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University of Rhode Island

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Baseball wins fifth straight in home opener

BY JONATHAN SHIDELER
Sports Staff Reporter

The University of Rhode Island baseball team (7-11) won its home opener 8-4 yesterday against SUNY-Stony Brook. The win marks the Rams’ fifth consecutive victory.

“It’s good to be home and to get a quality win versus a quality opponent,” Rhode Island coach Jim Foster said.

Last season Stony Brook finished the year 52-15; the Seawolves won the American East Conference in Washington, D.C. The conference, which will take place April 19-20, invites Haitian organizations from around the country to listen to keynote speakers and discuss their groups.

“For the future we’re looking to hold the gospel concert again next year,” SAAHP Vice President and treasurer Lynly Jean-Louis said. “We’re looking to explore different avenues through doing other shows and other conferences and reach out to other organizations and schools.”

In other news

The Senate approved a programming contingency grant of $5,200 for the Students for a Sensible Drug Policy (SSDP) to hold their Hemplest. Students are invited to attend Fifteenth Annual Haitian Student Conference in Washington, D.C. The conference, which will take place April 19-20, invites Haitian organizations from around the country to listen to keynote speakers and discuss their groups.

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Student group to host poetry slam champion

BY ALLISON FARRELLY
News Reporter

The recently established University of Rhode Island Slam Poetry Club is moving forward in its plans for events on campus by hosting a spoken word artist in April.

On Tuesday April 2, the Slam Poetry Club will be hosting California’s Rudy Francisco. The 30-year-old Francisco was the 2009 National Undergraduate Poetry Slam Champion. This isn’t the only championship under Francisco’s belt. The following year, Francisco went on to win the 2010 San Diego Grand Slam champion and, in the same year, the Individual World Poetry Slam championship. The event will be held in Edwards Auditorium at 8 p.m., with doors opening at 7:30 p.m. Admission will be $5 for students and $7 for the general public.

Slam Poetry Club president and junior Kevin Gemmell has been the leading force in organizing this event and is hoping for a larger turnout.

“We’re expecting about 100 people,” Gemmell said. “This event is going to be captivating. You can inspire others and inspire yourself [by attending].”

At the event, Slam Poetry Club members Ariel Russell, Monephia Nemhbool and Gemmell will present one of their original pieces for the audience and Francisco before Francisco himself hits the stage.

“I’m trying to think of words to describe this,” Gemmell said. “It’s going to be stimulating, relaxing and inspirational.”

Initially, Francisco posted an invitation on Facebook so that he could go to his fans’ colleges. After seeing this,
The Cigar gladly corrects all verifiable mistakes. To report a mistake please e-mail cigar@etal.uri.edu.

In the March 20, 2013 article "Students help out with multiple local organizations during alternative break" by Allison Farrelly, the company GRRILTech was incorrectly written as GIRLtech. Lash Dang was a co-coordinator of the alternative spring break and they worked with RI Food Bank and Keep Blackstone Valley Beautiful in addition to the non-profits listed.

The Welcome House is a homeless shelter that provides transitional housing or emergency shelter for those who are legitimately homeless. Lastly, Sarah Miller was listed as "now" being the faculty advisor, she has been the mentor for the last four years.

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The basic storyline is nothing new; prophecies in fantasy plots, especially ones with witches, have been done to death. The real thrill is in the details that update the famous world for the 21st century. The Oz land presented here is much more detailed than the one imagined for Dorothy Gale in 1939, and while plenty of it is done with (impressive) computer effects, the use of real sets and props whenever possible grounds the movie in its established reality. From a technical standpoint, between the special effects, costumes and art design, "Oz" is near perfect.

When it comes to the casting, things get a little uneven. All of the supporting players are great in their roles, notably Rachel Weisz as the evil witch Evanora and Michelle Williams as Glinda the good witch. Williams arguably has the tougher job, since she has to compete with Billie Burke's portrayal in the '39 movie. She acquits herself well, displaying both innate sweetness and wit as Glinda seen through Oz's shrewd attitude. For Weisz, given that her character is not in the original film, she is able to act free of expectation and provides a sense of seething menace.

This a slight heads up, as the next paragraph will have some spoilers, so if you want to go into the movie completely blind then you can skip to the end of this review. I'm thankful that Weisz was present on villain duty, as Mia Wasikowska (Theodora) is not able to convey the same evil presence. She is fine at first, where her wide-eyed persona fits Theodora's native nature very well, but once her character transforms into the Wicked Witch (yes, THAT Wicked Witch), her performance is less than convincing. Even without unfairly stacking her against Margaret Hamilton's iconic iteration of the character, Kunis is simply miscast for this part. She never quite finds the right tone in her voice to be a considerable threat, and the post-transformation makeup is less than great.

Meanwhile, James Franco, as the titular Oz, is the opposite of Kunis. Oz is meant to start out as a fake and a put-on, but Franco overplays the smarminess to a degree where it is hard to get into the character. Although as the movie and Oz's character are moves on, Franco settles into the role with his easy charm and humor. As good as he gets, he is often upstaged by the sidekick characters, who are perhaps the best part of the movie. They may not be as memorable as the Scarecrow, Tin Man, or Cowardly Lion, yet Zach Braff's flying monkey Finley is a consistently funny comic relief and Joe King's China Girl provides an emotional backbone to the grandly surreal visuals.

Speaking of flying monkeys, the evil ones make a return here, and will most likely terrify children even more so than before. They also signify another successful part of this prequel, which are the references to the classic.

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Rhody SPORTS

Living in the new Atlantic-10

BY MIKE ABELOIN
Sports Editor

Earlier this week it was formally announced that Xavier University and Butler University would be leaving the Atlantic-10 Conference and going to the new Big East Conference beginning next season. Compound that with the exit of Temple University to the America-12 conference, and the University of North Carolina-Charlotte heading to Conference-USA, and the Atlantic-10 will look drastically different in terms of geography and competitiveness.

Numerically, a 12-team league will work in terms of scheduling and tournament purposes, but the A-10 can’t replace the prestige that will officially leave in July. The brand-name recognition of Xavier, Butler, and Temple, to go with their strength athletically, is a huge blow to a league that has very little power in the world of realignment.

The league can either opt to grow as a 12-team league and build an identity as a strong eastern league. The lone team west of the Eastern Time Zone is St. Louis University and it has been linked to the Big East in the future.

A league built around Virginia, New England and the Mid-Atlantic is the best way to go long-term. For Rhode Island, more than half the league would be a manageable bus ride away and it would make recruiting more centralized. However, with SLU, and potentially the University of Dayton being linked to the Big East, it seems that the A-10 will have to look to add teams into the fold.

The first logical choice is George Mason University.

Based in suburban Washington, D.C., Mason is a natural fit as it would be easily able to build rivalries with Virginia Commonwealth University and George Washington.

Beyond that the挑ings are slim. Schools that have been thrown about in the Twitterverse are Davidson College and Siena College. Davidson will always be tied to Stephen Curry and the Wildcats’ magical 2008 run to the Elite Eight of the men’s basketball tournament, and it would expand the league’s footprint back into Charlotte market.

However, the school is incredibly small, with only 1,800 undergraduates. It would also be the only Presbyterian school in a league that, in its 12-team configuration, has seven Catholic institutions. From an athletics perspective, and in terms of market expansion, the Wildcats fit, but would Davidson fit “the mold” that the presidents of the league’s schools are interested in? I don’t know.

Siena, a Catholic school, would expand the league into the Buffalo market. The Saints, however, don’t have the selling power of Davidson or George Mason. The Saints had recent success, advancing to the Round of 32 in the men’s basketball tournament in 2008 and 2009 and becoming a national-tender in men’s lacrosse.

If SLU and Dayton leave, and I was the commissioner of the Atlantic-10, the first two phone calls I make are to George Mason and Davidson. Athletically they help keep the league where it is in the conference pecking and keeps the league’s geographic footprint intact.

The Red Sox prospect, 22, deserving of opening day nod over veterans

BY BRANDON MAXWELL
Sports Staff Reporter

Although he’s only 22 years old and has never played professional baseball past the Single-A level, Boston Red Sox prospect Jackie Bradley Jr. deserves a spot on the opening day roster.

For starters, Bradley is making the most out of his opportunity with the team throughout spring training. As of March 20, the 2012 Red Sox Minor League Defensive Player of the Year has had a stellar batting average of .439 with a homerun and five runs batted in. One could argue that spring training has little to no meaning toward the regular season, but he’s facing plenty of major league talent and performing far better than anyone expected.

Jacoby Ellsbury’s contract predicament plays a big role in this situation as well. I believe Ellsbury won’t be wearing a Red Sox uniform by the trade deadline, if not, the offseason. This could, in return, be a perfect time for Bradley to get some major league experience before he takes over the reins as the starting center fielder for the Sox.

On top of that, I just don’t see the Shane Victorino signing panning out. He’s nowhere near the all-star he was in Philadelphia anymore and if I was John Farrell, I’d keep him on a short leash if he begins playing as poorly as he did in the World Baseball Classic.

Another player Bradley could be relying on to make the opening day roster is David Ortiz. Although he is now beginning to make some sort of progress from his heel injury, there’s still a very real possibility he starts the season on the disabled list. If this happens, newly acquired Jonny Gomes could play designated hitter and Bradley could play left field until Ortiz is truly healthy and ready to return. I’d much rather see Bradley gain some experience and man the outfield during Big Papi’s rehab than Daniel Nava who has proven to be a very streaky hitter in his limited time with the club.

Overall, it is a delicate situation that the Red Sox have with Bradley. They could risk bringing him up too quickly, stunting his progression. In my opinion, the risk is definitely worth the possible gain. It is a waste to send Bradley down to the minors if the staff feels he is truly ready with extended time in the minors and Bradley has the ability to do the same.

As much as I’d love to see the 32nd top prospect entering 2013, according to mlb.com, join the Red Sox roster from the very beginning of the season, I don’t see it happening. Boston will probably put up with Victorino and Nava platooning in right field until an injury or a trade with one of the starting outfielders occurs making it a necessity to finally bring him up.

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