Super Bowl LIV

49ers will win as a balanced team
Michael Cuviello
The Prospector

In the battle for National Football League supremacy, the season has come down to one final game. The San Francisco 49ers (13-3) take on the Kansas City Chiefs (12-4) Sunday, Feb. 2, in Miami.

When the 49ers leave the field victorious Sunday, the team will be tied with the New England Patriots and Pittsburgh Steelers with six wins and its first Super Bowl victory in 25 years. Handsome Jimmy Garoppolo will hold his first Lombardi Trophy as a starting quarterback.

see 49ERS on page 2

PREDICTIONS

Final score: 49ers 27 - Chiefs 21
MVP: Richard Sherman

Anastasia Elliott performs in support of music education, shooting victims
Exodis Ward
The Prospector

Alternative singer and songwriter Anastasia Elliott headlined a concert Jan. 23 at the Lowbrow Palace to support The Great Khalid Foundation and the victims of the Aug. 3 shooting that left 22 dead and several dozen injured at an El Paso Walmart.

Elliott is a champion of music education so when she learned that The Great Khalid Foundation advocates for the same thing, Elliott and her team organized the benefit concert to ensure the foundation's outreach can continue.

"The focus that they have on the children, I think that's so awesome," Elliott told The Prospector in an exclusive interview. "They're putting all their efforts into place and it's beneficial so you can feel good when you donate money to them."

Despite recovering from a plane crash, Elliott persisted on supporting The Great Khalid Foundation and the El Paso community that experienced a tragedy months before.

"It's terrible. Just knowing that could happen at any moment, especially in such a normal, public place like that," Elliott said. "It's pretty amazing to see how the community here has come together and made the most of it, trying to give back to everybody and support the families of the ones that were lost."

Judah Holiday is a singer and songwriter who is also on tour. He showed his support by opening for Elliott.

"I didn't feel like I could start my trip off without paying respects to what happened," Holiday said.

To read Ward's full story, visit TheProspectorDaily.com

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Time to party like its 1969 in KC
Isaiah Ramirez
The Prospector

For the first time in 50 years, the Kansas City Chiefs are in the Super Bowl and, for Chiefs nation, the hope is that the result will be the same as the one in 1969 — with a win.

This version of the Chiefs may be the best chance it has to take home the Lombardi Trophy in Miami.

I see the Chiefs taking down the 49ers and Gucci Garoppolo (shout out to Bleacher Report) and winning its second Super Bowl, but it won't be easy.

see CHIEFS on page 2

Final score: Chiefs 28 - 49ers 24
MVP: Patrick Mahomes
Overwhelmed

Valeria Olivares
The Prospector

As the new semester starts, I want to remind students, especially those who push themselves to the point of breaking down while driving away from the university, to take care of their physical and mental health.

I understand that most of us are trying to make the most out of all the available opportunities in order to stand out after graduating, but we need to remember that we also matter. Our mental health matters.

Keep looking for internships; take challenging classes that give you headaches; work with UTEP faculty on different research projects; seek out different experiences. But remember to not burn yourself out. Learn and respect your limits.

As a person who thrives under pressure and whose personal hobby is to bite more than they can chew, I need to constantly remind myself of all of this.

I also want to call out to the UTEP community and push everyone toward sharing their opinions with The Prospector, the university’s student run newspaper.

As student journalists, it is extremely motivating when we see that people are reading, reacting and responding to the work we do.

While I do not want to add more to the plate of the inspired student faculty, students and staff of UTEP, but I believe that everyone should participate and contribute to their newspaper.

To submit a letter to the editor for The Prospector, email us at prospector@utep.edu, we want to hear from you so we can continue to properly serve the UTEP community.

Valeria Olivares may be reached at prospector@utep.edu

49ERS from front page

San Francisco is the most balanced team in football with the No. 2 ranked defense and fourth-ranked offense in the league. Better on both sides of the ball than the Chiefs, the 49ers are not just dependent on its offense to carry them like Kansas City.

The Chiefs’ offense is totally one dimensional, depending on the arm of its pro bowl quarterback Patrick Mahomes while trying to mask a mediocre running game led by journeyman running back Damien Williams. Overall, the Chiefs’ running game is ranked in the bottom half of the league in average and near the bottom of the league in yardage.

Defensively, the 49ers have only allowed 41 yards a game rushing per game in the postseason and are the top-ranked pass defense in the league. In terms of matchups, these play to the strengths of the San Francisco defense, which is also ranked sixth overall in creating turnovers and fifth overall in getting the opposing team’s quarterback.

Yet to trail in a game this postseason, the 49ers have been able to rely on a three-headed rushing attack of Raheem Mostert, Tevin Coleman and Matt Breida to wear out opposing defenses. The trio helped the team rank second in rushing yards with Breida and Mostart both averaging more than 5 yards a carry.

The Achilles’ heel of the Chiefs’ defense this season has been its ability to stop the run. Ranking near last in the league at 4.9 yards per rushing attempt, Kansas City’s run defense does not match up well to the multifaceted running game of the 49ers.

Featuring one of the most respected play-casters in the league, head coach Kyle Shanahan, the Niners have an ability to mix up its offense that is not dependent on one player, unlike the Chiefs. In five coaching stops, Shanahan has led four different teams to top five offenses and improved those offenses from previous seasons.

Just three seasons ago, Shanahan took over a 2-12 team in shambles that had ranked next to last in offense two years in a row. Now Shanahan is coaching in his first Superbowl as a head coach while previously being the offensive coordinator in the Atlanta Falcons’ Super Bowl loss.

The key to this game, in my opinion, is coaching and while Andy Reid is an excellent coach, there is one glaring omission from his resume and that is winning a Super Bowl. Reid has coached 21 years and has had one other shot at the brass ring in 2004, which his team lost to the New England Patriots. Shanahan has shown an ability to get the most out of his players and has created a very balanced team, for that reason I feel the Niners have the edge.

Michael Cuviello may be reached at prospector@utep.edu

CHIEFS from front page

If you’ve watched any Kansas City Chiefs game the past two seasons, you may have noticed a stocky guy playing quarterback and wearing the number 15 making unbelievable plays. You might have just seen him in State Farm commercials, which is fine, too.

That guy’s name is Patrick Mahomes, the defending National Football League Most Valuable Player and a once in a generation type talent, throwing for 76 touchdowns in his two seasons as a starter.

Mahomes has thrown eight touchdowns and zero interceptions during this playoff run and has an exceptional 131.5 quarterback rating.

The offense goes the way he goes and, after rallying the team from a 27-0 deficit in the divisional round game versus the Texans to win 51-31, I became a firm believer that this team has what it takes to make a Super Bowl run with Mahomes under center.

Mahomes is just unstoppable now and can get things done on the ground, rushing for 103 yards this postseason and even a strong defense in the 49ers will not be able to stop the curly-haired wizard from doing whatever he wants on the gridiron.

Mahomes has never lost a game by more than seven points as a starter and I don’t see Kansas City losing this one.

Mahomes is not the only reason the Chiefs will win the Super Bowl; it’s also the supporting cast around him such as wide receivers Tyreek Hill and Sammy Watkins, who combined for 181 receiving yards versus the Titans in the AFC Championship game and three touchdowns.

Hill is arguably the fastest receiver in the league and Watkins is at times a nightmare for opposing defenses.

The Chiefs will be going up against the best passing defense during the regular season in the 49ers that allowed just 169 passing yards per game. The good news for the Chiefs is that it has the best receiving score in the postseason and was top five during the regular season, averaging 283 yards per game.

One major question is the Chiefs’ defense. The 49ers has the best rushing attack in the league with running back Raheem Mostert coming off a stellar 220-yard four touchdown performance in a dominating win over the Packers in the NFC Championship game.

The Chiefs held NFL rushing leader Derrick Henry to just 69 yards in the AFC Championship game and it will need to bring up another smothering defensive outing against the 49ers if it wants to walk out of Miami with a W.

Isaiah Ramirez may be reached at prospector@utep.edu

SPEAK YOUR MIND

Submit a letter to the editor! Letters will be edited for clarity and brevity. Letters over 250 words are subject to editing to fit available space. Please include full name, street address and telephone number and e-mail address, plus major, classification and/or title if applicable. Address and phone number will be verified only. Write to 105 E. Union, prospector@utep.edu, call 747-7470 or fax 747-8031.

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Local orgs collaborate to raise Latino voter turnout

Margaret Cataldi
The Prospector

Telemundo 48 partnered with the University of Texas at El Paso's (UTEP) League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) chapter Wednesday, Jan. 15, in an effort to register students to vote in the upcoming primary election. The two organizations tabled together outside of the UTEP's Union Complex amongst dozens of other student organizations advertising their programs to new and returning students on their daily commute between classes.

"We're partnering with LULAC to encourage students and everyone in the community to come and register to vote," said Luisa Arredondo, marketing assistant for Telemundo 48 El Paso. "Right now it's very important for everyone to have the voice, to have a say, in what is going on with our country."

With the 2020 presidential election approaching this November, the Democratic primary election, which will determine who will be the Democratic nominee running against President Donald Trump, is underway. Iowa will kick off the election Feb. 3, followed by New Hampshire Feb. 11. From then until early June, elections will be held across all states. A number of delegates are allocated to each Democratic candidate based on the amount of votes they receive in each state's primary election. The candidate that earns the most delegates nation-wide becomes the Democratic candidate.

Texas is one of more than 15 states that host primary elections on what is known as "Super Tuesday," where states "set their date as early as possible to give their voters the greatest influence in the primary results," according to USPresidentialElectionNews.com. Super Tuesday is typically held the first Tuesday of March, which this year is March 3. The deadline to register in the Texas primary is Feb. 3.

"Here in El Paso, we have a very low voter turnout rate," said Diveli Perez, recruitment chair for LULAC Council 22350 here on campus. "Two thirds of eligible voters don't vote."

Despite the surge in voter turnout during the 2018 midterm elections, Texas is still on the low end of voter turnout percentage, with only 42.2%, according to Statista.com.

"It's so important that people have a voice, especially the Latino population in El Paso," said Gabriel Loya, a UTEP political science major and a member of Battleground Texas, a political action committee (PAC) organized with the intention to make Texas a swing state. As a member of the organization, Loya has been registering new voters all across the city.

"(When I register new voters) I see that everybody just feels like their voice doesn't matter. And it's so important that we get that mentality out of our heads," Loya said. "Everybody's voice does matter, especially when you're involved in local politics."

Loya explained how informing the community about local politics will help transform and increase voter participation.

"The feeling that one can make a change in their own government is extremely low in this area, and it's because our population doesn't really know much about government," Loya added. "It's only once we begin to educate our population, that everybody begins to start voting."

El Pasoans can register by filling out a Voter Registration Application and mailing it to the El Paso County Elections Department. VRAs are also available at the Department of Public Safety, any U.S. Post Office, all El Paso public libraries, Texas Health and Human Services Commission offices and at any public high school in the city. For information, visit epcountyvotes.com or download the El Paso County Elections App.

Margaret Cataldi may be reached at prospector@utep.edu
Career Fair: Showcase your resume, ask questions and network

Anahy Diaz
The Prospector

The University Career Center (UCC) will host its annual Career Fair Feb. 6-7 at the Union Building East, where students looking to expand on their career endeavors will have the opportunity to network with employers and learn about internships and full-time job opportunities.

With more than 80 employers visiting UTEP to recruit potential employees, UCC will divide its Career Fair to accommodate the university’s different colleges. On Feb. 6, the fair is structured with a business and liberal arts concentration, while on Feb. 7, it will have an engineering and science focus.

However, UCC Director Betsabe Castro says all students are welcome to stop by and experience the event. Castro stressed the importance of attending events like these, as the career fair offers the opportunity for students to put their resume to action, ask questions, meet new companies and, of course, network.

“They are looking to speak to as many students as possible to see if the student is interested in working for them and if their education; skills and experiences are a good match for their organization,” Castro said. “Students need to understand that employers have hiring cycles, similar to football season. There are time frames when they go out and look for talent.”

Aside from talent, Castro says employers are also looking for all around presentation, which is why students should come prepared. This includes looking at the list of participating employers in advance, bringing copies of their revised resume and dressing up in professional attire. Luckily, Castro says UCC can help with all of this.

Students can access the list of employers by visiting utep.edu/careers, where they can also find more information about the positions employers are looking to fill. Such as the CIA, which is offering internship positions; Texas Instruments, which is looking to hire full-time and part-time employees; and the University of Texas System Administration, whose positions vary from accounting to human resources internships.

“Having the distinction of being an R1 institution further elevates our students,” Castro said.

“In addition, UTEP students are unique in that many work and go to school at the same time so they are attuned to the demands that a professional position brings. Simply residing in a bina- tional community also sets them apart.”

UCC also acknowledges that a structured resume sets students apart. This is why the institution’s department encourages students to bring their freshmen resume to its office for review. UCC will also host a resume clinic in the days leading up to the fair, but it is recommended for students to not wait until the week of the fair as the waiting time may increase.

“We partner with UTEP alumni and the El Paso Society of Human Resource Management for the resume clinic, but the demand is usually high during that time,” Castro said.

Finally, UCC also helps students dress the part. The Career Closet, located at UCC, is open to all students looking for a professional attire to wear on the days of the Career Fair.

“You never get a second chance to make a good first impression, so prepare your attire the night before,” Castro said.

UCC is also scheduled to host “Navigating a Career Fair” on Jan. 30 at the Union Building West, where students will be able to learn what to do before, during and after the event, as well as gain help on their elevator speech. Other upcoming events include workshops that dive into subjects like developing a curriculum vitae, finding internships, preparing for graduate school and mastering an interview, among others.

“Too often students simply focus on going to class and getting to their part-time job, and lose sight of the ‘Why,’ Castro said. “Why am I enrolled at the University? I hope it is to learn and be part of an educated community, but also to be gainfully employed in a career that sparks your curiosity.”

For more information about the Career Fair and the schedule of upcoming events hosted by UCC, visit utep.edu/careers.

Anahy Diaz may be reached at prospec@utep.edu

Photo courtesy of UTEP
JANUARY 28, 2020
EDITOR BRYAN MENA, 747-7446

ENTERTAINMENT

Bodily fluids on canvas
El Paso artist uses blood to make art

Jaqueline Martinez
The Prospector

Ruby "Juice" Martinez is a 29-year-old local artist who has a gory, but not unusual, twist on creating art: using her own blood as paint.

Martinez was born and raised in El Paso, where she eventually graduated from Andress High School in the northeast area. Martinez made art throughout her life until having a discouraging experience in high school that forced her to quit.

Martinez later pursued an education in network administration where she felt the need to relieve stress, so she began making art again.

The artist rekindled with her old hobby by creating "oddball" paintings in the style of traditional tattoos, which is ultimately what influenced her to start using blood as paint.

"Something about bold lines and limited colors always drew my attention," Martinez said. "Growing up I was always attracted to oddball things or spooky stuff, so painting with blood didn't seem as a weird transition as some would think."

The use of blood in art is not an unusual practice in the art world. Many contemporary artists throughout the years have been known for their unique style and approach to art making — like using blood.

Many artists have been known to work with different bodily fluids, which is often used as a concept to address and explore issues of life and death, inheritance, racial, class and national identities, cultural and religious studies and performance studies.

American contemporary artist and photographer Andres Serrano is notably recognized for his 1987 work "Piss Christ," which is a photograph of a crucifix submerged in a glass container with the artist's urine. The work experienced international backlash, although the artist said he had no intent of blasphemy or offense.

Bee Hughes is also an artist and researcher notably known for creating artwork about menstruation as a "direct public challenge" to the stigma around it.

Martinez admited to not being able to differentiate blues from greens, which tend to blend one shade of color seemed personally appealing to her.

The blood the artist uses is pulled directly from her veins using a syringe, which is then placed in a two-ounce container with an anticoagulant that she eventually discovered.

When speaking about her personal favorite piece, "Blood Skull Moon," the artist shared that working with blood allowed her to focus on the value of a painting. Martinez recalls having to work in layers through the process of value in order to obtain darker tones.

"You can add as much blood on one layer, but you won't get much shading out of it until you let it dry and let new blood absorb into the canvas," Martinez said. "Although the blood does have an anticoagulant, my time is still limited so I try to work at a fast pace."

The blood is applied through various tools, such as paint brushes and sponges, in order to apply texture, and finger-painting for backgrounds.

To read Martinez's full story, visit TheProspectorDaily.com

San Elizario, Texas
A hidden gem of history, culture and art

Maria Ramos Pacheco
The Prospector

A quiet and peaceful place full of history, art and culture is located only about 17 miles east of El Paso and its the West Texas town of San Elizario.

"San Elceario" was the first name of this town, named after the French patron saint of the military, San Elie, according to the National Park Service. San Elizario's structures date back to 1598, when Spanish conquerors took control of the area. Many of these structures today are used as exhibits for internationally recognized artists.

While San Elizario teaches visitors all about its historical and cultural heritage, this magical town also showcases its unique art that people from all over the world come to enjoy.

Placita Madrid, located on Main Street in San Elizario, is one of the most visited places in the area. It houses the artwork of esteemed local artists such as Alberto Escamilla, Juana Romo, Roberto Dozal and Rommy Hawkins.

Visitors can also purchase mugs, key chains, ornaments, posters and postcards at Placita Madrid.

Escamilla has been an artist since 1978 and about 10 years ago, he opened his own art gallery in San Elizario to foster the arts in the community.

"My goal has always been to bring art to everyone, to show them the beauty of art and what is behind it," Escamilla told The Prospector.

Escamilla's next-door neighbor is Dozal, a UTEP graduate and portrait specialist.

"San Elizario Art District is a growing community after (experiencing) difficult times," Dozal said. "We (are) still here and young people can come and see this place. To know that you can make a living as an artist."

In the same building, Romo exhibits her artwork in a tearoom where acoustic jazz and bluegrass music is featured the first Saturday of each month.

The event is free, welcomes all ages and offers everyone free appetizers. Attendants only pay for their refreshments.

"We do these types of events so more local people can come and learn about our history," Romo said. "Most of our visitors are from other countries."

Across the street from Placita Madrid is a restored, historical building owned by local artist Gaspar Enriquez.

Enriquez was born and raised in El Paso's Segundo Barrio. He owns an art gallery in San Elizario where he features his work. Enriquez identifies as a Chicano artist and most of his art focuses on the Chicano and "cholo" lifestyle.

"I used to teach at Bowie High School and most of my students were from Segundo Barrio," Enriquez said. "I knew what it was (like) to grow (up) there, the difficulties and obstacles."

Erica Murrill, born in El Paso and raised in Ciudad Juarez, is the owner of the coffee shop, Cafe Arte Mi Admore. The coffee shop is also an art gallery where Murrill showcases her oil paintings, mugs, coasters, note cards and magnets. When her store is not too busy, she paints small canvases.

"This is a magical place, outside of the city, a quiet place. It is very relaxing to see the cotton and nuts crops," Murrill said. "I wish more people came to visit this place. There is so much history and art to learn and explore, only about 30 minutes from the city."

To read Ramos Pacheco's full story, visit TheProspectorDaily.com

Photo courtesy of Ruby Martinez
Ruby "Juice" Martinez uses her blood to create art which is displayed at the Ink Society Tattoo Studio on Montana Avenue.

Maria Ramos Pacheco may be reached at prospector@utep.edu
Local axe-throwing range offers a unique way to ‘Relaxe’

Anahy Diaz
The Prospector

Instead of throwing darts or playing typical poker games, Relaxe offers a new and exciting alternative for residents to enjoy — axe throwing.

Located at 808 Montana Ave., Relaxe offers customers a way to blow off steam and enjoy beer that they bring on their own. The idea is to offer everyone an exciting way to let go of day-to-day stress.

“It’s basically a place to come in and throw axes safely,” said Julian Huerta, owner of Relaxe. “Drink some beer, have some fun with your friends and just basically relax. It actually is pretty enjoyable.”

After returning from a family trip to California in 2018, where he had the opportunity to visit an axe throwing range, Huerta was inspired to bring the idea to the Sun City. A year later, Huerta opened up Relaxe to the public.

“Primarily, I’m trying to offer something else to do,” Huerta said. “We do have a lot of bars in El Paso, which is great, but as you get a little bit older you kind of want to have different options that can kind of be physical and fun. You can still have your beer and it’s good fun for all ages.”

“We maintain a good presence here,” Huerta said. “We’re watching, making sure people are throwing correctly, not too hard; and we’re making sure everyone stays within a good safe level of inebriation.”

With six lanes named after popular streets in El Paso, such as Don Haskins, Glory Road and Scenic Drive, Relaxe has plenty room to host special events.

This includes team building exercises, corporate events and even divorce parties.

In the case of a divorce party, the business helps lighten the mood by projecting wedding videos onto the bullseyes for the party group to throw axes at.

“We do have theme nights,” Huerta said. “You can bring a picture of your ex on Valentine’s and we’ll actually project it onto the wall. All of those types of things you can have a party for, here.”

Open from Wednesday through Sunday with a fee starting at $20, Relaxe welcomes walk-ins but encourages customers to go on its website, relaxepx.com, to book their visit and ensure they don’t miss out on the fun.

Anahy Diaz may be reached at prospec1or@utep.edu

This week in entertainment at TheProspectorDaily.com

Cultural organization teaches locals about French culture and traditions

The Great Khalid Foundation offers nationwide scholarship

Alamo Drafthouse screens Japan’s highest grossing horror film, the original ‘Ringu’

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Women’s basketball triumph at North Texas

Isaiah Ramirez
The Prospector

In a game where the UTEP Miners (12-6, 5-2) trailed for a large amount of time, the team battled back to defeat the North Texas Mean Green (9-11, 3-5) 67-63 and improve to 5-2 in Conference-USA. The only lead the Miners had up until 11 seconds in the game was a 4-3 in the first quarter, and from that point on, it had to fight against a scrappy and defensive-minded North Texas squad.

Senior forward Ariona Gill made a clutch and-one basket with 11 seconds remaining to put the Miners up. Senior guard Katarina Zec sealed the win knocking down a free throw with three seconds left in the game.

Senior leadership was evident in this game with Gill, forward Jade Rochelle, and Zec each playing an integral role in the Miners victory.

Zec scored 18 points with all of them coming in the second half of the game. Gill nearly tallied a double-double with 8 points and 11 rebounds, while Rochelle tacked in 8 points with a much-needed basket for the Miners with 2:16 remaining in the game.

“I think we had to lead this team no matter what happens,” Zec said. I believed we were going to win the whole 40 minutes and I didn’t doubt it and we took the win.”

“It’s hard to win games when you’re just not making shots and you’re just not in a rhythm, but this team led by our three seniors figured out a way to win the game,” Head Coach Kevin Baker said.

But the Miners had to play an emotional game against the Mean Green. The Miners were coming off a tough 69-61 loss to first place Rice at home. Rice is undefeated in conference-play this season.

“Leading the way for the Miners were sophomore Souley Boum with 21 points and Bryson Williams with 18 points. Scoring from the rest of the team though, was another issue. No other player on the roster scored more than 5 points for the Miners. Once again, the Miners seemed way too dependent on the three-point shot which has not been a strong point for the team. The Miners overall shot 5-19 from the arc, which is below the UTEP average of 28 percent for the season. Williams, who has been the most effective three-point shooter on the team, was only 1-5 from that range. For the season, Williams is shooting over 40% from the three-point line.”

“Conference-USA is tough and every game from this point forward is going to be like the game we just played,” Baker said. “There are no easy games ahead and our Conference is really good this year and we want it that way.”

“A three-pointer at the 17:40 mark of the first half by senior Darryl Edwards was the last time the Miners would lead the game at 5-2. At the 10-minute mark, the Mean Green would take the lead off a pair of free throws by Simmons. North Texas would never trail for the rest of the game and opened up a 38-27 halftime lead.

Men’s basketball lose at home to Mean Green

Michael Cuviello
The Prospector

The UTEP Miners men’s basketball team fell behind early to the University of North Texas Mean Green Saturday and never recovered. Trailng by 11 at halftime, the Miners went on to lose to North Texas 67-67.

Coming off its first road win of the Rodney Terry era, the Miners were facing a North Texas team that had won seven straight games, including four by double digits. The Mean Green has been a very balanced scoring team and has averaged a 9-point victory margin over its opponents.

Holding North Texas leading scorer Umoja Gibson in check with only six points compared to his usual 14 points per game was one positive for the Miners in the matchup. Unfortunately, Zachary Simmons picked up a great amount of the slack, leading the team with 16 points on 5-10 shooting and making all six of his free throws.

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Lack of turnover creation was an issue for the Miner defense with the Mean Green only committing six turnovers compared to the Miners’ 13. For the game, the Miners only had one steal from sophomore Tyrus Verhoeven at the 16:44 mark of the second half.

A three-pointer at the 17:40 mark of the first half by senior Darryl Edwards was the last time the Miners would lead the game at 5-2. At the 10-minute mark, the Mean Green would take the lead off a pair of free throws by Simmons. North Texas would never trail for the rest of the game and opened up a 38-27 halftime lead.

Things did not get much better for UTEP early in the second half as the Miners trailed by 16 points with 12 minutes remaining in the game.
Tennis begins with win

Michael Coviello

The Prospector

UTEP tennis shut out the University of Western New Mexico Mustangs for the third straight year by a score of 7-0.

Coming off a 7-14 season, the Miners have eight new faces on the tennis roster after losing three players to transfer, including all-conference selection freshman standout Kristen Prelle to Arizona. The only holdovers from the previous team are senior Vanessa Valdez, junior Erandi Martinez and sophomore Kathleen Percegona.

The day started off shaky for the Miners with the No. 1 doubles team of Valdez and junior Elena Dibatissta losing a lopsided 6-1 set to the Mustangs duo of Camilla Gomez and Julia Tozzi. The No. 2 double team of freshman Eve Daniels and junior Lona Sachica easily won their match 6-1. Closing out the doubles point with a 6-1 set win for the match was junior Maria Aviega and Percegona. The 2-1 set victory sealed the doubles match for a 1-0 lead.

All six Miner singles players won every set of their matches. Valdez won her match 6-3, 6-3 in the battle of number ones. Valdez takes over as the top singles player on the team after being the No. 2 most of last season. Valdez was 8-16 in singles play but was the best doubles player last season with a 17-11 record, including 11-4 with Prelle.

Taking over as the No. 2 Martinez dominated her opponent for a 6-1, 6-2 victory. Martinez was primarily the No. 3 the past two seasons and compiled an 8-9 record in dual meet action. As a freshman, Martinez was 20-10 for the Miners in match play.

No. 3 Sachica easily won her match 6-2, 6-0. A two time All Mid South Conference selection transfer from Lindsey Wilson College, Sachica is a strong addition to the Miner nation after going 12-3 in dual play, including winning her final seven matches last season.

Newcomer Eve Daniels from Manchester England might have been the most impressive of all UTEP players as she only allowed one point in her first match as a Miner versus WN-MU's Julia Terrazas 6-0, 6-1.

Percegona, a former top-ranked Brazilian junior player, was victorious in her match 6-3, 6-3 as the No. 5 player. Winning her first match as a Miner, Dibatissta from Agrigento Italy, beat Emma Oropeza 6-3, 6-3 to close out a 7-0 team victory for UTEP.

"We started out a little slow at No. 1 doubles, but two and three really stepped it up and won fairly easily," UTEP Coach Ivan Fernandez said. "The first match is always a tough one, just because we're trying to get the nerves out of the way and get the cobwebs out. But we really came together as a team and were able to win all six singles. I'm really proud of this group and I really do feel that as the season goes on, we're just going to get better and better."

Fernandez is entering his third year as a tennis coach for the Miners after eight years as head coach at 1-10 rival New Mexico State. After this weekend's victory, Fernandez has a 14-28 record as a tennis coach for UTEP.

The Miners (1-0) will next take on Abilene Christian noon Saturday, Feb. 1, and rival New Mexico noon Sunday, Feb. 2, at the El Paso Tennis & Swim Club. Admission is free for all UTEP home tennis matches.

MEN from page 7

played his most minutes in four games after averaging nine the previous three.

Since returning from the transfer portal, Lathon has struggled with his shooting coming off the bench. As a starter before temporarily leaving the team, Lathon shot 34% from the field since returning and coming off the bench; he has not made a field goal in 14 attempts.

"We didn't guard as well as we did at Rice," Terry said. "Regardless of the calls and guys sitting in the first half due to foul trouble, the guys coming into the game have to get down and guard. We had to stay in the same coverage that we're trying to work. We just didn't guard the way we needed to guard tonight."

Sophomore Efe Odigie was available but did not play after missing the team's travel to Houston Wednesday.

Falling to 12-9 and 3-5 in conference play, the Miners currently sit in ninth place in Conference USA. The good news is that the next opponent for UTEP is struggling mightily this season. The Middle Tennessee State Blue Raiders are coming off its first conference win and are 5-16 overall. Middle Tennessee has a five-game win streak over the Miners. The Miners will next take on the Blue Raiders 7 p.m. Jan. 30 at the Don Haskins Center.