Athletics battle low attendance

MARCUS GRUWELL
Daily Egyptian

Despite small increases at basketball games, low attendance at university athletic games still remains an issue officials are aiming to fix.

Many students have cited not attending games for reasons ranging from tailgating experience to team performance. While there are organizations like the Dawg Pound, a $115 membership that gives members perks such as a T-shirt and reserved seating at games, the issue still persists.

Athletic Director Mario Moccia said he and his staff have tried to fix the low attendance issue by creating student events for games, such as rafting tickets and giving out prizes during halftime.

“We have events made for students, like family weekend and homecoming, which usually brings a lot of attendance but besides those games, students do not really attend any others,” he said.

Many low attendance sports events include football, baseball and volleyball. An average of more than 350 people attended volleyball home games in fall 2013. Other universities, such as Kansas State, have more than 2,000 attendees at volleyball home games.

Toward the end of the 2013 football season, an average of 5,700 people attended the last two SIU home games, with an average seasonal attendance of 8,554. North Dakota State, who the Salukis fell to 31-10 on Homecoming, had an average attendance of 18,622 for the season, while SIU defeated Northern Illinois 24-17 in overtime on its Homecoming, and the Panthers have an average seasonal attendance of 12,572.

Several students believe the attendance problem is because of the various team’s records. Ben Varga, a sophomore from the United States, where various racing series, held twice a year in the United States, where various universities race their vehicles in multiple competitions.

The races take place in Lincoln, Neb., in June and in Brooklyn, Mich., in May at the Michigan International Speedway.

Nick Twombly, Saluki Racing’s administrative captain, said the team’s best race was in June 2013 when the team placed 34th of 80 competitors.

Jeff Burdick, Saluki Racing’s lead powertrain engineer, said he is happy the team even finished last year, because half of the vehicles didn’t cross the finish line.

The team of nearly 25 students is also judged on business presentation, engineering presentation, design and management.

“It’s not just the car moving forward for what you’re being judged on,” he said. “Last year at Lincoln, we won the cost report. We had the best use of money of any car there. You can have a multimillion dollar car, that’s fine, and there are teams that have budgets that are in that price range, but is that really true to the spirit of the competition?”

Burdick said the Formula SAE race series has little restrictions compared to other competitions.

“The engine has to be less than 600 cubic centimeters and it has to breathe through a 20 millimeter restrictor.”

Burdick said when teams must build a new car each year if it was previously raced at a competition. He said you can always find someone working on the car year round, no matter the time of day.

“It is worked on over summer, breaks, midnights, mornings,” he said. “It is a very man-hour intensive project.”

Burdick said when compared to other universities, Saluki Racing’s funding is almost nonexistent. He said the team makes most of the parts used on the car, such as the wiring harness.

“It’s funny when budgeting decisions affect how we do things, like making [parts] ourselves instead of buying something,” he said. “When we went to competition, they thought we bought the wiring harness, but no, we made it ourselves. Other teams, they’ll buy the high end material, like you’d see on an actual race car, they won’t know how to put it together.”

Kanchan Mondal, Saluki Racing’s faculty adviser, said a decent car would cost roughly $20,000, and the team does not have that money.

Burdick said the team will hopefully pool in more money since it became a Registered Student Organization this year. It can receive funds from the SU’s design ROB’s budget and are searching for sponsors.

SIU provides the team with a carbon-drafting, which allows the team to build parts in house such as carbon brakes.

Burdick said Saluki Racing looks great on a resume and helps attract new students to the engineering program. The team’s vehicle was featured at the 2013 Chicago Auto Show, which greatly helped promote the team and university.

“Of the 64 freshmen mechanical engineering students, like fresh people coming in – 15 of them saw us at the [auto show] and came to SU,” Burdick said.

Twombly said while the team is small, most members are fairly involved compared to other universities.

“University of Illinois had a team of 100 guys and I think 35 of them went to the competition,” he said. “We had about 15 guys and nine of them went to competition.”

Rec Center hours extended

SARAH NIEBRUGGE
Daily Egyptian

Starting fall 2014, the Recreation Center will stay open an hour later on weekdays and potentially weekends.

The Recreation Center will be open until midnight Sunday through Thursday beginning in August. Currently, the facility is open until 11 p.m. on Sunday through Thursday, 10 p.m. on Friday and 8 p.m. on Saturday.

Troy Vaughn, director of recreational sports and services, said athletic administration is still discussing whether it would be beneficial to add an extra hour to Saturday.

Vaughn said there have been several requests for the Recreation Center to stay open late. He said there have been no requests to open earlier than 1 p.m. on Sunday.

“A lot of people are doing family stuff or church related things or whatever on Sunday morning, so there is no need to open up [earlier],” he said.

Vaughn said it is proposed the Recreation Center stay open later on Fridays and Saturdays, but no final decisions have been made. The proposed hours would keep the facility open until 9 or 10 p.m., depending on its budget.

“The first step in figuring out what you have to look at is budget and you have to understand that when we are fully staffed, we have five or six people working in the building at the same time,” he said. “You take that number times minimum wage and it’s $50 an hour just to run the building.”

The student pay does not include utility costs and other expenses needed to keep the facility functioning. Vaughn said. He said most student workers will be hired because of the recent 20 hour student worker cap proposal.

Saluki Racing prepares for events

LUKE NOZICKA
Daily Egyptian

In a garage at the base of the Engineering Building, Saluki Racing revs its vehicle’s engine and checks all last minute changes in preparation for a four-day racing series beginning May 14.

The team has won numerous awards in its three years competing in the Society of Automotive Engineers. Formula SAE racing series, and want to bring home several more this year.

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Burdick said the Formula SAE race series has little restrictions compared to other competitions.

“The engine has to be less than 600 cubic centimeters and it has to breathe through a 20 millimeter restrictor” he said. “It has to have four wheels and it has to go forward, and that’s basically it for performance requirements.”

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Please see ATTENDANCE · 3

Fall 2014 Recreation Center hours

Sunday - 1 p.m. through midnight
Monday through Thursday - 5:30 A.M. until midnight

Fall 2014 proposed Rec Center hours

Saturday - 8 a.m. through 9 or 10 p.m.

Please see REC · 3
Peering across the universe

Richard Peterson, a senior studying physics, waits to observe celestial bodies during a free public astronomy observation Sunday on the roof of Neckers Building. The open viewing, sponsored by the physics department, gave students and the public the opportunity to see Mars, Jupiter, Saturn and the moon all in the same night. The physics department will host several observations over the summer.

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breaking stories, daily essentials relevant everyday events.

DAILY EGYPTIAN OPINION POLL

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:
SALUKI ATHLETICS

Question: According to the February 27 opinion poll regarding what keeps students from attending athletic events, 42 percent replied they are unaware of when the games take place. What would be the best method to convey to the student body the times and dates of these events?

A - Social media blasts, via Twitter, Facebook, Instagram
B - Mass email reminders to SIU email accounts
C - Public reminders, i.e. sidewalk chalk or flyers
D - A printed calendar of games on the back of students IDs

Visit www.dailyegyptian.com to vote

Social Media blasts, via Twitter, Facebook, Instagram

A printed calendar of games on the back of student’s IDs

Mass email reminders to SIU email accounts

Public reminders, i.e. sidewalk chalk or flyers

61%
5%
16%
18%

*Results recorded on 05/02/2014 at 4:00PM

THIS IS NOT A SCIENTIFIC POLL
IT REFLECTS ONLY THE OPINIONS OF THOSE INTERNET USERS WHO HAVE CHOSEN TO PARTICIPATE.
THE RESULTS CANNOT BE ASSUMED TO REPRESENT THE OPINIONS OF INTERNET USERS IN GENERAL NOR THE PUBLIC AS A WHOLE.
MARK SHERMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A narrowly divided Supreme Court upheld decidedly Christian prayers at the start of local council meetings on Monday, declaring them in line with long national traditions though the country has grown more religiously diverse.

The content of the prayers is not significant as long as they do not denigrate non-Christians or try to win converts, the court said in a 5-4 decision backed by its conservative majority.

Though the decision split the court along ideological lines, the Obama administration backed the winning side, the town of Greece, N.Y., outside of Rochester.

The outcome relied heavily on a 1983 decision in which the court upheld an opening prayer in the Nebraska Legislature and said prayer is part of the nation's fabric, not a violation of the First Amendment's guarantee of freedom of religion.

Writing for the court on Monday, Justice Anthony Kennedy said that forcing clergy to scrub the prayers of references to Jesus Christ and other sectarian religious figures would turn officials into censors. Instead, Kennedy said, the prayers should be seen as ceremonial and in keeping with the national traditions.

“Th e inclusion of a brief, ceremonial prayer as part of a larger exercise in civic recognition suggests that its purpose and effect are to acknowledge religious leaders and the institutions they represent, rather than to exclude or coerce nonbelievers,” Kennedy said.

Justice Elena Kagan, writing for the court’s four liberal justices, said, “I respectfully dissent from the court’s opinion because I think the Town of Greece’s prayer practices violate that norm of religious equality — the breathtakingly generous constitutional idea that our public institutions belong no less to the Buddhist or Hindu than to the Methodist or Episcopalian.”

REc

continued from 1

Sam Schneider, a senior from Pinckneyville studying human nutrition and dentistry, works at the Recreational Center as a group fitness leader.

Schneider was unaware of the changing hours at the facility, but was happily surprised and said it should not affect her or any of her co-workers.

“For work I probably wouldn’t use the extra time,” she said. “But if I needed to come into the rec to finish a workout or do anything, I think it would be very convenient.”

The Recreation Center is the second-highest employer on campus. It is currently going through a “hiring thing” and looking through over 500 applications, Vaughn said.

“We are very proud of the fact that we are very religiously diverse,” he said. “Especially if I don’t have class the next day.”

Bauer said students will have the option to take part in a healthful way to spend their time on weekends by keeping the Recreation Center open later.

“Just our hope that being open an additional hour will bring more students over. We are a very healthy alternative to going downtown to the bar and hanging out and doing something that’s not as healthy,” he said.

Immanuel sports, which start later in the evening, will also have more time to be active if the facility is open later, Vaughn said. He said the proposed hours will benefit students who use it for studying, working out and for a variety of other activities.

“We want to do what’s in the best convenience factor for our students and our members as well, so we are cognizant to that and we feel that in giving that extra hour will be beneficial for folks,” he said.

Andrew Bauer, a sophomore from Springfield studying civil engineering, said he frequently visits the Recreation Center.

“I usually try to make it at least four times a week to the Rec, but it’s been a while due to finals week,” Bauer said.

Bauer said he normally works out in the early evening, but likes having the option of having a late night workout.

“The idea that our public institutions belong no less to the Buddhist or Hindu than to the Methodist or Episcopalian.”

President Randy J. Dunn, Southern Illinois University and his wife, Dr. Ronda Dunn

Tuesday, May 6, 2014
3 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Old Main Mall
(front of Shryock)

Refreshments will be served and personal time is not required to attend the reception.

Please join Chancellor Rita Cheng for a welcome reception for

President Randy J. Dunn, Southern Illinois University and his wife, Dr. Ronda Dunn

Southern Illinois University
Polio now a world health emergency

MARIA CHENG
AP Medical Writer

LONDON — For the first time ever, the World Health Organization on Monday declared the spread of polio an international public health emergency that could grow in the next few months and unravel the nearly three-decade effort to eradicate the crippling disease.

The agency described current polio outbreaks across at least 10 countries in Asia, Africa and the Middle East as an “extraordinary event” that required a coordinated international response. It identified Pakistan, Syria and Cameroon as having allowed the virus to spread beyond their borders, and recommended that those three governments require citizens to obtain a certificate proving they have been vaccinated for polio before traveling abroad.

“Until it is eradicated, polio will continue to spread internationally, find and paralyze susceptible kids,” Dr. Bruce Aylward, who leads WHO’s polio eradication effort, said during a press briefing.

Critics, however, questioned whether Monday’s announcement would make much of a difference, given the limits faced by governments to contain the virus. It is happening “independently of who is in power,” said Dr. Donald A. Henderson, who led the WHO’s initiative to get rid of smallpox, the only human disease ever to have been eradicated.

Henderson said the WHO has never before issued an international alert on polio, a disease that usually strikes children under 5 and is most often spread through infected water. There is no specific cure, but several vaccines exist.

Experts are particularly concerned that polio is re-emerging in countries previously free of the disease, such as Syria, Somalia and Iraq, where civil war or unrest now complicates efforts to contain the virus. It is happening during the traditionally low season for the spread of polio, leaving experts worried that cases could spike as the weather becomes warmer and wetter in the coming months across the northern hemisphere.

The vast majority of new cases are in Pakistan, a country which an independent monitoring board set up by the WHO has called “a powder keg that could ignite widespread polio transmission.”

Dozens of polio workers have been killed over the last two years in Pakistan, where militants accuse them of spying for the U.S. government. Those suspicions stem at least partly from the disclosure that the CIA used a Pakistani doctor to uncover Osama bin Laden’s hideout by trying to get blood samples from his family under the guise of a hepatitis vaccination program.

On Monday, the al-Qaeda leader in May 2011 in the Pakistani garrison town of Abbottabad.

At the end of last month, there were 68 confirmed polio cases worldwide, compared with just 24 at the same time last year. In 2013, polio reappeared in Syria, sparking fears the civil war there could ignite a wider outbreak as refugees flock to other countries across the region.

The virus has also been identified in the sewage system in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza, although no cases have been spotted.

In February, the WHO found that polio had also returned to Iraq, where it spread from neighboring Syria. It is also circulating in Afghanistan (where it spread from Pakistan) and Equatorial Guinea (from neighboring Cameroon) as well as Nigeria, Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya.

Officials also worry countries torn by conflict, such as Ukraine, Sudan and the Central African Republic, are ripe for polio reinfeciton.

Some critics say it may even be time to accept that polio may not be eradicated, since the deadline to wipe out the disease has already been missed several times. The ongoing effort costs about $1 billion a year.

“For the past two years, problems have steadily, and now rapidly, mounted,” Henderson said in an email. “It is becoming apparent that there are too many problems (for the polio eradication effort) to overcome, however many resources are assigned.”
Submissions
Letters and guest columns must be submitted with author’s contact information, preferably via email. Phone numbers are required to verify authorship, but will not be published. Letters are limited to 400 words and columns to 500 words. Students must include year and major. Faculty must include rank and department. Others include hometown.

Submissions should be sent to opinion@dailyEgyptian.com.

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Our Word is the consensus of the Daily Egyptian Editorial Board on local, national and global issues affecting the Southern Illinois University community. Viewpoints expressed in columns and letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect those of the Daily Egyptian.

Guest Column
Vaccinations vital to public health

DRAKE HALL
Senior Journalism Student

Recently, the small-but-vocal anti-vaccine movement has been linked to small-scale outbreaks of preventable diseases across the country. Most media outlets have done the appropriate thing and reported on the movement using science to point out the dangers of opting out of childhood vaccinations.

ABC, however, has made itself complicit in the dangerous anti-vaccine movement by giving a platform to its leader, Jenny McCarthy.

Opting out of vaccinations is dangerous. Just over a week ago, California health officials reported the largest measles outbreak in decades. More than 20 people have contracted the illness and so far seven have been hospitalized.

This outbreak and others across the country have been attributed to people who have forgone vaccinations.

Skipping vaccinations isn’t just dangerous for those who opt out. Many children who can’t be vaccinated because of compromised immune systems depend on those around them being vaccinated to keep dangerous diseases at bay. It’s these children — and adults — who have the most to lose when outbreaks occur.

While the California outbreak might seem inconsequential, diseases can spread quickly when people aren’t vaccinated. One only needs to look at Syria, where civil war has disrupted the vaccinations of millions of children, for evidence. Polio, one of the most debilitating diseases in history, has made a swift comeback with 25 confirmed cases and more than 100 presumed cases in children who missed their vaccinations.

While vaccinations have been around for more than a century, the modern vaccination regimen only began in the 1960s and ’70s. Over the past several decades, vaccines have reduced the number of infections of several diseases exponentially. Smallpox, a disease that used to wipe out entire populations, has been completely eradicated. The last case was in Somalia in the 1970s. Polio, measles and pertussis, or whooping cough, have been nearly eliminated thanks to vaccines.

Why, with all of the overwhelming evidence in favor of vaccines, would anyone object to vaccinating their children?

The modern anti-vaccine movement can be traced back to the turn of the century when a now-discredited scientific study out of England started garnering attention. That study, headed by Dr. Andrew Wakefield, linked autism in 12 children to vaccines they had received as babies. It turns out the study was deeply flawed and Wakefield actually had a financial stake in a newly developed alternative to the traditional vaccines that the study found faulty.

Despite the fact that Wakefield’s results have never been replicated and his study was fraudulent, people all over the globe developed a fear of vaccines. Jenny McCarthy, whose son was diagnosed with autism, though McCarthy now admits he is, in fact not autistic, joined the anti-vaccine movement and has been one of its most visible and vocal mouthpieces ever since.

McCarthy, who briefly studied nursing at SIU, has a long list of accomplishments, which include being PlayBoy’s Playmate of the Year in 1994, hosting the MTV dating series “Singled Out,” numerous film and television roles and writing books on parenting. None of these accomplishments, however impressive, qualify her to make judgments about the safety of vaccines.

Last fall though, ABC, one of the nation’s leading media outlets, did something to make her seem a little more legitimate than the average actress/playmate/comedian. It gave her a co-host position on their popular daytime talk show “The View.”

Because of “The View’s” time slot and its subject matter, it is arguable that many of its roughly 3 million viewers are parents with small children. When these viewers see Jenny McCarthy discussing current events with Barbara Walters, the show’s executive producer and lead co-host, and one of the most recognizable broadcast journalists of the past few decades, they’re being persuaded that her insights are qualified. They’re not.

Views like McCarthy’s are dangerous. By giving her a platform next to a respected journalist, ABC is legitimizing everything she says regardless of its accuracy. It is lending its credibility to a public health menace and boosting her visibility. Unless ABC wants a hand in the resurgence of some of America’s forgotten diseases, it should part ways with McCarthy.

About Us
The Daily Egyptian is published by the students of Southern Illinois University Carbondale 50 weeks per year, with an average daily circulation of 15,000. Fall and spring semester editions run Monday through Thursday. Summer editions run Tuesday through Thursday. All intersession editions run on Wednesdays. Free copies are distributed in the Carbondale and Carterville communities. The Daily Egyptian online publication can be found at www.dailyEgyptian.com.

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The Daily Egyptian, the student-run newspaper of Southern Illinois University Carbondale, is committed to being a trusted source of news, information, commentary and public discourse, while helping readers understand the issues affecting their lives.

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Preview of the summer in music

\[ \text{Matisyahu, change and growth are currently set in place, and features out the political and social system...} \]

\[ \text{The Roots in the late '80s, they...} \]

\[ \text{Some tracks are quiet and calm and...} \]

\[ \text{The Black Keys...} \]

\[ \text{The Grim Reaper. Unexpected...} \]

\[ \text{He's versatile musician has come a...} \]

\[ \text{The second half of the season wraps...} \]

\[ \text{On that note, there is very little...} \]

\[ \text{It's rare that...} \]

\[ \text{It's even rarer when he can...} \]

\[ \text{Matisyahu...} \]

\[ \text{Roots' new album, "...And...} \]

\[ \text{The Roots...} \]

\[ \text{The band has been making use of...} \]

\[ \text{The former "Morning Joe" creator is...} \]

\[ \text{The Good Wife,"...} \]

\[ \text{So why is he the king of...} \]

\[ \text{Now if only the Angel...} \]

\[ \text{Executives save the drama for their...} \]

\[ \text{In December, I applauded some...} \]

\[ \text{A music video for "Palace," the...} \]
Ten fresh vaulters bring better outlook

SYMONE WOOLRIDGE
Daily Egyptian

The SIU pole vault team has incorporated 10 first-year vaulters with less than a handful of upperclassmen into next season's group of 13.

This is the largest number of new members in years.

By meshing new college athletes with more experienced ones, the vaulters have built competition amongst themselves.

The silent rivals yet dynamic group of vaulters have become great competitors. Freshman Chad Weaver said his teammates make weight lifting and certain drills in practice into competitions.

"With this many vaulters, only a selected few of us get to go if it's an invitation meet," he said. "So it's about challenging the upperclassmen to push themselves."

The enjoyable competition lies within the men's team more than the women's, which is more of a mental contest. Although the men can be aggressive, they still act as a team and assist each other as much as possible.

Weaver said older vaulters such as senior Alex Lietz, the only upperclassman on the men's team, has helped him on the track. Weaver has shown progression and is now a freshman to look out for.

In high school he was a two-time indoor, 2-A state champion in the pole vault. This year, he has won two competitions and jumps. Coach Brian Porter said he progresses every week.

"What I like about Chad is that he is never satisfied," Porter said. "That's one thing I look for in a coach—even if they've reached their personal best, they still look for what's next."

Junior Caselyn Harding and Alexandria Milton are the oldest women on the pole vault team.

Last season Harding competed in the pole vault five times indoors and five times outdoors. As a freshman Harding recorded five top-three finishes and two runner-up finishes during her outdoor season.

Harding said the number of freshmen this year has completely changed the vault team. Although this season the team is utterly different than the last, the fresheners have forced the upperclassmen to push harder to secure their spots.

"This year was really different, but it has made us more of a team because we all have to adapt to how we practice and how we compete," Harding said. "But having so many people helps us strive to try to get better and compete harder."

Porter said the difference in competing most experienced athletes than newcomers can be different yet similar.

"I want to feed off of what athletes are doing and make them better from there," he said. "My thing is if it's not broke don't fix it. If they're jumping well then you have to think they're jumping well for a reason."

Freshman Cara Engel came to SIU with a personal best of 10-6. In the few meets she has competed in, she has already progressed into jumping 12 feet. Engel did not start competing in track and field until her junior year of high school, but she now hopes to do great things at SIU.

Engel said it's nice working with the upperclassmen because they offer guidance if Porter isn't around.

"In meets, the girls really build off of each other because we're all pretty much around the same [jumping] height," Engel said. "Although we all want to win on our own, we're still a team and we still push each other to win."

Next season the pole vaulters are expecting two talented novices.

Illinois top-ranked female pole vaulter Lindsey Murray of Harrisburg, who was two-time all-state and three-time all-confidence, will join the Salukis for 2014.

Murray won a Junior Olympics All-American award and recently competed in the women's high jump for the first time.

Her first experience won her the competition, clearing 5 feet. Porter said she will be a powerful addition to next year's team.

"Lindsey Murray is an athlete if I've ever seen one," Porter said. "She can come in right now and be our top girl and literally do something on the national level."

SIU will also welcome Jonathan Welsh, a top-ranked junior college athlete from the 2012 Illinois High School Association pole vault state champion. Welsh hit 5.20m (17-1.00), which boosted him to the best clearance in the nation.

"We are super excited to have Jon Welsh and that level of an athlete on our team next year," Porter said. "I think he is going to come in and make a statement right off of the bat and my goal as a coach for him is to do that."

GOLF
continued from 12

"There's a couple guys I know that would apply," Newton said. "I think they'll be highly successful, and they've already been successful in Division II. There are a lot of good coaches out there and I'm hoping that they get a variety so they'll have a good selection."

Souchek said the team has met with Moccia, and said that they will hire someone in about a month.

Souchek also said despite having to work with a new coach this year, he has no interest in transferring.

"I'd love to be a pretty awful person to make me transfer," he said. "I like SIU and I like everyone here."

"Early in the year Todd got everyone together and had everyone vote for me to carry the pitchers bag," Dray said. "I thought I would try to do it this week, but it backed up, I ended up getting it."

Eaton said he stands by his choice of becoming a starter, even if Dray passes him.

RECORDS
continued from 12

Finnegan said he helped a freshman Welch play downstop. He said he has an outside perspective coaching Welch because he is the pitching coach.

Two Saluki pitchers are close in numbers as well.

Senior right-handed pitcher Todd Eaton was a closing pitcher for the majority of his collegiate career, but made the transition to become a starter this season. He is tied with former Saluki Aliev at 17 saves for second in the Saluki record books, but his roommate, senior right-handed pitcher Tyler Dray, is closing in on him.

Dray has been a relief pitcher his whole career.

"Dray's seven saves this season gives him 16 for his career, more experienced than any other pitcher," Finigan said. "I want to feed off of what Dray is doing and make them better from there."

Porter said the two of them have a roommate rivalry as well. He said when they play video games things can get intense.

The pitching staff has a pink backpack full of candy and sunflower seeds they carry around every week. They vote on the pitcher who has to carry the bag and protect it from position players. Finnegan said Dray tried to get everyone to vote for Eaton this past week. The vote ended up being a tie, but the bullpen catcher gets a tie-breaking vote.

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Coonrod’s potential keeps going up

Salukis look forward to next season

Women’s golf looks to pick up where it left off

TONY MCDANIEL
Daily Egyptian

The Saluki women’s golf team had a disappointing end to the season, but is poised for a strong 2014-2015 campaign.

SIU finished fourth at the Missouri Valley Conference Tournament after winning four tournaments throughout the regular season.

Coach Alexa Mihelich said the low point of the season was the meager result in the MVC tournament. She said one of the best moments of the year came more than six months ago at a tournament hosted by Middle Tennessee State University.

“That field was the toughest field we faced all year. There were 18 teams; only six were ranked below 100 nationally, and we were one of them,” Mihelich said.

“Going into that tournament, golfstat.com had us ranked to finish 12th and we came away with the win.”

Another highlight of the season was the play of seniors Ashleigh and Cassie Rushing. Cassie’s 76.3 strokes per round and Ashleigh’s 76.8 were the two best averages on the team. Ashleigh and Cassie have also been on 10 tournament-winning teams at SIU. Unfortunately 2014 marked the final season the Rushings will wear Saluki maroon as student-athletes.

Ashleigh said sharing the experience of playing golf with her sister the last four years has been great.

“Having her on the team with me has pushed me to be better, she said.

“Anything bad, or anything good that happened, she was always there. We talked about our rounds all the time, and she always helped me improve. It was really neat to do that.”

While replacing Cassie and Ashleigh might be tough, the pieces are already in place to do so, Mihelich said.

“We basically get four returning starters back with Brooke (Casumano), Martie [Lindner], Kristie [Yang] and Xianmei [Jin],” Mihelich said. “When a team graduates a really strong player it is just more motivation for someone to step up and be that player next year.”

Freshmen Brooke Casumano and Xianmei Jin each played in all 18 rounds the Salukis participated in last season.

Jin’s lowest round of the season was 76, which she shot twice, was good for second lowest of the season behind Cassie’s 68 at the University Missouri Kansas City Fall Invitational.

Sophomore Martie Lindner and junior Kris Grimes will also be back next season.

Lindner appeared in nine tournaments this season and posted an average round score of 78.8.

Grimes played in all but two tournaments for SIU and posted a round average of 79.8 strokes and a low round of 73 in 2013-2014, her first season as a Saluki.

Grimes will be one of two seniors on next year’s roster. She said she hopes to be a leader among her teammates.

“I know that I have to set a good example. If I were to be captain, coaches look at me to be responsible for my team. At the same time, I have to be positive and tell them we have to do the best we can, everywhere we go.”

In addition to the members the Salukis will bring back, the team will welcome two new players to the roster.

Alice Ho of Wadsworth, Ohio, and Hanna Netsingha of Carol Stream have both signed national letters of intent with SIU for next year.

Mihelich said Netsingha shows a true passion for golf; she would not hesitate and said “shoot a 66, I’ve shot around par and below par in the 70s and I know I can shoot six birdies in a round.”

If Ho achieved her goal, she would break Brady Hobbs’ school-record round of 67.

“With the combination of players new and old for SIU, Grimes said she thinks that the Salukis can succeed next season.

“I think we’re going to be really good,” she said. “With the freshmen coming in, there will be more competition, and honestly, in the next competition is good, it helps us push everyone. We can only be great.”

TONY MCDANIEL can be reached at tmcDaniel@dailyEgyptian.com or at 536-3311 ext. 282
The Saluki baseball team has only seven games left of its regular season, but there is more than wins and losses at stake.

Senior shortstop Jake Welch moved into ninth place in Saluki history with 213 career games during the weekend, five behind pitching coach P.J. Finigan.

Finigan was a Saluki in elder and pitcher from 2002-2005. He was drafted by the Detroit Tigers in the seventh round of the 2005 draft and played professionally as a pitcher for three seasons.

Welch passed Finigan in career at-bats last season, and is on pace to pass him in career runs and career hits. Welch is one run and one hit away from tying Finigan in those categories.

“I hope he beats all my records,” Finigan said. “I don’t mind, not one bit.”

Finigan said if Welch passes him in the record book, he would probably give Welch more grief than Welch would give him.

“He’s a pretty quiet, lead by example kid,” he said. “We’ll probably share a laugh about it, but it will probably be me bringing it out more than him.”

“I know he’s much more accomplished than I am,” Welch said. “I might get him in a few things, but he played quite a bit of pro ball and I think he’s got that on me.”

Finigan is eighth in career runs and ninth in career hits. Welch is directly behind him in both categories.

“Leroy is getting older, so it wasn’t a huge shock,” Souchek said. “The next step for the Salukis will be to find their new coach.”

SIU athletic director Mario Moccia said he will assemble a committee in the coming days to find a new coach.

“The primary thing is we’re looking for somebody who can recruit, teach golf and be a good mentor for the guys,” he said. “They’re going to be interacting with a lot of high level people, so somebody who can also properly articulate the vision of the golf program and maybe do some fundraising.”

Newton said he is unaware if he will have any input on who the coach will be, but he would be willing to put in a good word for a few candidates.

LEROY NEWTON

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Leroy Newton announces retirement

TONY MCDANIEL
Daily Egyptian

The SIU men’s golf team will have to find a way to replace the longest tenured coach in the program’s history for the 2014-2015 season.

Coach Leroy Newton announced his retirement from the head coach position of the men’s golf team after 19 years of service, Monday.

Newton said it felt like it was time to retire, but the Salukis are still in his thoughts.

“I’ve been doing it for 19 years, it’s been a long time and I just thought it was best that I do other things,” he said. “Maybe we can get somebody younger to come in and take care of the golf team. I never wanted to leave and not have some good golfers on hand for the next guy.”

Sophomore Drew Nawara said Newton told the team he would be departing a few days ago.

“It was pretty tough to see him go,” Nawara said. “He gave me the opportunity to come play golf here so that was tough,” he said. “We all loved him as a guy, but I guess he and the administration decided he had been here long enough.”

In SIU’s men’s golf history, the team has finished in the top three at the Missouri Valley Conference Tournament eight times; Newton has coached the team to five of those. He has also led the team to 11 tournament wins and coached 13 golfers to All-Conference awards.

The Salukis finished tied for seventh at this year’s MVC tournament.

Junior Steven Souchek said Newton’s announcement came as little surprise to him and his teammates.

“A lot of us saw it coming,” Souchek said. “Leroy is getting older, so it wasn’t a huge shock.”

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Please see RECORDS · 8

AARON GRAFF
Daily Egyptian

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