

LARIAT SPORTS

SECTION B

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Clawing to survive

Women's basketball managing tough conference slate without team captain

BLOCK Party at the Ferrell Center

Udoh providing much-needed defensive spark for men's basketball, efforts echoing throughout team



DANIEL CERNERO | LARIAT STAFF

Ekpe Udoh (middle) blocks James Anderson's lay up during Saturday's 83-70 victory against Oklahoma State University. Udoh leads the Big 12 and is fourth in the nation with 4.4 blocks per game.

Forward on pace to shatter school single-season block record

By JUSTIN BAER
SPORTS EDITOR

University of Oklahoma sophomore All-American Willie Warren notices a gaping hole in Baylor's zone defense. While Bears' center Josh Lomers is occupied with 6-foot-10, 295-pound mammoth Tiny Gallon, there is a capacious alley to the basket left unattended. Warren makes a quick cut to the hoop in hopes of exploiting Baylor's lapse.

Gallon threads a pass to him, and just as Warren goes up for the easy basket, the dangling arms of Ekpe Udoh descend upon him. Udoh violently swats Warren's shot, and the crowd explodes with ruckus.

Whether it's salvaging a mistake, or punishing those who dare to attack him, Udoh's presence beneath the basket has made riveting effects to opposing coach's game plans.

"Ekpe just being on the court makes everyone better," Lomers said. "He is amazing offensively and defensively. He is somebody (opposing teams) are always having to worry about, so it makes everyone's job a little bit easier."

The self-proclaimed "Nightmare" has been the cornerstone of Baylor's defensive turnaround. Notoriously known as a jack-it-up team on offense that is lackadaisical on defense, Udoh's intensity on defense has reverberated throughout the squad and is a prominent reason why Baylor is third in the Big 12 with 62.4 points per game allowed, compared to last year's squad that was 10th in the league allowing 70.1 points per game.

"This is the best Baylor team

since I have been (at Oklahoma)," said Sooners' head coach Jeff Capel, whose 90-61 defeat against Baylor was the first for the school since 1974. "They are different. What is different about them is defense."

Udoh transferred from the University of Michigan after his sophomore year as the third-leading blocker in school history with 159 shots blocked and earned a spot on the Big 10 All-Defensive team. While it's probable he would have eclipsed Courtney Sims's record of 213, Udoh has already dented the Baylor record books. Udoh's 4.4 blocks per game rank first in school history, and his 68 total blocks are the fifth-highest amount in a single season. (The top four spots belong to current Los Angeles Clipper Brian Skinner.)

Furthermore, Udoh became only the fifth player in school history to record a triple-double on when he posted 18 points, 17 rebounds and 10 blocks on Jan. 6 against Morgan State University. But Udoh humbly admits that his statistics are irrelevant. As a disruptive force in the paint, Udoh prides himself with his defensive prowess, but credits his teammates for supporting him throughout each game.

Teammate Tweety Carter has become highly fond of Udoh since he has come to Baylor. Carter cites Udoh's passion for the game as the underlying reason for his instant success.

"To have him out there knowing he wants to do those types of things, to have him on my side is big," Carter said. "As long as we keep playing, he is going to continue to get stats like this, because that is the type of player he is. He wants to be the best player on the floor no matter what, even in practice."

Udoh has quickly become a fan favorite, and it's easy to see why. The Bears have longed for a commanding post-presence since the days of Skinner, and

Udoh may have more tangles than Baylor's all-time leading shot blocker. According to ESPN.com's Chad Forde, Udoh could sneak in as a lottery pick in the 2010 NBA Draft. However, many expect Udoh's stock to rise further if his dominance continues in a premier conference like the Big 12.

While Drew would love to see Udoh stick around another year, especially with one of the nation's top big-man recruits Perry Jones coming in, he realizes he must reap the benefits Udoh provides this season. The obvious benefits include blocked shots, but Drew said Udoh's presence extends further than displacing shot attempts.

"The times he doesn't block shots and alters, he affects or even has people going in there hesitant, I think that number's a lot larger than the actual blocked shot numbers," Drew said. "So when you combine both of those you can see what a huge impact he has on the game. As far as when he does block a shot, it's an easy way for us to get quick transition."

"Ekpe's one of those blockers who can keep the ball in play after he blocks and does a great job allowing us to get transition with that. But again, I think how he alters and affects the other part of the game is greater than just the number of shots he does block."

Udoh's recipe for blocking shots comes from obvious length and height. The Edmond, Okla., native possesses an 88-inch wingspan to coincide with a 6-foot-10 frame. However, Udoh claims that the yearning for defensive success separates him from other great defenders.

"I think I've been blessed with being long and tall," Udoh said. "But I think it's really just a want to play defense and block shots. You have to have a desire to do anything in life, and if you put your mind to it, you can do it."

Griner revolutionizing women's basketball in multiple ways

By CHRIS DERRETT
SPORTS WRITER

It is only 30 seconds into the Lady Bears' home conference opener against the University of Oklahoma, and she has done it again. It comes as no surprise to anybody in the Ferrell Center, yet the crowd roars like they did the first time, and the second time, and the 89th time.

Because when Brittney Griner sends a shot hopelessly flying away from the rim, they cannot help but cheer on the 6-foot-8, freshman phenom.

Griner has 105 blocks on the season, including 11 in the 57-47 win over the Sooners. Her defensive impact has proven invaluable for the Lady Bears this year, as teams must adjust to a force that even coach Kim Mulkey has never before experienced in her basketball career.

"You're seeing a lot of blocked shots from a girl that I've never seen in my life, and she's exciting," Mulkey said. "It's something that energizes us, energizes the crowd."

After finishing her senior year at Nimitz High School with 299 blocks on the season, Griner clearly proved her raw talent to onlookers. Mulkey took the task of honing those skills and incorporating an 88-inch wingspan into her defense.

The maturation process was evident in Baylor's first game, a road loss to the University of Tennessee, in which Griner recorded four blocks but committed three fouls in the first two minutes of the second half.

"Just like Brittney and every freshman, those kids are in a new environment," Mulkey said after the game. Griner's game would be broken down, Mulkey added, to determine areas of needed improvement.

In the 13 non-conference games after Tennessee, Griner averaged only 2.1 fouls per game, including a five-block, one-foul performance against then No. 11-ranked California. She also swatted eight shots in the Lady Bears' 70-66 win over No. 14 Arizona State University and did not commit her second foul until 10 seconds remained in the game.

After a 100-46 drubbing of University of Texas-Pan American in Baylor's 13th game, the single-season block record was amazingly already within reach for Griner. She added eight blocks in the game, leaving her one shy of Danielle Wilson's 2006-07 best of 86, but the numbers did not and still do not matter to the 6-foot-8 freshman.

"It's really not too important. I like to get the blocked shots so the other team can't score," Gri-

ner said. "I really am just playing my game. I don't come out each game and say that I need to achieve this."

Yet the record books cannot help but show Griner's shot-blocking ability. Wilson's record fell in Baylor's next game, and later Griner set the Baylor and Big 12 single game record in her shot-blocking clinic against the Sooners.

Even when Griner is not sending shots back toward their source, her competition often feels her defensive pressure. Every time an opponent thinks twice about trying to shoot over her and Griner forces the ball elsewhere, she has altered a shot. The shots she alters, says Mulkey, are crucial to the team's success.

"Brittney's presence in the paint is as important as any dunk she'll ever have in her career. I bet none of you can tell me how many shots she altered tonight," she said in the Oklahoma postgame press conference. "Those are things that the NCAA doesn't keep."

The NCAA record books also cannot measure Griner's impact on teammates and momentum. Ashley Field, a 6-foot-2 post who leads the Big 12 in field goal percentage, says the team benefits greatly matching up against Griner in practice.



SARAH GROMAN | LARIAT STAFF

Brittney Griner blocks Cory Montgomery during Sunday's 65-56 defeat at the Ferrell Center. Griner already owns the Baylor single-season record with 105 blocks and is on pace to break the career mark by next year.

Griner Stats

- 105 blocks
- 6-foot 8 inches tall
- 88-inch wingspan
- 18.9 points per game
- 9.1 rebounds per game
- 459 blocks as high school senior
- 52 dunks as high school senior

Career Blocks

1. 249 Danielle Wilson - 2006-09
2. 159 Steffanie Blackmon - 2001-05
3. 141 Kacy Moffitt - 1995-99
4. 131 Sophia Young - 2002-06
5. 119 Maggie D. Stinnett - 1986-89, 1990-91
6. 116 Monica Arnold - 1997-01
7. 114^ Carol R. Brandenburg - 1977-81
8. 105 Brittney Griner-2009-10
9. 104^ Jackie Reiter - 1980-84
10. 94 Jessica Morrow - 2005-09

^ AIAW competition
^ Combination of AIAW and NCAA competition

Single Season Blocks

1. 105 Brittney Griner - 2009-10
2. 86 Danielle Wilson - 2006-07
3. 83 Danielle Wilson - 2008-09
4. 80 Danielle Wilson - 2007-08
5. 76 Carol R. Brandenburg - 1979-80
6. 58 Steffanie Blackmon - 2002-03
7. 53 Maggie Stinnett - 1987-88
8. 51 Bernice Mosby - 2006-07
9. 48 Melanie Hamerly - 2002-03
9. 48 Maggie D. Stinnett - 1990-91



FILE PHOTO



McCLATCHY NEWS



McCLATCHY NEWS

Baylor head coach Art Briles was courted by the Texas Tech University administration to return to the Red Raiders, this time as the head coach. Briles reaffirmed his commitment to Baylor during the winter break.

University of Texas defensive coordinator was reportedly offered a "lucrative" deal to leave the Longhorns and become the University of Tennessee head coach. Muschamp refused the offer.

Duke University head coach David Cutcliffe was offered the head coaching position at the University of Tennessee. Cutcliffe declined the offer, citing his heart was with the Blue Devils.

Sports take: Coaches display class with commitment to schools

Rick Stockstill. David Cutcliffe. Will Muschamp. Art Briles.

These college football coaches won't be found all over the front pages of sports sections or dominating news channel airwaves. They are not the featured video clips on ESPN.com, nor are they stealing time away from Brett Favre and LeBron James in the SportsCenter highlights.

However, mention the names Chip Kelly, Lane Kiffin and Pete Carroll to an average sports fan and he or she could probably tell you why they have made headlines in the last two months.

Kelly was the first of the trio to accept a head coaching position (Notre Dame) and Carroll's departure from USC for the NFL provided Kiffin the chance to jump into the Los Angeles starlight as the Trojans' new coach.



Matt Larsen
Sports writer

While Kelly, Kiffin and Carroll are connected by their decisions to take more prominent, potentially higher-paying jobs, the commonality between Stockstill, Cutcliffe, Muschamp and Briles lies in their refusal to take or pursue those big-time jobs.

Rick Stockstill, Middle Tennessee's head coach, displayed his loyalty to the Blue Raiders program by declining the head

job at East Carolina.

David Cutcliffe chose to stay at Duke and continue to build on the foundation he has started.

"I have a lot of ties and a lot of people that I'm very close to, and a lot of respect for the University of Tennessee," he told ESPN.com. "But my heart is here. We've worked very hard these two years to change the culture, to change the team physically."

"You feel like the job's not done, and in this era, it bothers me, what we do as coaches, moving here and there. This is mid-January. Nothing about that felt right to me as a person."

Sure, one can argue that he is just spouting words, and that he simply wasn't offered enough money. Yet, if that was the case it could not have been because Tennessee had any shortage of

funds.

Will Muschamp, defensive coordinator at the University of Texas, turned down a "lucrative" offer from the Vols according to the ESPN.com. Muschamp chose to remain the Longhorns' contractual coach in waiting.

And then there is Art Briles. As former Texas Tech coach Mike Leach involuntarily exited Lubbock, Briles' name arose as a potential replacement for Leach.

Briles' history as Tech's running back coach, his success at the University of Houston and at Baylor and his experience as a high school coach at a number of West Texas schools fueled talks that he could be headed back to Lubbock.

However, as Stockstill, Cutcliffe and Muschamp, Briles did not see the opening as an opportunity to

take a big-time coaching position at an established program. Rather, he chose to see his current job as a greater opportunity.

"I am proud to be a Baylor Bear," Briles said. "And remain committed to making this program a source of pride for the Baylor family. I feel good about the direction of our program and the foundation that has been built for future success."

"Our coaching staff is excited to finish this recruiting class strong and start preparations for the 2010 season."

Of course it is understood that someone must eventually fill vacant coaching positions, and it is virtually inevitable that he must leave another program in order to do that. I am not out to bash the decisions made by Kelly, Kiffin and Carroll.

There are many factors that play into a decision to take a coaching job, and it is far from my place to condemn their choices.

Rather, my goal is to call attention to the coaches who saw an opportunity to set a new precedent.

As the trend to work oneself up the coaching ladder so often makes the news, the coaches who choose to remain committed to their programs send the message that opportunity is not always moving on and moving up.

Briles, among these, sends a message of dedication and perseverance consistent with what he preaches to his players that seeks to redefine opportunity in the world of college football.

Matt Larsen is a sophomore journalism major from Katy.

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Broosova eager for championship

By DANIEL CERNERO
REPORTER

All-American senior Lenka Broosova, who is currently ranked No. 17 in the nation, did not originally intend to play tennis at a collegiate level.

Broosova, whose hometown is Banska Bystrica, Slovakia, said she started playing tennis at the age of 10, which is actually quite old for tennis players.

While she would wind up coming to Baylor as a freshman in 2006, she said that her first thought was to play tennis professionally.

"I had heard from previous players that if pros don't work out, they go to college," Broosova said. "The idea of college tennis (in Slovakia) is way different then here.

It is way more serious than people (from Slovakia) think it is."

She said that it was her parents that turned her on to the idea that maybe she should get a degree, in addition to playing tennis. Baylor head coach Joey Scrivano was the one who clued Broosova in on how everything works in collegiate tennis. She said it helped that the two of them had similar personalities.

"I liked the stuff he told me about how they practiced, about the tradition they have here, the values, the hard work, and everything," Broosova said. "It was a better fit for me I guess. It's like the best decision of my life."

The transition to college life proved to be challenging, as it was a big change from what Broosova had been accustomed to.

"At first it was hard, because back home I was more focused on tennis," Broosova said. "I was home-schooled and I wasn't going to school every day. But here you have to go to class every day,



JED DEAN | PHOTO EDITOR

Senior Lenka Broosova attacks the ball during Tuesday afternoon's practice at the Baylor Tennis Center. Broosova, who holds the Baylor record for wins in a season, is ranked No. 17 in the ITA preseason rankings.



JED DEAN | PHOTO EDITOR

Women's tennis head coach Joey Scrivano teaches during Tuesday afternoon's practice at the Baylor Tennis Center. Scrivano's squad is the reigning Big 12 champion.

Women's tennis squad poised for historic run

By DANIEL CERNERO
REPORTER

After recently receiving a No. 5 ranking, the Baylor women's tennis team will start the spring season looking to capture its first-ever national championship and first trip back to the Final Four since 2008.

The 2009 season finished in disappointing fashion, with the Lady Bears exiting in the quarterfinals of the NCAA Championships.

"The program is at the stage now where if we don't win the championship, it's a disappointing year," head coach Joey Scrivano said. "The exciting part is that every year you have a fresh opportunity to win it."

Along the way, Baylor will face an abundance of quality opponents, including four teams ranked in the top 10 of the Intercollegiate Tennis Association's (ITA) team rankings.

Baylor is a very experienced team, with five upperclassmen, led by No. 17-ranked senior Lenka Broosova, who made it to the semifinals of the ITA Indoor National Championships in the fall. Broosova currently holds the Baylor record for most wins in a single season, after going 52-4 during the 2008 season.

"They've been in a lot of big matches and they've had a lot of success," Scrivano said about his experienced team. "That should translate into a lot of confidence."

The Lady Bears also have high hopes for their No. 13-ranked doubles tandem of Broosova and senior Csilla Borsanyi. The duo made it all the way to the semifinals of the NCAA Women's Tennis Doubles Championships last year.

"We're going to get a lot more aggressive this year, and I think

that's what we needed last year at nationals," Borsanyi said. "It's going pretty well with us, but obviously we can learn a lot more and we can improve on certain areas."

Over the past five years, Baylor has put up incredible numbers against opponents from the Big 12 Conference, winning five consecutive Big 12 Championships and going 54-1 during that time.

"I believe that the coaching staff and the players expect to win (the Big 12 Championship) every year," Borsanyi said. "We all believe that we have to keep the tradition going."

Scrivano said that the Big 12 Conference is something they definitely don't take for granted. He said that he knows that if they're not at the top of their game, they won't win the league championship.

While there is a lot of focus on what the Lady Bears do on the court, they were recently recognized for their accomplishments in the classroom. Baylor was named an All-Academic team by the ITA, recording a 3.46 GPA as a team.

"These student-athletes are just amazing to be able to shine on the court and off the court and it says a lot of them as people," Scrivano said. "When they leave Baylor, these are going to be very successful young ladies."

Hard work is the mentality these players have and it is yet to be seen if it will all pay off in the end.

"I don't want to be leaving (Baylor) with a loss this year," Broosova said. "I want to win and I'll do anything for it."

The Lady Bears begin their spring season with a NCAA Indoor qualifying match against Harvard University on Jan. 29 in Waco.

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Michelle Turner
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Ashley Warren

2010 Roster

Csilla Borsanyi	5-6	SR-1L	Siofok, Hungary
Lenka Broosova	5-7	SR-3L	Banska, Slovakia
Karolina Filipiak	5-7	JR-2L	Poznan, Poland
Carla Lindlar	5-7	FR-HS	Seeheim, Germany
Taylor Ormond	5-11	JR-1L	Hamilton, Ontario
Nina Secerbegovic	5-9	SO-1L	Tuzla, Bosnia
Jelena Stanivuk	5-7	JR-2L	Tucepi, Croatia

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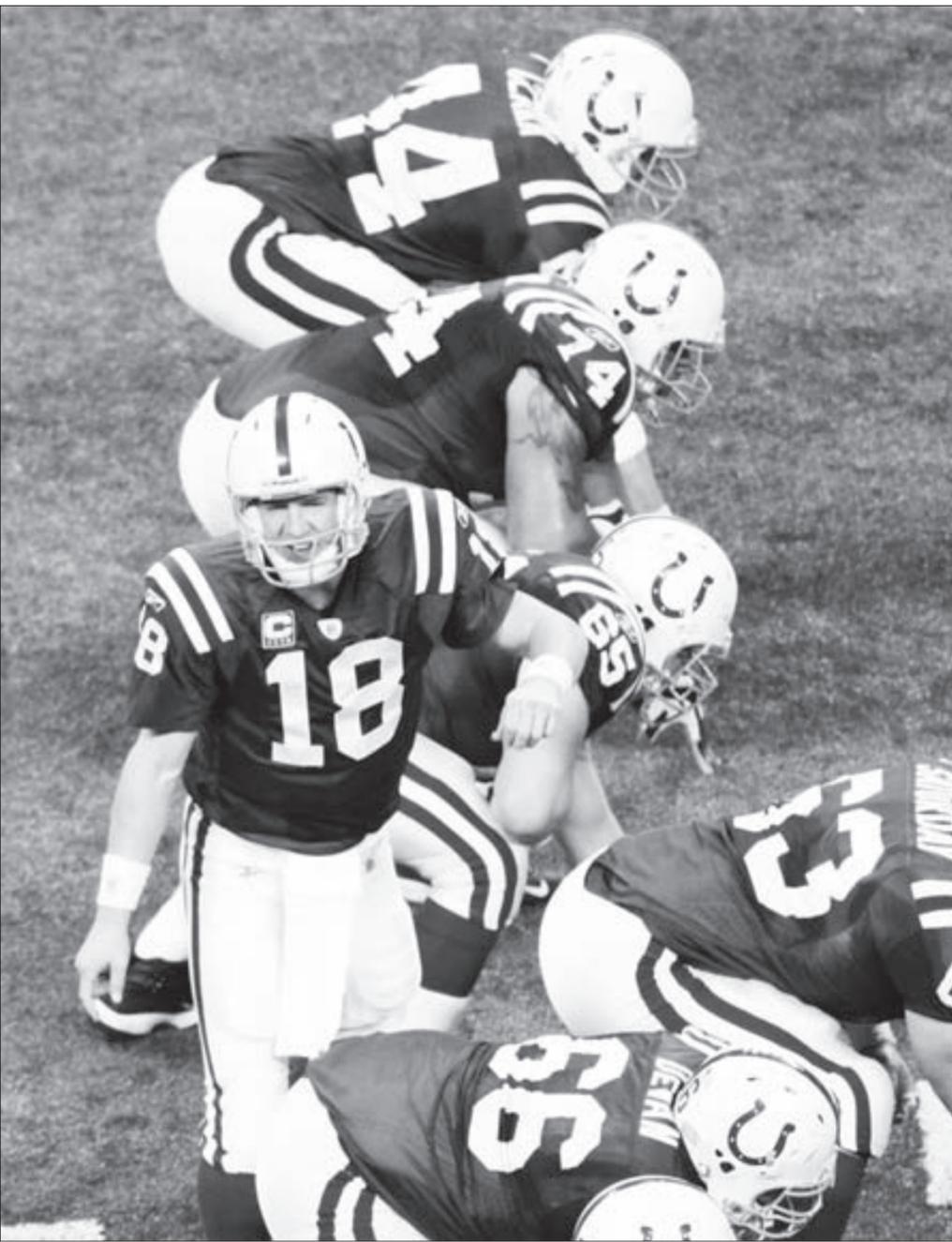
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Manning's impromptu calls guide Colts to AFC Championship



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Peyton Manning barks audibles at the line during the Colts 20-3 victory against the Baltimore Ravens Jan. 17 at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, Ind. Manning collected his NFL-record fourth MVP two weeks ago.

By REGGIE HAYES
McCLATCHY NEWS

Indianapolis Colts quarterback Peyton Manning gets more than his share of credit for being an offensive mastermind, surveying defenses and checking into foolproof plays.

But he's not above soliciting ideas.

Manning's touchdown pass to Reggie Wayne seconds before halftime in the Colts' 20-3 playoff win over the Baltimore Ravens on Saturday was, at least partly, impromptu.

"We were breaking the huddle and me and Reggie and Dallas (Clark) were like, 'What do you think? What do you want to run?'" Manning said.

"It was a little bit of recess playground, if you will. Finally, the thought hit (Wayne) and I at the last minute and we got him on the right route. He made a great catch and did a great job of getting it in the end zone."

Great story. Wayne's catch and stretch for the score pushed the Colts to a 17-3 lead and cushion the Ravens couldn't overcome.

It's natural to wonder, however, if Manning wasn't exaggerating a bit for the drama of the recollection.

"I wouldn't say he's exaggerating," Wayne said. "He was asking for opinions. Everybody had a different opinion. That's kind of how it is. When we get those opportunities, he wants guys to come up with suggestions. He'll pick all of the above, or A, B and C."

Manning and his teammates will surely need some special plans, predetermined and spontaneous, when they play the New York Jets at 2 p.m. on Sunday for the AFC Championship at Lucas Oil Stadium.

It's a rematch of a Dec. 27 game in which the Jets won, 29-15, after Colts head coach Jim Caldwell removed Manning and other starters late in the third quarter, sacrificing a chance at an undefeated season.

Up to that point against the Jets, the Colts' passing game had been humming along. Manning completed 14 of 21 passes for 192 yards and had hit seven receivers for at least one pass—led by Austin Collie's six catches for 94 yards.

Manning's confidence in his passing game might be at an all-time high, considering the depth and diversity of his options. In the playoff win over the Ravens, he hit seven receivers.

Six of them had more than one catch. Manning spread the ball around almost evenly. The NFL keeps statistics on "targets," which is the number of times a receiver is thrown the ball.

Against Baltimore, 11 passes were thrown to Wayne, 10 to Pierre Garcon, nine to Clark and eight to Collie.

That shows the breadth of Manning's trust in the younger receivers Garcon and Collie.

The Colts' first touchdown Sunday came on a fade route to Collie in the left corner of the end zone. Collie credited Wayne's presence with allowing him the chance to make the big play.

"Reggie draws a lot of attention because of who he is," Collie said. "He's unbelievable. Naturally, they respect him a little more than they do me—a lot more is what I should say."

"Having both Reggie and Dallas opens up everything for us. Those two are wonderful at what they do. They're some of the best in the NFL. Definitely, Pierre

"It was a little bit of recess—playground, if you will."

Peyton Manning
Indianapolis Colts

and I have been the beneficiaries of that."

The confidence in the passing game was never more evident than when the Colts went for the touchdown pass to Wayne with seven seconds left in the half. The Colts were out of timeouts, so a sack would have ended the half without any points. Kicking a field goal was the conservative call.

Caldwell chose not to go conservative, no doubt influenced by the fact he has one of the NFL's all-time best directing his offense.

Manning said he knew they had to go to the end zone, but also knew an incomplete wouldn't take seven seconds, so a field goal was still an option if they failed.

Failure wasn't a seriously considered option, however.

"In the normal world, we probably would have kicked the field goal," Wayne said. "But when we got there, it was like we were playing Madden, having fun and doing what we can do. With the guys out there we have, anything can happen."

"We have the best quarterback in the league and great skill guys. Whoever gets the ball, we know they can make the play."

Wayne suggested Manning throw him the ball. Not a surprise, perhaps. But a good call, no question.

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Men's tennis coach Matt Knoll stands in front of the decorated trophy case. The men's tennis team has won the Big 12 regular season title for eight consecutive years, including the national championship in 2004.



Senior Attila Bucko practices Tuesday afternoon at the Baylor Tennis Center. Bucko, along with Julina Bley are the 38th-ranked doubles team in the Intercollegiate Tennis Association preseason rankings.

Men's tennis team prepped for NCAA title run in 2010

JEREMY JOSEPH
REPORTER

The Baylor Bears men's tennis team comes into the 2009-2010 season just as they left off—ranked nationally in the top 10.

The Bears, who ended last season ranked No. 8 in the nation, begin this season ranked sixth.

Head coach Matt Knoll believes this a fair reflection of this team.

"That is how we finished last year," Knoll said. "Teams are generally ranked in our system on how they finished last year."

Coach Knoll has put together one of the toughest schedules for his team again this year, and such was the case when the Bears opened their season with select athletes traveling to Los Angeles Jan. 15 for the Sherwood Invitational.

"Playing the most difficult schedule in the country really fits with the philosophy of our whole program that we are trying to push ourselves and stretch ourselves every day," Knoll said. "I think part of the process along with practicing hard and being in great shape is playing the best

teams we can play."

Only the Bears, No. 1-ranked USC, No. 4-ranked UCLA and No. 9-ranked Stanford University were invited to participate at the event.

During conference play, the Bears will also face three opponents that are currently ranked in the top 25: No. 8-ranked Texas, No. 12-ranked Texas A&M University and No. 25-ranked Oklahoma State University. Meanwhile, Texas Tech University and the University of Oklahoma are in the top 50.

Eger, Hungary senior Denes Lukacs believes that this team ranks among the best he has been a part of.

"I think we have the best team since I've been here at Baylor, and I think we have a really high chance to finish at a high level with a NCAA championship," Lukacs said. "I feel like we have really good team chemistry. We're really close friends."

The Bears also believe that this is a team that could match the 2004 team's accomplishment of a national championship.

"This is a team that could be in the position to win it all but it's

all up to the players in the end," Knoll said.

Kerville junior Jordan Rux echoed what the coach said

"I have a lot of confidence in our team right now," Rux said. "I think we can win it this year as long as everyone stays healthy and performs down the stretch."

Knoll, Lukacs and Rux all agreed that last weekend's tournament was full of tough teams, but by playing these teams, it gave the Bears a good way to get ready for the start of the season.

Lukacs who advanced to the singles title match of the tournament, fell to Stanford's sophomore Bradley Klahn in a 6-3, 6-4 match.

"It was a good tournament for everyone," Rux said. "It's not a huge deal for rankings right now, but it did help us get everyone ready for the season that really starts on Friday."

The Bears will continue play this week with matches against the University of Louisiana-Lafayette at 3 p.m. Friday and against the University of Florida at 1 p.m. Sunday.

Both matches will be at the Baylor Tennis Center.

Rux has room to improve despite high ranking

JEREMY JOSEPH
REPORTER

The nation's No. 11-ranked college tennis player stands the tallest on Baylor's tennis team at 6 feet 5 inches, but he still has a lot of growing left to do.

Kerville junior Jordan Rux realizes that his tennis game still has room to improve.

"I feel like I still have room to grow, especially in the mental area," Rux said. "I'm working at getting mentally more stable when I'm out there."

Rux came to Baylor in 2007 ranked No. 1 in the U.S. in the 18 and under age range.

Rux saw most of his action his freshman year at the No. 5 and No. 6 spots in Baylor's lineup. He put up a 30-11 singles record for that season and was 21-5 in dual match play. He also posted a 24-15 doubles record at the end of the 2007-2008 season.

Rux closed out his first season by having a 15-match singles win streak, the second longest on the team with his last loss coming to No. 67-ranked Ted Angelinos of then top-ranked Virginia on March 1, 2008.

Head coach Matt Knoll thought Rux's freshman year was impressive given the circumstances.

"Jordan came in without a lot of playing experience and ended up having a pretty good freshman year," Knoll said. "He may have been the best sixth in the nation."

Rux entered his sophomore year ranked No. 13, his highest ranking of the season, in the Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA) rankings. He was one of two players from Baylor along with Denes Lukacs to be ranked in every edition of the ITA rankings.

Rux jumped from the bottom of Baylor's lineup to the No. 2 spot in the majority of the spring matches in 2008-2009. During this season he finished with a 25-13 singles record and 19-14 doubles record.



Kerville junior Jordan Rux prepares to return a shot against Texas A&M University on April 8, 2009. Rux enters the season ranked No. 11 in the Intercollegiate Tennis Association preseason rankings.

"Jordan has matured a lot, but he still has some stuff he needs to work on," Lukacs, an Eger, Hungary senior said. "He's got way stronger physically, and he still needs to work on his mental game. I have no doubt he is going to do well this semester, and he will play well and help the team. "He's a different guy from his freshman year. He's trying hard to do well and work on his weaknesses."

Rux won a share of both the Big 12 regular season No. 2 singles and No. 1 doubles titles his sophomore year.

During the 2008-2009 season, Rux was 5-1 against nationally ranked opponents defeating No. 14 Bruno Rosa from Rice University, No. 16-ranked Conor Pollock from Texas A&M University, No. 30-ranked Ed Corrie from Texas, No. 48-ranked Rudy Siwy from

Fresno State University and No. 59-ranked Victor Kolik from Tulsa University.

His only loss was against Oleksandr Nedovyesov from Oklahoma State University.

Rux was named the Big 12 Tournament's most outstanding player after winning the deciding point in Baylor's 4-3 win over then No. 15 Texas in the Big 12 championship final with a 5-7, 6-4, 6-4 victory over No. 64 Ed Corrie.

Rux said he plans to build on last season's success in pursuit of a deeper run in the NCAA Tournament.

"I have a lot of confidence in our team right now, and as long as I'm helping out the team, I'm helping out myself," Rux said. "I am going to handle the pressure better this year because of my prior experience."

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Lady Bears scraping by without Jones

By CHRIS DERRETT
SPORTS WRITER

Looking at the Lady Bears' Big 12 record, onlookers have been surprised to see the team predicted to win the conference with two scratches in the loss column in its first three games.

But seasoned coach Kim Mulkey knows that given the circumstances, the losses are not a step backward; in fact her young team has barely learned how to walk in a league full of grown up, experienced talent. Losing your equivalent of a field general does not help, either.

"We need that experience from our returners to take effect for the freshman to learn early, and I think we'll be all right," junior guard Melissa Jones said at the beginning of the season.

Besides being the only team in the Big 12 with only one returning starter, the team was dealt another blow beyond its control when Jones discovered a stress reactor that kept her sidelined for her team's first three conference games.

Jones' leadership by example is evidenced by both her willingness to hit the floor to make plays as well as the team-high 31 steals she collected in non-conference play.

Fundamentally she also plays a key role in the inside-outside attack Baylor can throw at opponents.

Teams must chose to devote attention to Brittney Griner and yield open perimeter shots, or guard the perimeter and take their chances with the 6-foot-8 freshman.

To put Jones' importance in perspective, she hit 21 of 48 three-point attempts during the non-conference schedule. The next closest player, freshman Kimetria

Hayden, made six of 19.

"I hope you don't think this was unexpected," Mulkey said after a 65-56 home loss to No. 9 ranked Nebraska. "Without Melissa Jones, and as many freshman and sophomores as we have, look at the league: there are juniors and seniors in this league."

The juniors and seniors on Nebraska's team showed the Lady Bears what experience does when mixed with talent. With the game tied at 45, the Cornhuskers out-scored Baylor 20-9 to end the game using perfectly executed plays that created eight three-point attempts, four of which they sank.

Nebraska nailed 11 of its last 23 three-point attempts while the Lady Bears went 0-10.

During the 20-9 run Mulkey's team went 4 of 15, missing open shots and lacking any offensive rhythm. They could not find an answer to the constant double and triple teams on Griner, and players were confused about trying to get the ball inside versus taking open shots.

"They all have the green light (to shoot)," Mulkey said. "What's happening to them is they're hearing coach say, 'Throw it inside to Griner,' and there's no spacing. It's a youth and experience thing, and that just comes with uncertainty, inexperience, and immaturity."

Mulkey later commented that even calling plays is difficult with a young team, as players tend to miss assignments when faced with Big 12 caliber opposition.

With Jones' void, the younger players have found other avenues to overcome offensive execution struggles. Aggression and defense have kept the Lady Bears competitive in this stretch of

"We'll keep helping them; we'll keep working with them. We will remain positive."

Kim Mulkey
Women's basketball coach

unfortunate injury.

Players like freshman Shanay Washington can give the team a spark with momentum swinging hustle plays. She was only 4 of 11 from the field against Oklahoma, but twice she turned steals into fast break points, scoring on one and drawing a foul for a three-point play.

"I knew in this game that I couldn't be timid because I needed to get to the basket. I have been doing that all week in practice after Oklahoma State. I needed to get to the paint and not be scared of contact," Washington said after the game.

Washington is the only player to record at least one steal in each of Baylor's first three conference games.

Of course Griner, never shying from contact, also anchored the defensive effort in that game with 11 blocks.

Each game this season is just another step. At some point in the coming years, Mulkey says, she will be on the side with a smoothly running offense and a mature group of winners. The young will become leaders; the team will have leaders from top to bottom.

"The effort is there," Mulkey said. "We'll keep helping them; we'll keep working with them. We will remain positive. We are very, very talented, and it's going to happen."



SARAH GROMAN | LARIAT STAFF

Melissa Jones (No. 5) drives the to the basket Nov. 17 against Tennessee Tech University. Jones leads the Lady Bears in 3-point shooting. However, Jones has missed the last three games because of a stress fracture.

Sports happenings during the break

Men's Basketball

Junior Ekpe Udoh and senior Lacedarius Dunn led the Bears through December and early January as they combined to garner three Big 12 Player of the Week honors and Udoh added two Big 12 Rookie of the Week awards.

Udoh also tallied the school's fifth triple-double with 18 points, 17 rebounds and 10 blocks against Morgan State University on Jan. 6.

The Bears opened conference play by snapping a 30-game losing streak against the University of Oklahoma with a 91-60 victory at the Ferrell Center.

They look to take down the No. 3-ranked University of Kansas Jayhawks in Lawrence tonight at 8.

Football

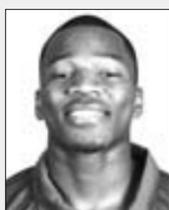
Senior center J.D. Walton and wide receiver David Gettis received invitations to the NFL combine. Walton was named a second-team All-American by Rivals.com and AP first team All-American along with Joe Pawelek who earned third-team All-American honors on the Phil Steele list.

Finishing the season as a finalist for the Rimington trophy, Walton enters the offseason as the top draft-prospect at center according to ESPN's Mel Kiper.

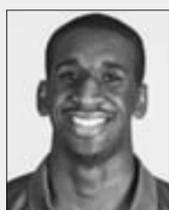
Women's Basketball

The Lady Bears continued to look up to freshman Brittney Griner as her dominant post play led them through non-conference play and into the Big 12 matchups. Meanwhile, the Lady Bears are coping with the injury of Melissa Jones. Highlights included a 90-18 win over Texas State on Jan. 2 in which she dunked twice. The feat was only the second time a woman has dunked in a college basketball game, joining Candace Parker as the only other woman to do so. Griner also earned her fifth Big 12 Freshman of the Week honor in a period of just eight weeks.

The Lady Bears hope to rebound from a 1-2 conference start as they travel to Columbia to take on the Missouri Tigers.



Lacedarius Dunn



Ekpe Udoh



David Gettis



J.D. Walton



Melissa Jones



Brittney Griner

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Concerts of the past highlight legends

By **JAMES BYERS**
REPORTER

Before he became an icon, Elton John burned through Waco. Present-day Waco may not be a hotbed of live music, but it hasn't always been that way.

Making the first stop of his American tour, a rising Elton John performed at the Heart O' Texas Coliseum in 1972. Although he wasn't allowed to play on the Baylor campus, plenty of Baylor students flocked to see the performer.

Kathy Johnson, who graduated from Baylor in 1976, was one of them.

"That was such a high-energy show," she said. "It was so unexpected for him to be in Waco, Texas, of all places, in all of his weird outfits. We were shell-shocked."

Johnson, who is now the assistant to the dean of the School of Music, recalled that John performed with unusual enthusiasm.

"He was a showman," she said. "He was jumping all around, getting on top of the piano, and then jumping down."

John enthralled the crowd with some of his then new, now



ROUND-UP FILE-PHOTO

Elton John performing at the Heart O' Texas Coliseum in 1972.

played in Waco in 1962, and Nina Simone visited in 1965.

John's performance was confined to the Heart O' Texas Coliseum, but plenty of famous musicians have played on the Baylor campus.

The Baylor Student Union organized many concerts in the '60s, '70s, and '80s and was led by Marie Mathis, director of the Student Union from 1953 to 1981.

Audrey Gray worked closely with Mathis on the Student Union staff.

"She really worked hard to bring entertainment to campus, and she didn't want students to have to pay too much," said Gray, who works part time at Moody Memorial Library at the exit desk.

Gray said the Student Union had connections with concert promoters who would bring their artists to Baylor. The promoters would underwrite the performance and take most of the ticket revenue. In this way the Student Union brought artists to campus without spending much money.

"We tried to have something at least once a semester," Gray said. "We never made money. The whole idea was to bring en-

tertainment."

In 1969, folk trio Peter, Paul and Mary played in a packed Rena Marrs McLean Gymnasium to an audience of 3,500. Students lined up an hour before the show to secure good seats. The trio set up on the gym floor underneath a basketball goal, played for three hours, and mingled with the crowd and signed autographs afterward.

Martha Lou Scott, associate vice president for student life and a Baylor graduate, remembers sitting on the floor with her date, four rows from the band.

"This was a big thing for Baylor back then," Scott said. The Carpenters, the pop duo of siblings Richard and Karen Carpenter, came to Waco twice, first in 1971 and later in 1973.

Kathy Hillman, who graduated from Baylor in 1973 and is now director of special collections for the University Central Libraries, went to both performances.

"Oh, I loved them so much," said Hillman, who also attended the Peter, Paul and Mary concert. "Concerts in Marrs McLean were fun because everyone was squished in there and you were so close to the performers."

A relatively unknown John Denver played to a small Waco Hall audience in 1971. John Hillman, Kathy's husband, remembers being highly impressed with Denver's performance.

"That was when I became a big fan of his," he said.

However, low ticket sales caused the Student Union to lose \$1,500. Denver drew a much bigger crowd when he returned in 1973 as an established star.

Chicago, the band, played at Baylor in 1971 and would return again in 1974.

Jimmy Dorrell, a Baylor graduate and the executive director of Mission Waco, went to the performance in 1971.

"I remember a few students stood up and rocked with Chicago in Marrs McLean and we were sure they would be kicked out of Baylor for dancing," Dorrell said.

Other artists who played on the Baylor campus in the 1970s included Don McLean, Waylon Jennings, Randy Newman, Mac Davis, Rare Earth, Bread, Bachman-Turner Overdrive and Blood, Sweat & Tears.

In the 1980s, the Student Union, with Ruben Santos as director, continued to bring artists

to Baylor, including country artist Emmylou Harris and Christian artists Amy Grant and Michael W. Smith.

In 1989, the Ferrell Center was opened, giving Baylor an exciting new venue with a capacity of more than 8,000 for concerts. The Beach Boys performed at the Ferrell Center in 1993.

Scott said that the Beach Boys' visit to Baylor was controversial because several members had admitted to past drug use.

Nevertheless, the band played, and Richard Veit, concert and promotion manager of the School of Music, was there to soak in the sunny harmonies with his wife.

"We just jumped at the chance to buy tickets," he said. "They were 25 years past their prime, but they sounded just like they do on their recordings."

Veit said that while the size of the crowd was underwhelming, it was, "not embarrassing, but maybe not quite what they deserved."

The Ferrell Center has also hosted Huey Lewis and the News, Clay Walker, Steven Curtis Chapman, the Newsboys, Hootie and the Blowfish, George Strait, and Keith Urban.

Baylor lacks high-profile music acts of past

By **JAMES BYERS**
REPORTER

Thirty years ago, big-name artists like The Carpenters, Waylon Jennings and Chicago regularly performed on the Baylor campus. Now, on-campus concerts are more likely to feature smaller acts like David Phelps or Jon McLaughlin.

Why are there fewer concerts now?

The change can be traced back to Baylor's growth in the mid-'80s, when the Department of Student Activities was created to coordinate campus programming, supplanting the Student Union. The Student Union began to concentrate on the management of the Bill Daniel Student Center. The Baylor Activities Council was established in 2001.

The 12-person council facilitates on-campus concerts and other student programming.

Mike Riemer, assistant director of student activities for campus programming, said that the council's goal is to give students an opportunity to lead. The council works with student organizations to bring acts to Baylor, but doesn't actively seek out entertainment like the Student Union did in the past.

"Our office is really devoted to helping student organizations," Riemer said. "We're not out there actively seeking artists to come to campus."

Any organization can book an artist if it has enough money, and if a venue, such as Waco Hall or Fountain Mall, is available.

Riemer also said the council oversees an "extensive approval

process," to insure that any artist who performs on campus will abide by Baylor's standards.

"The bottom line is that we're not going to let anyone come if they're going to be swearing the whole time," Riemer said. "They wouldn't be able to perform."

Audrey Gray worked on the Student Union staff for more than 30 years and organized many concerts at Baylor. Gray, who now works part-time at the exit desk of Moody Memorial Library, said she wishes Student Activities would bring more acts to campus.

"I think that they need to underwrite this stuff and bring it in," Gray said. "But they don't seem to be trying, and I think they're making a big mistake. They're Student Activities, and they should be representing all

the students and not just the fraternities and sororities."

Kent Ellis, associate director of conference and event management, stated in an e-mail that the decreased availability of venues, such as Waco Hall, makes it difficult to accommodate external concerts.

"Our calendar is maxed out with Baylor events and Waco community events," Ellis said. "There really aren't any good dates throughout the year that we don't already have something going on. Additionally, we set our calendar a year in advance and promoters do not usually book that far out. Despite these challenges, we still manage to have a couple of external concerts every year such as the David Phelps concert last year, and the Tribute to the Beatles, which was hosted

by the Waco Symphony Orchestra."

Drew Pittman, director of facilities for the athletic department, said that the Ferrell Center also has a full schedule, including career fairs, premieres and athletic events.

"Back in the '90s, when most of the big concerts happened, the building wasn't run by the athletics department, it was run by finance and administration," Pittman said. "We haven't really done a big concert since Keith Urban in 2005."

Tickets for that concert were \$40, and the show did not sell out.

Perhaps the biggest reason for the decrease in concerts, as is often the case, is money.

"It's almost become cost prohibitive to bring people in," said

Dr. Martha Lou Scott, associate vice president for student life.

"Concerts are challenging, and they keep getting more and more expensive," Pittman said, citing production and staffing costs.

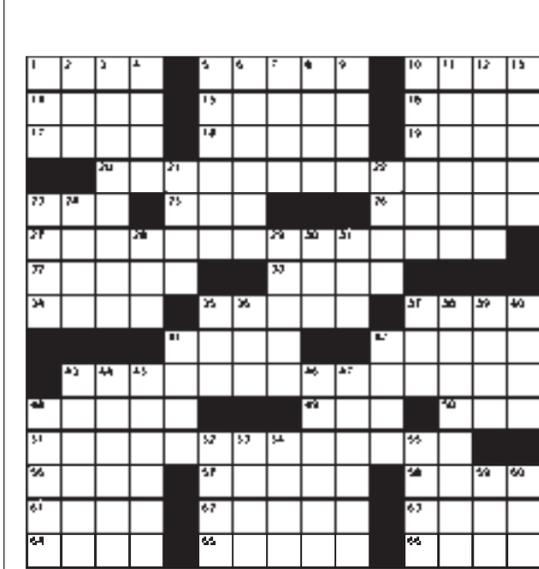
Practical problems such as expenses and the availability of venues play a role, but Kathy Johnson, assistant to the dean of the School of Music, said students have simply changed since she was a student.

"Back in the day, students didn't have the means to go see people play in Dallas and Austin, so they would bring people to us," Johnson said. "We stayed on the weekends. But that's a different age. Students are more mobile now, and they're better off financially. Now, everybody's attention is so fractured. Who knows if they would even show up?"

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Despite outstanding casts, two movies don't impress



McCLATCHY NEWS

Denzel Washington stars as Eli in Alcon Entertainment's action-adventure film, "The Book of Eli," a Warner Bros. Pictures' release.

'The Book of Eli' lacks Washington's usual luster and proves disappointing

By **ASH ANDERSON**
CONTRIBUTOR

I have always been a fan of Denzel Washington. The guy just has a gravity that is inescapable. Whether he's playing a Union soldier, a political activist or a rogue cop, the energy that he is able to capture is profound.

MOVIE | REVIEW

Unfortunately, Denzel is unable to carry "The Book of Eli" to the finish line, despite the visceral post-apocalyptic imagery and metaphysical fight sequences.

The premise sounds great on paper. Eli (Washington), on a cross-country trek to find water in a world that has been left in shambles, happens across a small town led by the charismatic Carnegie (Gary Oldman).

Obsessed with the Bible, and having never read it himself, Carnegie is taken aback to learn

that Eli possesses one of the last remaining copies.

Obviously enough, Eli doesn't just hand the Bible over. If he did, there wouldn't be a story, and we would have been able to walk out of the theater in half an hour.

Actually, I might have enjoyed that more. In a vain attempt to get his hands on the book to give up the book, Carnegie sends his wife's daughter, Solara (Mila Kunis), to seduce Eli.

Though, being the wise man that he is, Eli refuses her advances and instead asks her to look inward at the turmoil that Carnegie is willingly spreading. As Solara and Eli flee, Carnegie pursues them. The third act picks up the pace to an enjoyable level, but if you haven't been interested to begin with, then there really isn't much the last 20 minutes will do for you.

There are plenty of interesting plot points in the story, but the director just seemed to skip over them in favor of more action-oriented visuals.

Cliches aside, the choreography is superb. Shifts in vantage points, perspective changes, and cuts are all very well done to the point that the action keeps you entertained. From what I've read, Denzel did all of his own stunts and martial arts, which leaves me even more impressed considering that he's getting up there in terms of age.

There's not much more that I can say without spoiling the ending - which is interesting, to say the least. The supporting cast helps to buoy the film above water just enough to keep it from drowning in its own convoluted plot, but they can't save it from simply being mediocre.

While not a bad film, I can't help but wonder what this could have been with another rewrite or two. Denzel doesn't normally pick poor scripts, but it appears that he finally hit a pot hole.

Grade: C

Difficult plot hinders 'The Lovely Bones'

By **JAMES BLAKE EWING**
REPORTER

In the last 10 years director Peter Jackson started strong with "The Lord of the Rings Trilogy," declined into indulgent spectacle with "King Kong" and moved to the producer's chair with last year's sci-fi blockbuster "District 9." Now he's returned to the director's chair to direct a murder drama ala his 1994 film "Heavenly Creatures."

Susie Salmon, portrayed

have one. No matter what this family does, it is never going to be the same again because it has suffered a horrible loss that will endure forever. The film's foolish desire to reconcile and rebuild this family in Susie's absence is false on both an emotional and narrative level. Perhaps these elements worked in the 2002 novel by Alice Sebold upon which the film is based, but here there's not enough development to justify the entire structure of the family drama.

The film would have been compelling if it focused on the murder. Stanley Tucci's performance slowly lures us in with his slight uneasiness and projection of vulnerability, disarming both his victims and the audience until it's too late.

The obsessive and meticulous planning of his character is fascinating to watch and a more interesting film would have been the Stanley Tucci and the Mark Wahlberg characters attempts to outsmart each other.

Visually, Peter Jackson displays some intelligent ideas. He parallels the sheltered life of this family with enclosed bottles and he makes the world of Susie and

the real world clash in a handful of interesting ways.

The film also subverts one of the key elements of horror by making the most tense moments being when a character steps into the light instead of darkness.

However, most of the visuals suffer from poor digital effects. Sometimes they are so clearly manufactured that they jump out, as is the case with the netherworld imagery.

Given that he directed four of the most technically proficient films of the last 10 years, there is no excuse for the lack of quality.

"The Lovely Bones" high concept is also its strongest enemy. Perhaps in the novel there was a reason for Susie's tale of life after death but here it becomes a well-spring of poor writing, subpar digital effects and inferior storytelling.

There are glimmers of brilliance and any scene with Stanley Tucci is excellent, but not even he can redeem the poor execution. Susie's rumination on death only serves to muddle the tale of the living.

Grade: C



McCLATCHY NEWS

Saioirse Ronan, left, who stars as Susie Salmon, works behind-the-scenes with director and producer Peter Jackson on "The Lovely Bones."

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Amid humor at the Globes, stars add perspective

By MARY McNAMARA
LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES - So, not a great night for Ricky Gervais fans, but you have to love a show in which Meryl Streep announces she would like to be called "T Bone," Mike Tyson shares the stage with Bradley Cooper and Sandra Bullock actually chokes up thanking her agent.

We were so excited when the Hollywood Foreign Press Association announced they had drafted the British comedian to host this year's Golden Globes ceremony. He had essentially saved the 2008 Emmys, and even his recent appearance on "The Tonight Show With Conan O'Brien" was promising, as he incited O'Brien to use the window of his struggles with NBC to his best advantage. "Let's go mental," Gervais said. "What are they going to do? Fire you?"

He took a similar attitude toward his gig at the Globes, telling anyone who asked that he had no plans for the evening other than drinking and going out there and having fun. But it's one thing to say that and another to actually do just that. Gervais' opener consisted of a reprise of his "feud"

with Steve Carell, a lot of self promotion, a very long masturbation joke and a jab at Kiefer Sutherland. In a room filled with Hollywood A-listers, you go for ... Kiefer Sutherland?

To Gervais' credit, he warmed up. He later took on Paul McCartney, joking that they had flown over on the same plane, but Gervais was in first class while McCartney flew coach. "He's saving money, because he spent a lot of it last year," Gervais cracked, referring to McCartney's high-profile divorce.

Good joke, but it fell flat because, you know, it's Paul McCartney. Mel Gibson, on the other hand - well, it's hard to imagine another comedian with the moxy to not only drink on camera but to use it as the ultimate intro: "I like to drink as much as the next man," he announced, "unless, of course, the next man is ... Mel Gibson."

But a host doesn't live on one great moment alone, so, just as he repeatedly predicted, Gervais will probably not be hosting the Oscars any time soon.

If he didn't exactly knock 'em dead, Hollywood was happy to make up the difference. Anchored by Martin Scorsese accepting the

Cecil B. DeMille award with an earnest lyricism one doesn't usually associate with awards shows -he called DeMille's work "the shared landscape of our childhood" and thanked the Hollywood Foreign Press for its dedication to film preservation - as well as regular but understated reminders of how important it is to aid and support the people of Haiti, this year's Golden Globes actually didn't need Gervais to make it a good show.

It was a very good year in television and film, which meant each nomination list was chock full of potential winners, rather than padding.

Most of those who got a statue wore a red and yellow ribbon in remembrance of the earthquake survivors and an air of grateful humility remarkable even for an awards show.

Oh, James Cameron tried to ruin it, speaking in Na'vi, making references to his need to urinate during both of his acceptance speeches and being, you know, James Cameron. But even he couldn't put a damper on what was, at times, a strangely stirring evening.

From Mo'Nique's tearful and deeply moving acceptance for

best supporting actress to Jeff Bridges thanking his father for convincing him to be an actor, almost every speech was strikingly graceful and heartfelt, with almost every winner expressing what seemed like a sincere gratitude for not only the award but for the ability to be, well, stars of the entertainment industry.

Not surprisingly Meryl Streep managed to say it best. "I come to Golden Globes weekend," she said, "and I am conflicted how to have my happy movie self in the face of everything I'm aware of in the real world, and that's when I have my mother's voice coming to me: Partners in Health, shoot some money to Partners in Health, and be damn grateful you have the dollars to help. And I am grateful. I'm really grateful."

It helped that, on the television side of things anyway, there were wins that could be seen as Emmy "do-overs" - Kevin Bacon won for "Taking Chance," "Big Love" finally got some gold with Chloe Sevigny winning best supporting actress in a drama - as well as recognition for "Glee," which beat "30 Rock" for best comedy, and Julianna Margulies, who won best actress in a drama for "The Good Wife."



James Cameron, the winner of best director, backstage Sunday at the 67th Annual Golden Globe Awards show at The Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, California.

As for film, well, of course there's a chance that, as one cynic of my acquaintance said, we're just getting the first draft of the Oscar speeches. But that's more than a month away, and with a

show like this one, maybe it's time to stop slamming the Golden Globes. For years, they've been the most free-wheeling of the awards shows, but this year they managed to do it with class.

Fashion at the Globes was both romantic and sleek

By BOOTH MOORE
LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES - The red carpet may have been spongy wet, but that didn't dampen the Golden Globes fashion parade.

After last year's recession-conscious styles, the look was anything but understated with romantic ruffles, flounces, beads and folds popping out all over.

There were some misses (Cher's reverse corset train wreck; Quentin Tarantino's Japanese-American hybrid tuxedo).

However, there were more hits. And it was fun to see stars taking risks again.

Neutral shades made a big

showing and were one of the most popular trends of the rainy evening.

The best: Drew Barrymore's draped, champagne silk chignon Atelier Versace gown with glass fringe at the shoulder and hip and Nicole Kidman's softly draped, bias-cut nude Nina Ricci. Both were dramatic but not too much so.

The worst: Christina Hendricks' flouncy pale peach Christian Siriano gown. The color competed too much with her porcelain skin. And Kate Hudson's ivory origami-folded Marchesa dress wore her instead of the other way around.

There was a lot of anything-



Sandra Bullock in purple Bottega Veneta at the Golden Globes.

but-basic black. The best: Olivia Wilde's dramatic beaded, plunge-front Gucci gown - sleek and modern. The worst: Penelope Cruz's Giorgio Armani Prive gown with lace sleeves and ribbon skirt. It aged her.

But the real story was color. The color purple reigned supreme. Chloe Sevigny's sleeveless silver lilac Valentino edged in ruffles was a showstopper (even if the rain made it a bit see-through), as was Rose Byrne's eggplant-colored, washed silk strapless Lanvin column dress. (Jane Krakowski, Fergie and Sandra Bullock also wore purple.)

Several actresses were pretty in pink, but none prettier than

Diane Kruger. Her Christian Lacroix haute couture gown from the spring '09 collection with a softly draped neckline brought to mind pink rose petals.

It was also a reminder that for a designer, red carpet success doesn't necessarily equal business success.

The French couturier made news last year when he declared bankruptcy, and this was a nice tribute to him.

In a snappy white jacket and red pocket square, Tracy Morgan said he was paying tribute to the Rat Pack.

Dark green was an alternative to black for Marion Cotillard, Sigourney Weaver and Gabourey

Sidibe.

Every awards show season seems to bring a breakout star who does not fit fashion's size 2 mold, and this time it was Sidibe the star of "Precious," who rocked a malachite green gown with a crystal-embellished waistband and billowy sleeves by L.A. designer Kevan Hall.

Byrne should win an award for most creative use of jewelry for her Neil Lane diamond hair clip and the three Stephen Russell diamond brooches at her hip.

January Jones' wide black headband looked fresh, as did Julia Roberts' vintage 1972 Van Cleef & Arpels sautoir necklace with citrines and diamonds.

Spoon's seventh album 'Transference' is true to their unique musical style

By JAMES BYERS
REPORTER

Austin-based indie rock band Spoon is easy to take for granted. They spent the previous decade releasing critically acclaimed albums as consistently as Peyton Manning won MVP awards, the last being 2007's excellent, if unfortunately titled, "Ga Ga Ga Ga Ga," which debuted at number 10 on the Billboard 200 chart. On Tuesday, the band ushered in the new decade by releasing their seventh studio album, "Transference."

The album begins with "Before Destruction," perhaps the

you're leaving, you turn around and take a cold shot," he laments. It's an intriguing opening track, and it may reasonably lead listeners to believe that "Transference" is headed into uncharted territory. That's not the case; for better or worse, the band quickly picks up the tempo and returns to its patented brand of hook-filled rock.

"The Mystery Zone" entertains for nearly five minutes and then abruptly ends in mid lyric, because apparently that's what happens in the mystery zone. "Who Makes Your Money" uses treated vocal textures and keyboard effects to achieve a hypnotic groove. The first single "Written In Reverse," arguably the album's best song, is vintage Spoon. A pounding piano propels the song forward while Daniel channels John Lennon and therapeutically screams the chorus. It's an urgent and compelling addition to Spoon's canon of singles. "Trouble Comes Running" and "Out Go the Lights" are similarly engrossing.

Elsewhere, "I Saw the Light," the album's longest song, spends a wordless three minutes descending in melody. It's never boring, but it does slow the tempo of the album. "Got Nuffin,"

the biggest departure from the album's clean production, features a murky bass texture and churning guitar riffs that sound downright dirty.

If there's anything to complain about, it's that this collection of songs sounds a little too familiar. On "Transference," Spoon becomes victims of their own success. Too often Transference sounds like Spoon on autopilot. Sure, most of the songs are typically great, but by Spoon's lofty standards there is nothing as dynamic as "The Underdog," or "The Way We Get By," standouts from previous albums.

The album closes with the funky, bass-driven "Nobody Gets Me But You," an appropriate ending to Transference, both fun and familiar, if not entirely fresh. "Transference" retains their hard-earned reputation as one of the leading lights of American indie rock.

There's little doubt that in the coming decade, Spoon will consistently release albums full of immediately catchy, well-crafted songs. And Peyton Manning will probably win a few more MVP awards.

Grade: A-

ALBUM | REVIEW

least straightforward opening track the band has ever penned. Charismatic frontman Britt Daniel is known for his detached vocal delivery in which he spits out words, adding or dropping syllables as he pleases. However, "Before Destruction" is less playful and more melancholy. A sparse acoustic guitar and reverberating background vocals accompany Daniel as he sings of heartbreak and betrayal, both common themes in Spoon's music. "Just as

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This year's fashion doesn't depart from past

By RACQUEL JOSEPH
REPORTER

Few topics are more frivolous, controversial, and light-hearted than fashion trends. Trends have stepped all over pop culture in Manolo Blahniks and created denim social uproars in the form of baggy jeans and super-low hip huggers. However, the fashion trends of dearly departed 2009 were a little more politically correct.

In 2009, designers avoided baring all, depending on one-shouldered dresses and crooked hems for a hint of skin. Looking

back to the comforting days of 1980s luxury, bold, strong shoulders and loose harem pants made a comeback boosted by French designer Pierre Balmain.

The one note of unpractical fun was found in shoes where crazy patterns, clashing colors, sculpted heels at Dior and Miu Miu, and thigh-high boots were on all the runways and copied in malls.

In rebellion, the young and fashionable covered themselves in zippers, studs and plaid topped with military jackets in '90s grunge flair.

So, are the fashion dictators

breaking out the fresh and innovative for spring 2010? Not quite.

Military style has moved camp to the desert in khakis and canvas, as shown at Chloé. Tan will be perfect to subdue the popular clashing patterns which are easy to love but hard to wear.

The 1990s are hanging on with all-denim ensembles: soft denim work shirts on top of patched up jeans. Even the '70s are making a splash in tie-dyed fabrics and draping hemlines like those at Matthew Williamson.

However, the modernists are finally out to play in the main-

stream. Women everywhere can thank Proenza Schouler for surf- and skate-inspired clothes in stores. Other designers showed scuba mini-dresses and neoprene suits. Over skintight Spandex the mannequins will be wearing blazers, boyfriend blazers of course, and men's jeans.

In a new take on underwear as outerwear, designers such as Oscar de la Renta showed skirts with sheer panels and Matthew Williamson displayed transparent-backed shirts.

When looking for the perfect bag to throw on over your spring wardrobe, make a statement:

tribal prints, ruffles, bold colors. It is difficult to make a mistake and it should be big enough to carry everything you need across campus.

The most notable trend of 2010 will be the participation of bloggers and street style in the creation of fashion. To truly stay on top of fashion, look to the Internet.

If there is one thing that the Internet will teach you it is that trends should be handled with care. Assistant professor of family and consumer sciences Dr. Jay Yoo suggests investing in "affordable luxury" to balance

trends such as "pencil skirts, high-waisted pieces, and lightweight, unstructured handbags" by luxury brands.

As trends flicker in and out of magazines and your closet, you can bet that the women behind blogs such as Coedugly on chic-topia.com and Karlasclot are just as reliable as the traditional Style.com.

If there is one thing that the Internet will teach you it is that trends should be handled with care. Celebrate them by scattering them in your wardrobe in bits and pieces and creating a stir this spring.

2010 shaping up to be promising year for Hollywood

By JESSICA ACKLEN
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

2009 proved to be a year of record-breaking blockbusters, such as "The Twilight Saga: New Moon," James Cameron's visually breathtaking "Avatar," which is continuing its highly successful journey into 2010, and the top-grossing movie of the year, "Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen."

While expensive and popular franchise movies dominated the box office, there were a few surprise gems in the 2009 movie crown, including the highest grossing comedy of the year, "The Hangover," the Sandra Bullock drama, "The Blind Side" and the little-independent-film-that-could, "Paranormal Activity."

Although 2009 had many films to be commended, 2010 looks like it just might blow last year out of the water.

From the long-anticipated beginning of the end of the "Harry Potter" film series to a third installment in the wholesome and always fun "Toy Story" franchise, 2010 is shaping up to be a highly profitable year for Hollywood. Thus, mark your calendars, be-

cause here are five movies that can't be missed in 2010.

'Alice in Wonderland'

March 5 - Tim Burton tries this hand at the children's classic by Lewis Carroll. In what seems to be a part tailor-made for Johnny Depp's unique and eccentric acting style, he plays a very colorful and whimsical Mad Hatter in his seventh collaboration with Burton. Opposite Depp plays Australian newcomer Mia Wasikowska, in the role of Alice. Anne Hathaway also stars as the White Queen in Burton's Wonderland and Burton's long-time finance Helena Bonham Carter portrays the Queen of Hearts.

'Sex and the City 2'

May 28 - Start saving your pennies for Manolos! Carrie and the girls reprise their roles in this sequel to the HBO television series, which debuted in 1998 and the feature film that was released in 2008. Directed by Michael Patrick King, the director of the previous film and also the writer, producer and director of the TV series, the movie should maintain the essence of the hit show. Flirting, fashion and fun are sure to be

present in this next chapter in the lives of four friends living fabulously in New York City.

'Toy Story 3'

June 18 - When the original "Toy Story" was released in 1995, it was an instant classic that was a huge leap into digital animation. Fifteen years later, this third installment in the "Toy Story" franchise takes the toys into the unknown, a day care. While their former owner, Andy, leaves for college, the toys are abandoned and taken to a day care. This most recent "Toy Story" will undoubtedly be a wholesome and humorous addition to the franchise.

'The Twilight Saga: Eclipse'

June 30 - Unless you live under a rock, you are most likely to have some knowledge of Stephanie Meyer's book-series-turned-teenage phenomenon, "Twilight." In this third installment in the film adaptations, vampires and wolves combine to fight off a crazed vampire, with a grudge and an army of newborn blood-suckers. While that description may appeal to a male audience, the prevalent theme of the movie



Cynthia Nixon, from left, Sarah Jessica Parker, Kim Cattrall and Kristin Davis reprise their roles as four fabulously women living in New York City in "Sex and the City 2."

continues to be love, including the thickening of a Jacob-Bella-Edward love triangle. Chris Weitz brilliantly directed the second installment, "New Moon" and yet does not reprise his role as director of this one. That position belongs to David Slade, the director

of 2007's "30 Days of Night."

'Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1'

Nov. 19 - The first part of the final "Harry Potter" book is converted into what is sure to be a major hit. Harry and friends take

the final steps toward defeating Lord Voldemort. The final book, by the same name, was split into two movies, to preserve the story line and probably to get a bit more revenue. Regardless, audiences will join Harry in quest to defeat The Dark Lord.

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