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Women's Basketball Record-break- ing campaign ends in NCAA first round

BY WILLIAM VEGA

The Prospector

When it was all said and done, this year's Miners did something no other basketball team, men or women, have ever achieved in school history. But their record 29 wins was not enough to duplicate what the only other NCAA Tournament team did in 2008, as they fell to No. 11 Penn State in the first round of the NCAA Tournament, 85-77 March 18 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

"I am extremely proud of my team. We have had a great year and a great season. Our players right now are extremely hurt," head coach Keitha Adams said in the post-game press conference. "We haven't lost too many games this year. When you win a lot of games and then you lose, I think the magnitude of the pain that you feel from it is pretty intense."

Despite entering the tournament with 29 wins and three losses, UTEP was seeded 13th in the Kingston region of the NCAA Tournament and faced the fourth-seeded Penn State Lady Lions, who won the Big 10 regular season championship.

The Miners hung with the Lady Lions, even leading multiple times against them in the first half. UTEP led 13-7 at the 14:29 mark of the first half, then surrendered the lead seven minutes later when Penn State surged ahead for the first time at 25-24. Then, with 4:26 remaining in the half, a three by sophomore guard Kelli Willingham gave the Miners their largest lead of the game at 34-27.

The Lady Lions finished the half on a 12-5 run to send the teams into the locker room tied at 39.

Then Penn State turned to three of their best players of the season in the second half. Junior forward Nikki Greene broke the tie when she hit a layup for two of her eight points in the second half (she finished with 12 total) then sophomore guard Maggie Lucas sparked an 18-4 run that put the Lady Lions up for good. Junior guard Alex Bentley also had the majority of her points in the second half, scoring 12 of her 21 in the final frame.

But no one had as much of an impact as Lucas. She had 16 of her game-high 23 points in the second half, including 11 during that run, and Penn State suddenly saw themselves in control at 59-45 with 12:46 remaining in the game.

see BASKETBALL on page 8

BOTTLE ROYALE BEER & WINE ISSUE



SOCIAL NETWORKING ALCOHOL

BY EILEEN LOZANO

The Prospector

Beer advertisers and distributors gear their social networking sites and commercials to a very specific demographic, predominately made up of college students.

"Beer advertisers are among the top advertisers spending over \$975 million," said Ruth Mc Donald, women's studies professor with a strong background in neuromarketing. "The top beer brands include Bud Light, Budweiser, Miller Lite and Coors Light."

Bars specializing in beer and wine selections have been popping up like wildfire around campus such as Hoppy Monk, Primos, Il Canto and Square Cow.

These places utilize social networking as a tool to bring in more patrons. They offer drink specials, contests, a beer or wine of the month and even full menus of their selections.

"College students are a primary target consumer for beer brands, as well as a primary target audience for beer marketing activities," Mc Donald said. "College students are also among the heaviest users of social media websites such as Facebook."

The future of advertising is changing. The demographic of whom advertisers are selling to is the same, but the type of people they are marketing for is vastly different.

"I always use Facebook to keep track of one of my favorite bars, Hope and Anchor," said Andrea Read, senior marketing major. "They always post pictures of who is making your drink that night and what type of specialty drink they will be featuring."

see ADVERTISING on page 3

ILLUSTRATION BY DIEGO BURCIAGA / PHOTOS BY AUDREY RUSSELL



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Column

Cutting out the middleman

BY KRYSTAL OBLINGER
The Prospector



Store shelves are no longer lined with beer from just the three big brewers. Coors, Michelob and Anheuser-Busch once dominated the beer market until a recent trend had consumers calling for more variety. Micro-brewed beers, or craft beers, were not necessarily born, but reared its head from the depths of people's basement, where they were mainly made for individual consumption.

Even though this sounds like the 1920s version of boot-legging beer, what made these brands special was their quality over quantity. The people making these beers wanted something better than what the big brewers were providing. Every bottle produced in their domestic factories had the quality and taste they were looking for.

Now there is an issue with the system of distribution. The three-tier system is made up of the producer, distributor and retailer. The system starts with the producer, who sends beer to a distributor, who then distributes the product to retailers (i.e. grocery stores and licensed alcohol sellers). Here is the basic run down of why the system is failing both small brewers and big business: with the amount of brewers rising in the United States, distributors cannot keep up.

Big business lobbies to keep the system intact in order to keep the chaos flowing between small producers. Big brewers are able to underhandedly own many of the distributors, who then put out more of their own products. However, by forcing the system to continue, regulating the amount of small products is becoming a daunting task. There are too many brewers in the country and that is not counting the import sellers. This is all according to reports from the Beer Industry Summit that occurred in 2010.

Question is, why should anyone care and why is there such a demand for craft beers?

Craft beers are normally made from pure ingredients in a small supply and are made locally or regionally. Many times these companies use little to no fillers in their product, which makes for a cleaner drink. With the push for organic food, many people are turning to these type of beers because they are more appealing when it comes to health benefits. Also, since they are localized, it gives them a friendlier face than the big three brands.

In the 2009 documentary "Beer Wars," directed by former general manager for Mike's Hard Lemonade Anat Baron, he shows how marketing and the three-tier system works to benefit the big brewers. The film depicts a corrupt system that inevitably hurts any type of creativity when it comes to new products.

Free trade would be the next step in this whirlwind of uncertainty. If the system were kicked out it would not just affect the selling of beer, but wine, whiskey and any kind of alcoholic beverage. Heavy legislation overhaul would be necessary to change the system and with lobbyists pushing to hold the system strong, it seems like it is here to stay.

For now, the distributor is the gatekeeper to product selling. Legislation on the state level in Illinois may give traction to Anheuser-Busch. Busch is attempting to go state level and cut the middleman (the distributors) out completely and sell straight to retailers in Illinois. This would only affect state level sales, but it leaves this market move open in other states. Such a change may alter the system drastically on a national level and cause a sudden need for even more legislation in order to regulate state control of alcohol distribution. If this happens, it would leave a huge question mark in the future of alcohol distribution. How will small retailers organize sales and how much power would mega-marts, such as Walmart have in selling products?

There is a shadow, which existed long before prohibition, looming over what will happen in the case of alcohol distribution. Beer is diving head first in changing the way retailers sell and consumers buy beer.

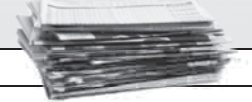
Krystal Oblinger may be reached at prospector@utep.edu.

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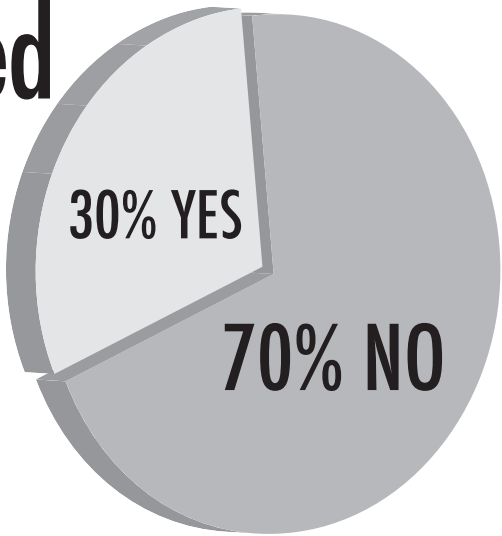
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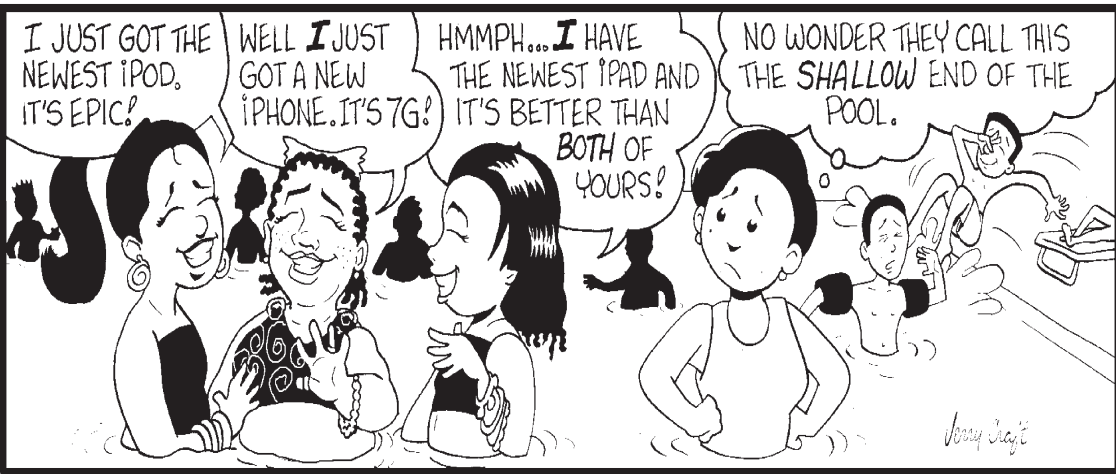
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Health

Counseling center offers help for alcohol-related problems

BY HENRY ARRAMBIDE
The Prospector

With spring break and St. Patrick's Day over, some college students may be dealing with the hangovers from the partying associated with these holidays. Dealing with the sobering realities of alcohol abuse is not something students need to face alone.

"We offer counseling services to help individuals with alcohol issues," said Brian Sneed, clinical counselor at the University Counseling Center. "The reason may vary from student to student, but for students who have issues with alcohol, such as performance difficulties in school, we offer individual counseling."

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, roughly 11,000 people will die annually in a drunk-driving incident. It is estimated that 2,000 of those deaths will be college students, according to the Annual Review of Public Health. According to a Texas Department of Transportation report, in the El Paso County, there were 805 alcohol-related crashes in 2010 and 17 of these accidents were fatal.

"I'm in a fraternity and we have a designated driver program," said Brian Foster, senior biology major. "Every week, Thursday through Saturday, we have guys who are picked to be designated drivers to be sober all week for the nights and we just call them up if we need a ride anywhere. It's an effective program, it works really well. Nobody's gotten in trouble for drinking, no DUIs, driving drunk for us has decreased."

Moderate drinking, defined scientifically by Dr. Reid Hester in the

Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment as no more than nine drinks per week and a blood alcohol level below .055, is acceptable. However, as blood alcohol content rises, drunkenness sets in. This is when the body experiences the results of excessive drinking such as vomiting and passing out. Students may not know that too much alcohol consumption can lead to liver disease, high blood pressure, heart failure and stroke.

"I would say I drink about average for a college student," Foster said. "I guess that would be a lot for somebody who's not in college. Usually I drink at a party or a bar, it's very social. I rarely drink by myself"

According to materials available at the University Counseling Center for students who may be struggling with alcohol, there are clear symptoms of abuse that are observable before permanent health damage can occur. Drinking alone, drinking to the point of intoxication, loss of memory while drunk, not showing up to work or school and mood fluctuations are early signs. More severe problems may arise such as financial difficulties, loss of sleep and showing up drunk in inappropriate settings. Drinking to boost self-confidence and to overcome shyness are major symptoms of an alcohol problem and may lead to a dependency on alcohol.

"I definitely know my limits, but I know I don't always tend to acknowledge them," said Cassandra Duran, freshman business major. "People will ask me if I'm okay or tell me that I'm starting to act weird and I say I'm good, but I know inside I should slow down. You can feel it in your body, you don't feel like the same person,

and that's when I'm like, okay I need to stop."

A study in the Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology has shown that slowly cutting back in moderation is an effective method for dealing with addiction – quitting cold turkey is not necessary and may result in withdrawal symptoms. Counseling, even if just for a single session, has also been proven effective.

For UTEP students who need help, the University Counseling Center is available. According to Sneed, aside from individual counseling, the center has outreach programs where they go out and talk with students about self-protective drinking behaviors and dealing with high-risk drinking situations.

They may be reached at 747-5302 and are located at 202 Union West. The UCC is open from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday and Tuesday and from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday through Friday. Services are free to students and walk-ins are accepted.

"I think it's a part of the college life, having a good time with friends," Duran said. "Personally, I've never had to go through counseling here at the school, but I support the counseling center. If I did have a problem, I'd know where to look."

Henry Arrambide may be reached at prospector@utep.edu.

ADVERTISING from page 1

The rise of new forms of communicating such as blogging and tweeting, has opened up another venue of getting product names out to consumers.

"There are blogs about beer and blogs about those who drink beer. Untapped.com is a new blog site that promotes the social aspect of drinking, which is an important consideration for college students," Mc Donald said.

The website states that it provides a new way to socially share your favorite beers, as well as locations.

Many of these sites are also available on smart phones and downloadable apps.

"Smart phone apps serve as an extension to social networking and wine brands have made these apps available," Mc Donald said.

Smooth wine pro is one of many wine-related apps companies use to market and keep interests up concerning their products.

"Users can engage in activities such as taking a photo of the wine label to match it to a vintner in the app's enormous wine database, read a description of the wine, as well as users' reviews," Mc Donald said.

Some individuals go the old fashioned route and just rely on what their friends are drinking to help them make a decision.

"I was never really into beer until I started liking Coors Light and I also drink the new Bud Light Platinum," said Jorge Castanon, junior nursing major. "I was drawn to it by the name because when you add platinum to the end of the name it makes it sound cooler."

Eileen Lozano may be reached at prospector@utep.edu.

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BEER &

BREW EDUCATION SPARKS BUBBLY FUTURE

BY ANDRES RODRIGUEZ

The Prospector

Propelled by the latest openings of beer establishments such as the Primo's Craft Beer, Nofish and Hoppy Monk, El Paso has entered its "second hump" of beer awareness. According to Bruce Loudon, professor of language and linguistics and president of The Borderland Brewers Association, this is the "golden age" for El Paso beer enthusiasts.

"When I moved here the beer scene was literally about two decades behind California, and a few other places," Loudon said. "Where the craft beers and greater availability of imports, particularly from Belgium, had fundamentally changed people's awareness of what beer is, and the wide variety of choices they could have."

After moving to El Paso in 1991, Loudon noticed a weak beer scene. Guinness Stout was the only available beer he considered good.

The first hump, Loudon said, began around 1994 when El Paso's brewing industry rose in popularity. At the time, the home-brewing club, now The Borderland Brewers, was formed and Hemingway's began to offer a wider variety of taps, including the probable first instance of the Belgian ale, Hoegaarden's White, in the city.

During the mid 1990s, El Paso's variety of selections of beers increased considerably, but the movement lost momentum, according to Loudon.

Traces of the city's second hump of beer awareness can be seen as far back as 2002, said Doug Barker, owner of Buddy's Beer Barn. Barker bought the east side property, located on 10150 Montana Avenue, for retirement income and, after a failed attempt at a sports bar, decided to make it a beer store inspired by Austin's Party Barn.

Barker said he was the only one selling exotic and craft beer at the time.

"We were the first ones 10 years ago to do this kind of selection of beer," Barker said. "Slowly, it grew and people began to acquire taste. At one time we had 300 different beers."

According to Barker, the rise in the price of gas and the expansion of the city's beer services, especially in the west side, have impacted his business.

"For almost eight years, I was it," Barker said. "Within the last year there's been five different retail stores (open), bigger guys than me. Good thing that most of it is on the west side, but I've lost that west side traffic."

The west side has seen the most recent openings of Primo's, Spec's, and the soon to open Square Cow. This, according to Loudon, makes for "a vibrant beer scene that compares with the best in Colorado and on the West Coast."

Louden believes that in spite of the rise of beer services in the city, the majority of El Pasoans remain ignorant about beer.

"Most don't even know what an ale is," Loudon said. "The vast majority of beer sold in the United States is all the same style, lagers, made by companies who actually spend the vast majority of their money on the marketing of the beers, not on the ingredients that make the beer."

However Barker believes that the growth of the city's beer services have heralded a new understanding of beer past Budweiser or Bud Light. Still some prefer more mainstream beer.

"I'm not big into beer drinking, but I enjoy Heineken and Stella Artois for their nice and light flavor," said senior political science major Julio Martinez. "But I've definitely seen a growth and sophistication with what people choose to drink."

Andres Rodriguez may be reached at prospector@utep.edu.

BASIC STYLES

ALES

Ales are usually higher in alcohol and noticeably fuller. The yeast settles at the surface of the brew during the first few days before settling to the bottom.

LAGER

Lager yeast simply gather (not on the surface or bottom). This type of beer tends to have a lighter color and normally have a drier taste than Ales. However, the taste is more complex and it contains a smaller alcohol percentage.

All other beers are either hybrids or a complex version of both ales and lagers



PHOTOS BY AUDREY RUSSEL & JUSTIN STENE / ILLUSTRATION BY DIEGO BURCIAGA



WINE

LEARNING TO LOVE WINE

BY KRISTOPHER RIVERA

The Prospector

Montserrat Mena, sophomore studio arts major, only drinks wine when the family pulls a bottle out for special occasions and she doesn't find the experience very enjoyable.

"At my house they don't drink it. My uncle does, but like once a month or special occasions," Mena said. "It's not something he does regularly. I've only tasted it when they drink it which is not often, but I don't like it."

Wine is a narrow subject in a demographic like El Paso. Chances are only a few actually drink wine on a daily basis and have some knowledge of it.

"There's a stigma that wine is used for special occasions, but I think you can drink wine for everyday use," said Donna Alba, proprietor and president at Star Canyon winery. "You've got your sweet wines, lighter wines and really dry wines. Any occasion is a good day for wine."

Star Canyon Winery, located at 2601 North Stanton near the Cincinnati district, is one local winery that introduced locals to the joy of wine.

"When people go to restaurants and they try a Cabernet they're not going to like it because they've never had wine before or they're not used to drinking wine," Alba said. "It wasn't something they were brought up in and familiar with the flavor. But they don't realize there are so many varieties and so many ways of fermenting and blending wines that there's always a wine for everybody."

Alba said people always think they have to go to California vineyards such as Napa Valley and Sonoma, or order wines from overseas to get a good quality wine when the agriculture here in the southwest is actually good for producing quality wines.

According to gotexanwine.org, an online site which is part of the Texas Department of Agriculture that promotes Texas wine, Spanish missionaries began making wine in the early 1600s in the region of what is now present day El Paso. Thomas Volney Munson, a 19th century viticulturist, produced Texas grown phylloxera-resistant rootstocks that saved the European wine industry that was suffering from a phylloxera epidemic in the late 19th century.

Luis Alejandro Einaudi, junior business marketing major, has learned from personal experience that a place like El Paso can produce quality wine. His father, Luis Einaudi, a retired distilling engineer, along with help from partners established a winery in his home state of Chihuahua. His father's winery, Vino Hacienda de Encinillas, does everything from growing their own vineyards to aging the wine in French oak wine barrels and bottling it.

"People don't really see it as feasible (in El Paso), but for example they use to think that way in Chihuahua, 'It's desert that's not going to work out' and you know it worked out," Einaudi said. "Actually it came out in the national news that 'Oh my god, nobody thought it could ever work in Chihuahua.'"

Einaudi's grandfather was French and brought his culture from France to Mexico. His grandfather's traditions were in a way the inspiration to the family's wine-making business.

"Here in the States, I do see it as a special occasion thing, but in other parts of the world like Europe, France for example...Italy, Spain, where they're major producers of wine, they see it as a normal thing," Einaudi said. "They even have it at breakfast, lunch and dinner. It's just about getting people more familiar with it, educating people."

Kristopher Rivera may be reached at prospector@utep.edu.

MOLECULAR BREAK DOWN OF BEER

BY REBECCA GUERRERO
AND OSCAR GARZA

The Prospector

Though many are content to cap off their evenings with a six-pack of Budweiser, there are those who are repulsed by the very idea. For some, beer is not only a drink, but a passion. People like this know all about what goes into the production of a quality bottle of beer, ale or lager and the process is part of the fun.

"We've been conditioned to drink one kind of beer, but you don't eat one meal every day, so we try to expand the knowledge of beers," said Alberto Salinas, UTEP alumnus and member of Borderline Brewers. "A lot of people don't even realize there's something besides Budweiser."

The process that goes into brewing a quality beer involves fermentation. Beer is composed of only three ingredients: water, hops — which is a bitter flower seed — and yeast. According to howstuffworks.com, fermentation is the process by which yeast converts the glucose in the wort (the liquid extracted from the mashing process of grain) to ethyl alcohol and carbon dioxide gas, giving the beer both its alcohol content and its carbonation.

"Wine for the most part is dead, but beer is very much alive in most instances," Salinas said. "There's still living yeast in it that contains Vitamin B, which is actually helpful for hangovers."

To begin the fermentation process, the cooled wort is transferred into a container which in some breweries can be as large as 10 feet high. The mashed yeast has already been added. If the beer being made is an ale, the wort will be maintained at a constant temperature of 68 F for about two weeks. If the beer is a lager, the temperature will be maintained at 48 F for about six weeks. According to Salinas, the difference between ale and lager is simply that ale ferments on the top of the container and lager ferments on the bottom.

Members of Borderline Brewers make it their business to educate people that it's not impossible to brew better quality beer.

Jaxon's Restaurants & Brewing Co. is one of the only restaurant-owned breweries in El Paso and has been making beer since 1973.

"Since we are on the Borderland, we do have larger Mexican-style lagers that are brewed to capacity. Here (Remcon) for example, we have three huge fermentation tanks," said Abe Montoya, the current brewer for Jaxon's Restaurants and Brewing Company.

Montoya has been working for the company for four years and brewing beer for the Southwest region as long as he can remember.

"I like being hands on and trying different things," Montoya said. "One time I did an orange zest, honey wheat brew just for fun, because I love to do this."

Beer and the art of brewing have existed for a very long time. Ancient cultures tamed grains used in beer and made it one of the first domesticated crops. According to alabev.com, a leading beer producer site, one of the oldest-recorded versions of brewing dates back almost 6,000 years ago involving the Sumaerian.

According to Montoya, the craft industry is essentially "blowing up." There are about 3,000 breweries in the United States. So Jaxon's is competing in a national level.

"Craft production alone stands out from the big guys," Montoya said. "Now you have local pubs that offer a wide variety of different beers, so you know, competition is always welcome."

Roozbeh Hamed-Zanjani, senior criminal justice major, feels microbrewed products are better than the big brands due to the value in their produces.

"I prefer microbreweries because they are smaller and are produced with more care and less commercial fluids," Hamed-Zanjani said.

According to Montoya, passion is the biggest part of making beer.

"Be creative," Montoya said. "There is no wrong way when making beer. As long as it is delicious for you then other people with recognize its worth."

Oscar Garza and Rebecca Guerrero can be reached at prospector@utep.edu.

WELL-KNOWN VARIETIES

PINOT NOIR

(A dark red color) Pinot Noir is made from a black grape that grows better in cooler environments. The flavor is vaguely reminiscent of dark fruit such as sweet berries, plums and has a hint of cherry. On the tail end, it gives off an earthy wood flavor.

MERLOT

(A violet-red color) Merlots can be a bit tough on the senses, but paired correctly with a red meat or pungent fish, the sweet raspberry like flavor comes out. The flavors tend to be fresh and carry subtle hints of coconut and black pepper tones.

RIESLING

(Light green wine) Riesling is a diverse type of wine that can range from sweet to dry. The main flavor associated with Riesling is bubbly overtones of earthy flavors and hints of sweet strawberries. Best used as a desert wine.

CHARDONNAY

(White Wine) This wine is one of America's top selling wines. Tending to be complex and harsh on newcomer's palettes, Chardonnay has tones of buttered oak overtones that sit well in a apple/pear flavor.

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— King Crossword — Answers

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Answers to 3-06-12

BRAIN ZONE

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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Football

RB battle highlights spring drills



FILE PHOTO

Sophomore running back Nathan Jeffrey rushes into the end zone against Houston Sept. 29 at the Sun Bowl. Jeffrey is one of two returning backs from last year's team.

BY DANIEL ORNELAS
The Prospector

A running back attacking the line of scrimmage is often referred to as “hitting the hole.” The Miners find themselves with a hole to fill at the running back position after losing their three most productive backs from 2011. As the senior class of 2011 graduated, so did 1,634 yards of production by a trio of running backs in Joe Banyard, Vernon Frazier and Leilyon Myers. Sophomores Nathan Jeffrey and Josh Bell are the only returning running backs for the 2012 spring roster. Jeffrey received the most playing time of the two, finishing with 166 yards on 26 carries. Bell had only three carries on two games of action in 2011. Jeffrey entered the offseason as the front runner to win the starting job,

but a knee injury he suffered in an earlier practice has sidelined him for a number of practices opening the door for Bell and others. “Well Nathan Jeffrey has been the one that was going to inherit the job, but he has a sore knee...which really opened up for (redshirt freshman) LaQuintus Dowell and Josh Bell and those two guys came to play,” head coach Mike Price said. “Josh did a real good job, so more power to them. It just makes us better.” Price has seen good production from Bell and Dowell, as they fill in for the injured Jeffrey. The first opportunity for the running backs to show coaches their worth came during the team's first scrimmage of the spring March 10 at the Sun Bowl. Bell took advantage of it by breaking a 65-yard run for a touchdown.

“I thought Josh had a great scrimmage and ran the ball really well and outran everybody. We did move the ball against the No. 2 defense pretty well when he was in there,” Price said. Aside from Jeffrey, Bell and Dowell, the Miners welcome a couple of freshman from El Paso in Coronado High School's Sam Brown, Jacob Martinez from Cathedral and sophomore Brandon Polk from Fort Worth. The Miners would usually begin their spring drills after spring break, but this year, Price decided to begin practices three weeks earlier than year's past. The time off for spring break served as healing time for players like Jeffrey. For Bell, this is an opportunity to separate himself from the younger players and possibly earn a starting role. So far, he said it's getting used to what's in front of him and harp on

what running backs coach Jeff Banks preaches. “(It's) getting used to the gaps, holes, the way the lineman block, trying to make things work, find holes, hit them and hit them hard,” Bell said. “(Banks tells us to) be smart, protect the quarterback, protect the ball and run hard.” Bell agrees that the competition has opened and that will give him an opportunity to make his bidding for the starting job. So far, he likes what the group has done and is hoping for better things. “We're on the verge of great things, we're looking real good. I'm very confident in what we're doing right now,” Bell said.

Daniel Ornelas may be reached at prospector@utep.edu.

Softball Mexican pitcher uses family as driving force to play



FILE PHOTO

Junior pitcher Cynthia Villastrigo lances a pitch during UTEP's season opener against Santa Clara Feb. 9 a the Helen of Troy Softball Complex.

BY DANIEL ORNELAS
The Prospector

For junior pitcher Cynthia Villastrigo, the opportunity to play college athletics is driven from more than just accolades; her purpose is to make a difference for her family back home in Monclova, Mexico. Co-head coach Kathleen Rodriguez praises Villastrigo for her attitude and focus and believes that has carried onto the rest of the team.

Rodriguez recalls the time she asked the team to give their reasons why they are playing softball. After most mentioned they were playing since they were a kid or because they followed in their sibling's footsteps, it was Villastrigo who changed the temperature in the room. She stated that her drive is to save her parents and use her education in the U.S. to move her parents out of harm's way. “She tells the girls every day, ‘I cannot fail, there's no option. I need to

come and have the right attitude and the right type of concentration every day,” Rodriguez said. “It's kind of neat to be able to have that.” Villastrigo transferred to UTEP from the Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua (UACH) and is also the No. 1 starting pitcher for the Mexican national team. So far, it has been a learning experience for her as she adjusts to the different level of competition.

“It's something really different coming from the national team to UTEP. I've changed a lot of things, my technique has change dramatically. My release changed too. I feel very different,” Villastrigo said. “At times I want to fall back to my old technique, but then I adjust all the time. I also have more pitches to work with unlike before. I now have six different pitches I can use.” Villastrigo also says her velocity has increased, but feels she needs to remain focused to be able to handle the hitters and help the team win. Rodriguez recruited Villastrigo to UTEP after the Miners struggled to hit against her last season in a match-up against UACH. “Last year, she came... and for five innings, we didn't put the ball in play very hard against her, she just had a focus that I thought was really neat then when I started talking to her, I liked her even more,” Rodriguez said. “She brings a different type of presence to our team.” For her teammates, it has not only been an adjustment handling her pitching style but also learning to communicate in a different language. Junior catcher Kayleigh Walts is one of her teammates that has enjoyed having Villastrigo as a teammate.

see **PITCHER** on page 8

Column Floyd, UTEP should take notes from Pat Knight, Lamar

BY WILLIAM VEGA
The Prospector



It seems that a loss to Stephen F. Austin brings out the worst in college basketball coaches. Just ask UTEP head coach Tim Floyd and Lamar head coach Pat Knight.

Knight, the son of hall of fame head coach Bob Knight and currently in his first year at Lamar after being fired by Texas Tech last year, really made a name for himself this year following that specific loss. After falling to SFA 62-52 Feb. 22 at home, Knight went on a rant during his post-game press conference that eventually made its rounds onto YouTube. The video spans 8-minutes 48-seconds and begins with him kicking one of his players off the podium saying, “alright, let's go, I'm next, because you don't have a clue about what it takes to win.” He then begins criticizing his six seniors (with the exception of guard Devon Lamb, which he praises for his effort near the end of the rant) for their on-court and off-court performances, even going as far as saying the problems are “classroom, drugs, being late for stuff.” He added, “you just can't do all that BS and expect to be a good team and win games.” One can only imagine what Knight told his players (not just his seniors) in the locker room, behind closed doors, but after the video went viral, there is a strong possibility that the players saw his rant. And just how did his team respond to the criticism? They won their last three games of the regular season, made the Southland Conference Tournament (where eight of the 12 teams make it), won their division, defeated SFA in the second round and won the tournament to send them to the NCAA Tournament for the first time since 2000. That's a six-game winning streak they rode into the Big Dance. Lamar made it as a 16 seed and lost to Vermont in the tournament's opening-round game. Just a few months earlier, Floyd had a rant after losing 53-35 to SFA Nov. 26 at home that never made it to the Internet but had some similarities to it and it could have made headlines, too. Floyd, in his second year at UTEP, was in a rebuilding process this season and after falling to 1-3 following the loss, he sat at the podium in the post-game press conference for over five minutes. He criticized the Miners' focus, preparation and offensive mentality in their lowest offensive output at the Don Haskins Center. After giving his opening comments, no one had questions (unlike Knight's press conference where he answered a few questions) and he quickly exited

see **FLOYD** on page 8

FLOYD from page 7

the media room. Most notable in the rant, he criticized every player on the team which included eight freshmen, two sophomores, two juniors and one senior.

“We’re trying to look at everybody on our roster. Nobody has a secure position,” Floyd said. “But that being said, you have to have somebody step up and go play. Right now we really haven’t seen it. We’re getting ready to enter one of the most difficult stretches of our schedule. We’re going to continue to try to be patient, try to coach, try to guard these other teams’ actions and keep our spirits as high as we can.”

And how did UTEP respond to that rant?

They lost their next game to Oregon by five points to cap a three-game losing streak, avenged a loss to NMSU, lost to UNLV on the road then went on a three-game winning streak. Along the way, they defeated Mcneese State (who Lamar defeated in the Southland title game), Clemson and Auburn while losing to Kansas State and Colorado State.

Overall, the Miners went 14-14 after the rant, eventually losing to Conference USA regular season and tournament champion Memphis in the quarterfinals, not making any postseason tournament.

What that says to me is that UTEP did not respond well to Floyd’s criticism. Granted, I don’t know what Floyd told his players behind closed doors. Granted, the Miners had a

much tougher schedule than Lamar. And granted, Lamar had seniors to show their maturity in responding, not freshmen.

Still, it can be argued that UTEP’s partial success after the rant can be credited to their lone senior, forward Gabriel McCulley, who returned from an injury during the Oregon contest. After hearing that they could be gone after this year, after just one year at the division-1 level, I would imagine that a player would try their hardest to keep their spot for next year.

UTEP also had 28 remaining games to prove themselves (26 regular season) instead of just six, such as Lamar. While six games may limit little to any room for error, 28 games also gives much more opportunities to prove a player’s value for next year. And after the departure of freshman guard Darius Nelson and the injuries to freshman forward Hooper Vint and junior forward Malcolm Moore, plenty of opportunities presented themselves.

Prior to the season, at an intra-squad scrimmage, Floyd said he wanted to use this team to prepare for next year. After losing over 80 percent of his scoring from last year’s team and eight seniors, he had no choice but to rebuild this past season. He said he wanted to build experience from this team to create leadership for next year’s.

It’s going to be very interesting to see what type of leadership carries into next season.

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BOB CORRAL / The Prospector

UTEP, along with their fans, await the fate of their postseason destiny during the selection show March 12 at the Don Haskins Center. The Miners played No. 11 Penn State in the first round, losing to them 85-77 March 18 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

BASKETBALL from page 1

“I just wasn’t going to let the first half determine how I was going to play the rest of the game,” Lucas said. “My teammates were keeping my head up the whole time, making sure I was coming out with my head up and ready to make an impact in the second half.”

UTEP answered with their own 13-4 run to cut the deficit to 63-58 six minutes later, but they would not get any closer. Seven of the Lady Lions’ next 11 points came from the line, which gave them their double-digit lead once again.

“When the game gets tightest, when the game gets close, (Lucas and Bentley) are going to perform their best,” head coach Coquese Washington said. “That’s really a luxury to have as a coach, when you have not only one but two players who can turn their game up when the game is at its tightest.”

Senior forward Gloria Brown did what she could to attempt any comeback for UTEP, when she fought back from a 1-of-6 start in the first half to go 5-of-11 in the second. She finished with a team-high 18 points, 10 re-

bounds, four steals and three blocks. Brown sat at the post-game conference but did not leave any quotes, as she fought back tears the entire time at the podium.

Sophomore forward Kayla Thornton was the spark for the Miners in the first half, scoring 10 points on 5-of-7 shooting, but missed all five of her field goals in the second, but went 5-of-6 from the free throw line. She had a game-high 12 rebounds.

Brown and Thornton finished as the team’s best scorers, rebounders and most efficient shooters of the season. Brown even led the team in free throw and 3-point percentage.

“I’m a sophomore and I experienced a lot this year. We had a great year. I am going to take this and move on to next year,” Thornton said. “Gloria is a great player, she taught me a lot. I’m going to take a break and then hit the gym for next year.”

UTEP lost seven seniors this year, including Brown and two starters in guards Kim Smith and Erika Warren. They will be returning six rotation players from this year’s team, includ-

ing Thornton and Willingham, who both started along with junior forward Anete Steinberga.

Adams said it will be difficult to replace this year’s seniors but she is looking forward to keeping their memory alive when they place their three banners in the Don Haskins Center next year: the Conference USA regular season champion, the tournament champion and NCAA Tournament participant banner.

“We had a great senior class. I think that those ladies obviously were a part of doing something very special,” Adams said. “All year long I kept them grounded, but today I talked to them about how three banners will be hung this year...That is something that they can all feel very proud of and they definitely have done something this year. They have made history.”

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BOB CORRAL / The Prospector

Head coach Tim Floyd storms off the court after being ejected from the Miners’ home finale against Rice Feb. 29 at the Don Haskins Center.

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PITCHER from page 7

“It’s been an experience, she’s actually helping me out with my Spanish...some days, coach will actually make me speak in Spanish to her and then her speaking English to me,” Walts said. “It’s definitely helped me being in El Paso, it’s been an experience catching for her and made me and her a lot closer as pitcher and catcher.”

Villastrigo said she had interest from schools in Florida and Tennessee, but ultimately UTEP’s proximity to Mexico and her family’s influence helped her choose the Miners.

“UTEP was the one that convinced me the most,” Villastrigo said. “I like the support I’ve been given and I feel I have to pay them back the same way, that’s why at times I’m not satisfied with my performance and feel like I have to do more in return.”

Villastrigo has been the starter for most of the Miners’ games this season, but Rodriguez won’t label any of her pitchers as “the ace,” or No. 1 pitcher.

“We don’t get involved in any kind of ace conversations, I have a staff and she’s a very valuable part of my staff. As far as ace or no ace, I have four amazing pitchers and she’s a very strong one,” Rodriguez said. “I’m extremely excited and thankful that she’s here with me and not against me.”

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