

http://jsu.transloc.com

Changes To Transit Routes

For 2010-2011

As part of the university’s ongoing plan to increase and improve service, Gamecock Express has increased the number of buses to seven during the normal hours of operation. Gamecock Express also operates a surge with nine buses from 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Bus shelters

Gamecock Express shelters are scheduled to be installed at selected stops during fall 2010.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

More than 40 students gathered on Labor Day for the annual International Student Organization’s Picnic at the Jacksonville Center Community Center. Photo by Kevin Brant / Staff.

BRIEFS

Flu shots offered

The Calhoun County Public Health Department is sponsoring seasonal flu shots in a convenient, drive through event to be held Tuesday, September 28 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Hillcrest Baptist Church in Anniston.

The cost is $15.00 per shot. Cash and checks will be accepted.

According to Amanda S. Bonds, RN, MSN, director of JSU’s Student Health Center, a chart listing other participating businesses will be posted at the Student Health Center.

SGA sponsors can food drive, tailgate contest

The JSU Student Government Association is having a Can Food Drive until today. Bring canned food items to the Office of Student Life Room 402 or the TMB! We are also having a Back to School Drive now until September 13th. Bring gently used school supplies for high school and college students.
International students gather for food, fun

By Kevin Brant
Associate Editor

Friendship, food and fun.

That is what students of the International Student Organization at Jacksonville State University came to do at a recent gathering at the Jacksonville City Community Center.

On a day filled with clear skies, nearly 40 people attended the event for food and fun.

The annual picnic was a chance for students, both old and new, to get acquainted with each other and the Jacksonville community.

The annual event takes place during Labor Day weekend.

Russ Lloyd, a sophomore at JSU, said that experiencing new culture and making new friends is what brought him to the event.

"I enjoy hanging out with the international community and my friends."

While the food was being cooked, students went to the soccer field next to the picnic area to show off their skills.

Other students were throwing a Frisbee around to pass the time away.

Sachio Arai, a senior at JSU from Japan, shared his thoughts about the picnic.

"I have been involved with this picnic for at least the last 3 years," Arai said. "It's a good way to get to know other international students.

Justin Phillips, a freshman at JSU had a simple reason why he was there.

"I wanted to hang out with my friends," Phillips said.

Before the picnic started, Cami Gonzalez, the current president of the International Students Organization, shared her thoughts on the picnic. "I hope a lot of people come out and have a fun time," she said. "I want people to learn more about ISO and to get involved."

Gonzalez stressed that the organization will have more activities in the future to strengthen its ties to the community.

"We are planning more things to do in the community and at JSU.

Internationals students gather for food, fun.

Shhhhh! Library

Remember the good ol' days when libraries were quiet places?

Well, this semester the Houston Cole Library wants to bring back a bit of the good ol' days. Due to student and patron demand, the sixth floor of the Library is now a "Quiet Floor."

There will be no loud talking, no cell phones, and no social networking on the computers on the sixth floor. Patrons not in compliance with these regulations will be asked to go to another floor.
Book rental pique student interest

From Page 1

to continue growing.

"We expect the vast majority of the programs we're serving to adopt renting," she said.

If so, it might benefit students like Ashley Maner and Kayla Dalton, both juniors at JSU. They each said they spend about $400 per semester buying books, both new and used.

Currently, students have the option of purchasing digital editions, new print editions at full price or used editions at a reduced price. Each has a different price point, and rented books, if made available at JSU, would be one of the cheapest options available for students, according to Roth.

As an example, she said that if a new textbook at one of their stores cost $100, it might sell for $75 after it was used. A digital edition of that same book might sell for $55, and a rented copy could be borrowed for $45 per semester.

A student who needed that book for class would do best to purchase a used copy at $75 and sell it back for 50 percent of that value at the end of the semester.

However, bookstores only purchase the most popular books back, and students sometimes receive much less than a 50 percent return. So students like Maner and Dalton never know how much money, if any, they'll get back at the end of the semester.

Roth said renting is a much more secure option for students because they know how much their books will cost from the beginning of the semester.

"Even though that's the best value, the student is still taking a bit of a risk,"
know how much their books will cost from the beginning of the semester.

“Even though that’s the best value, the student is still taking a bit of a risk,” she said.

Rental programs that are already in place at college bookstores charge students about half the original price for rentable books, which make up about 30 percent of all books, according to Roth. For a book to be deemed rentable, it must meet a few criteria. First, it must not have worksheets or other disposable components; it needs to be a book for a core class that is regularly offered; and it needs to be something that’s not expected to have a new edition with drastic revisions.

As for the digital editions, Roth said she expects sales in that market to pick up, though they have been sluggish since the company first began offering them seven years ago. That’s because those editions have more interactive and visual components than ever before. “It’s a totally different experience,” she said. “I don’t think those tools were available in the past.”

Cindy Turner, the manager of the independent Jacksonville Bookstore off-campus, is also weighing just how practical the rental program would be for a bookstore that serves JSU. The rental programs, which she said were popularized a little more than a year ago, can be less practical for smaller universities where some classes are offered with less regularity.

“The biggest thing is a book has to be used continuously,” Turner said. “When classes are offered continuously, it’s easier to start a program.”

“People have less money to spend,” she said. “(You’re) trying to find any options we can to help.”

(Laura Johnson covers Jacksonville State University for The Anniston Star.)
TIMELINE CHRONICLES JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

1883
- Cathoun College building becomes the first home for what is now Jacksonville State University.

1886
- Samuel Bishop of Anniston is awarded the very first State Normal School diploma.

1904
- Jacksonville College plays its first football game against University High losing 51-0.

1919
- President had 12 teachers, four staff members. Highest salary: $150 a month; student expenses for a year: $190.

1930
- Bibb Graves Hall is built at the cost of $300,000.

1940
- Don Salls is captain, leads Jacksonville State to a championship.

1947
STADIUM DEDICATION ACTIVITIES

TODAY
- Pep Rally: Burgess-Snow Field at 8:30 p.m. Featuring the Southerners, football team, cheerleaders and Cocky. The community is invited to join the JSU campus community in cheering on the Gamecocks at the 8:30 p.m. rally.

FRIDAY
- Free concert: Featuring Vanguard Records recording artist Mindy Smith; the Charley Pell Memorial Golf Tournament and Dinner at the Anniston Country Club; the first games of a JSU Soccer Tournament that will continue through the weekend; and a JSU Alumni reunion.

SATURDAY
- Game Day: School band students from all over the region rehearsal with the Marching Southerners at 9 a.m., in preparation for their pre-game performance; a car show at 11 a.m. in the parking lot of the Theron Montgomery Building; a JSU Alumni Tailgate Party at the Alumni House at 1 p.m.

SPECIAL NOTE: Activities just for children will be offered on the TMB lawn from 1-5 p.m. JSU faculty past and present are invited to gather on Kennamer Field at 4 p.m. for a reunion and tailgate.

From news wire reports

After more than a year of construction, Jacksonville State University is preparing for the public reveal on its $55 million housing and stadium expansion during JSU's first home football game on September 11.

Dedication activities include 9/11 Tribute, alumni tailgate party, special performances honoring first responders.

During the pre-game show, the Southerners along with all Band Day participants will perform.

At halftime, the Southerners will enter the field to a special fanfare written especially for the occasion. This will be followed by the official stadium dedication.

The focus will then shift to the September 11 observance as the Atlanta Bagpipe Band joins the Southerners on the field and the JSU ROTC presents flags from every state.

First responders including firefighters, police and emergency medical technicians will enter the field to be recognized, followed by a performance from JSU alumni and faculty member Mrs. Teresa Cheatham Stricklin, as the former Miss America finalist sings "God Bless America," the sky above JSU Stadium will explode with fireworks to bring the patriotic extravaganza to a close.

Stadium gates open at 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, September 11, and the pre-game show begins at 5:40 p.m.

To order tickets, please call 1-877-JSU-TIXX (1-877-578-8499) or visit www.jsugameday.com.
THE YEARS

JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY'S BEGINNINGS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1934: Heath becomes Jacksonville State College.

1966-67: Jacksonville State College becomes Jacksonville State University.

1970: Twenty-three majors; seven schools; $14 million in construction; 6,461 students enrolled.

1983: The Lady Gamecocks gymnastics team is the first in NCAA Division II team in history to win back-to-back national championships.; Men's Basketball team wins the NCAA Division II national championship.

1999-2010: Bill Beehan succeeds Dr. Harold McGee as president; nation mourns 9/11 victims; Ashley Martin becomes first female placekicker; Jack Crowe named JSU football coach; stadium dedication.
STADIUM DEDICATION/SEPT. 11
PRE-GAME and HALF-TIME EVENTS

TODAY

September 11
Remembrance: JSU's ROTC will have its 9/11 Memorial recognition at the Alumni House at 3 p.m.; a concert by the Atlanta Bagpipe Band will follow.

The Marching Southerners and special guest dedication and salute to members of the U.S. Armed Services as well as pay tribute to the victims of 9/11 and emergency first responders for their dedicated service.

JSU ROTC presents flags from every state. First responders including firefighters, police and emergency medical technicians will enter the field to be recognized, followed by a performance from JSU alumna and faculty member Mrs. Teresa Cheatham Stricklin and fireworks display close.

First responders (police, fire and emergency personnel) may receive two free complimentary tickets to the game by pre-registering their attendance with Maj. Dean Shackelford of the JSU ROTC program.

Please register by e-mail at Ishack@jsu.edu or by phone, (256) 782-8023.

— From news wire reports

GAME DAY INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

JSU Student Tailgate Area
Dillon Field has been designated as the Student Tailgate area for the 2010 season Tailgating is not allowed on campus until 8 a.m. on Saturday. The Student Tailgating Lot is Dillon Field, located off Forney Avenue near the Football Field House.

JSU SHUTTLE SERVICE
During Jacksonville State home football games, a game day shuttle service has been established to shuttle guests from the Houston Cole Library parking lot to two specific drop-off points near JSU Stadium. This service will begin two (2) hours prior to the game and continue until one (1) hour following the game.

JSU STUDENT GATE ENTRANCE
Jacksonville State students will be admitted free with a current valid JSU I.D. card at the Student Gate, which will be located at Gate E, at the south end of the Football Field House, near Dillon Field. The student gate will open 1 1/2 hours before kickoff.

JSU STUDENT PARKING:
HOME GAMES ONLY
Three Parking Lots MUST be CLEARED by 9 a.m. on SATURDAY!!!
There are three parking requirements for students living in this dorm during home football games this fall.

1. Any students parked in the Stadium Tower Dorm, which is located on Mountain Avenue at Burgess-Snow Field at JSU Stadium, must have their car moved from this parking lot by 9 a.m. on Saturday morning. This lot becomes RESERVED CLUB LEVEL/SUITE HOLDER PERMIT ONLY parking lot on HOME football games and all spaces are numbered.

2. Any students parked in the Jerry Cole Parking Lot, which is located in front of Curtis Hall and the Football Field House, must have their car moved from this parking lot by 9 a.m. on Saturday morning. This lot becomes FOOTBALL PERMIT ONLY parking lot on HOME football games.

3. Any students parked in the Kennamer Hall and Gamecock Center Parking Lot must have their car moved from this parking lot by 9 a.m. on Saturday morning. This lot becomes GAMECOCK CLUB and MEDIA permit parking only on HOME football games.

All student lots will re-open to students immediately after the football game.

Student parking is available at Patterson Hall, Crow Hall, Dixon Hall and also in front of Stephenson Hall.

Parking WILL be allowed around Trustee Circle on GAME DAY ONLY, but there will be NO PARKING on any YELLOW CURBS. Cars must be parked in a designated parking spot or is subject to towing.

JSU CAMPUS FOOD OPTIONS
9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.: Jazzman's Coffee Shop open (Houston Cole Library)
10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.: Hopper Dining Hall open for Brunch (JSU Quad)
41 a.m. - 5 p.m.: JSU TMB Food Court open (Chick-Fil-A only)
11 a.m. - 8 p.m.: WOW Wingery Open (JSU Quad)
4:30 p.m. - 7 p.m.: Hopper Dining Hall open for Dinner (JSU Quad)
4:30 p.m. - 4th Quarter Concession Stands at Stadium.

— From the office of the SGA president

MANDY SMITH
SET TO GIVE PRE-GAME PERFORMANCE

Vanguard Recording Artist Mindy Smith will perform a free concert for JSU students, faculty and staff on Friday at the Calvert Amphitheater.

The JSU Office of Student Life will distribute 2,000 tickets to the concert.

The concert will begin at 7:30 p.m. and gates will open at 6 p.m. Students are encouraged to bring lawn chairs or blankets for seating. Coolers will not be allowed at the concert. A concession stand will be open. The Gamecock Express will run until 11 p.m.

Smith's music has a broad appeal and can be classified as country, pop, folk, bluegrass, and even alternative.

Smith hit the music scene in 2004 with the release of her debut CD, One Moment More, featuring the hit single "Come To Jesus." She has been featured on NPR, performed on national TV shows such as The Tonight Show, Conan O'Brien, GAC/Edge of Country and CMT. Her songs have been heard on shows such as "Grey's Anatomy," "Smallville," "Six Feet Under," and Fox's "So You Think You Can Dance."

— From news wire reports
Marching Southerners announce London trip

By Noelle Milliron
Special to The Chanticleer

Cheers erupted last week after the director of University Bands, Ken Bodiford, announced that the Marching Southerners in 18 months would be 4,000 miles away on the streets of London.

The band, now in its 54th year, has been invited to lead off the 2012 New Year’s Day Parade in London.

The parade is watched by thousands of spectators and millions more on television.

The 2012 parade is unlike its predecessors for two reasons. The parade will be the first official event in the year of festivities to celebrate Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II’s Diamond Jubilee, marking her 60th year on the throne. It is also the official event in London to begin the 2012 Olympic year, as London is home to the 2012 Summer Olympics.

The Southerners were unanimously voted to be formally invited to represent the United States in Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II’s Diamond Jubilee New Year’s Day Parade.

Participation in the parade is by invitation only. A music program must be nominated to the selection committee. No one can apply or audition. The Southerners were nominated after committee members witnessed their 2009 production of The I Sing at the Bands of America regional in Atlanta, Ga.

While in London, the Southerners will also participate in stand still performances. JSU Chamber Winds will also perform in concerts while on the trip.

A United States committee member told Director Ken Bodiford, “The people of London have never had a band like the Marching Southerners visit...it is going to be a sight to behold!”

The Southerners began their 2010 tour last Saturday at Ole Miss in Oxford, Miss., where they wowed a crowd of 55,768 performing an hour and a half-long program of cornet, sax, drums and other instruments.

The new Stadium Towers Residence Hall at JSU has four floors. Each dorm unit has four rooms which include kitchen area, common living room area and elevators that talk. Photos by Steve Latham / JSU

A DAY IN THE LIFE

down long hallways, empty my belongings and return to my car for more.

Well after five trips, I finally got my stuff in the room.

As for the room, it was great.

The unit I live in has four rooms labeled A, B, C, and D. I live in room B. Each room has a bed unit with a chest of drawers attached, a table and a chair. Also, each room has a small walk in closet. Roommates share two bathrooms.

The bathrooms have a toilet and shower/bath area. The cool thing is that the bathtub is made to where you can either take a shower or a bath. The bathroom sink is right beside the bathroom.

Each dorm room has a kitchen, which includes a refrigerator, sink and Microwave. The common area, which all roommates share, is kind of like a living room. It’s a really nice area for relaxation when you’re not in your room. It includes a couch, a chair, a TV stand for an entertainment system, a table and two chairs.

Each floor has several great amenities, which include a Pepsi machine, a vending machine and a laundry room on either side of the floor. The floors also have at least one study area. The building also has exercise rooms on the first and third floors and computer labs in various parts of the building.

There are four state-of-the-are elevators in the new facility. As you enter the elevator, it speaks your room number and it goes directly to your floor.

The building also has main level floor to floor elevators that can also be used by escalators in stairs to a common area. The common area is where the front desk is located.

Photos by Steve Latham / JSU
A DAY IN THE LIFE OF STADIUM HOUSING

By Kevin Brant
Associate Editor

Coming to college is an exciting time for many people. It's a time of new beginnings.

On Aug. 19, 2010, a new beginning started for me -- I moved into the new Stadium Towers Residence Hall on the Jacksonville State University campus.

As I drove into the parking lot, the new facility seemed larger than life. It's brick facade towered from the bottom of the residence hall to the top. It felt small compared to this structure.

While unpacking my car, I reflected on the many days and nights of studying, relaxing and social gatherings I will experience over the next two semesters.

Walking proudly to the new facility, I entered the residence hall's lobby. There stood several residence hall assistants (RAs) who knew me because I had met them at other residence halls or at other places on campus. They asked me what room I was staying in and I told them 439-B. They then handed me paperwork to sign.

Before moving in, students are required to sign several documents, one being the Gamecock Guidelines. These guidelines are a list of "Do's and Don'ts" in regards to living at the facility. They are based on University and University Housing regulations.

The registration process continued with the completion of an information card to identify those who actually live at the residence hall and a disciplinary card used track infractions. Students are allowed up to 12 infraction points. If students exceed those points during the course of the school year, they can be removed from University Housing.

After all my paperwork was filled out, I received my key and was asked to inspect my new dwelling. "Make sure everything is as good as the inspection states," an RA tells me.

As for the paper work, I felt like I was signing my life away.

I inspected my room. It looked really nice. I went back down to the RA station and told them everything was fine.

Then, for me, came the bombshell: Students who live at this facility must move their cars to another part of the campus on Game Day.

I thought, "How crazy is that?!"

The reason given was so that alumni and others who have club suite level boxes can have a place to park. It was also mentioned that students' cars will be towed if they are not moved during Game Day. Students are allowed to move their cars back to stadium housing the game is over.

After getting over that piece of news, I regained my composure and focused on moving in.

In the heat and high humidity, moving in was everything but pleasant. I had to get the the lobby, get on the elevator, go up four floors, walk

The bathrooms have double sinks and a bathtub/shower area. Photo by Steve Latham / JSU
CONGRATS
JSU
GAMECOCKS
FOR A GREAT
WIN!

Photo by Steve Gross/ The Anniston Star
GAMECOCKS VS. U-T CHATTANOOGA, 6 P.M. BURGESS-SNOW STADIUM

Media frenzy boosts profile

By RYAN WOODBURY
Sports Writer

OXFORD, Miss. – You could’ve heard a pen drop in Vaught-Hemingway Stadium late last Saturday afternoon as soon as Jacksonville State knocked off Ole Miss in a double overtime thriller. All was quite, except for the northeast corner of stadium where the Marching Southerners were, and a group of about fifty or sixty JSU students that took advantage of the great lower level seats that suddenly became available after the first half.

As the Marching Southerners played the JSU fight song and as the players rushed the field JSU’s head coach Jack Crowe had tears began budding up in his eyes. On his way over to raise his helmet to the tune of the JSU fight song junior defensive end Jamison Wadley said: “I don’t even think its set in yet, I don’t know how long it take to set in. But, I do know one thing. This is huge for [JSU] us.”

Is he going to play? Is he not going to play? Last Friday it was announced that he was. His name: Jeremiah Masoli. He was the starting quarterback for Oregon. After a transfer, a loophole in the system, and a whole lot of unnecessary hype over this Masoli guy-there was still a game to be played. All the pre-game attention was focused on him [Masoli]. There was not much focused on the quarterback(s) of the opposition.

Arguably the two best quarterbacks to come out of their home states (Alabama and Georgia) were in Vaught-Hemingway Stadium that day. They weren’t wearing the red and blue of Ole Miss, they weren’t playing for a Division I-A school, they were playing for, what the bleacherreport.com called, a “Cupcake Team”. That “Cupcake Team” made Ole Miss wish they’d never even heard of that school up in northeast Alabama.

Now everyone knows who Coty Blanchard, Marques Ivory, and Jacksonville State are. Thanks, ESPN. “This means a lot for JSU’s tradition and everybody to bring this win back to JSU,” said Calvin Middleton.

Defense dubbed Red Bandits

By BRETT WIGGINS
Special to The Chanticleer

JACKSONVILLE – Hall of Fame baseball manager Casey Stengel always told his teams to “keep the game close until the sixth or seventh inning and I’ll figure something out.” This is the same approach that Coach Charley Pell and his offense took with the Jacksonville State University Gamecock defense...
baseball manager Casey Stengel always told his teams to “keep the game close until the sixth or seventh inning and I’ll figure something out.” This is the same approach that Coach Charley Pell and his offense took with the Jacksonville State University Gamecock defense during the last season the football team went undefeated.

That magical season, the defense dubbed the Red Bandits by then Sports Information Director, Rudy Abbott, took this to heart. That stingy defense led the Mid South Conference (now the Gulf South Conference) in rush defense, scoring defense and total defense. It also finished the season third in the conference in pass defense. Perhaps the most important stat was that during the ten games played that season only two teams were able to score more than ten points against them. The Red Bandits only gave up 104 points for the whole 1970 season.

The Red Bandits were not only a team that would keep opponents out of the end zone, but would also keep opposing offenses off the field. They had an uncanny ability to take the ball away from the other team. In the game against rival Troy, the bandits took the football away from the Trojans three times in the first quarter alone and either scored or set up a short field for the Gamecocks high-powered offense. The Gamecocks went on to win this game 55-10. They also set a national record with ten interceptions in their tilt against Western Carolina.

The ability to take the ball away was due in large part to Pell implementing a defensive scheme that had not been seen in the conference, the 4-4, also known as an eight man front. In the spring of 1970, Pell brought in Jerry Glanville, who later coached the Atlanta Falcons, to teach a new defensive system to confuse quarterbacks and defensive coordinators. It worked.

Coming in as Sports Information Director in 1964, Abbott wanted to create an identity for the Gamecocks football team. This was in part because there were so many teams across the country and state competing for headlines and coverage that everyone needed a way to set their program apart. It was not a matter of just saying you are the best. According to Abbott, “You can’t just say you’re the best and then not perform.” Abbott sensed the defense was going to be special in 1970 and hung the identity of the team on them. He came up with several names and presented them to Pell, the defensive coaches and the players. The players and coaches chose the Red Bandits. They were told by Abbott that he would promote the team around the Red Bandits under one condition, “They couldn’t just be good, they had to be the best.”

“ar storybook season; these guys captured the imagination of not only Jacksonville, but the surrounding areas. They also rallied alumni support. I have seen defenses as good as the 1970 Red Bandits, but none better,” said Abbott.

As the 1970 season was wrapping up, Pell faced a scheduling nightmare. JSU’s last regular season game was Thanksgiving Day at the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga and two days later the playoffs were set to begin. There is no way a team would be able to play a game on a Thursday and be ready to play the following Saturday. There were two options: forfeit to UT-Chattanooga, finish the season 8-1 and go to the playoffs for a chance at a national title or play UT-Chattanooga trying for something only two teams had been able to accomplish at JSU and try to find a bowl game to play in. The team voted and they took a bus to Chattanooga, handily defeating the Mocs 40-6.

Abbott and Pell approached the Florida A&M coach promising if he invited them to play in the Orange Blossom Classic in Miami that they would aim to bring 10,000 fans with them. This was to reward the players for such an outstanding season. According to Abbott, between 9,000 and 10,000 Gamecocks fans made the trip to the Orange Bowl stadium to see the Red Bandits finish the season as the only undefeated team in NAIA in 1970.

There have only been three undefeated teams in JSU’s history: 1970, 1947 and 1917. The one thing these teams had in common was their ability to keep the game close and let the offense figure something out. When asked what she remembers about that storybook year of 1970, Ward Pell, wife of Charley Pell said, “Without a doubt they were the most brutal, fast and hard-hitting defensive unit we ever had the privilege of being around. We have had some great individual players and teams at Clemson and the University of Florida, but none played as well and in tune with each other as the 1970 JSU Red Bandits. They were such a dominating team. It is my hope that the 2010 Fightin’ Gamecock defense can equal the performance of the Red Bandits of 1970, and carry on the great tradition set by them.”

For 40 years the Red Bandits have been a tradition at JSU, but that name is only used when it is deserved. The defense earns the name by working hard and establishing the fact that they are the best.

Abbott said that the most impressive trait of the Red Bandits is that “they could not only run you down and take you down, but they’d knock you out.”

Will the 2010 season revive the Red Bandits? Says Coach Jack Crowe, “Truly great football happens when eleven people play with one heart, one mind, and one identity. After 40 years, indications are the Red Bandits are back!”

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