The Prospector, January 21, 2020

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Inside: Interdisciplinary Research Building
Expected to open its doors by summer 2020

Welcome Back Issue

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Wars in the Middle East have always been about oil.

Roberto Rass
The Prospector

On the second day of this new decade, we were hit with the alarming news that U.S. President Donald J. Trump had ordered the killing of Qassem Soleimani, Iran's leading military figure. The drone strike that resulted in his assassination plunged the Middle East into crisis. Protests erupted in Tehran, with Iranians shouting, "Down with USA" and burning American flags. National news in the U.S. switched from the impending impeachment trial to the worries that our country was on the brink of war.

According to The Guardian, Trump claimed Soleimani's murder was justified because the Iranian leader had been planning imminent attacks on multiple U.S. embassies. Members of the U.S. Intelligence community were quoted shortly after contradicting those claims. After Congress received the intelligence briefing from the White House, Republican Sen. Mike Lee of Utah called it, "the worst briefing I've seen, at least on a military issue in the nine years I've served in the Senate."

To understand the conflict in Iran we would have to go back to the 1950s and the CIA-backed coup that overthrew a left-wing nationalist, Mohammad Mossadegh, who had nationalized Iran's oil. Operation Ajax was born, one that supported a brutal dictatorship in the country through to the 70s. This would later lead to the siege of our embassy in Tehran in 1979, which took 52 American hostages and held them for 444 days. The details and political unrest that would unfold for far more than one can explain in 800 words, but its important to recognize that the latest unrest did not happen because of one nuclear deal.

Soleimani's killing did not start this latest conflict, but rather ignited it. Trump's decision to respond to an Iranian-backed militia group that attacked a military base in Iraq, killing an American contractor, would begin the week of violence that ensued from both sides, with Trump tweeting, "Iran will be held fully responsible."

After Soleimani's death, he further threatened to attack 52 Iraqi cultural sites in reference to the 52 hostages in 1979, something that is considered a war crime by the International Criminal Court.

He later restricted the threat.

The wars in the Middle East have always been about oil. As we face the biggest energy crisis in this new decade, we were reminded of the impact it would have on oil fields burning, as the sky turned black and smoke billowed up. People were covered in soot.

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The Prospector 95, No. 15

The nation has since reverted its attention back to the impeachment trial of the president, which began last week in the Senate. Still, the threat of war with Iran will forever remain until economic sanctions are lifted, our reckless foreign policy is changed, and we reconsider our nuclear deal.

If we look to Iran's history, we can see that the country's economy is hard, further tensioning relations and launching violent protests within the country leading up the current unrest.

Biden responded to the assassination with a final answer to kick all U.S. forces out of the region, Iran launched retaliation strikes against U.S. military bases, though no members were killed, several were injured. Within days of those strikes, a Ukrainian passenger plane was mistakenly shot down by Iranian military forces, killing all 176 on board. After growing evidence from credible news sources, including the New York Times, Iran took responsibility for the horrific mistake and stated it did not seek war.

Meanwhile, back in the States, the House voted on a measure to restrict Trump's war-making power, and that of any future president. While the measure sits in the Senate, Trump announced he would back away from any further action, as the country and our international allies exhale a sigh of relief.

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Wilson applied for presidency of Colorado university system

UTEP president explains her decision to choose the Miners

Bryan Mena
The Prospector

The Colorado Independent reported on a leaked list of mostly Republican candidates who were under consideration to lead the University of Colorado (CU) System as its president, which listed UTEP President Heather Wilson among the 30 candidates — a search conducted around the same time the University of Texas (UT) System conducted its own search to fill UTEP’s presidency.

TheProspector inquired on Wilson’s decision to lead UTEP instead of CU, to which she provided the following statement:

“Current and former university presidents are contacted very frequently by headhunters to see if they are interested in particular positions or are asked to recommend others who might be. I knew I wanted to return to public higher education in the West when I finished my service with the Air Force, and Colorado met that criteria. However, the chancellorship in Colorado is not on a campus. One of the things I enjoy most about higher education is engagement with students and UTEP was a much better fit for what I love and wanted to do. I’m very happy to be here.”

Wilson did not specify roughly how many high-ranking university jobs she was under consideration for before she landed UTEP’s top job.

The short list anonymously sent to The Colorado Independent indicates that only 11 candidates among the 30 were recommended for interviews, resulting in the selection of former Bryan Menato lead UTEP instead of CU, to which she contacted very frequently by headhunters to see if they are interested in particular positions or are asked to recommend others who might be. I knew I wanted to return to public higher education in the West when I finished my service with the Air Force, and Colorado met that criteria. However, the chancellorship in Colorado is not on a campus. One of the things I enjoy most about higher education is engagement with students and UTEP was a much better fit for what I love and wanted to do. I’m very happy to be here.”

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This same concern over a secretive process that re sults in the selection of someon e controversial with a history of con servative politics was expressed by critics on a local and state- wide level when Wilson was selected to su cceed UTEP’s previous president, Diana Natalicio, even by UTEP faculty.

Guillermina Gina Núñez-McHirih, UTEP faculty senate vice president, told Inside Higher Ed, an online publication, that the faculty senate “was never consulted during the search — nor was it told who the semifinalists were” and that “faculty members on the UT search committee, she said, were required to sign a nondisclosure agreement prohibiting them from talking about the pro cess.”

However, the report also acknowledges that “presidential searches are often secretive” and according to a study in the Journal of Higher Education, university presidencies are also often political appointments.

“A troubling aspect of most public boards is that people come to the work with a particular ideology based on their political party,” an in- terviewee said in the academic article. “Yet the work of the board needs to be carried out in a nonpartisan way.”

Another interviewee said that public higher education boards have to confront the “natural tendency to adopt a political culture” in order to succeed.

The structure of public higher education boards varies by state. In Colorado, the CU regents are elected by voters in partisan elections, while in Texas, the UT regents are selected by the governor. But both governing boards used seemingly partisan and secretive processes to appoint high-ranking administrators.

Unlike the process conducted by CU’s governing board that narrowed a pool of 160 applicants down to 30, the UT Board of Regents named Wilson as the sole finalist for UT’s presidency.

Any other candidates who might have been in the running for UTEP’s presidency remain a mystery. Nondisclosure agreements over community members that held advisory roles in the selection process prevent the release of that information.

Bryan Mena may be reached at prospector@utep.edu

Interdisciplinary Research Building expected to open its doors by the summer

Pauline Asialt Spencer
The Prospector

The wait for the University of Texas at El Paso’s (UTEP) anticipated Interdisciplinary Research Building (IDRB) is almost over. After nearly five years of planning and construction, the IDRB is beginning to come together and is nearly ready to open its doors.

Work on the landscaping and construction will continue for the months to come. There is no official date for the opening of the building yet, but according to Greg McNicol, UTEP associate vice president for facilities management, the IDRB is looking to be completed by April or the summer of this year.

In December of 2018, the university was awarded an R1 designation by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, officially labeling it as a top-tier doctoral university with high research activity.

The new building is located between the Undergraduate Learning Center (UGLC) and El Paso Natural Gas Conference Center (NGCC) and will provide UTEP students and faculty with a series of labs, large meeting rooms, interview rooms and even a coffee shop.

With a spending budget of $93.5 million, the IDRB is a large, four-floor building, equipped to help student researchers and faculty through interdisciplinary research.

The innovative building comprises of many offices, ranging from small study rooms, to large, open-spaced conference rooms with an occupancy of up to 75 people. With an interior made almost entirely of glass, the IDRB gives UTEP a modern touch to its Bhutan-inspired architecture.

“We want each building to have its own expression of the Bhutan architecture, so we’re not looking for a cookie cutter design, but it has to have the elements,” McNicol said.

TheProspector previously reported that the building will be open for collaborative research done by students coming from different colleges. Students looking to move their research into this new building will have to present a case advocating for their projects, mentioning their needs and explaining how they would benefit from it.

Pauline Asialt Spencer may be reached at prospector@utep.edu

The main entrance to UTEP’s new Interdisciplinary Research Building will include a lounge area that will house tables, chairs, sofas and more. The lighting in various rooms, such as the one pictured above, is intentional and set to represent molecules of gold, silver and copper.
Howdy's gas stations converted to Speedways

The change comes following a multi-billion-dollar merger

Andy Diaz
The Prospector

As El Paso residents make their way through town, they may have noticed the change in what used to be Howdy's gas stations, which are now turned into Speedway convenience stores. The change comes after several mergers within the oil business, including a $23.3 billion-dollar deal between Marathon Petroleum Corporation (MPC) and Andeavor that came into effect in October of 2018.

The first set of mergers came in 2017, when the San Antonio-based petroleum company Andeavor purchased Western Refinery from its owner at the time, El Paso billionaire Paul Foster. With the sale of Western Refinery, came all Howdy's gas stations, which the company had been managing since 2011.

Looking to expand to the West Coast in 2018, MPC, who also operates all Speedway gas stations as one of its primary branches, acquired Andeavor in a $23.3 billion-dollar merger. The merger combines all of Andeavor's refineries in the west and retail markets like Shell, Exxon and Mobil.

"This transformative transaction is a significant milestone in our company's more than 130-year history," said MPC Chairman and CEO Gary Heminger back in April 2018, when the deal was first announced to the public. "MPC is now the leading refiner, midstream and marketing company in the U.S. and is well-positioned for long-term growth and shareholder value creation."

This merger expands MPC's operations from coast to coast, as Andeavor's refinery presence in the Mid-Continent and Pacific Northwest add to MPC's Gulf Coast and Midwest markets, making the combined company the number one United States refiner with the capacity to produce more than three million barrels of oil per day.

In addition, with the intention of spinning off Speedway into its own company, the store would go from owning and operating approximately 3,000 convenience stores to what would ultimately grow to be 8,000 nationwide stores.

"Today's announcement to separate Speedway will create a new independent company that is well-positioned to achieve sustained growth and create substantial shareholder value," Heminger said in a 2019 statement. "We have built Speedway into an exceptional business."

Through this, MPC would be creating the second largest independent gas station chain in the U.S. after Couche-Tard, the company that owns all Circle K stores. But the new change does not only mean changing the signage outside, Speedway plans to reinvent some of Andeavor's practices, including the food service found inside stores, as Speedway looks to control more of its supply chain.

"We change all the point-of-sale, the back-office systems, we install our loyalty program, there is extensive training of employees on new systems and procedures;" Speedway President Tony Kenney told Convenience Store News. "What's really happening inside the store is much more complex than just the appearance - the things that you see from the outside perspective, the painting and things like that."

Speedway will focus on continuing the success of old practices done by Andeavor, such as the company's primary focus on fuel, while equally focusing on creating some of its own in order to insure the best transition and service for customers.

"We are able to bring a lot of our knowledge and learnings and relationships that we have with CPG companies and vendor partners;" Kenney said. "We have a strong loyalty program. We want to leverage that. There will be some best practices brought from the Speedway side as we continue to integrate the Andeavor stores."

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Photo courtesy of Speedway
Howdy's gas stations are now turned into Speedway stores.
Forecast for border region predicts impact from USMCA trade deal

Bryan Mena
The Prospector

Recent research from the Border Region Modeling Project (BRMP) through the University of Texas at El Paso reveals that the border region encompassing El Paso, Las Cruces, Ciudad Juarez and the city of Chihuahua, will benefit economically from the new U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) which was decisively approved by the Senate less than a week ago.

The BRMP is a yearly economic study that has been published since 1998 and, according to Steven Fullerton who is a staff economist and associate director at BRMP, is composed of 255 equations containing variables from the housing, labor and commercial markets.

Fullerton said it also contains variables like local restaurant prices gathered by UTEP graduates to conduct price analysis ratios.

Some significant predictions that the report makes for the forecast period from 2019 to 2021 is that "employment growth is projected to slump" this year and that "automobile registrations are expected to accelerate in 2019 and surpass 698,000 by 2021." The report also highlights that "health care services is likely to post the fastest rates of expansion.'

Along with the several projections that the report makes, it also addresses the forecast of upside and downside risks like "natural disasters, trade wars and policy inconsistencies."

"Approval of the new USMCA trade agreement has stabilized the regional outlook and reduced threat of continental supply chain ruptures that would have likely resurrected 1970s-style stagflation," the forecast-risk section in the report said.

Fullerton said that the new USMCA trade deal will stabilize the region's economic outlook by stimulating commercial activity in the area.

"The USMCA gives our region an advantage by allowing companies to expand into our area. Those new companies produce skilled jobs on both sides of the border. Those skilled jobs enable workers to spend those earnings in our region, which helps retail sales and boosts our border economy," Fullerton told The Prospector.

"On top of that, there will be a need for additional industrial space for those IMMEX plants that will be producing each product, which increases the need for construction jobs."

According to Industry Weekly, the Mexican program, Industria Manufacturera, Maquiladora y de Servicios de Exportación, or IMMEX, "is defined as an instrument to temporarily import goods and services that will be manufactured, transformed or repaired, and then re-exported without payment of taxes, compensatory quotas, and other specific benefits."

Fullerton explains that this back and forth — export and re-export — of electronic and automotive components between Mexico and the U.S. is a huge job creator and is inherently why trade policies like the USMCA play a significant role.

"A lot of these moving pieces, including those electronic products, get built in Juarez that, in turn, come over here and try to pass inspection," Fullerton said. "Then they send them back to complete the rest of that component."

The USMCA's expected impact on industrial space for IMMEX plants, coupled with its requirement that 75 percent of the content of passenger and light vehicle trucks be made in North America by 2023, is poised to stimulate the border economy once it is fully ratified.

According to the Office of the United States Trade Representative, another advantage of the new USMCA is its new provisions on digital trade, anticorruption and "good regulatory practices" which are expected to affect every region, including the border.

The USMCA is awaiting signature from U.S. President Donald Trump after passing through both chambers of Congress and is likely to pass through Canadian parliament as well, according to a Vox article.
Candidates for county tax assessor collector race make their case

One candidate touts experience, the other calls for community engagement

Bryan Mena
The Prospector

Voters in El Paso County will cast their ballots to decide the fate of several primary races on Tuesday, March 3, including the contested El Paso County tax assessor-collector race which has drawn two Democratic candidates, incumbent Ruben Gonzalez and challenger Ivan Nino.

According to the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, the responsibilities of the county tax assessor-collector include assessing and collecting property taxes, the registration, titling and transfer of all vehicles, the issuance of disabled parking permits, the collection of sales tax on a .ssessor-collector include assessing and collect­

beer and liquor permits on behalf of the Texas Alcohol and Beverage Commission.

One candidate

Alcohol and Beverage Commission.

Voters in El Paso County

According to the Texas Comptroller of Public

Gonzalez is running for reelection after being
couted a bill, I don't remember the exact number, but it's an automatic voter registration initiative that automatically registers you to vote," Nino said. "I think that is a great idea and I would love to work with the Congresswoman to make sure that this something that could become national.''


The bill seeks to ensure every person that pro­

vides "identifying information to the State mo­
tor vehicle authority is automatically registered to vote." However, the bill remains pending in the House Administration Committee and has not received any action in over a year.

Nino repeatedly said that it is simply not enough to just get the job done, but to ensure that "we're truly representing our constituents.'''

The candidate plans to eventually release video­

through his campaign to illustrate his ideas and plans to "empower the community.''' The last day to register to vote in the March 2020 primary election is Feb. 3. For a complete list of important dates, visit the county's election office website at epcountyvotes.org

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The most anticipated action movies of 2020

Andrew Diaz

With a new year comes a new wave of entertainment and although award season for 2019 films just began, people are already buzzing about this year's action movie releases which can become next year's potential winners.

The year 2020 is the year of action movies where we reunite with the world's favorite Bad Boys, finally get an answer to the classic Hollywood question, "Who would win in a battle between Godzilla and King Kong?" and witness a world of action on the big screen.

The new decade began with what feels like the early 2000s as we are greeted by Detectives Mike Lowrey and Marcus Burnett one more time in the highly anticipated movie "Bad Boys for Life," released Jan. 17.

The film directed by Adil El Arbi and Bilall Fallah, stars Will Smith as Mike and Martin Marcus as Burnett, where the duo team up to take down the merciless leader of a Miami drug cartel, Armando Armas, played by Jacob Scipio.

The duo confront issues like job changes and midlife crises. Although the audience can expect to see a plot similar to the franchise's last two movies, one can't help but wonder what the talkative pair have up since.

The same level of adventure can be expected from "Birds of Prey (and the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn)" directed by Cathy Yan and starring Margot Robbie as Harley Quinn, a psychotic and fearless supervillain the world met back in 2016 as she battled alongside other supervillains in the film "Suicide Squad."

"Godzilla vs. King Kong" is an upcoming American film directed by Adam Wingard and written by Terry Rossio. However, in this film, the audience will see Quinn come into her own as she faces the aftermath of splitting up with the Joker by joining superheroes Black Canary, Huntress and Black Manta to save the life of young Cassandra Cain from a crime lord. Audiences can see the battle starring the iconic Quinn on Feb. 7.

Another battle you won't want to miss coming to theaters March 27 is the live action adaptation of the 1984 Disney film, "Mulan." The film, directed by Niki Caro stars Liu Yifei as Hua Mulan, the eldest daughter of an honored warrior who steps up to take her ill father's place when the emperor of China announces one man per family must serve in the Imperial Chinese Army to defend the country's honor against the Huns. Disguised as a male warrior, Mulan embraces her true potential alongside Donnie Yen, Gong Li, Jet Li and Ukranh Ambushka in a battle to save the country and challenge the status quo. Others who will be unveiling their true potential include the five martial artists hero who will meet on April 3 in "The New Mutants," a film directed by Josh Boone, starring Anya Taylor-Joy, Mance Williams, Charlie Heaton, Bla Hust and Henry Zaga. The movie is said to be the final installment of the X-Men film series as it centers around the story of five young mutants who belong to the first group of graduates from Charles Xavier's school. The team must face their past sins and try to save themselves as they begin to discover their abilities while being held in a secret facility against their will.

The action continues throughout the year as the world meets James Bond, played by Daniel Craig, in the twenty-fifth installment of the James Bond film, "No Time To Die," set to be released on April 10.

After leaving active service, we are reunited with 007 in Jamaica, where he is enjoying a tranquil life. That is, until his friend Felix Leiter from the CIA turns up asking him for help to rescue a kidnapped scientist. The rescue mission turns out to be more difficult than expected, leaving Bond to go on the hunt for a mysterious villain armed with threatening new technology.

Craig is joined on screen by Oscar-winning actor Rami Malek along with talented actors such as Lea Seydoux, Lashana Lynch and Ana de Armas, under the direction of Cary Joji Fukunaga. The action spy movie, contrary to the title, is expected to be a film moviegoers want to make time for. A mystery people will also want to uncover is the one Scarlett Johannson is set to bring as she returns to her role as Natasha Romanoff, to tell the superhero's story in the anticipated Marvel Studios' movie, "Black Widow."

The film, directed by Cate Shortland, is the first full-length film centered around the character. It takes place following the events of "Captain America: Civil War," as Natasha is on the run from the government after having disobeyed the Sokovia Accords and for helping Steve Rogers, also known as Captain America. With supporting actors like Florence Pugh as Florence Pugh as Scarlett Johansson and David Harbour as Red Guardian, Marvel fans can expect to learn more about the Avenger's mysterious past as returning Marvel Studios' movie, "Black Widow."

The film is set to be released in theaters May 1.

However, Black Widow isn't the only superhero the world will be talking about. Wonder Woman, played by Gal Gadot, is expected to deliver thrilling action on June 4 in DC Extended Universe's "Wonder Woman 1984." Director Patty Jenkins reunites us with Amazons demi-god, Diana Prince, after having first met her in "Wonder Woman" where she confronted forces of evil in World War I to end human conflict.

Unfortunately, the conflict does not end. This time around the superhero faces problems with the Soviet Union during the Cold War in the 1980s and finds two formidable foes by the names of Maxwell Lord and the Cheetah, joining the action with Wonder Woman, include Chris Pine, Kristen Wiig, Pedro Pascal, Robin Wright and Connie Nielsen in supporting roles. One who is also up for action is Captain Pete "Maverick" Mitchell, played by Tom Cruise, who will return in "Top Gun: Maverick," the sequel to the 1986 film, "Top Gun."

The film, directed by Joseph Kosinski, is set in the world of drone technology and fifth generation fighters. As one of the Navy's top aviators, "Maverick" trains Top Gun cadets for a mission no living pilot has ever seen. It is then that Maverick encounters Lieutenant Brad Bradshaw, played by Miles Teller, the son of his late best friend, Lieutenant Nick Bradshaw, also known as Goose, faced with danger of a desperate mission, while confront­ ing the ghost of his past, Maverick must face his deepest fears and make ultimate sacrifices on June 26.

Another conflict includes the ones Bill Wold­hard, McKeev Scrae, Paul Bussi and Carrie Coon will try to face on July 10 as the highly anticipated "Godzilla vs. Kong" comes to theaters. The film, directed by Jason Reitman, is set 30 years after "Godzilla II: King of the Monsters," as a family moves to a small town and soon discover their connection to the original Godzilla and the secret legacy their grandfather left behind.

With the help of friends, the family builds on the legacy by battling supernatural creatures and events happening in the town ofFooterville, Oklahoma.

The final top anticipated action film of 2020 brings a battle where technological warfare can win, as seen in "Bad Boys for Life," and "No Time To Die." A fight between Godzilla and King Kong in a monster film directed by Adam Wingard titled "Godzilla vs. Kong." The two most powerful foes on earth will collide on Nov. 20, a battle of the ages as humanity fights for its future. The film stars Akram-Ghassouli, Millicent Bobby Brown, Clyde Chandler, Rebecca Hall and Brian Tyler. The world watches the epic battle unfold before their eyes with the audience.

With action films that reunite-old-heroes and present new ones, 2020 is expected to be a promising year for action movies—it's now up to the audience to decide if they too are up for the adventure.
"The Gentlemen" is an excellent action-comedy

The Gentlemen is a quick-witted, action-packed crime thriller with as many twists and turns as a rollercoaster to hell and back.

British filmmaker Guy Ritchie’s latest film, "The Gentlemen," is an excellent action-comedy crime thriller with as many twists and turns as a rollercoaster to hell and back. The film depicts a violent battle of wits between sophisticated British mobsters over the lucrative, yet bloody, marijuana black market in Ritchie’s fictional United Kingdom.

Ritchie is known for directing successful comedic crime films like his 1998 "Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels" and his 2000 "Snatch" that capture this rugged, working-class London aesthetic — sometimes known as cockney. "The Gentlemen" is a continuation of this prosperous streak of action-packed, quick-witted crime films, a streak that the director deviated from to produce "Aladdin" for his five children, among other reasons.

Breathing life into this intricately clever screenplay is a star-studded cast featuring Matthew McConaughey as the cunning protagonist, Mickey Pearson. McConaughey’s character is a rags-to-riches tough guy that is not only street smart, but also book smart since he went from an unstable home in Tennessee to becoming a Rhodes Scholar at the prestigious University of Oxford, selling weed to the university’s rich upper-class student body.

Aside from his superb acting, McConaughey’s snazzy outfits and his luxuriant curls are two details that amusingly bring this archetypal mobster character to life.

The same can be said about the entire cast when it comes to wardrobe. From stylish leather jackets and turtlenecks to exuberant tracksuits, and the iconic Hugh Grant as the whimsical private investigator and hopeful screenwriter, Fletcher, who gives the film its moments of lighthearted comedy.

Fletcher somehow snuck into Raymond’s cory upscale home to negotiate a £20 million deal to sell a screenplay he wrote in exchange for this large sum of money from Raymond.

Fletcher is literally blackmailing Raymond with the actual screenplay because it’s not just any piece of writing. The screenplay is an actual account of all the notes Fletcher took as an investigator for the opportunistic British tabloid, The Daily Print, of all the messy dark deeds committed by Raymond and Pearson in the midst of a mobster business deal gone wrong.

The film’s plot unfolds as Fletcher explains the contents of his screenplay, which again, are events that actually happened and is just Fletcher basically touting his investigation to Raymond in the form of proposing a screenplay.

One thing that must be discussed is Fletcher’s sexuality and how it’s hilariously expressed in his dialogue with Raymond.

In one scene, Raymond says it’s time for him to go to bed, to which Fletcher responds, “Can I come?” which obviously implies that he’s either gay or bisexual, but in a witty way.

It’s a very simple comedic element and Ritchie did well in strategically placing jokes throughout the entire film — at least most of them.

On the topic of humor, some jokes simply fell flat, like a joke about the appropriateness of saying the term "black cunt."

The Hollywood Reporter criticized this “woke” humor in its review of the movie asserting, "The film’s undercurrent of knowingly woke humor is also slightly grating: weak jokes about Chinese people having comically rude names and mixing up English vowels, for example, or a digression on whether it is racist to call somebody a ‘black c—’. These nagging details feel more lazy than willfully offensive, but they are still oddly out of place in a film set in multicultural 21st century London."

Ritchie might have missed the bullseye in that regard, but Fletcher definitely kept the comedic spirit alive throughout the movie.

Other big names in the film include "Downton Abbey" actress Michelle Dockery playing Pearson’s partner-in-crime/wife Rosalind Pearson; "Succession" actor Jeremy Strong as the film’s conniving backstabbing antagonist, Matthew Berger; Colin Farrell as the film’s track-suited father figure, Coach; and host of BBC’s "The Travel Show" Henry Golding as the other brutal antagonist, Dry Eye, who "explodes onto the scene like a firecracker," according to Fletcher.

The business mobster deal that goes wrong in this film is between Pearson and Berger and it has to do with weed — a lot of it. Pearson plans to retire a bit early after a successful career running a marijuana agribusiness.

To read Mena’s full story, visit TheProspectorDaily.com

Bryan Mena may be reached at prospector@utep.edu
Miners dominate Roadrunners with 94-54 rout

UTEP women improve to 4-1 in Conference-USA play

Isaiah Ramirez
The Prospector

It has been a season of significant improvement for the UTEP women's basketball team (11-5, 4-1) and its 94-54 win over UTSA (6-10, 2-3) Saturday afternoon at the Don Haskins Center is one piece of evidence.

UTEP has already surpassed its win total from last season (9-22) and stands amongst the leaders in Conference-USA (C-USA) with a 4-1 record in conference play.

Behind a robust first half in which the Miners scored 55 points, tying the second most first-half points in program history, UTEP never let off the gas pedal and earned its ninth win by double figures.

The Miners' halftime lead of 55-28 is its largest halftime lead in a league game in program history.

"I thought it was really important that we do start well, especially in a Conference-USA game where every possession is important and the way we got out early was important," head coach Kevin Baker said. "We really played some terrific basketball in the second quarter and extended the lead to where we could all take a little bit of a deep breath and play even better in the second half."

Junior transfer forward Michelle Pruitt earned her first career double-double scoring 12 points and grabbing 11 boards. For the second time this season, Pruitt has grabbed 10 or more rebounds.

Freshman guard Katia Gallegos dished out a career-high 10 assists against the Roadrunners. Coming into Saturday's game, Gallegos was second in C-USA in assists per game at 4.7.

"I dished the ball out a lot, found our open players and as a point guard, that's your job. I'm pretty proud of that," Gallegos said.

The dominating win was a total team effort with seven players scoring eight or more points and everyone on the squad chipping in at least two points. UTEP's bench outscored UTSA's bench 48-14. UTEP also won the battle of the boards outrebounding the Roadrunners 53-34.

"We compete in practice and two things that really stand out about this team is sharing the ball and competitiveness. This team is so far my favorite and it's been a great senior year," Katarina Zec said.

Zec had her 13th game scoring in double figures with a 15-point performance against the Roadrunners. Zec grabbed seven rebounds for the Miners and led the squad in minutes with 26.

"The Miners now battle the Rice Owls in the second game of UTEP's three-game homestand. Rice (11-6, 6-0) is currently in first place in conference and is coming off a 75-64 win over Southern Miss at home. The Owls are the defending C-USA regular season and tournament champion.

"We don't have to do anything special we just have to play the way we are capable of playing and we'll be fine," Baker said. "We know that Rice is a good team and you know the pressure is really on Rice it's not on us. Rice has not lost a conference game in a while. We don't have anything to lose and we're a team on the rise."

UTEP takes on Rice at 7 p.m. Jan. 23 at the Don Haskins Center.
For the second straight year, the UTEP men's track and field team swept the top three spots in the 3000-meter run at the Corky Classic in Lubbock, Texas.

Freshman sensation Titus Cheruiyot took first place in the long-distance event with a close victory over teammate sophomore Rogers Korir and junior Boaz Ronah.

Cheruiyot, in his first indoor competition for the Miners, ran the 3000-meter distance in a time of 8:42.53, just edging Korir (8:44.44) and Ronah (8:47.70). A star for the cross-country team who won two meets and qualified for the NCAA national championships, Cheruiyot will be an anchor for the long-distance runs.

Ronah won the event last year, followed by teammates Korir and junior Cornelius Kapel, who finished a distant 11th this year. Korir followed up his strong performance by running away from the field, winning the 5000 meters by 16 seconds over teammate Ronah. Korir and Ronah were the only participants to run both events at the classic. Freshman Kayn Quinones finished fifth in his first meet.

Junior Caroline Chepkosgei dominated the 800-meter run winning with a time of 2:12.22, which was over 9 seconds less than the second-place finisher. Coming close to sweeping her events of the weekend, Chepkosgei came up short in a narrow loss in the 1500 meter run but won the first-place finisher.

Winner of last year's 1000 meter, Chepkosgei was a silver and bronze medalist in these events at last year's Conference USA (C-USA) championships.

Junior Shakeem Smith narrowly broke the two decade standing school record in the 60-meter hurdles that were held by Lee Mays (7.91) with a time of 7.90. Previously Smith's fastest time was 7.95 at the C-USA championships in a preliminary race.

Running a personal best time of 1:09.5 second, senior Sean Bailey came in a close second in the 600-meter run as he did the previous year. Bailey ran a 1:10.07 last year in the event losing by about half a second. A bronze medalist in the 400-meter dash at the conference championships last season Bailey is the top sprinter for the Miners.

Competing in both the triple jump and long jump sophomore Chantelo bright finished second and seventh, respectively. Bright jumped a personal best 12.95-meter jump in the triple jump.

In the men's 100-meter run freshman Kenneth Talavera is a photo finish with two-hundredths of a second with a time of 10.31. Cheruiyot finished fourth a tenth of a second slower with four runners, all crossing the finish line within a third of a second apart.

Running in their first track events, fellow freshman Davion Bynaum and Yasmin George finished seventh in the 60-meter hurdles that were held by Lee Mays (7.91) with a time of 7.90. Previously Smith's fastest time was 7.95 at the C-USA championships in a preliminary race.

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Miners’ road woes continue

Michael Cuviello
The Prospector

The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) got payback against the UTEP Miners last Saturday with a dominating 86-70 victory on its home court.

Leading from start to finish in this matchup, the Roadrunners shot 61 percent in the first half to build a 17-point halftime lead. Early in the second half, UTSA built up the lead to 23 points, much as it did in the previous matchup in El Paso.

After securing a 24-point comeback in the last matchup, the Miners chipped away at the UTSA lead at about the 12-minute mark. This game was at a similar point where UTEP staged its biggest comeback in history a few nights earlier versus the same team.

Junior Luka Barasic of UTSA then proceeded to throw cold water on the UTEP comeback with a layup and one to extend the lead to nine points. Nine points would be the closest that the Miners would get for the rest of the game and UTSA extended the lead into double digits at the 4:30 mark and never looked back.

Losing its eighth road game of the season and Head Coach Rodney Terry’s 21st straight as a Miner coach, UTEP fell to 11-8 on the season and 2-4 in the conference. Currently residing in 11th place in Conference USA, the Miners are a far cry from where they were predicted to be in the preseason.

“We let them go early in transition. We can’t let a team like that get transition baskets like that to start the game,” Terry said. “We didn’t have the urgency to get back and get stops when we needed them on defense.”

UTSA’s one-two punch of Jhivvan Jackson and Keaton Wallace combined for 44 points doing most of the damage as they had in the previous matchup. Senior Otem Bior putting up a career-high 13 points, was the surprise of the night. After being held scoreless just three nights prior, Bior, who averages about 4 points a game, put up 11 in the first half and missed only two shots out of eight for the game.

Junior Bryson Williams led the way for the Miners as usual with 21 points and seven rebounds. Unfortunately for Williams, he fouled out at the two-minute mark putting on a game effort. Williams has done a much better job recently in staying out of foul trouble and has played well when in danger of fouling out. This was his first foul ejection of the season.

Sophomore guard Souley Bourn had 18 points on the night, but had his second straight one of eight-game from the three-point line. For the season, Bourn is only shooting 24 percent from the three-point line and the Miners as a team shot 18 percent on the night from the arc.

Rebounding was a major Achilles heel for the Miners against the Roadrunners as they were outrebounded by a 47 to 32 margin. Defensively this may have been the Miners’ worst game as they gave up the most points to an opponent by nine more than the previous high of 77.

Junior big man Eric Vila returned to the starting lineup for the first time in four games as Terry stayed with those players who played the most minutes in the last game. Sophomore Jordan Lathon went his fourth straight game without making a field goal since returning to the team after entering the transfer portal. Lathon has been a combined 0-11 in his last four games and his minutes have dipped below double digits during that time.

Hoping for its first road win, the team next faces conference opponent the Rice University Owls (9-10, 1-5), which has won the last two home games against the Miners. UTEP plays at 6 p.m. Jan. 23 at Rice in Houston. The game will be televised on ESPN+ and broadcast on AM Radio 600 ESPN El Paso.

Michael Cuviello may be reached at prospector@utep.edu.
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INTRAMURAL SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEAGUES</th>
<th>Registration Deadline</th>
<th>Season Starts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>01/29</td>
<td>02/03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor Soccer</td>
<td>01/29</td>
<td>02/04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>03/18</td>
<td>03/23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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TOURNAMENTS

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
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OUTDOOR ADVENTURE PROGRAM

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Trip Name</th>
<th>Member Non-Member</th>
<th>Deadline to Register</th>
<th>Open Registration Type of Trip</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

February 22: Thousand steps $15
March 14-19: Inca Trail $50
March 18: Hueno Tanks $15
April 11: Tin Mine $15
April 21-26: Fort Davis $50
May 22: Taos Box Whitewater Rafting, NM $175

CPR Awareness Day
Monday, February 17, 2020
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Learn how to do Hands Only CPR
Free giveaways!

Miner Madness Open House
Thursday, February 20, 2020
4 p.m. - 8 p.m.
Food, Music, Games and Prizes

FITNESS PROGRAMS (JANUARY 27 - MAY 7)

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3450 Sun Bowl Dr.
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