

Baylor finds hope in renewed Big 12 stability

By TYLER ALLEY
SPORTS EDITOR

With the Pac-12's decision to not expand, the Big 12 is once again stable and looking to remain that way.

"We are pleased that the Presidents of the Big 12 institutions have come together this evening to re-commit themselves to our heartland conference," president Ken Starr said in his statement. "Our efforts are now focused on working together to make the Big

12, for the long-term, one of the strongest athletic conferences in the nation."

The Big 12's stability comes with a casualty, as commissioner Dan Beebe has agreed with the conference board of directors to step down.

"The Big 12 Board of Directors has reached a mutual agreement with [Beebe] that he will leave his position effective today," Big 12 Board of Directors chair Brady J. Deaton said in a statement. "We

sincerely thank Dan who has always demonstrated a total commitment to what is in the best interest of the Big 12 Conference."

"I have been honored to serve the Big 12 Conference for the past eight and one-half years, including the last four-plus as its commissioner," Beebe said in a statement. "I care deeply for these fine institutions and the citizens they represent. It is satisfying to know the Big 12 Conference will survive...I wish the Big 12 a long

and prosperous future."

Former Big Eight commissioner Chuck Neinas will serve as interim commissioner.

Now that it seems the chaos is nearing an end, it's time to clear up some misconceptions surrounding Baylor's role in everything.

"To be clear, Baylor's position is that we reserve our rights," vice president of marketing John Barry said. "That's it. Baylor never sued anyone. Baylor never threat-

ened to sue anyone."

Texas A&M president R. Bowen Loftin has said that he was not happy with the commitment of certain Big 12 schools following an agreement between the Big 12 and the SEC saying the former conference would not sue the latter.

However, the agreement said nothing about individual schools suing the SEC. Baylor's decision to not waive their legal rights had nothing to do with that agree-

ment.

Also, there has been a misconception surrounding the Aggie's exit. It is widely believed that the Aggies could simply pay their exit fee and leave.

To simplify this, imagine a stack of 10 cups. The popular belief is that Texas A&M could simply pay their fee and take their cup right off the top of the stack. However, if Texas A&M's cup is at

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Sports take: Parents reason for sports love

By KRISTA PIRTLE
SPORTS WRITER

My love relationship with sports began when I was little, dressed in a Michael Jordan jersey seated on my dad's lap. It has grown over the years as my dad has introduced me to different ones. I remember watching the Cowboys in the late 90's, sharing the frustrations of my dad with the lack of athletic ability on the field. I remember fighting off sleep as I watched the Dallas Stars win the Stanley Cup in 1999. I remember my first Texas Rangers' game and the excitement the atmosphere brought.

As time progressed, I not only watched these sports but played them as well. When I was five, I drug my oversized bat bag to my tee-ball games. It only took one game for my dad, and coach, to realize that I was purposefully

"It would be hard to imagine participating in a sport without my parents there."

missing the slow pitches so I could use the tee.

The older I got, the more I liked to play basketball. After games in high school, I would find my dad, who was usually sitting on his camera case taking pictures, and talk strategy and improvements.

It amused my dad and humored my mom when I would be in my cheerleading uniform for football games warming up the back-up quarterback instead of stretching.

As a whole, my dad was my coach throughout the years while my mom was always in the stands supporting me.

It would be hard to imagine participating in a sport without my parents there.

Sports provide a true bond with my family. If the Rangers win a big game, I can expect a phone call from my mom. If I watch something cool on ESPN, I call my dad.

Opening Day at the Ballpark in Arlington is a tradition in my family. Baseball is our favorite sport to watch, and my brother was born on Opening Day in 2000.

For students at Baylor, as their parents approach, they are cleaning their apartments and making shopping list. Before taking your family to Walmart, truly think about what they have done for you

Personally, I know I have taken my parents for granted many times, calling them when I need money for food or gas. As your parents arrive today, think about what all they have done for you.

For me, my parents raised me in the church. My dad baptized me, and my mom taught the "sweet jams" at vacation bible school.

God and sports are ties that bring my family together. As I spend time with them this weekend, I don't need to focus on stocking my pantry. I need to enjoy the time I spend with them and thank them for what they've done for me.



MATT HELLMAN | LARIAT PHOTOGRAPHER

Can lightning strike twice?

No. 10 quarterback Robert Griffin III carries the ball in for a first down during the game against the Rice Owls Saturday, Sept. 26, 2010, at Rice Stadium. Baylor won 30-13 despite a 67-minute rain delay, and Griffin had 268 yards passing and a touchdown along with 50 yards rushing. Baylor hopes for a similar result against Rice this year when the teams play at 6 p.m. Saturday in Floyd Casey Stadium.

Former receiver fuels defense with skill

By DANIEL WALLACE
SPORTS WRITER

Junior safety Mike Hicks has been one of the prime defensive stars for the Bears this young season. It was Hicks who had the dramatic game-winning interception in the waning seconds of the game against the TCU Horned Frogs on Sept. 2. Hicks also had an interception in Saturday's 48-0 victory over Stephen F. Austin.

Hicks spoke of his two interceptions already this season and his knack for making big plays, but did not credit himself.

"I think it just happens to be me at the right place at the right time," he said. "I feel like anyone in my position could have made it. I wouldn't consider it luck because we've been out there working hard everyday at practice."

The China Spring, Tex. native played in 23 games his first two seasons at Baylor as a reserve safety and a special teams regular. In spring drills this year, he won the starting cover safety position for the Bears. Hicks was a standout all-purpose athlete at China Spring High School where he finished no. 2 in career receiving yards in Texas high school history with 4,328 yards to go along with 41 touchdowns. Hicks came to Baylor as a receiver and his catching skills have paid off for the team, just on the other side of the ball.

"The reason Mike is able to make plays on balls is because he was a high school receiver," head coach Art Briles



MATTHEW MCCARROLL | LARIAT STAFF

No. 17 senior safety Mike Hicks intercepts the ball inside the Baylor 10 yard line to hold SFA scoreless early in the first quarter. Baylor won the rain-shortened game, 48-0, on Sept. 17, 2011, at Floyd Casey Stadium.

said. "That's one of the things we look for when evaluating DBs—can they make a play in the air?"

Senior running back Terrance Ganaway said that Hicks is a player who works hard, trains hard and plays hard. He added that Hicks prepares his body and mind for the game and that allows him to make great plays on the ball. He appreciates his interceptions and leadership

on the defense but would like to see him execute more of his physical strength by making some more big hits on defense.

"Mike Hicks is fast, has great hands and he's like a receiver back there," he said. "He understands receivers so I bet it comes a little bit naturally to defend them. I'm ready for him to lay

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After terrible injury, Campos returns to impact team

By DANIEL WALLACE
SPORTS WRITER

As the ball went over the goalkeeper's outstretched arms and into the back of the net, junior midfielder Larissa Campos finally had her confidence fully restored. It was a confidence she had been in search of for nearly two full years, battling a long, painful recovery from a torn ACL.

The goal that restored her confidence came on Sept. 16 against the Texas A&M Aggies in College Station and tied the game at 1-1. Campos said that after an injury of that magnitude, the toughest thing was to regain confidence in herself back. She now has that confidence back.

"It was special," she said. "It was kind of the cake on top of a really good season so far. It's hard coming back from an injury like that. Bringing that confidence back is really the last step of recovering fully from an ACL. That goal was definitely my confidence maker."

She tore her ACL in a game against Kansas in 2009 as a freshman. Campos said she went into the game with around 15 minutes left in the first half. What would happen when she touched the ball in the game would change the

course of her collegiate career.

"The first touch I took, I took a hard touch down line, planted to cross the ball, decided last minute that I was going to cut back instead, but my body wasn't really

in tune with my mind," she said. "My left leg just kind of collapsed on me."

Campos said when she fell to the ground, she knew immediately something was wrong because she

heard a loud snap. She feared she had broken her left leg; tests revealed a torn ACL. She had surgery in November 2009 and was recovering well until May of 2010 when she started experiencing extension

problems in her left leg. That led to her second surgery, where it was determined there was immense scar tissue built up underneath her kneecap, restricting the ACL from going where it should when she straightened her leg.

By the time the 2010 rolled around, Campos had decided to redshirt her sophomore year in order for the knee to completely heal. In November of that year, Campos received her third surgery to repair the knee. She had been experiencing pain in the front of her knee that shot down to her toes and gave her a tingling sensation all over. The third surgery removed neuromas in her knee, which she described as "little nerve ball that just bundle up over time after surgeries." Her body was rejecting one of the screws that was put in her knee during the first surgery.

Her road to recovery has served as inspiration to sophomore midfielder Karlee Summey.

"Larissa is such an inspirational player just because of her injury," she said. "She always has had such a passion for soccer. That passion just encourages our team. She's such an inspiration to our team. She has great leadership qualities, just always positive, and is a great player."

Sophomore forward Vic Hoffman said Campos is dedicated to the game and admires that she researches soccer and is in continual pursuit of knowledge for the game.

"She's hilarious and she loves soccer more than anyone else I've ever seen," she said. "She's one of the players who knows the game just as well as the coaches."

Head coach Marci Jobson dealt with the same injury in her career and thus has a great respect for how Campos dealt with the injury and the complexities of the recovery.

"It's a long road," she said. "You always question whether you will be the same player again. Larissa has had to fight with those demons. She's kept a really positive attitude. She's kept hard working in practice. I was just really proud of her for that moment, that she was able to have that."

What separates Larissa on the field is her vision, skillfulness, and passing skills, her teammates and coach said. The Aurora, Colo., native is thankful for the lessons she learned through her injury and recovery process.

"Patience and faith can go a long way," she said. "You really have to rely on the people around you to get through the tough times."



AMBICA SINGH | LARIAT STAFF

Baylor soccer practices Wednesday for its upcoming games this weekend. The Bears will face Texas at 7 p.m. Friday in Austin followed by a game against Weber State at 12 p.m. Sunday at Betty Lou Mays field.

Soccer heads to Austin before coming home for non-conference foe

By DANIEL WALLACE
SPORTS WRITER

The Longhorns and the Wildcats are the matchups the Bears will be granted this weekend. Baylor soccer (7-2-1) will continue Big 12 play on the road when it faces the University of Texas Longhorns (6-2) at 7 p.m. today in Austin. Then they will travel back up I-35 to play host to the Weber State Wildcats (2-6) at 1 p.m. Sunday on Betty Lou Mays Field.

The Bears were originally scheduled to play the Texas A&M Aggies and Texas Longhorns on the same weekend, both on the road, head coach Marci Jobson

said. Instead, there will be a week in between play of the two Big 12 schools. The Bears lost to Texas A&M on Sept. 16 but are using that as fuel for their match against Texas.

"The end result of A&M made us more ready for Texas," sophomore forward Vic Hoffman said. "The end result is prompting us to show we can win games."

Jobson said the keys to beating Texas will be to keep their field compact and organize pressure against them. She stressed the importance of aggressive, physical defense.

"They are probably one of the most possession-oriented teams

that we play, meaning they like to pass and pass and pass," she said. "They don't want to have to play too many long balls. It's very crucial for us to disrupt their pressure."

Hoffman spoke of the importance of representing Baylor in the Big 12, specifically because of the conference realignment fiasco.

"We definitely want to go in there and make an impact on the Big 12, partly because who knows when we will play them again with everything going on," she said. "They are a really good team with really skillful players."

Sunday's game for the Bears is a non-conference game, but sopho-

more midfielder Karlee Summey stressed the importance of treating every game the same, no matter who the opponent may be.

"The game that we face that day is the most important game at that time," she said. "For championship teams, those games are just as important as the other ones. In order to win, you have to learn to win those too."

Jobson and the players agreed that they don't want a repeat of last weekend. They were not talking about the heartbreaking loss to the Aggies but rather, their play on Sunday against Utah Valley. Although the Bears won that game, the players and coach all agreed

that the team came out flat and unenergetic. That is something they will try to avoid this weekend.

"If we don't play with energy and emotion, we can lose to any team," she said. "Sunday (vs. Utah Valley) we came out and we were just awful first half. I was [upset]. I was not happy at halftime. That's the most I've ever flipped as a coach. I said things I didn't know could come out of my mouth."

The Bears will be the first Big 12 team Texas, who is 5-0 at home, faces this season. Weber State is a member of the Big Sky Conference and has beaten Utah Valley and New Mexico State this season. The Bears will look to remain undefeat-

ed at home against the Wildcats.

In the first 10 games of the season, the Bears have outscored their opponents 21-7. The team has also dominated the amount of shots taken per game, averaging 17.7 shots per 90 minutes as compared to their opponent's 8.8. Senior goalkeeper Courtney Seelhorst has boasted an .811 save percentage, including 30 saves and five shut-outs.

Baylor's upcoming conference schedule starts with a home game versus Texas Tech, followed by a trip to Lawrence to play the Kansas Jayhawks and an away game against Iowa State. Soccer returns home Oct. 14 against Mizzou.



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Volume increases energy, momentum in volleyball

By Krista Pirtle
SPORTS WRITER

Growing up playing basketball, many of you would jump up and down after making a basket, celebrating your score. Coach would then pull you aside and tell you to act like you had scored before.

When you watch sports today, unless it is a buzzer beater or walk-off, there in no celebration in the middle of the playing surface.

Football even made a rule prohibiting it in the end zone. Point-by-point optimism seems to have disappeared from the modern sports world.

Oh wait, what about volleyball?



No. 4 Right setter Alyssa Dibbern tips the ball over the net against Oklahoma Wednesday in the Ferrell Center. The Bears suffered a 3-1 loss to OU.

Baylor is no exception. After every point, won or lost, the Bears enthusiastically huddle in the middle and then break to their respective positions.

In a sport where momentum dominates offensive performance, it is key to stay positive and expect to score every point.

If the team quiets down, the energy level begins to decrease.

When most other sports view this as distracting, Baylor volleyball head coach Jim Barnes sees it as a way to focus his players.

“The big part is keeping us focused point by point,” Barnes said. “We are motivated and trying hard, but you have to have that mental

focus and doing your job every point. When we are disciplined and doing our job, I think we are a pretty good team.”

When watching a Baylor volleyball game, you will see how the exhortations affect the play.

Senior setter Brittany Ridenour is captain of this team. Also, as setter, she is like the Robert Griffin III of her team, controlling who touches the ball and the offensive attack point by point. Watch after every point as she corrals her troops to a huddle and offers a nugget or two of wisdom.

Senior middle blocker Briana Tolbert is becoming more of a leader for the 2011 squad in every game. After a big kill, you can bet you will see her excited, but also watch after the Bears lose a point. The focus never leaves her eyes as she leads her teammates by example to never give up.

Her counterpart, junior middle blocker Torri Campbell, is very expressive on the court. You know something good just happened when she screams and makes a lit-

tle fist pump. Of course, there is no fist pump when they lose a point, but the joy of the game is obviously what pushes her point by point.

Sophomore outside hitter Zoe Adom is perhaps the most enthusiastic and expressive, which leads to the power behind her kills. However, Adom doesn't yell just on the court, but she is just as excited on the sidelines. There are points when she will drop to her knees to watch a set when the score is close, and then rise to her feet to celebrate a won point.



No. 7 Middle Blocker Torri Campbell preps for the spike against Oklahoma in the Ferrell Center on Wednesday.

Senior outside hitter Qian Zhang is little more quiet when it comes to celebrating. She still celebrates with her team in the huddle, but once she is in the zone, let her go because she is a threat both at the net making kills and in the backcourt making digs.

Senior libero Allison King, after running everywhere on Baylor's side of the net, probably feeds off the energy the most. At libero, she is responsible for chasing down as many balls as she can since she has no attack responsibilities. She also is expected to pass the ball well and take the place of setter Ridenour if she is out of place.

Freshman utility Adri Nora is becoming more enthusiastic as the season progresses. Not to say she was never before, but with her improving match by match, the excitement naturally escalates as well.

Indeed there are more players on the team, but this should make you the reader want to go out and watch your Baylor Bears enthusiastically win their way to a conference championship.

Baylor continues conference play

Bears welcome non-conference foe Rice, will travel to Manhattan, Kan. to face the K-State in Wildcats' Big 12 opener

By Krista Pirtle
SPORTS WRITER

While the Baylor football team will look to improve its record to 3-0 Saturday against Rice, the Baylor (11-4) volleyball team will be playing their second Big 12 match up against Kansas State (11-3) at 7 p.m. in Manhattan, Kan.

This will be Kansas State's first conference game of the season, coming off a seven-game win streak.

The Bears look to slow down the victorious roll of the Wildcats, who opened conference play against Baylor in 2009 to fall 1-3 in

Waco.

Baylor has won the last four meetings between the two schools and looks to make it five.

One issue that the Bears have worked on all season thus far is their service game — not being able to return serves accurately.

This needs to be fixed by Saturday as Kansas State is a strong service team, ranking in the top 50 nationally in aces with an average of 1.56 per set.

After returning serves accurately, Baylor will need to attack the Kansas State defense.

In order to do that, Baylor's front line will have to focus on

their kills and getting them over the Wildcat blockers. Kansas State is No. 23 in the nation for blocks with 2.63 per game.

The Wildcat Wall has played eight games with 10 or more blocks. Part of K-State's early success this year can be credited to sophomore middle blocker Kaitlynn Pelger.

Pelger leads the Big 12 in kills averaging 4.73, but that isn't all she can do. She also ranks among the nation's leaders in kills (12), hitting percentage (57), blocks (69) and points (3).

Kansas State has one player with all the numbers, but Baylor's front line consists of senior middle blocker Briana Tolbert, junior middle blocker Torri Campbell, sophomore outside hitter Zoe Adom, and freshman utility Adri Nora.

This front line of Bears is responsible for 486 kills on the season, as Baylor as a whole has 734. Plus, senior setter Brittany Ridenour has 514 assists.

Baylor is one of the top defensive teams in the Big 12 this season, averaging 17.15 digs per set to place them at second in the league. Senior libero Allison King is second in the conference individually at 5.11 digs.

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C O M P A N Y

A Legacy Built on Tradition

Sports Take: Despite being incredibly unlikable, Yankees are consistent

By DANIEL WALLACE
STAFF WRITER

I hate the New York Yankees. I want that to be made perfectly clear. Anytime the Yankees lose, I am happy.



Daniel Wallace | Staff Writer

I was most especially happy when they lost the 2010 ALCS to the Texas Rangers as I watched my team win the pennant for the first time in franchise history, dethroning the evil empire. But I digress.

What I am about to say pains me to my core, but I am going to be a man and admit what most baseball fans who despise the Yankees refuse.

What the New York Yankees do year in and year out is absolutely sensational. Although there are numerous things I dislike about the Yankee organization, it is time to give credit where it's due. On Wednesday, the Yankees clinched the American League East division title for the 12th time in the past 16 years. That is the most division titles in the major leagues since the wild card era began in 1995.

This marvelous run has seen the Yankees develop into a modern-day dynasty, hoisting five world championship trophies. To add to it, three of the four years they did not win the division title, they were still good enough to get into the playoffs as the wild card team. 2008 is the only year since 1995 the Yankees have not been in the postseason. Oh, that was a glorious October without them there though, wasn't it?

When it comes to winning and consistency, the New York Yan-

kees are the standard in baseball. You can say what you want about them. You can argue that they buy championships with their ridiculous spending. That argument may have some validity but what you can't argue is the fact that the organization deserves some credit for the type of winning material it has produced over the last 15 years. In major league sports, the primary objective of any team is to win. A wise man by the name of Herman Edwards once said, "You play to win the game." As another not so wise man said, "Just win, baby." (That would be Al Davis, owner of the Oakland Raiders.) What I'm getting at here is that in professional sports, winning is all that matters. That's what the Yankees do.

All they do is win, win, win. No matter what.

Are we being too harsh on an organization that is simply doing what it is supposed to do? Since when it is appropriate to bash teams for winning? Believe me, I know, the fact that the Yankees are winners every year is why a good number of us hate them. But enough is enough. Let's put our

pride behind us and give them credit. We can't deny that they are the team every other team wants to be. The consistency of the Yankees is truly something we've never seen before. This is the 50th time franchise history the Yankees are in the playoffs, joining the Los Angeles Lakers as the only other franchise in the NFL, MLB or NBA that has been to the playoffs 50 times. In baseball alone, the Dodgers are second in franchise playoff appearances with 26. The Yankees have almost double that.

Consistency is the key in the majors, no matter how you get there. Thus, the Yankees should be given high praise for embodying that so well. In these playoffs, I won't be going for the Yankees. I will be rooting against them with a passion. But I can't sit here and pretend like I don't respect the type of dynasty they have created. In a world where winning is everything, the Yankees have shined above all the rest.

OK, that's officially enough. Too much praise for the Yankees in one day.



New York Yankees' Curtis Granderson, left, Brett Gardner, center, and Chris Dickerson leap into the air to celebrate their 4-2 win over the Tampa Bay Rays.

Living the Fantasy Lifestyle: Joshua and Matt argue football picks

By MATT HELLMAN
AND JOSHUA MADDEN
PHOTO EDITOR & A&E EDITOR

Editor's Introduction: In part of what may or may not be an ongoing column, this week we have decided to ask two people who know almost nothing about sports for fantasy football advice, mainly just for the sweet, sweet taste of irony. Our resident A&E editor, Joshua Madden, and photo editor, Matt Hellman, seemed like obvious picks for two people who might not know anything about sports. Despite actually drafting his own team and not relying on a penny, Joshua is currently 0-2 while Matt is somehow 2-0 — perhaps partially because one of his opponents was Joshua — so they're here to give you their advice. Enjoy.

Question: Who is the best fantasy player this year?

Joshua: It's certainly not Arian Foster, who I drafted with the first overall pick in one of my leagues. He's played a total of part of one game for me, so I've been REEE-ALLLLY happy with my first-round pick there. As for the best pick you could have made, Adrian Peterson would be my guess, but I'd have to look at point totals and I just don't feel like doing that right now.

Matt: It's Calvin Johnson hands down. I mean come on guys! The man has feet like lightning, and don't even get me started on his catching ability. The ball sticks to his hands more than Baylor to the Big XII. If Johnson were any better, the Energizer bunny would give him his own drum to beat!

Question: Who is a good dark horse fantasy player that people should try to pick up or trade for?

Joshua: I'm really excited to actually have an answer for a question for a change. I've actually been lucky enough to stumble into three players who have been outperforming most expectations. Kenny Britt has been an absolute star, although at this point, anyone who has drafted him probably isn't going to pick him up. Ben Tate and Cam Newton are both open in a lot of leagues despite scoring a lot of points lately, so you might try to take advantage of those two.

Matt: The real diamond player is Beanie Wells. Looking back at the last two games, Wells has shown excellent improvement. Yeah, he takes a while to get on his feet, but once he's up and running,

he's a solid catch. Josh just thinks he has a good player there, and maybe he does, but it's okay. He still tasted defeat by my hands.

Question: I have Drew Brees playing Houston and Kevin Kolb playing the Seahawks. Should I start the really good quarterback against the (so-far) good defense or the above average quarterback against the terrible defense?

Joshua: This is a no-brainer. Start Drew Brees. He scored a ton of points against Green Bay in week one and Green Bay is at least comparable in quality, if not just outright better than the Texans, so I don't see Brees having any trouble scoring a lot of points.

Matt: I'm with Josh on this one. If Brees was able to score so many points against Green Bay (who has

an excellent defensive line by the way) then there is no reason not to start him. Besides, the Texans' defensive line isn't all that great.

Question: Off the top of your head, can you guess the top five players in terms of fantasy points our league so far?

Joshua: My guess would be Tyler, Daniel and Krista, because they're the sports staff, Chris, because he's editor-in-chief, and then Matt because somehow, despite his best efforts, he is still 2-0.

Matt: Well starting from the top we have Krista for sure. Following her is Tyler, and then me of course. The next two I am not so sure about, but I would have to guess Chris, followed closely by Daniel Houston. If you notice, Josh isn't even ranked. Obviously it is

because he is still 0-2.

Question: Finally, Joshua, you've already lost to the sports editor (Wes Welker, baby!) and Matt, you're about to lose this weekend. CAN'T WAIT! Shouldn't we just give him the trophy now?

Joshua: I'm the comeback kid. Vengeance will be sweet. Plus Ray Rice is still doing well, so as long as he doesn't get injured, I may actually end up doing ok.

Matt: This sports editor (he who shall not be named) may not realize it, but he has already lost. His mom called me last night and told me he left his game at home. I could probably beat him with my benched team. That trophy has my name on it. It will be looking pretty shiny on my desk in a few months.

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Busy weekend awaits Bears tennis, XC, golf

By LAUREAN LOVE
REPORTER

Women's Cross Country

Baylor fans have plenty to follow this weekend as several teams are in action: men's tennis will be home Friday, Saturday and Sunday for their season opener in the HEB Invitational, women's cross country competes Friday at the Toledo Inter-Regional Bubble Buster meet in Toledo, Ohio, and on Sunday and Monday, women's golf will be at the Dick Maguire Invitational tournament in Albuquerque, N.M.

Men's Tennis

Men's tennis opens its season at the 11th-annual Baylor-HEB Invitational at the Hurd Tennis Center at 8 a.m. on Friday. There will be 16 schools at the tournament, which will include seven players that are currently ranked in the Intercollegiate Tennis Association's national preseason rankings.

There are several top-ranked players that will be at the tournament this weekend, which includes: Baylor's Roberto Maytin ranked at No. 43, Oklahoma's Costin Pavel ranked at No. 17 and Rice's Harry Fowler ranked at No. 41.

Baylor's doubles team of Maytin and freshman Marco Krickovich are the tournament's top-ranked at No. 23 in the Intercollegiate Tennis Association, and Iowa's Bruche and Will Casos follows at No. 41.

Another Baylor veteran, sophomore Robert Verzaal, will be the other veteran playing.

Four freshmen will play in their first collegiate tennis match this weekend. Mate Zsiga is ranked number three among freshman nationally. Lars Behlen, Robbie Korth, and Krickovic are the other freshman attending the tournament.

Maytin advanced to the tournament's semifinals in singles last year. Maytin also claimed the tournament's doubles crown with John Peers.

Women's Golf

Women's golf team will be at the Dick Maguire Invitational in Las Cruces, N.M. on Sunday and Monday.

In their season opener, the Lady Bears finished sixth as a team, while freshman Hayley Davis led the team in her first collegiate tournament with a second place finish.

Senior Chelsey Cothran finished 17th and carded a team-best with nine birdies. Freshman Stani Schiavone and senior Valerie Sternebeck made their career-first collegiate appearances and tied for 33rd and 38th.

Senior Jaclyn Jansen tied for 56th overall.

Lariat sports desk picks NFL week 3

Week 3	 Tyler Alley Sports Editor	 Krista Pirtle Sports Writer	 Daniel Wallace Sports Writer
San Francisco at Cincinnati	49ers	49ers	49ers
New England at Buffalo	Patriots	Patriots	Patriots
Miami at Cleveland	Dolphins	Dolphins	Browns
Denver at Tennessee	Titans	Broncos	Titans
Detroit at Minnesota	Vikings	Lions	Lions
Atlanta at Tampa Bay	Falcons	Bucs	Falcons
Houston at New Orleans	Texans	Texans	Saints
NY Giants at Philadelphia	Eagles	Giants	Eagles
Jacksonville at Carolina	Panthers	Jaguars	Panthers
NY Jets at Oakland	Jets	Raiders	Jets
Baltimore at St. Louis	Ravens	Rams	Ravens
Kansas City at San Diego	Chargers	Chiefs	Chargers
Green Bay at Chicago	Packers	Bears	Packers
Arizona at Seattle	Cardinals	Cardinals	Cardinals
Pittsburgh at Indianapolis	Steelers	Steelers	Steelers
Washington at Dallas	Redskins	Cowboys	Cowboys
Week 2:	10-6	11-5	12-4
Season:	20-12	19-13	18-14

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BIG 12 from Page B1

the bottom, then the whole stack falls apart.

That is essentially the problem the Big 12 ran into when the Aggies decided to leave. After A&M's decision, Oklahoma and Texas both had meetings discussing a move to the Pac-12, with Oklahoma State and Texas Tech accompanying them. Missouri was also rumored to head to the SEC.

There were a number of "doomsday scenarios" for the remaining Big 12 schools, the most

prominent being a merger with the remaining Big East schools, as their conference is also having issues with schools leaving.

The Pac-12 decided Tuesday to not invite those four schools, citing geographic reasons along with satisfaction of their current television deal.

With the schools reestablishing their commitment to the Big 12, Baylor nation can breathe a deep sigh of relief.

"We are greatly encourages by the excellent work being done to stabilize and strengthen the Big

12," athletic director Ian McCaw said.

"The actions taken this evening, pay tribute to the needs of student-athletes and their families, and preserve the storied historic rivalries so valued by our alumni and the citizens of our states," Starr said.

The Big 12 is now looking at possible expansion, whether to just replace Texas A&M or reach 12 schools again. Some of the speculated schools include BYU, TCU, Louisville, West Virginia and Cincinnati.

Hicks from Page B1

some hits."

Junior quarterback Robert Griffin III said Hicks is a crafty, smart player with a strong work ethic. He added that if Hicks ever makes a mistake, being the defensive leader he is, Hicks is going to make sure he makes up for it.

"He's a leader on that defense," Griffin said. "It's great to have a local kid like that come to Baylor and do great things."

Hicks was quick to credit his recent success on the defense to

playing against the high-octane Baylor offense in practice. He believes that in practice, he is playing against some of the best receivers in the nation and that allows for him and the rest of the defense to be put to the test.

"To tell you the truth, I think we have one of the best receiving corps in the nation," he said. "It helps us out tremendously. If we go up against them, then I feel like we can hang with anybody."

Briles also spoke of Hicks' versatility. He believes that Hicks is a player who could also succeed on offense for the Bears if need be.

"With Mike you never have an issue because he's caught a lot of footballs," he said. "It was just a good fit for Mike. If it didn't work out defensively, he's a guy who could come over and play inside receiver for us right now just because he's a good football player and knows how to play the ball."

To go along with his two interceptions in as many games to start the season, Hicks also has recorded 12 tackles, including a career-high 10 in the opening game against TCU.



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In Print

>>> Chad Thomas Johnston

The Lariat scored a Q&A with Chad Thomas Johnston, author of the upcoming book “The Stained Glass Kaleidoscope.”

“Our indwelling daughter has apparently decided that kicking her way out of my wife’s stomach is a suitable exit strategy.” - Chad Thomas Johnston

Page B11

>>> Zooeey Deschanel

Zooeey Deschanel is famous for her film work and her music. But maybe she’s now found her real home on Fox’s new hit series “New Girl.”

Page B12

>>> Fantasy Football

Check out page 5 in the sports section for a debate between the photo editor and the A&E editor about this week in Fantasy Football.

Page B5

>>> Sonic the Hedgehog 2

In this week’s “Great Video Game” section, we’ve got a new look at an old classic: Sonic the Hedgehog 2

Page B10

>>> Unplugged

Emilly Martinez thinks that maybe it’s time for music aficionados to take out the headphones and socialize once in a while.

Page B10

>>> Cal Thomas

We took the time to review “The Wit and Wisdom of Cal Thomas” as our book review of the day. Is it worth reading? Check out our review and find out.

Page B12



By JESSICA FOREMAN
REPORTER

Freshman year is often called the year of firsts. First welcome week, first day of college. First time to live in a dorm room, first \$500+ textbook purchase. First Baylor “sic ‘em” at the first Baylor football game, and the first time to do laundry for some.

What if it was the first year to get signed with a record label and start recording music in a studio?

For Amy Boykin, currently a Baylor sophomore social work major from Loveland, Ohio, that was her most notable freshman first.

When Boykin strolled into her audition last spring for Uproar Records, Baylor’s on-campus student-run-record label, she calmed her nerves, took her place in front of the piano and belted out one of her favorite songs, “New Shoes.”

“She had genuine raw talent,” said Ryan Anderson, president of Uproar Records. Tomball senior Anderson is a senior marketing and media business and has been president since April. “I remember seeing her as a breath of fresh air.”

A breath of fresh air is a good way to describe Boykin as she walked into the Lariat interview wearing bright pink glasses, a Mumford & Sons T-Shirt and a big smile plastered on her face.

She began playing piano in kindergarten and her grandfather’s vintage Gibson ‘64 in eighth grade after it was discovered in a dusty attic. Boykin said she began writing songs as early as seventh grade.

“I used to have insomnia,” Boykin said. “I would stay up and write music all night. It’s one of the best ways I express myself.”

Boykin, who compares her sound to Regina Spektor and Sara Bareilles, first performed in front of her church community in ninth grade during coffee night. She later sang at Line Camp for Baylor after the scheduled performer of the evening broke a guitar string. After impressing audience members and receiving encouragement, one thing led to another and Boykin found herself auditioning for Uproar Records.

“I get extremely nervous for auditions,” Boykin said. “Hate auditions, love performances. I made it, which blew my mind.”



COURTESY PHOTO

O, Loveland is a folk duo recently signed to Uproar Records consisting of Amy Boykin and Clark Jones. Boykin, who is Uproar Records’ only returning artist this year, is joined by Jones, who transferred to Baylor this year from Wheaton College in Chicago, Ill.

Since signing with Uproar, Boykin has performed several shows, written and released new music, some of which can be found on the Uproar’s annual composition album released this past April, and has plans to produce a music video in the spring.

“This [experience] enabled me as a freshman to be immersed in a community of musicians that I was hoping to find at Baylor,” Boykin said. “It’s been inspiring because of how much talent there is here. It also enabled me to become more aggressive and get active with my thinking.”

Part of that active mindset is highlighted in her initiative to start new band O, Loveland with Dallas junior, Clark Jones, that incorporates several different instruments including the ukulele, harmonica, tambourine, and mandolin.

“We say it’s stomping, dancing folk music,” Boykin said.

Boykin joked that she is also able to play the glockenspiel (an obscure percussion instrument), and Jones quickly chimed into correct her.

“You don’t play that,” Jones said before adding an important qualifier: “Not yet.”

Uproar Records released the five names of the new artists signed on for the upcoming year earlier this week, including Layne Lynch, Trannie Stevens, Holly Tucker and a band that has yet to be named consisting of Cameron Butcher, Byron Roldan, and brothers Jacob and Michael Agnew.

The duo of O, Loveland is the fifth new artist signed with Uproar Records this year. They are considered new artists because of the presence of Jones, despite the fact

that Boykin participated last year.

Jones is not just new to Uproar Records, but to Baylor as a whole. Despite meeting Boykin in Dallas, the concept for O, Loveland developed while Jones was a student at Wheaton College in Chicago. This year, because he has transferred to Baylor, the duo successfully auditioned for Uproar Records together.

“Clark and I have been writing new music, which we are excited to start playing,” Boykin said. “The calendar is filling up with quite many shows and so there is a lot of preparation for that as we would ideally love to start including some of our good friends — who play various wonderful instruments — in our shows.”

O, Loveland played a show two weeks ago at Common Grounds with singer/songwriter Ben Rector.

“The show two weeks ago was incredible,” Boykin said. “So much energy. Most of the crowd had never heard our music before, but were so engaged in our set and enthusiastic about it, which makes the show so much better. It was packed. Clark and I really enjoyed meeting new people, that’s a big part of why we love doing what we do.”

Boykin said O, Loveland recently set up a YouTube account that will stay updated, as well as Twitter and Facebook pages.

Boykin’s advice to those looking to break into the music industry?

“Just be yourself. The second you lose yourself is the second you lose the art. Because music is such a personal thing, you have to be faithful to that and self aware.”

Joshua Madden also contributed to this article.

‘Drive’ is a wild ride through film world

By JOSHUA MADDEN
A&E EDITOR



One of my friends joked once that — and I’m paraphrasing here because of his language — that Ryan Gosling only makes terrible films or excellent films.

“Drive” certainly didn’t disprove that theory, but luckily that’s because “Drive” is one of the excellent films.

In Thursday’s issue of the Lariat, we reviewed the book that “Drive” is based off of and I’m happy to report that the film lived up to my expectations.

Much like the book, the film follows a protagonist (in the book he’s named Driver, but in the film he’s not named at all) who works as a Hollywood stunt driver as well as a criminal getaway driver.

The film opens up with one of the most intense heist scenes in recent cinematic history and, in many ways it rivals the quality of the bank robbery in “The Dark Knight,” which is undoubtedly

the new standard in terms of heist openers for films.

It won’t take you long watching “Drive” to realize that Ryan Gosling doesn’t have a lot of lines in the film, but that doesn’t mean he’s not required to act.

In fact, it’s the opposite. Gosling had better get some kind of nomination for his performance here. He somehow comes across as likable without ever saying much of anything.

Gosling creates a character without ever outright stating that character’s feelings. It is a true achievement in terms of his acting ability that he is able to say everything his character needs to say while staying silent.

Gosling, however, is always a terrific actor, even in movies that sometimes don’t meet up to the quality of his performance — like the disconnect between his Academy Award-nominated performance and the actual film in the case of “Half-Nelson.”

Because it is essentially assumed that Gosling will deliver a quality performance, the real surprise treat of the film might be the

performance from Albert Brooks, who is already receiving some buzz as a possible supporting actor nominee at this year’s Academy Awards.

Brooks plays the mysterious Bernie Rose, a gangster with motivations that are always hidden, which makes him an incredibly fascinating character to watch on screen. You never know exactly what Rose is going to do and somehow Brooks brings that sense of mystery to life.

While I loved the film primarily because of the power of the acting, make sure you don’t go see “Drive” unless you’re willing to put up with some graphic violence. Director Nicolas Winding Refn makes no effort to soften the violence of the film and while I felt that this gave the film emotional heft, others might struggle with it.

I would recommend “Drive,” but only if you’re sure you’re ready for it.

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Sonic the Hedgehog 2: Spark of Genius

By LINCOLN FAULKNER
CONTRIBUTOR

Probably one of the most eccentric video game icons, Sonic hasn't stopped racing through our consoles for 20 years.

Featured in more than 65 games, this spiky blue rodent capable of lightning-fast speed and boasting a rebellious attitude has grown immensely over the years since his debut as a toy hanging in the rear-view mirror of the arcade racing game "Rad Mobile."

However, "Sonic the Hedgehog 2" remains one of my favorite titles with its timeless adrenaline pumping, fast paced side scrolling mayhem.

The game premiered in 1992 as the second 16-bit installment of the Sega produced series on the Sega Mega Drive/Genesis one year after its predecessor.

The plot is similar to titles before and after it. The maniacal scientist Dr. Robotnik, sometimes referred to as "Eggman" for his egg-like proportions, has imprisoned the cute and fuzzy inhabitants of Sonic's island in worker drones and has forced them to search for the Chaos Emeralds in order to power his monstrous starship, the Death Egg, which looks like a parody of the Death Star.

Determined to save his animal friends, Sonic sets off on his high-speed quest accompanied by his mutant, two-tailed fox friend Miles "Tails" Prower to free the island and save the world.

One important feature to the game was the series' first two-player mode, in which a second player could control tails to help Sonic progress through levels.

The gameplay offers the player several challenging stages, each two to three acts long. Even though much of the detail of the levels goes by in a dizzying blur, the scenery is detailed and colorful.

Throughout the courses Sonic and Tails must crush enemy robots to free their friends inside by jumping on them or using their Spin Dash moves, all while collecting golden rings along the way.

The rings serve two purposes in the game. The first is to save Sonic's life should he fall victim to a trap of spikes, be crushed by blocks of land, or get in the way of a robot.

The second purpose, and possibly the best feature of the game, is to grant the player access to the Special Zones.

After collecting 50 rings, once a player reaches a checkpoint post, a ring of stars appear above that Sonic can jump through. This ring teleports him to a never ending funnel where the player must collect a certain number of rings indicated at the begin of the stage, while avoiding bombs that cause Sonic to loose his rings.

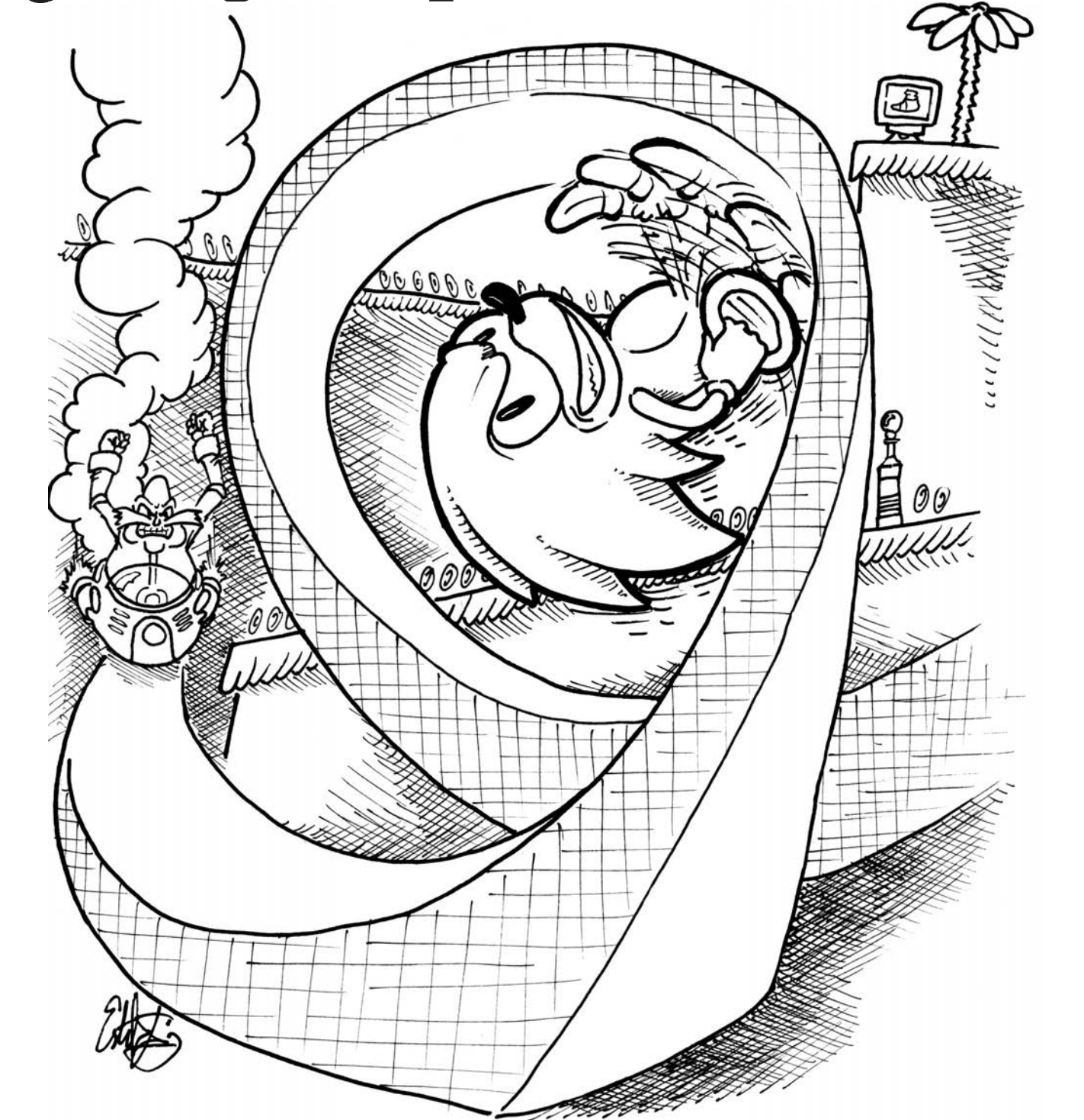
If the player is successful, Sonic will earn one of the seven Chaos Emeralds. When all seven emeralds are obtained, Sonic can transform into Super Sonic after collecting 50 rings, turning him into a golden version of himself that can fly at higher speeds and is invincible to most forms of damage.

This particular challenge is what kept me coming back for more even after I had defeated the game many times. For me, it was the highest form of glory in the game. In fact, the quest for Super Sonic fueled an obsession to consume many other titles after this one.

At the time, the game saved Sega's prominence in the gaming industry by producing a viable competitor to Nintendo's mascot Mario, and brought SEGA's market share up fifty percent during the first six months of its release.

Since then, the series has spawned a gamut of merchandise, including comic books, toys, apparel and four animated TV series.

The hours of gameplay I devoted to this classic, beating it over and over again, makes it one of my most treasured pieces of entertainment history. Although it has been sad to watch Sonic stumble through many less enjoyable titles, he is one of the most marketed videogame characters, rivaling Mario, Link, and Donkey Kong, allowing his legacy to continue through multiple generations.



Editor's Note: This article is part of our ongoing series on "Great Video Games." If you are interested in submitting a piece on a video game you consider great, please email us at lariat@baylor.edu.

Time for students to unplug

By EMILLY MARTINEZ
COPY EDITOR

There is nothing more awkward than calling out someone's name in public only for him or her to fail to acknowledge your existence.

It seems this happens most often when someone has headphones in and is listening to music while walking across campus.

Why is it that students feel compelled to listen to music while walking from class to class or riding their bikes home? Wearing headphones says, hey, I don't want to talk to you. Please go away now.

COMMENTARY

Sure listening to music while in transit can make people feel like they have their own personal soundtracks, but it seems antisocial and keeps them from being in the moment.

When walking around campus or riding my bike I enjoy seeing my friends, starting up conversations and just soaking up my surroundings. Whenever I'm plugged in, I tend to tune everything else out.

Without music, life would be dull. I am all for discovering music

and believe that it can bring friends together under most circumstances.

While any other time I would be offering up new music suggestions, now I am suggesting students unplug themselves from their iPods and just enjoy their journeys.

However, if you simply can't stand the thought of a music-less walk, try listening to Local Natives when the temperature is mild and there is a breeze – they were my 2010 ACL find and for whatever reason they remind me of nice weather and pleasant times.

FUN TIMES

Across

- 1 Dollar bill weight, roughly
- 5 Dey job?
- 10 __ Stream
- 14 San __
- 15 Silly
- 16 Adidas alternative
- 17 From the top
- 18 Blanche __, pseudonymous author of the 1983 best-seller "Truly Tasteless Jokes"
- 19 "No ice, please"
- 20 questions
- 23 Terhune collie
- 24 Annual sign of bad behavior?
- 25 "Alice" singer Lavigne
- 28 Orator's vocal quality
- 33 Sacramento daily
- 34 Sched. B item on a 1040
- 35 High point of an Alaskan trip?
- 36 hours
- 40 Seven-time N.L. batting champ
- 41 Storm dir.
- 42 They lead to an F
- 43 Six-pack abs?
- 45 Seat of Colorado's Pitkin County
- 47 TriBeCa neighbor
- 48 Blueprint subject, perhaps
- 49 ers
- 57 Frankfurt's river
- 58 Phils, e.g.
- 59 Deception
- 60 '70s pinup name
- 61 Beneficiary
- 62 Its state bird is the cardinal
- 63 2-Down unit
- 64 Fixes
- 65 Place to cross, on signs


Down

- 1 Seles rival
- 2 Eye care brand
- 3 Flock response


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- 5 Dug, so to speak
- 6 Heart lead singer Wilson et al.
- 7 Where kip are spent
- 8 Silliness
- 9 Party pooper
- 10 Underworld
- 11 Where the iris is
- 12 Neeson who voiced Aslan in the "Narnia" movies
- 13 You may have a brush with it
- 21 It merged with Continental in 2010: Abbr.
- 22 Swindler, in slang
- 25 Trinity test subject
- 26 Locale
- 27 Maker of pieces?
- 28 Genetic letters
- 29 One of the convicted Rosenberg spies
- 30 Image Awards org.
- 31 1930s public enemy
- 32 NFL Network sportscaster Rich
- 34 Devil's tools, metaphorically
- 37 Touchdown site
- 38 Big shot
- 39 More than zero
- 44 Walk bouncily
- 45 Modeled after
- 46 Sneaky devil
- 48 "It's nobody __ business"
- 49 Go out
- 50 Nose wrinkler
- 51 Sommelier's prefix
- 52 Singer Horne
- 53 Hunted
- 54 Pre-coll. catchall
- 55 Shower in public?
- 56 Urban miasma



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Q&A: ‘Kaleidoscope’ author looks at life

By JOSHUA MADDEN
A&E EDITOR

Chad Thomas Johnston is, in many ways, a renaissance man. There aren't too many forms of art that Johnston hasn't worked with and I was able to interview him and discuss his books and other works of art.

Question: You seem to dabble in just about everything - literature, music, physical art, Web development even. For those who aren't familiar with your work, how would you describe it?

Johnston: I take the kitchen sink approach to creativity because I am interested in all of those forms you mentioned, and probably more as well. In the end, I'm not very good at leaving any creative stones unturned. I am like a kid who cannot help but pick up his mom's lipstick and draw a picture of a stegosaurus on the living room wall.

In terms of descriptors, my work tends to be whimsical, weird, ecstatic and all-encompassing. I like the post-modern notion of pulling disparate elements from a variety of sources and synchronizing them and make them part of the same thing. That pretty much informs my approach to any project I undertake. No ingredient is too ridiculous to be incorporated into my work.

I primarily create early in the morning around 5 a.m., and the only problem with that is sometimes I get so excited about my projects that I end up waking up even earlier than that, which is absurd. But since I have a day job, a wife and a baby on the way, it's the only way for me to find time for creativity.

My daily creative pursuits usually include a mix of blogging, tweeting, doodling, adding to or revising a manuscript, planning publicity for my projects, mixing music (I never record anything at 5 a.m. though, as my wife sleeps in and would flay me with a carrot peeler if I ever attempted any such

shenanigans), and good, old-fashioned brainstorming. I like a good brain tsunami.

Question: Your first book, “The Stained-Glass Kaleidoscope: Essays at Play in the Churchyard of the Mind,” is currently being marketed to publishing houses. What would you tell people about the book if you could tell them whatever you wanted?

Johnston: I would tell them to buy copies of my book for all of their naughty loved ones as Christmas stocking stuffers instead of lumps of coal. But since it's not in print yet, or even available as an eBook, it would be difficult for them to obey my command.

If I were going to describe the book to them, I would say “The Stained-Glass Kaleidoscope” is an essay-driven creative memoir that looks at life through a lens that has been shaped by equal parts pop culture, theology and Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder.

Question: How did you first get started on writing your book?

Johnston: I was working on a Ph.D. in film studies at the University of Kansas and, during my first and only year there, it occurred to me that, at most, a paltry five people would ever read my dissertation, and I would be spending years writing the blasted thing. It was either going to be about P. T. Anderson's “Magnolia” or Lars von Trier's “Dogville.” In the end, I figured if I wrote a book, I could almost certainly net six readers. And thus, I became a Ph.D. dropout.

Since completing my manuscript, which took me three years to write, I have achieved my goal. It may be that an astonishing seven people have read my book, although they may all regret doing so.

Question: How do you balance creating daily content on your website with more long-standing creations like your books?

Johnston: I can keep enough

plates spinning at once, but I'm far from a circus performer in that department. For example, I'm writing my second book with a collaborator - Amanda Lynch - who lives in Virginia.

We've been about 20,000 words deep into it for about four months now. We would be farther along, but I have so many other projects, and I have been really distracted by them. Really, I think I just needed a break from being imprisoned in my brain with only one project after writing “The Stained-Glass Kaleidoscope” for three straight years. I needed a vacation from epic things.

I needed a project I could start and finish within the span of a weekend, just for my sanity's sake. So it's been good to have smaller, less intimidating projects going - smaller plates spinning...I think it will be worth the wait for all seven people who are somewhat eagerly awaiting the follow-up to “The Stained-Glass Kaleidoscope.”

Now that you've got me thinking about it, I'm not that great at keeping a multitude of plates spinning. Balance is not really my forte. About half of my spinning plates end up on the ground, smashed to bits. I am probably fine china's worst nightmare.

Question: There's certainly a religious aspect to your works. How do you relate your religious beliefs to the process of creating art?

Johnston: I'm the son of a minister, and I grew up listening to a lot of wonderfully weird and now, sadly, out-of-print underground Christian records (these things actually exist). For a long time, I thought a book or a song or a piece of music was only sacred if it mentioned Jesus, God, or Moses. But my adult slant on that is very different. I became a Christian when I was 9, and I remain a Christian now. But I have come to see the creative act itself as something rooted in being made in the image of the creator.

I just find great joy and purpose

in creating, and it is rooted in that religious idea. God made the narwhal, and I see this as an invitation to make things that are likewise absurd, fascinating and marvelous. Whether I succeed or not I don't know, but I certainly try.

Question: You also bring an autobiographical element to the table in your writing. How do you balance figuring out what to share and what to keep private?

Johnston: For better or worse, I do think most of my cards are on the table. I only leave things out of my writing if I suspect they will hurt or embarrass other people who already have a predisposition for being hurt or embarrassed. I am fairly sensitive myself, but I'm not shy, so I tell whatever stories I can with a certain amount of discretion.

Occasionally I'll post a story from home and my wife will make me take it down, but she usually gets a kick out of what I write about our life together. At the moment, she's getting more kicks than usual out of our life together, as she's almost nine months pregnant, and our indwelling daughter has apparently decided that kicking her way out of my wife's stomach is a suitable exit strategy.

With regard to what information I share, if an experience can make someone laugh or find meaning in an otherwise seemingly meaningless situation, I am happy to share. Of course, whenever I write I assume people will be interested in whatever I'm writing about, which is ridiculous. But if seven people like my stories, maybe it's not as ridiculous as I think it is.

Question: You're already working on future books. Can you tell me about them?

Johnston: Well, I don't want to let the literary cat out of the bag, and I also don't want to tell people I'm writing something that I very well may abandon later. The project I am absolutely dedicated to right now with regard to long-term



COURTESY PHOTO
Chad Thomas Johnston describes himself as “an author, sonuva’ precha’ man, Ph.D.-dropout, singer/songwriter, music producer/sonic reducer, day-dreaming doodler, guerilla/gorilla publicist, cinemaddict and pop-culture obsessive.”

writing is my book with Amanda Lynch. It's a young adult supernatural fantasy book of sorts, and the central, defining quality of the book is whimsicality.

I should emphasize that it is not fantasy in the sense that J. R. R. Tolkien is. There are no dwarves in it, although Amanda is currently pregnant with her second boy, and right now he does happen to be very small. But I was reading a review of Werner Herzog's film “Bad Lieutenant: Port of Call - New Orleans,” and the writer described it as “deliriously unhinged.”

I think that phrase fits what Amanda and I are creating in our collaboration together, although that phrase means something very different with regard to our writing than it does when applied to a Werner Herzog film. There is, after all, only one Werner Herzog. The

spirits of Dr. Seuss and Madeleine L'Engle are definitely in what we're doing, too.

Question: Any other plans for the future?

Let's see ... I want to survive and even excel at fatherhood. Get “The Stained-Glass Kaleidoscope” published and get it in the hands of an eighth reader - I have faith in my agent on that front. Successfully avoid toxoplasmosis despite cleaning multiple litter pans on a daily basis for our five cats. Finish my book with Amanda Lynch. Continue to assault the world with asinine blog entries and terrifying tweets. I think that pretty much covers it.

For Johnston's full interview, including links to some of the works of his collaborators, check out the Lariat online at baylorlariat.com

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Cal Thomas’ ‘Wit and Wisdom’ needs more of both, more cats

By JOSHUA MADDEN
A&E EDITOR

Every now and then you stumble onto one of those things that almost seems like it has to be a joke. Something so ridiculous that you have to ask yourself how someone could possibly have taken it seriously.

“The Wit and Wisdom of Cal Thomas” is one such item, but, in fairness to Cal Thomas, it is meant to be a bit of a joke.

The cover of the book — which features the picture of Cal Thomas stroking his cat to the right of this article says pretty much everything about this book that anyone could possibly need to say.

My friend sent the book to me as a birthday gift and, after discussing it with me, we eventually agreed that this book had to be reviewed in the Lariat.

Part of the reason that reviewing the book is so interesting is because it came out in 2001, right near the end of the Clinton ad-

BOOK REVIEW

ministration and the beginning of George W. Bush’s tenure as president.

That actually, somewhat counter-intuitively, actually adds to the book instead of taking away from it. The book has aged surprisingly well and serves as an interesting look at a political arena that has changed very little over the course of the past decade.

The idea behind ‘The Wit and Wisdom of Cal Thomas’ is that his thoughts are so profound that they must be shared with everyone who is capable of reading them.

I speak partially in jest, of course, but the book does seriously describe Thomas as “a stubbornly independent thinker,” which strikes me as being pretty far from the truth, given that Thomas largely espouses textbook conservative talking points.

There’s a chapter on how great Ronald Reagan is that pretty much

takes out any credibility to the claim that Thomas is “stubbornly independent.” There is no courageous criticism of Reagan to be found here.

This book is likely not going to change anyone’s mind about any of their core beliefs — although I guess that is theoretically possible — but it certainly has the potential to re-enforce beliefs that one already holds.

Ultimately, however, the book isn’t quite as funny as it thinks it is. It has some shining moments — Thomas’ description of his cat in the acknowledgements is downright hilarious.

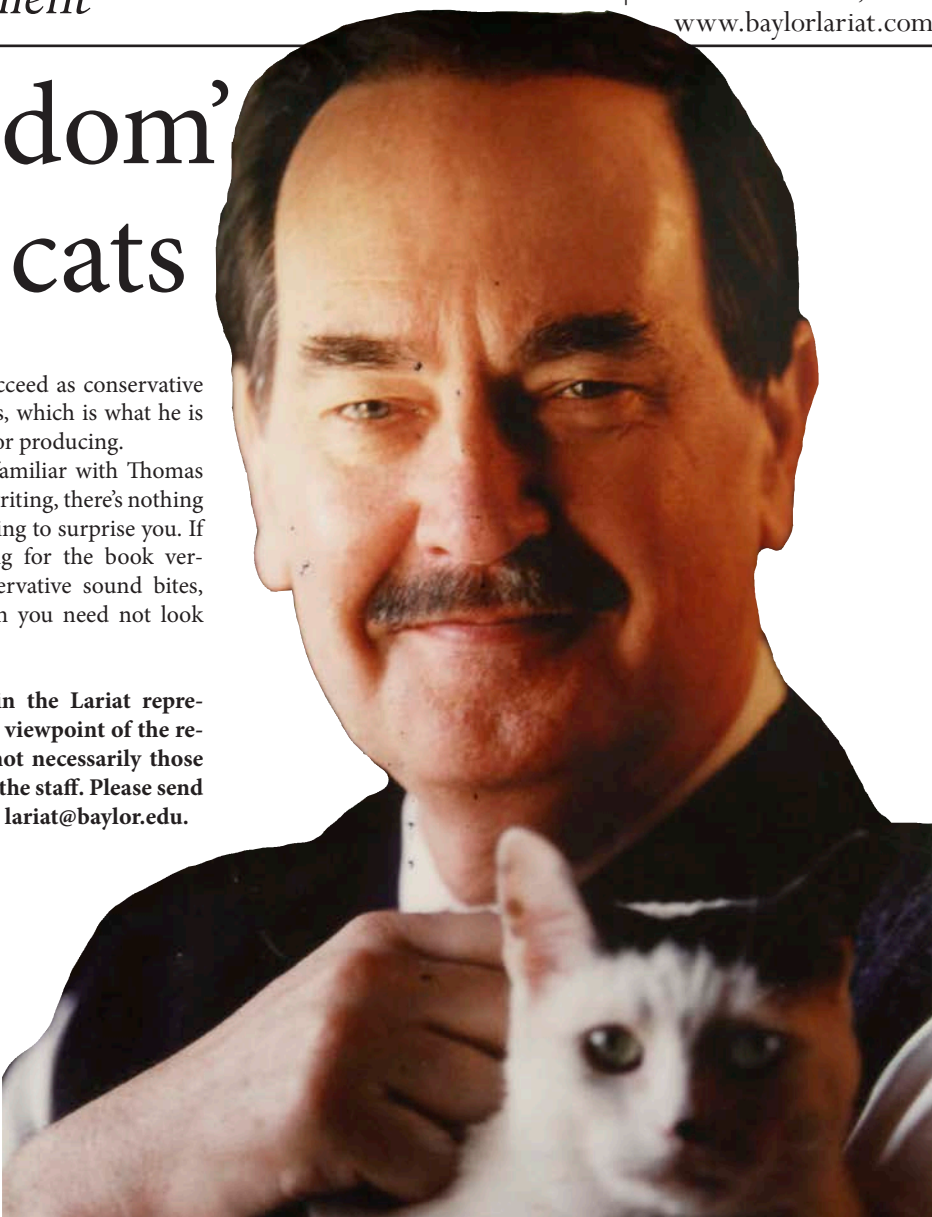
“Thanks to my cat, ‘Precious,’ also affectionately known as ‘The Wiener’ for the sleek body she had when young (too much food and love have turned her into a full-figured feline) for posing with me on the cover,” Thomas writes.

Sadly, however, that might be the funniest part of the book. Many of the other jokes fall flat, although, in Thomas’ defense, they

do largely succeed as conservative talking points, which is what he is best known for producing.

If you’re familiar with Thomas or his other writing, there’s nothing here that’s going to surprise you. If you’re looking for the book version of conservative sound bites, however, then you need not look further.

Reviews in the Lariat represent only the viewpoint of the reviewer and not necessarily those of the rest of the staff. Please send comments to lariat@baylor.edu.



Zooey Deschanel is ‘New Girl’ to Fox TV stardom

By KENDALL KAUT
CONTRIBUTOR

For years a hipster’s opinion has been easy to pass by without missing much. No one really cared about that concert for global warming and the fair trade movement’s lasting achievement will be Chipotle’s charge \$10 for a burrito.

Yet for years, hipsters have talked about Zooey Deschanel, a singer, actress and comedian. She is perhaps most famous for her work on “(500) Days of Summer,” “Our Idiot Brother” or possibly “Yes, Man.” On Tuesday night Fox

TVSHOWREVIEW

debuted “New Girl,” Deschanel’s new series, and hipsters were finally vindicated.

“New Girl” stars Deschanel as Jess Day, one of the craziest lead characters in television history. Jess begins the show returning early from work to see her boyfriend, who is seeing a lot of someone else.

Obviously Jess needs a new place to live, so she begins apartment hunting and decides to live with three men with different personalities. Coach (Damon

Wayans Jr.), an overbearing gym instructor, creates a nice foil to Jess’ laid-back attitude. The other roommates are Nick (Jake Johnson) an intelligent, voice of wisdom bartender and Schmidt (Max Greenfield) as a do-anything-to-get-ahead businessman.

The cast set-up for “New Girl” is brilliant. Deschanel clearly has the most talent and broadest appeal on the show. Deschanel is funny and has drawn a cult following from years of hipster love.

In shows like “How I Met Your Mother,” the primary goofy character is cast aside for a neutral lead. “New Girl” has taken the crazy idea

that if you have LeBron James on your team, you don’t make Chris Bosh the star.

Deschanel demonstrated her singing ability, highlighting that it is possible to have singing without having to be “Glee.”

The transition to the roommates could be an area of concern later in the season because some of the roommates, like Coach, seem to be too one-dimensional. But with Deschanel the focal point of the show, she should be able to compensate for any weaknesses in the other characters.

“New Girl” has a lot going for it that will make this show viable for

a while. “New Girl” follows “Glee” so it is likely to have a large lead in audience. Ratings released by Nielson from episode one showed 10 million people tuned in, 2 million more than watched “Glee.”

“New Girl” also finished No. 1 in its timeslot among young viewers — the people networks care about because of the ability to build brand loyalty and advertisers’ desire to win young viewers in a quick time.

Look, I may be a hipster and Zooey Deschanel may not actually be talented. All I can say is I had never heard of “Pumped up Kicks” until it had 2 million YouTube hits,

and am not eager to discuss fair trade with anyone so I do not just talk about things no one likes.

Fox though has given us a show we can all enjoy. A show that focuses on someone hipsters were right about, a show with great writing and something that has not sold out.

The age has finally happened where hipsters and regular people can enjoy the same thing.

Reviews in the Lariat represent only the viewpoint of the reviewer and not necessarily the rest of the staff. Please send comments to lariat@baylor.edu

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