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#4 Eagles head to KC for NAIA Tourney



#4 Concordia Eagles

GSAC Regular Season Champion

Record:
26-7 (13-5 Conference)

Top Scorers:
Austin Simon- 15.3 ppg
Cameron Gliddon- 14.0 ppg

Notable Wins:
Our Lady of the Lake, Westmont,
Azusa Pacific, Master's (2)

Notes:
Concordia ranks fourth in the NAIA in scoring, averaging 86.2 points per game. Three years ago, Concordia beat Oklahoma Christian 70-55 in a first-round NAIA tournament game.

LAURA LUNDBERG
STAFF WRITER

The men's basketball team won the GSAC Regular-Season Championship on Feb. 21 after finishing up the conference season with a victory over Point Loma. The Eagles landed in the championship game of the GSAC Tournament against Biola, where they fell to the Eagles for the third time this season by a final score of 81-77. The team currently sits as the number four overall seed in the Buffalo Funds NAIA National Tournament in Kansas City, MO where they will play Oklahoma Christian in the first round on Thursday.

Throughout the season, the Eagles never had a losing streak longer than one game. "We always found a way to bounce back from a loss and win the next one," said Greg Dinneen, Associate Athletic Director. "This was probably the toughest championship to win in awhile because the league was so balanced this season, making the conference very competitive." As regular season GSAC champions, the Eagles preyed on some considerable conference hardware. Cameron Gliddon, senior, was awarded GSAC Player of the Year, and Ken Ammann was honored alongside Point Loma's Bill Carr as Co-Coach of the Year. Austin Simon, senior, also received All-Conference honors.

The success of this team can be attributed to many causes. "It starts with the coaching, the preparation, having seniors who play well together, a strong defense, sharing the ball on offense, and players taking good shots," Dinneen said. "If you put it all together, it's just chemistry." Ammann, who won his 300th game at Concordia last month, traces the success of this team back to the recruit-

ing process. "After losing all five starters, we wanted to get the best players and people we could get," he said. "We weren't going to sacrifice character just to get a good player. When you come here, you are joining part of a family."

The team's emphasis on the character of their athletes does not go unnoticed by fans. "I think the team's greatest strength is their unselfishness," said Sarah Lindley, '11. "They really play for each other, and it's obvious." Athletes enjoy playing for this team because of how cohesive it is.

"I came to Concordia because it offered a program where the focus was based on building a team, not on individual success," said center Tommy Granado, senior. "Our team wins because we have great coaches who recruit and bring together unselfish guys who want to compete and win as a whole." Granado is averaging over 12 points per game in his second year at Concordia after transferring from Citrus College.

The Eagles head to Kansas City hungry to make another deep tournament run after falling to Georgetown in the third round of last year's one-week NAIA Championship sprint. "I hope to see the team continue to get better and tougher," Ammann said. Granado emphasized a focus on defense after the Eagles gave up totals of 87 and 85 points to opponents in the GSAC tournament.

Fans have high hopes for the team as well. "If they keep building on their confidence, they will be golden," Lindley said. "The seniors are solid, and the rest of them have really been shining. I think they will go really far."

A live stream of the contest will be available for viewing on Thursday in the Eagles Nest at 10:30 a.m.

Oklahoma Christian Eagles (unranked)

Sooner Athletic Conference
Postseason Champion

Record:
20-12 (11-11 Conference)

Top Scorers:
Will Reinke- 16.1 ppg
Kendre Talley- 11.1 ppg

Notable Wins:
Oklahoma Baptist

Notes:
OCU snuck into the tournament field after upsetting #2 ranked Oklahoma Baptist to win the SAC Postseason Tournament. Coach Dan Hays is in his 29th season with the program.

Take me out to the 60-hour wiffleball game

DAETONA LAURENCE
STAFF WRITER

Concordia's 5th annual 60-hour Wiffleball Tournament for Diabetes will take place April 14-16 between the baseball and softball fields. All proceeds will benefit the American Diabetes Association. "It's great to get out there and compete. It's pretty relaxed, and everyone has a lot of fun," said Wesley Gong, sophomore Intramural Coordinator.

The Concordia tradition began in 2006, when alumnus Peter Ferry decided to outdo his father's previous 52-hour long wiffleball game. In an interview with *The Orange County Register*, Perry said, "After my younger brother, Andrew, was diagnosed with diabetes, I wanted to do something to help. My dad had told me that he set a world record in wiffleball when he was younger to raise money for breast cancer, so I decided to try to beat his record."

After the tournament's debut, students who were interested in the cause carried on the tradition. This year, the intramural staff has taken ownership of the tournament. Teams will be able to sign up on imleagues.com beginning March 18. The cost is \$100 per team, and each team receives ten t-shirts. The featured teams this year include

"Everyday I'm Wifflin'" and "The Endless Wiffle." Shirts can also be purchased individually at \$10 a piece. Individuals who would like to participate, but cannot find a team can contact the intramural staff or visit the CSLD.

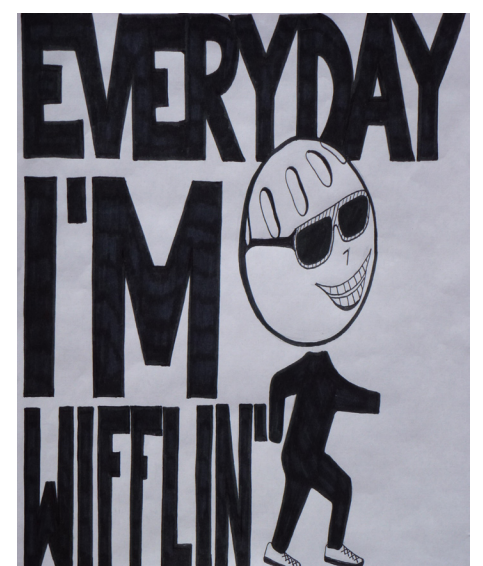
Each team signs up for a two-hour slot and plays in that same slot for two shifts each day. The intramural staff is also working toward getting a faculty and staff time slot sometime Friday afternoon. The game begins Thursday at midnight and ends Sunday at noon. "The tournament builds community. It's a chance for you and all your friends to come together and enjoy yourself," said Josh Canter, sophomore. "The unique aspect of it being at random times makes for a fun experience. I just love wiffleball, and this year it's going to be bigger for the cause."

After signing up, each smaller team, or shift, gets assigned to one of the two main teams. "I didn't play my freshman year, but this year I'm looking forward to participating in the tradition," said Haley Holmes, sophomore.

"The tournament is another opportunity for the campus community to come together for a good cause. We want to support the American Diabetes Association and the Concordia students who have diabetes as well," said Beth Crowell, LEAD

GA Program Coordinator.

Fans are encouraged to come and cheer on the teams even if they would rather not play. Contact the intramural coordinators at stephen.puls@eagles.cui.edu or wesley.gong@eagles.cui.edu with any further questions.



Editorial:

An outpost of hope

STEPHEN PULS
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Upon returning to Concordia in the fall of my sophomore year, I found it hard to ignore the buzz surrounding a group of students who had traveled together to Africa during the summer of 2009. I was able to observe a tangible change in each individual by somehow continually finding myself in the middle of "Africa story time" over the first few weeks of the semester. Over time, I began to see tables and flyers around campus speaking of FIKISHA. I knew it was somehow connected to the experience of the summer team, but mentally evaluated it as something equivalent to Invisible Children—a global cause that I personally would most likely never be involved with.

That spring, I not only was able to learn the story of the student-founded non-profit, but found that I would get to experience it first hand as a student on the Around-the-World semester. I slowly attempted to build visualizations of these "miracle boys" that I would eventually be interacting with. As the moment grew closer, I prepared myself to deal with an environment engulfed with despair. Upon arrival, I quickly found it to be quite the opposite.

The miracle boys of Kawangware (a community within Nairobi) have every reason to live in dejection, but instead each one is filled with a unique joy that I have never observed in individuals elsewhere. Their ages range from pre-teen to men in their mid-20s, all of whom have developed a community with each other through the work of Kawangware Lutheran Church—located in the center of the slum. Since the founding of FIKISHA, the church has been able to expand this outreach considerably. FIKISHA not only works to provide support for the miracle boys through activities at the church, but also provides funding for selected

boys to be placed in local boarding schools.

Outside the church's walls, the boys must deal with the earthly consequences of their situation. Drug use is a way of life, and many citizens avoid associating with the boys at all costs. They typically find shelter at night under the awnings of shops, sleeping on the hardened dirt street. Because many of the boys are orphans, it becomes extremely difficult to obtain a government identification—making it virtually impossible to pursue any form of employment. In fact, the current economic climate of Kenya has made it even difficult for those who do possess IDs to have any form of a stable job.

It's far too risky for any of the boys to try to save money they do come across (through collecting scrap metal) because all of their possessions are kept with them at all times—making them liable to theft. Nevertheless, the boys are a pleasure to interact with, whether it be through simple conversation or an incredibly competitive game of soccer. At times it even became difficult for me to associate immense suffering with their dynamic, joyful personalities.

Despite their terribly bleak predicament, the church and FIKISHA have given the miracle boys a perspective towards hope. For me personally, the miracle boys serve as a testimony of how to react in any time of hardship—to return to the eternal hope that is within each one of us through the sacrifice of Christ.

This Thursday, Night of Hope will work to bring awareness to the wonderful ways that God's hope is being brought to individuals across the globe—including those in America and on this campus. I encourage you to attend not only to support the miracle boys, but also to celebrate the hope that each of us can thankfully live with each day.



Sammy, a FIKISHA miracle boy.

PHOTO COURTESY FIKISHA

CPP Director's Commentary: Reacting to Pension Reform

The Center for Public Policy is a new program that brings together diverse thinkers within Orange County to focus on critical issues confronting our future. Through the Center, Concordia works with local elected officials, labor, business groups, public sector managers and local residents to find solutions to difficult problems and serve as a forum for discussion and dialogue. The next event is titled "Creating High Performance Government in Orange County and Beyond" and will be held at Concordia on Fri. March 30, beginning at 8:30 a.m. in DeNault Auditorium. Keith Curry, Mayor Pro-tem of Newport Beach, serves as the Center's director.

KEITH CURRY
DIRECTOR-
CONCORDIA CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY

Recently the Concordia Center for Public Policy hosted a program on managing pension costs. Rapidly escalating pension expenses have dominated the news and forced the issue to the top of every local government agenda.

The rapid increase in pension costs is due to the poor investment performance of pension funds such as CalPERS, changing assumptions regarding mortality and longevity and rapidly escalating salary and benefit levels which have pushed up pension payments. Today's crisis in pension funding can be traced to 1999, when CalPERS actuaries testified that the California legislature could enact a "3% at 50" pension formula for public safety workers and that it would be "at no cost" to local governments due to the investment performance of CalPERS pension funds at that time. This induced a bi-partisan enactment of the new formula, signature by then-governor Gray Davis and adoption by nearly every local government in California.

In retrospect, it is now clear that the "3% at 50" formula did not work as a matter of mathematics. The investment returns, increasing contributions and mortality assumptions to make it work simply cannot be achieved. CalPERS' testimony to the contrary stands as an act of financial malpractice much greater in scope and cost than the Orange County bankruptcy. People went to jail for the Orange County bankruptcy.

Governor Jerry Brown, Stanford University, the Little Hoover Commission and local elected officials of all political persuasions have all used the

same word to describe this system; unsustainable.

In my own city of Newport Beach, the projected increase in pension costs between 2010 and 2014 is estimated to be about \$9 million based on the most recent CalPERS announcements. That amount would enable us to more than double the expenditures on our library system or to double our parks, recreation and senior services budget. It is this crowding out of public services by increasing pension costs that has led some so-called liberal communities such as San Jose and San Francisco (where there are more retired than active city workers), to call for pension reform.

Recently, Governor Brown has proposed some far reaching pension initiatives. The most significant is to require public employees to pay half of their pension costs and to create a hybrid, second tier system for new employees. These are substantial reforms that would have a major impact on pension funding.

Again using Newport Beach as an example, going to a 50/50 split would reduce our taxpayer paid pension costs to pre-2005 levels, a very affordable situation. Similarly, a second tier program for new hires would begin to bend the out year cost curve and over time, will reduce our ongoing liability.

What impact would a 50/50 split have on our employees? For safety employees the pension cost is equal to 44.9% of salary, so a hypothetical police officer making \$85,000 would pay 50% of \$38,165 or \$19,082 equal to 22.45% of salary. This would certainly be a big hit to take home pay and cops like everyone else are subject to expenses expanding to meet the amount of income available. This is even more true in the family formation years when officers are in their 20's and 30's.

Higher employee pickups will need to be phased in over time, but is this level unfair or excessive? Not really. Self employed individuals are compelled by law to pay 15.3% in self employment tax for Social Security. If that same self employed individual set aside 10% of income in a 401(k), the percentage of income allocated to retirement would be 25.3%. A private sector employee pays 6.2% in Social Security tax (reduced to 4.2% temporarily by the payroll tax cut), and with 10% to his 401(k) would be paying 16.2%. A lower percentage, but for a much less beneficial retirement plan. Most public employees, including those working for Newport Beach, do not pay into nor receive Social Security.

When you consider that the additional pension contributions by public employees would be pre-tax, the savings from reduced state and federal income taxes would offset the increased cost by approximately 37% or \$7,060. While everyone's tax and expense situations are different, the point is the amount is similar to the retirement contributions being made by private sector employees.

The tradeoff is that today's public sector workers are the last generation to enjoy an enhanced retirement benefit paying as much as 90% of salary at 50 years of age, with lifetime adjustments for inflation that he cannot outlive. Furthermore, he is 100% protected from losses due to fluctuations in market value. Any 401(k) holder who has watched his value drop in the past few years would jump at the chance for this investment vehicle.

It is because current employees enjoy such a valuable financial asset in the form of their pensions that I believe, acting out of enlightened self-interest, labor will work constructively with local governments to address this problem. The alternative is massive reductions in workforce. Indeed, nationally, state and local governments have shed 650,000 jobs since 2007 and that number is expected to rise to over 1 million by 2013. A "3% at 50" pension does you no good if you lose your job at thirty five after ten years.

Indeed, we are seeing this happen all over California as local elected officials and their bargaining units are crafting agreements that introduce a second tier and increase contributions by current employees. If the legislature provides the tools and gets out of the way, local governments and their employees together will craft pension programs that are economically sustainable and preserve vital public services.



Keith Curry, Director: Center for Public Policy

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The opinions expressed in *The Concordia Courier* are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the administration, faculty, staff or student body of Concordia University. Editorials reflect the views of the majority of the editorial staff.

25 Fun Facts with Dakota Anderson Scott Eskelson, Admissions Office

1. Married to Angel Eskelson for 13 years
2. They have two boys: Brett (9) and Carson (5)
3. Works for Concordia in the School of Education as a MAED Admissions counselor—He helps teachers get their Masters Degrees
4. Worked as a teacher before coming to Concordia—He was a P.E. teacher who taught 1-4 grade
5. Lived with his wife in France for three years—worked in a Christian camp as missionaries
6. Was born and raised in Fullerton, CA
7. His son Brett is named after George Brett, and his middle name, Jordan, is after Michael Jordan.
8. Carson is named after Carson Palmer.
9. Attends Rose Dr. Friends Church in Yorba Linda.
10. Spent a summer in Camden, N.J. coordinating VBS for kids.
11. Spent another summer in Ireland running basketball camps as a missionary.
12. Favorite bible verse: Jeremiah 29:11-13
13. Scott is currently the leader for the kindergarten class in the Awanas program at his church Wednesday nights.
14. Traveled throughout Europe including trips to Austria, Italy, England, Germany, Netherlands, and Ireland
15. Favorite Movies: Gladiator and The Patriot
16. Favorite Sport: Angels Baseball
17. Favorite College Football Team: USC
18. Has already started taking his kids to every Concordia Athletics event
19. Favorite Bands: Third Day and Hootie and the Blowfish
20. Dream Vacation with the family is to go back to Notre Dame and watch a football game vs. USC
21. Dream vacation with his wife is to go to Fiji.
22. Currently coaching his two son's in baseball. He has also coached basketball and soccer
23. Favorite Quote: "The safest place to be is in the center of God's will."
24. Favorite Animal: Dogs—His sons want a German Shepherd and a Golden Retriever
25. Besides Christ, some people he wants to meet in heaven include David, Paul and his grandparents on his dad's side, who he has never met



Eagles 'lace up for love' again with annual 5k Eagle Run

BRIANNA LAMANNA AND ALISON MARTIN
STAFF WRITERS

Concordia's annual 5k Eagle Run was established by students and includes the nearby community in order to raise funds for selected non-profit organizations. The proceeds generate financial assistance to three non-profit organizations: FIKISHA, ABAN on Neglect, and Village of Hope. ASCUI is coordinating the event, and chose these three organizations because they are directly connected to the Concordia community.

FIKISHA Kenya is an organization founded by Concordia students that brings hope, restoration and independence to homeless youth in the slums of Nairobi, Kenya. FIKISHA is a Swahili word meaning "Enable to Reach." This ministry exists to care for and rehabilitate vulnerable youth through the promotion of physical stability, educational opportunity, emotional maturity and spiritual identity.

ABAN on Neglect is a non-profit organization in Accra, Ghana, working to empower street girls while cleaning up the environment. Rebecca Brandt, '10, became connected with the program while studying abroad in Ghana. They provide women with shelter, while also offering seamstress training and other means of education. Upon graduation from the program, each participant's

savings are matched by the organization.

The third selected organization is Village of Hope (OC Rescue Mission). This is a 192-bed transitional housing program for homeless men, women and children. The Village offers spiritual and personal development, counseling services, medical and dental care, workforce development, food service, child development services, transportation and recreational services.

Parking for the event will be available on campus in the Grimm Hall Parking Lot. Upon parking, participants will be directed to walk down to the baseball parking lot. Interested participants start the course run at Concordia camps and continue along Bobcat Trail before ending at the baseball lot. Water stations will be placed at the second mile marker.

"First and foremost we encourage people to sign up," said Melissa Karnazes, ASCUI Secretary. "You don't have to be a runner. It is 100% okay to be a walker and invite family members or friends, people you work for or anyone that you think will be interested." The ASCUI team also has an important goal in mind. "We want as many people there as possible having fun, raising awareness about our causes and raising money for them," said Margaret Foreman, Communications Director.

Registration forms and other race day information may be found at cui.edu.

"Pi" Mu Epsilon pays tribute to 3.141592...

SARINA GRANT
STAFF WRITER

Tomorrow, March 14, Concordia's chapter of the math society Pi Mu Epsilon will be hosting a celebration of "Pi Day."

The event will take place in front of the Student Union during lunch, from 11 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. "During lunch is a nice time to host it because we get both students and faculty to participate," said Ellie Rossi, junior Vice-President of Pi Mu Epsilon.

Pi Day is an internationally recognized day that celebrates pi—the number 3.14159... The theme of this year's Pi Day at Concordia is "Pi-rate." Some of the activities will include a contest to memorize the most digits of pi, playing sudoku on the ground and answering trivia questions. Prizes will be awarded to the winners.

Just for stopping by, students will receive 'pi-patches' and goodie bags with fortune cookies and facts about the world's most recognized mathematical constant. Free dessert pie will also be provided

for those who attend. "We just want people to stop by for a bit to participate in this internationally celebrated day," said Jordan Pare, senior President of Pi Mu Epsilon.

"I'm excited to see the different activities that will be at Pi Day. It would be cool if we could smash pie into the math teachers' faces," said Lea Lawrence, freshman.

"We try to incorporate some kind of theology into every math club event," said Pare. The group decided to do this with "Pible" versus this year. A Pible verse is a term coined by the math club that represents the 14th verse of the third chapter of various books of the Bible.

"Even if you're not a math major, Pible verses are something that everyone at Concordia can appreciate and enjoy," said Pare.

"There's not very many math or science days that exist in the world, so it's pretty cool that we get to celebrate this event," he said. Joining the math club in celebration of Pi day is free for all students and faculty. For more information on getting involved with Pi Mu Epsilon contact Pare.

Faculty Profile: Mike Hoffert

AUDREY BIESK
STAFF WRITER

Michael Hoffert, Adjunct Professor of Physical Science, has worked at Concordia for four years. He graduated from Cal-State Fullerton with a Bachelor's degree in Physics and Musical Performance along with a Masters in Computer Science.

Outside of Concordia, Hoffert is in his 35th year as an engineer for Timken Corporation in Los Alamitos, where he rebuilds jet engines for major airlines. During his career as an engineer, Hoffert has been involved in building the basic power structure of the Mars Spirit and Opportunity Rovers. He also formed a non-profit research and educational institute with Tierra Astronomical and constructed a 48-inch telescope. Before being an engineer, Hoffert was involved in show business for 15 years, doing work in Broadway musicals and television. He won a College World Series as a baseball player at Cal-State Fullerton and currently works as an NCAA official for football and baseball. Hoffert is also a Vietnam War veteran.

In fall of 2012, he will be teaching a new Hon-

ors Planetary Astronomy class. This class will serve as an introduction to Concordia's prospective Physics major.

One of Hoffert's favorite things about teaching at Concordia is the creative family atmosphere. He believes that everyone really helps each other here. A future goal that Hoffert is in the process of working towards is having a campus observatory built for the school. It would be used for educational outreach to the community and for student academic projects for class. All of the earth science, chemistry, biology, physics and even theology classes would be involved. During the course of the next two years, Hoffert hopes to get a final decision and sufficient grants from outside foundations in order to build the observatory.

Hoffert has been married for 36 years, raised three children and has three grandchildren. He believes one of his greatest accomplishments is raising a family. His definition of luck is "when opportunity meets preparation" and encourages students to always be prepared for what they are going to do. Hoffert's advice for life is, "to never say no to anything that you're interested in."



Hoffert, an avid astronomer, poses with his telescope.

Eagle Run Schedule of Events

- 7:00 am: - Registration Bible/T-shirt pickup Expo
- 7:50 am: Welcome and Prayer
- 8:00 am: 5k Race
- 9:00am: Closing/Expo ends

- Registration:
- CUI Students: \$10
- CUI Alumnus: \$15
- Faculty/Staff/Administrators: \$15
- Friend of CUI: \$20
- Group (more than 10 people): \$15 per person



Softball not yet satisfied after blazing 32-2 start

MICHELLE LOPEZ
STAFF WRITER

The Concordia softball team is off to an incredible 32-2 start, going undefeated at home thus far. The Eagles have won 23 straight games and are currently ranked 8th in the nation. The team had a busy schedule over spring break, playing 14 games in total, including traveling to Arizona for the Tucson Invitational. The girls played seven different teams over three days, and won all seven games. Much like last year, the strong start is building higher expectations for the end of the year. Chanele Dresser, freshman, said, "The team has been putting in a lot of time and effort into making our program what it is right now."

The Eagles have specifically been working throughout the year to improve their swinging techniques. "This year I feel like we are way faster at running the bases, hitting the ball harder, all around stronger and more aggressive throughout the game compared to last year," said Jenna Jorgenson, sophomore.

On Feb. 12, the team traveled to a tournament in Redding where they played against Simpson

University. The Red Hawks opened up with a 7-1 after just the first inning. The Eagles retook the lead in the bottom of the seventh inning scoring six runs and winning 13-11. "Our pitching is just really on it as a team—we're not going down without a fight," said Bryanna Simpson, junior. "We have confidence in each other."

Fighting back to win against Simpson University boosted the Eagles' confidence to a new limit. This was later proven during the Tucson Invitational in Arizona. The Eagles won all seven of their games by significant margins, winning the fourth game of the invitational by a blow out score of 22-1 in five innings against Trinity International. After failing to reach nationals last season, the Eagles understand they are still far from their objective. "There's always room for small improvements, we had the best record ever last year, but couldn't finish," said Katie Carson, senior. The Eagles feel confident they will succeed and have a chance to compete for a title at the NAIA National Championships in Alabama.

The team will begin GSAC play today at Hope International with a doubleheader starting at 2 p.m.



The team huddles around home plate during its tournament in Arizona.

COURTESY CU SOFTBALL

Women's water polo heads to Ann Arbor for Michigan Invite

ALLISON BOWMAN
STAFF WRITER

On March 16, the women's water polo team will be competing at the Michigan Invite at the University of Michigan. This will be the team's only out-of-state tournament this season. It consists of five games and lasts until March 18. The team currently holds a 10-7 record.

This is the first year the team will be traveling to Michigan. "It's a prestigious tournament," said Jamie Clark, junior. Because of the state's low outdoor temperatures, all matches will take place in indoor aquatics centers. "It will be a new experience as a team to play in different conditions," Clark said. The Michigan Invite schedule includes matches against Gannon University, Siena, Mercyhurst College, University of Notre Dame, and the University of Michigan. "We'll be seeing different styles of playing compared to how we do it in Southern California, in terms of how we handle the ball and executing plays," said Maria Quiroz, junior.

To prepare for the tournament, the team has held some two-a-day practices while also maintaining consistent sessions of weight training. "For water polo you need to constantly stay conditioned because it is not like a dry land sport—you need to use all of your muscles," said Ashley Dorrego, junior. "You can really tell if you've been out of the water for a couple of days."

The team has specifically been working on perfecting some of their set plays and rotations at recent practices. "As a team, we are mostly focusing on defense and improving on our six-on-five," Clark said.

There are 20 members on the water polo team, with a good majority being upper classmen. "Our biggest challenge is probably communicating with each other and taking the time to figure out each other's strengths and weaknesses," Quiroz said. The regular season will go until April 13, with nationals beginning in Fresno, CA the following week.

On March 14, the team will play against George Washington University at the William Wollett Aquatic Complex in Irvine beginning at noon.

Light Up the Night!

Come support the baseball and softball teams

Wed. March 14, 7:30 behind the baseball field

Food trucks, bonfire, games

Free Screaming Eagles tank-top!

Love more than a score

JAMIE VAUGHAN
STAFF WRITER

The Concordia men's tennis team has started the 2012 season with a 4-5 overall record, going 4-3 in GSAC play. This year's team is led by seniors Jordan Hovis and Bruno Santarelli in Jonathan Sanchez's second year as Head Coach.

Gernot Hagemann, sophomore, is an exchange student from Germany who joined the team in the fall of 2011. He has been playing tennis for the last eight years and is currently Santarelli's doubles partner. "I think the team has made an impact on my life," said Hagemann. "I gained a lot of new friends, and it is fun to hang out with the team when we are not on the court."

A significant amount of team focus is spent on avoiding negativity at all costs, working to constantly build each other up. "I love being a student-athlete and working with a strong team," said Jan Guler, junior. Guler is also an exchange student from Switzerland and has been playing tennis for 17 years.

He agreed that the team spends time together doing more than just playing tennis, a vital element to team camaraderie.

Tennis is not entirely a team sport; it is also a sport that works to push the athlete's own talent so he can become better himself. "I love the individual aspect of tennis and being in control of my own aspect. I can't blame anybody but myself," Hovis said. Each player has the chance to shine in his game. "I need the competition. Competing is my favorite thing. There is nothing like it," Hovis said.

Highlights of the season thus far include 9-0 sweeps of Hope International and Biola. The team fell to NAIA #1 Fresno Pacific 8-1 last week, with Ryan McNamara, senior, and Patrick Szerameta, junior, recording the only team point in a doubles match.

The team's last match was on Sat., March 10, against Westmont in Costa Mesa. Their next match will be Tues., March 20, against Hope International University at 3:30 p.m. For more information on the team, visit the tennis page on the CU Athletics website.

White's career comes full circle

DANIELLE LEE
STAFF WRITER

Josh White, senior, is one of two four-year members of the Concordia baseball team. White began playing baseball at the age of five and is serving as co-captain for the team this season alongside Kyle Konicek, senior.

"Baseball has always been my passion," White said. He emphasized a great appreciation for the knowledge he has obtained about himself through years of playing the game. "He brings a lot of experience, even if it's not necessarily voiced verbally," said Andrew Brooks, junior. "He can teach other players without even talking about it." Having played together for three years, Brooks and White have been able to develop a close relationship. "He's a one-of-a-kind kind of guy," Brooks said.

While White is a dedicated to constant improvement, he also knows how to keep things light and have fun. "He's a fun kid and good student," said Mike Grahovac, Head Coach of Baseball. White's favorite memory during his Concordia tenure was last year's National Championship. "There will never be any sports thrill for me that was better than that," he said. "Our team was so close and it seemed like no matter what the score was we were going to win the game in the World Series."

Off the field, White is a Business: Sports Marketing major and President of the Student Athlete Advisory Council (SAAC).

As president of SAAC, he works as a student representative that assists in relaying concerns of the student body to faculty. Concordia has been a great experience for White. "I love it here," he said. "Since it's a small school, it was easy to meet people and to focus on my studies with the small class sizes." When White has free time he likes to go golfing and play hockey. "He's very close to his family," Grahovac said.

White's ability to work well with everyone and make light of situations makes him well loved by his peers. Nick Kopinski, junior, has developed a relationship with White as a student-worker for the athletic department. "It's great working with him," he said. Natalie Hernishin, senior, has known White for three years and pointed out that he is always willing to meet new people. "He's really friendly and inspires his team," Hernishin said.

After graduation, White emphasized playing Major League baseball to be his ultimate goal. "If it doesn't work out I want to work for a professional sports team like the Angels or Ducks in the front offices of the team," he said. Though he does not plan on going to graduate school any time soon, White says that obtaining a Master's is a possibility in the future.

White and the rest of the baseball team will be in action on Fri. March 16 at Point Loma Nazarene University for a double header. The first game starts at noon. The next home game is Sun. March 17—another double header against Point Loma.



White, senior, has saved four games out of the bullpen for the Eagles this season.

Blair, Exalt, visits local churches

SALLY JEAN WARREN
STAFF WRITER

Spencer Blair, senior, has been involved in a wide array of art programs during his time at Concordia. He is 22 years old and is currently studying to acquire a degree in theater. Blair's hometown is Laguna Hills, CA. He chose to attend Concordia because of the successful Performing Arts department. He has participated in many Concordia-related activities including theater productions, Exalt and the Concordia Choir. He is active in performance groups outside of Concordia, such as "Improv Shmimprov" and "Comedy Num Nums." Blair also founded and co-directs a group called "Improv-ceivable," an on-campus comedy group comprised of Concordia students.

Exalt is an a cappella group composed of four students. Along with Blair, the other students in Exalt include Matthia Duryea, sophomore, Maggie Darby, sophomore, and Jon Bennett, senior. Exalt is affiliated with Witness and Acclaim, two groups that are part of an outreach ministry centered around the performing arts. "Exalt began approximately 15 years ago as an outreach ministry and a way to thank our local congregations who support Concordia," said Kris Huston, Vocal Outreach Teams Director.

Huston has a special connection with the group because she is a Concordia alum. "It's a huge blessing to be able to pursue a cappella music and min-

istry with the talented and passionate students of Concordia," Huston said. Blair has impressed his Exalt peers and the director with his contribution to the performance group. "Spencer is a joyful, talented and committed member," Huston said. "Having Spencer as our tenor is a huge blessing to the group." Huston has worked with Blair for a few years and has enjoyed getting to know him over that period of time. "His exuberance and sense of humor makes rehearsals a lot of fun, and his talent brings the group to new levels of performance quality," Huston said.

Exalt has also brought benefits to Blair as a performer. "I really enjoy being a part of Exalt both because of the professional experience and the outreach aspect of the group," he said. "Exalt has really improved my vocal abilities as well as my understanding of music."

Darby works closely with Blair and values his input to Exalt. "He makes Exalt really fun," she said. "He's a great musician and shows outstanding leadership qualities in our group. We love him." Andy Zanca, junior, has worked with Blair in the Concordia Choir and has attended "Improv-Shmimprov" events. "Spencer is my favorite team member to watch," he said.

One of Blair's favorite memories while attending Concordia was playing the role of Algernon in the Theater Department's production "The Importance of Being Earnest." Blair will also be performing this Thursday at Night of Hope.



Spencer Blair, senior

Choir rounds third and heads home in finale performance

TAYLOR BUNDY
STAFF WRITER

Fri., March 9 was the final performance of the critically acclaimed Concordia Choir in their Pacific Southwest Tour. The choir was conducted by Dr. Michael Busch and accompanied by Dr. Hyun-joo Choi on piano. From Feb. 25-28 the Choir performed at churches in the Phoenix and Las Vegas areas.

The spiritual concert was in six parts, each with a different theme and style of worship. The choir welcomed the audience with a powerful opening of Psalm 122:1-3, 6-7, "I was glad when they said unto me, we will go into the house of the Lord"—some may recognize it as the song used as the processional to the Royal Wedding last year. This was followed by two other British pieces quoting the gospels of Matthew and Luke. A wonderful rendition of Bach's "Magnificat" featured Matthew Busch, senior, on trumpet.

The second part consisted of three separate songs of Prayer, Lamentation, and Hope. The most haunting song of the night was "David's Lamentation," a chilling a cappella composition of II Samuel 18:33. It ended with the choir whispering "My son!" in the words of David as he cries out after the death of Absalom. Following the previous two sorrowful songs, the choir sang a hopeful piece in the words of Jesus, "Come to me, all ye heavy-laden." The choir and powerful piano accompaniment beautifully emphasized Jesus' promise, "I will give you rest."

The concert's third section featured three hymns of praise. The choir showed off their beautiful harmonies in the Danish folk hymn, "O day full of grace." When introducing the song, Dr. Busch

said the choir would "start softly, as if we are about to see a beautiful sunrise." "A Mighty Fortress," or "the Lutheran fight song," according to Busch, was followed by an amazing South African Folk song about marching in the light of God. It featured former student Alex Guebert '10, playing the djembe. The choir had spirited hand-motions to go with the lyrics sung in the Zulu language.

After intermission, the choir uniquely presented an old English street cry. Three soloists, Matthia Duryea, sophomore, Maggie Darby, sophomore, and Alexandra Edelman, freshman, slowly walked down the aisles of the CU Center handing out fresh, colorful daisies. As they sang "Won't you buy my sweet blooming lavender," the rest of the choir wistfully hummed along. After the ladies started walking back to their positions, the tenor section excitedly ran up wanting to "buy" flowers from the women. The entire room was surprised and laughter broke out from everyone, including the choir.

The euphoria of the impromptu skit nicely led the choir into the final two Gospel pieces. The choir was exuberant as they clapped to their lively music.

The second-to-last piece featured soloists, Robyn Cornish, sophomore, and Wesley Barnes, freshman, in the most joyful piece of the night.

The Choir Home Concert garnered wonderful reception from the audience. Throughout the event, there were vocalizations of "Amen!" and a multitude of cheers for the soloists.

The closing piece featured a Concordia Choir tradition as alumni were invited to join the rest of the choir as they surrounded the audience, singing "Thou Shalt Know Him." With this beautiful ending to an exceptional night, the audience gave a heartfelt standing ovation that was well-deserved.



Artist Spotlight:

Tyler May

To be honest, being considered an artist, or even placed in a spotlight, is odd to me. I have always been one to shy away from any public endorsement and praise. I've always despised self-proclaimed artists who rattle on about their current work, using words that require the use of a dictionary. I must warn you this is uncomfortable and awkward.

Before last semester, I hadn't written anything other than poor attempts at song lyrics during my angsty high school years. During the first years of my college education, after I fled Chico State (before it completely corrupted me) I returned home. During this time, I began to experiment with photography and writing worship songs with my best friend. This season of my life abruptly ended when I transferred to Concordia. The sources of my creative outlets were no longer accessible. Songwriting was gone, and photography had become nothing more than the latest hipster craze. My life was caught in a drought, and I was thirsting for something to replenish me.

Under the "Electives" section on my graduation plan there was an empty space, and I decided to fill it with something entirely new. Creative writing was a daunting challenge I thought I'd attempt, perhaps a chance to water the dry fields of my mind. I walked into the class promising myself that I would write only for myself and my own enjoyment, never seeking praise, compliments, or accolades. Taking this class was intended to free me from the monotony of academic writing. However, Professor Gavin's class became a place where I was pushed into frontiers I never thought of exploring.

After viewing the syllabus on the first day of class I panicked. The thought of writing a poem, or short story, or 10-minute play was more terrifying than trying to pass "History and Development of the English Language." Each assignment pushed

me as a writer, and even more as a person. I was able to take my struggles with faith, life, death, and bring them all into my writing. I was free to search wild territories, places undiscovered within me.

This may seem like a ploy to encourage you to enroll into writing classes, but I assure you it is not. Without Professor Gavin's gentle hand pushing me into my newly-discovered love affair with writing, I would have never come to find this new joy. I now have a love for writing, crafting words together like a woven fabric. So I'll take this spot of light that I am trying so hard to hide from and thank Professor Gavin for pointing me in the direction of regions unexplored, untamed, and longing to be searched within me.

Now that I have found this new passion, I've been exploring what ignites me, what causes me to stay up in the dark morning hours writing. The influence of music has always been prevalent in my life. Whether it is a few notes of melancholy I've strung together on a guitar or piano, the haunting falsetto of Bon Iver, or the chaotic pounding meter that is The Chariot, I try to capture the tones and moods created through music within my writing. Other discovered influences include the legend that is Jack London, the fossilizing genius known as Cormac McCarthy, and the mystifying Minnesotan brothers from the Coen family. Aspirations and goals are hard to determine at this point in my writing. Poetry will always recharge me, continuing to add kindling to my fire. I love the beauty of short stories. I can see myself continuing to write those little gems for the rest of my conscious years. Perhaps one day I'll toy with the idea of a novel, but I doubt I have the patience for that kind of work. I only want to keep writing, keep creating, and keep exploring, though I'd love to see my written work brought to film, or created into parallel musical compositions. Those are lofty goals though, and I can only dream.

Brotherhood

O great, young and wild buck!
Caught in the headlights of your youth
Fractured crown, how perfectly still you lay
Blood flowing into the white capped waters
Suckling the last breaths of life.

How close,

How close you were to making it to the top,
The top of the mountain peaks,
Mountain peaks conquering the horizon,
The horizon upon which you meet each day a new,
How close you were.

Dear brother I see myself in your foggy, grayed eyes.

You and I are the same.

You and I, brother, sentenced with the same fate
Drowning beneath youth's glamour
Breathing together now, until life's cursed end.

Don't give in to the dying breath. Fight.

With all your soul

With all of your strength

And with all of your fading heart.

Go! Conquer the valley floor, drink deep from the rivers below,

Summit the never ending, never ceasing mountain crest

Go meet the great sun at the highest of heights,

...go

O great buck, young and wild.

Live art exhibit colors Night of Hope

MEGHAN JONES
STAFF WRITER

Sarah Scritsmier and Emily Moore, juniors, are both student-artists participating in Night of Hope on Thurs., March 15. Night of Hope is a fundraiser that includes art, music and food to help raise awareness for individuals across the globe. The concert will be featuring Christian musician Phil Wickham and proceeds will be going to FIKISHA, a non-profit organization working with the youth in Nairobi, Kenya. Scritsmier and Moore are both art majors who will paint, draw or sculpt live art during the event.

Scritsmier has been an artist for seven years. She was inspired to be an art major by her high school teachers who helped her to master her skill. This is her first time participating in a Concordia event like this one. Mai Vu, junior, originally approached Scritsmier asking if she would help with the event. Scritsmier is honored to participate in such a good cause. She will have an area where she will be painting a live piece of art and the audience can watch. "I will be drawing a picture that expresses hope, which is a landscape of the calm after the storm," said Scritsmier, "To me that is the ultimate representation of hope."

Moore will also be participating in the live art exhibit. "I always loved doing art and have always had a pencil in my hand," Moore said. She went to Orange County High School of the Arts (OCHSA) where she received experience in many different fields of art. "Now I am furthering my art through graphic design here at Concordia, where I am also majoring in business," Moore said.

Jeffrey Hitch, Assistant Professor of Art, is pleased to see two of his students participating in Night of Hope. Hitch's "Elements of Art" class will also present art projects during the event. The students are going to read stories of suffering, hardship, drugs, death and other dark topics as well as testimonies of new beginnings, hope, joy, light and freedom in Christ.

Attendees will be able to walk through an exhibit called the FIKISHA Story which will feature the art work by Hitch's students. Moore and Scritsmier will both have a booth where people will be able to watch as they paint.

Night of Hope begins Thursday at 5:30 p.m. with the art show starting at 6 p.m. Tickets for General Admission are \$15, Concordia students and children under 15 are \$14. Tickets can still be purchased in the Cafeteria and Founder's Bookstore.

Jones to take sewing strengths to Nairobi as part of East Africa team

ETHAN SCHERCH
STAFF WRITER

Michelle Jones, Secretary for the Dean of Arts and Sciences, will lead by example this summer as she joins a missions team heading to East Africa. She is located in Alpha 107 where she already serves all those with whom she comes into contact. "She is one of the most caring people I know, always offering a bottle of water or a snack to me," said Mai Vu, junior. Jones has worked at Concordia for four years and is now about to embark on a trip to Africa with eight students and an alumnus, led by Adam Lee, Professor of English.

"It's a missionary trip, and I've never been on a trip like this one before. I'm excited to see what God has in store for me," Jones said. Traveling is not something foreign to Jones. In 2003, she traveled to France for the French Open to watch tennis- one of her favorite hobbies. She has also been to England and Italy. Jones expects to visit Australia

sometime in the future to see the Great Barrier Reef and hopefully take in a few tennis matches. She has dreamed of traveling to Africa all of her life.

Jones will bring a special dynamic to the Africa group. "She brings six decades of experience to the team," Lee said. She provides a strong faith for the women of the trip to look up to. "I love her motherly attitude. Even in our meetings she already is taking care of us," Vu said.

Furthermore, this unique aspect of leadership is not the only contribution Jones is supplying to this outreach team. She is bringing five sewing machines with her- carried by the men of the group- to teach the women in Kenya sewing techniques. In exchange, she will be learning the unique trades from the women of Kawangware Lutheran Church in Nairobi. She has individually purchased two used sewing machines and is still gathering materials that the church might need. She will be leaving the machines with the African women at the end

of the trip. Jones is also looking forward to an opportunity to work with the Fikisha boys during her time at the church.

Jones has enjoyed sewing for multiple years and hopes to eventually start her own embroidery company once she retires. Her constant source of love reaches out to any member of her office through her sewing. "When a member of her office gets pregnant, she has been known to give gifts of baby blankets and bibs sewn by her," Lee said. "She uses a pattern that she believes describes the family."

Another way that Jones serves the Concordia community comes through the popular post-chapel snack funded by the Department of Arts and Sciences. Jones is in charge of buying and setting up the coffee and snack after chapel as a way of providing a small blessing to faculty and students.

If members of the Concordia community wish to assist Jones in her cause, she has a list of needed sewing and school supplies for the Africa team to take with them this summer.



Jones poses with two of the machines she will be taking to Kenya.

COURTESY ADAM LEE

Adventure runs duel for Irvine participants

JENNA SIETS
STAFF WRITER

During the next two months, Irvine will be hosting a Mud Run and Color Run. The Mud Run is benefiting the Gavin R. Steven Foundation, and the Color Run is benefiting Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County. The Color Run has reached full capacity, but they are in the process of making more spots available.

The Mud Run is a timed 5k run. Participants can register in a group of four or as an individual. The run starts at 8 a.m. on March 31 and is an all-day affair. During the run, there will be various obstacles such as tires to run through, mud pits, nets and ramps.

The run is right outside scenic Irvine Lake creating an enjoyable atmosphere for the outing. Jana Reiland, Adjunct Professor of Physical Science, has been involved in the mud run through her family. "I would love to participate, but do not want to ruin my shoes in the process," she said. "It is a great experience when someone crosses the finish line. They get a crown and a turkey leg." At noon, there will be a Dirty Dodgeball contest that requires an extra fee to participate. There is food for sale and an eco and beer garden.

The Color Run is 5k run/walk on April 22 that is designed for both children and adults. Participants are required to wear white. Every kilometer, a new color of paint will be thrown on the runners. The paint is food grade cornstarch, making it 100% natural and safe. It is the equivalent of getting into a powdered sugar food fight. At the end of the run, there is a colorfest where all the participants throw their pre-given color powder packs in the air at the same time.

The Mud Run and the Color Run both promise to be great experiences. The mud run still has tickets available, but do not wait long if you would like to participate. Visit irvinelakemudrun.com to sign up for the Mud Run and thecolorrun.com to check availability for the Color Run.

Laguna Beach gets Artsy

MELISSA SALCEDO
STAFF WRITER

Local artists put their talent on display for the public during Laguna Beach's monthly Art Walk on Thurs., March 1.

The Art Walk is held the first Thursday of every month from 6-9 p.m. and stretches along Pacific Coast Highway. This monthly event includes art, music, entertainment, drinks and also free transportation. These galleries display all types of art including sculptures, works of Impressionism, jewelry, and legendary sports pieces.

"I absolutely love going to art walks, but the Laguna Beach Art Walk is by far my favorite," said Cassie Lenz, Laguna Beach resident, "The galleries go on and on so you have to wear comfortable shoes and dress warm because you'll get the ocean breeze." The Art Walk consists of three main locations: north, south and downtown.

It is almost impossible to stop by all the galleries in three hours because there is so much art. The Art Walk also provides free wine, crackers and cheese which encourages conversation between walk participants. Lenz recommended the Tree House Art Gallery. "It really looks like this gallery is in a tree. It's so amazing how creative these artists are," he said.

The Laguna Beach Art Walk also has art work available for purchase. The prices ranged from \$1 to something affordable only for the Occupy protester's 1%. Most of the galleries had live bands playing, finger foods, candy and beverages to enjoy. People of all ages are allowed to attend the Art Walk.

If you would like to attend the Laguna Beach Art Walk, the next display will be held Thurs., April 5, from 6-9 p.m. For more information, please visit the Laguna Beach Art Walk website, firstthursday-sartwalk.com.



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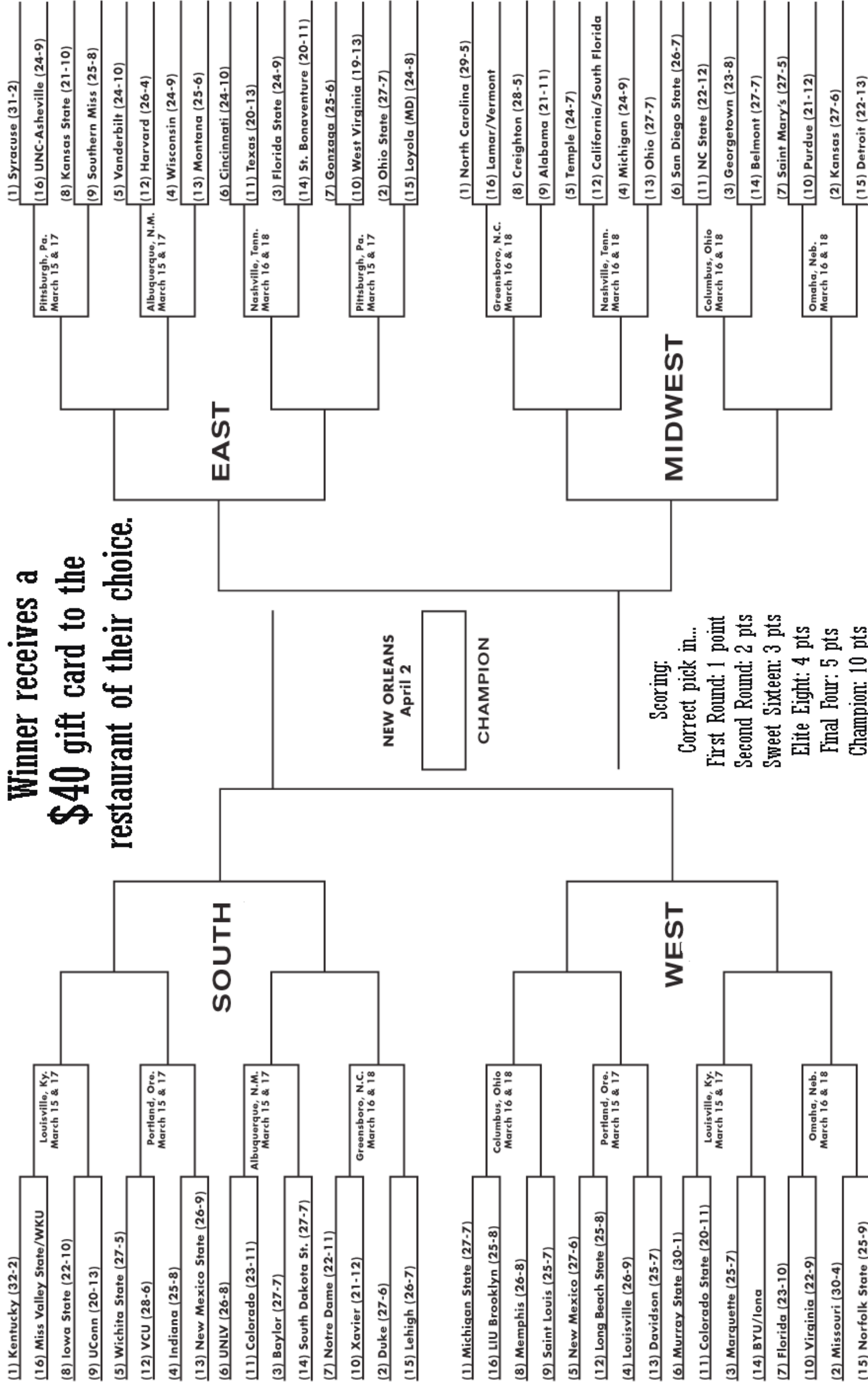
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Tiebreaker!
How many rounds will Concordia advance in the NAIA National Tournament and what will be the final score to their last game?

*One entry per person

Submit bracket to boxes in cafeteria and CSLD by 8:00 a.m. Thurs. 3/15

Updates to be published in upcoming issues.

“John Carter” leaves viewers excited for more

ERIK OLSEN
THE “POP CULTURE VULTURE”

When it comes to reviewing movies based on books I haven't read, I feel I need to include a disclaimer. One where I admit I have no idea what I'm talking about, and, therefore, my opinion should be taken with a grain of salt. It's a white flag of respect to the fanboys, and a declaration to my fellow uninitiated that, “Hey, I'm on your side.” Consider this to be that disclaimer. So begins my review of “John Carter,” Disney's adaptation of Edgar Rice Burroughs' “A Princess of Mars,” which recently celebrated its 100th anniversary this year.

Although I've never read the book, I was familiar with “John Carter” thanks to my dad. I was surprised the first time I saw a preview for the film, as Burroughs, in my world, has always been associated with Tarzan. For me, at least, Carter seemed

an unlikely choice for the big screen treatment. But now that I've seen the film, it makes total sense. Frankly, I'm surprised it didn't happen sooner.

The movie, itself, is visually fantastic. The sweeping settings—taking us from the Civil War era to the rainy streets of New York, to the dusty plateaus of Mars—are very well done. Spaceships, speeders, horses, and gigantic blind white apes, explode in bursts of color and sound that are only enhanced by the 3D features. It's rare when I'm in favor of 3D add-ons, but this is one of those times when it actually allowed me to become more immersed in the story, instead of increasingly distracted by that extra dimension.

As previously mentioned, the film spans time and space, with a wraparound plot featuring a young Edgar Rice Burroughs who has been summoned to the estate of his deceased uncle, John Carter. Through journal entries, we learn that



Carter, a boisterous man, stumbled upon a cave of gold... and found a portal to another world whose people, led by Princess Dejah Thoris, are in turmoil.

Although I was immersed in the story, I admit it took me a bit to get there. I'm a Horror guy, which means my brain usually isn't required to think or care in order to enjoy a movie. So, I—much like Carter, himself—had to adapt to my new Sci-Fi surroundings, and pay attention to the dialogue, so I could feel for the plight of John Carter and the CGI aliens fighting on screen. Fortunately, at two hours and twelve minutes, there's plenty of room for character development. The movie gives newbies time to catch up with more than enough plot left to go.

And that's one of the movie's biggest strengths. I never felt too lost. “John Carter” is, supposedly, the first entry in a planned trilogy. So, if you're completely unfamiliar with the source material, fear not—this film is still for you. Director Andrew Stanton intended it to be an origin story, showing how John Carter became John Carter of Mars. It's a nice introduction to what will hopefully become a franchise.

My only complaint is that it felt a bit too *Disneyfied*. I loved the movie's look, but I can't deny it was painted with that overwhelming family friendly sheen which instantly lets us know that everything will be OK. The battle scenes never really felt high stakes enough. There was never any legitimate threat to our heroes until the end of the film. It was like watching a Saturday morning cartoon.

But even the made-for-kids feel couldn't dampen my enjoyment. Although I was, essentially, on the outside looking in, I felt a connection to the characters and the story. The aliens, with their insect features and green skin, felt strangely human and were easy to relate to. Better yet, the film seemed to satisfy the majority of the ERB fans in attendance, with the biggest criticism being that “the film left a few things out, here and there.”

In the end, that's the most important thing—that the fans are happy. By all accounts, they're looking forward to seeing more of Carter's adventures brought to life on the silver screen. And, for that matter, so am I.

Bird's “Break It Yourself” is odd, yet joyful

ZACH BORST
ARTS EDITOR

Andrew Bird's most recent album “Break It Yourself” was released by Mom & Pop Records on March 6, 2012. Bird's eclectic style of songwriting is not muted in this album. He includes whistling, violins, crickets and other instruments to create a spacious, all-encompassing record.

“Break It Yourself” opens with the track “Desperation Breeds...” Bird clangs a cymbal and the song begins at a piano level of volume as Bird plucks his violin. The theme of the song sounds similar to a previous track of his, “Fake Palindromes,” but the openness of the quiet intro creates a different tone. Bird strums his acoustic guitar as he begins to sing about “accidental pollination without bees.” Bird

breaks down with more violin plucking between verses, creating a steel guitar sound similar to Jack Johnson's 2008 “Sleep Through the Static.” Bird is accompanied by drummer Martin Dosh playing the bongos. As he sings, “this peculiar incantation, I'm sure you've heard it before,” I welcome the familiar and unique artfulness of Andrew Bird.

He may be a familiar voice, but Andrew Bird is still weird. Immediately succeeding “Desperation Breeds...” is the 45-second track “Polynation.” A lyric-less song, Bird plays the ukulele and arouses any listener expecting something like the opening song with shrieking violins. At the end of the song is the faint recording of a crying baby. If you buy “Break It Yourself,” be willing to put up with Bird's experimental indie antics.

“Eyeoneye” has an upbeat intro and begins with

electric guitar, a welcome departure from Bird's often-acoustic music. The song is simply fun. Bird's lyrics are strangely literal, “Go ahead and reionize yourself. Give yourself a hand, the hand is yours,” but the song is tightly orchestrated for a pop-rock track. The pure falsetto back-up vocals of Mike Lewis singing “oh,” Bird's xylophone interlude, and his enjoyable application of whistling make even this four-four pop song distinctly his.

Bird describes the “Eyeoneye” effect in an interview with Rennie Sparks as a feedback loop “like a teratoma—a kind of tumor that copies other cells in the body like hair and teeth, causing one's immune system to freak out and attack the good teeth and hair cells.” Yes, Andrew Bird has obscure and peculiar topics for his songwriting, but his lyrics create another level of interest in his music. Whistling, violin-plucking, and baby cries would seem like empty effects if Bird did not have equally weird subjects to sing about.

“Near Death Experience Experience” sounds very similar to another of Bird's earlier tracks, “Nervous Tic Motion of the Head to the Left,” but the song departs enough from its predecessor so that it can't be called self-plagiarism. Bird employs computer effects that sound like an alien abduction as he strums his violin. Bird is accompanied by the lovely voice of Nora O'Connor, who has contributed to his work before, and they sing that “We'll dance like cancer survivors, like the prognosis was that you should've died.” Bird's lyricism is joyful and, again, odd.

“Orpheo Looks Back” has an enticing classical allusion in the title and an upbeat rhythmic introduction. Bird begins the track with quick guitar strumming and plucking and then silencing the chords to punctuate the beat. The opening reminded me instantly of Vampire Weekend's energy and rhythm in “A-Punk.” Bird impresses with his versatility later in the track, however. Thankfully, “Orpheo Looks Back” becomes a folk anthem that is governed more by rural, dance tradition than preppy indie music. Bird plays the violin with high-energy and gusto—he plucks, he strums, he creates weird noises—and sings “there are places I must go to” again and again.

Andrew Bird constantly changes and reinvents himself in this album, yet his voice and the tone of his music is entirely his. If you know Bird from his earlier work, you will instantly recognize him in “Break It Yourself” and be gratified. He is a complex lyricist and aesthetic song-writer, and this album is no exception. “Break It Yourself” is available on iTunes.

Core book Review:

Don Quixote de la Mancha

RUTH ELLIS
STAFF WRITER

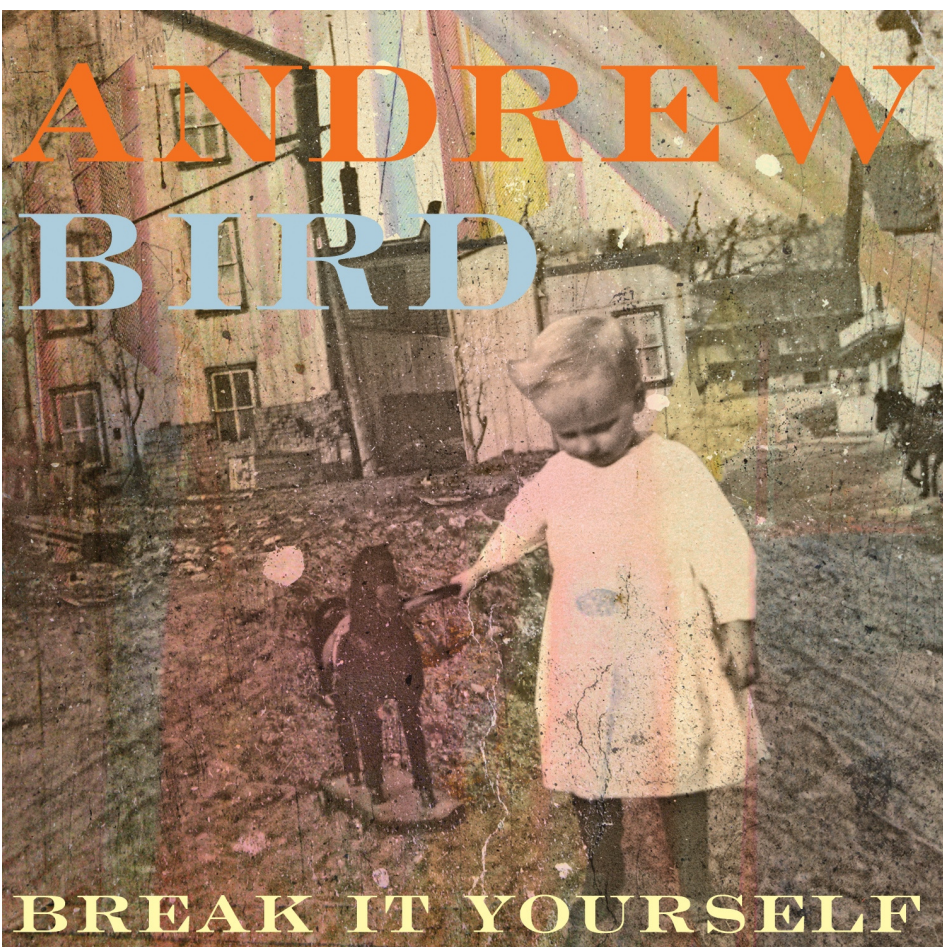
Towards the end of last semester, I began preparing a short talk about the visual representations of the titular character in “Don Quixote de la Mancha.” As I poured over pictures of famous statues and paintings (and a few from the film that thought it could), I began to think about the way the world perceives this character. I saw that, although we can read the book and think—that guy's crazy—the world does not physically represent him as such. Instead, many of the images I found show him to be exactly who he thinks he is, nothing less.

We hold him up as a hero—someone who espouses the “traditional values” of knighthood that have gone by the wayside. In our minds, he stands for truth, justice, and chivalry. So what if he's a little crazy, it's just part of his charm. My romantic side is swept up in the magic of the story, but my rational side forces me to conclude he is simply an old man who lost his marbles from reading too many books. (My rational side also nudges me as I write about reading too many books. It sounds familiar...) Part of me wants to smack Sancho Panza for being an enabler, and the other part wants to shake his hand for holding back just enough commentary to let us indulge in the fantasy.

That must be what keeps us all looking to Don Quixote as that classic defender of all that is good—the fantasy. Because if we look at our world today, we have to conclude it is too real. Too many wars are fought with the depressing knowledge that atrocities occur on both sides. Too many politicians spout a magic fix we know they can't deliver. Too many families are split by money, sex, or drugs. Our reality is too human, too imperfect. A classic tale of a somewhat blundering knight-errant must grant some escape from this.

But this is true within “Don Quixote de la Mancha,” too. Don Quixote allows others to treat Sancho poorly, helps criminals escape, finds at least one victim of infidelity, and lives through many other, shall we say, imperfect experiences. Why, then, when faced with all this does he not turn around and give up? Does he really not see those giants are windmills, even after Sancho explains?

Suppose he does. Maybe every time Don Quixote is about to do something incredibly stupid (brave), he deliberately dismisses the negative perspective (reality). It's even possible Don Quixote understands why people try to stop him from continuing his quest. But he follows through anyway. Perhaps the magic of “Don Quixote de la Mancha” is not the fantasy, after all, but the willingness to approach the world with a different view, a different goal. When we travel with Don Quixote, we feel empowered to stand up for what is right, do what the world tells us not to, and act brave when the occasion calls for it.



Bird's “Break it Yourself” is currently available on iTunes.

