Finalists’ background checks not requested

Search firm to wait until Poshard’s decision for more extensive inquiry

Sean McGahan  
DAILY EGYPTIAN

SIUC officials brought four chancellor finalists to campus without requesting a background search from the finalists. The firm hired to assist with the search, a representative for the firm said.

Joseph Wright, vice president for the Hollins Group, Inc. — a Chicago-based search firm hired for $100,000 to help conduct a nationwide search for SIUC’s next chancellor — said the firm deals with all the applications and scheduling for candidates early on in the process, but only talks with the people the finalists have put down as references on their applications until after the four visit campus.

Wright said the firm works on what the university that hired them tells them to do, and no officials have asked for additional information, which could include a criminal background check and looking into any lawsuits the finalists are involved in.

Wright said she would not comment on what other universities have asked for in similar searches because of client confidentiality. She said it is standard protocol to respect the rights of the finalists.

“You have to realize that all the individuals that have applied are currently employed, and we don’t go around modelling in people’s business because all of them are not going to be finalists, obviously,” Wright said.

“There will be one finalist, and it is inappropriate to go in and disrupt people’s lives if they’re not going to be the finalist, and then they have to go back to their job.”

Wright said she has not talked to SIUC officials about what they may ask for regarding background checks, and won’t know until the on-site visits are completed later this month.

Poshard for Academic Affairs John Haller Jr. who has worked closely with the Hollins Group, and will request a background search when SIU President Glenn Poshard, who has determined which of the four finalists he is considering for the full-time position.

See CHANCELLOR, Page 5

With calculator and extra pencils nearby, SIUC senior Dennis Luehr works though a practice problem as he studies for his advanced accounting final Saturday afternoon at his home. Luehr, a first-generation college student, is the winner of the Ernst and Young Outstanding Senior award. The 48-year-old is set to graduate Saturday.

Ex-coal miner excels at SIUC

48-year-old to earn degree Saturday

Alejandro Gonzalez  
DAILY EGYPTIAN

When workers in the Zigler 11 mine were laid off in 2004, Dennis Luehr found more than a depressing lump of coal.

He found an opportunity to return to SIUC.

In 1980, Luehr left the university after three semesters to work in a coal mine. He said back then it was easier to get jobs without a college education.

“I worked at the mine for a lot of years and made as much or more than I could have with accounting,” he said.

He's an excellent student, there's just no doubt about it,” he said.

Luehr's history in the mines didn't come into play in the decision.

“It’s based on how they do here. He’s an excellent student, there’s just no doubt about it,” he said.

Luehr said he worked at the mine for a lot of years, it gets old,” he said. “It’s a job, not a career. You do it for the money and if you do it for a lot of years, it gets old,” he said. It's not something you really like to do, you just do it.”

Luehr said he worked with the other 250 coal miners and was an electrician for almost nine years. For 19 years, he worked 210 feet underground with the digging machines. He met his wife Audrey in the mines during this time.

See COAL, Page 3

Poshard: Top 75 doesn’t matter

Sarah Lohman  
DAILY EGYPTIAN

Each college has a list of goals it wants to achieve by 2014. Poshard said the number 75 doesn’t matter.

Southern at 150 — a plan initiated by former Chancellor Walter Wendlor in 2002 and developed in cooperation with nearby nearly 200 others affiliated with the university — has taken several blows but hasn’t been forgotten.

Each college must report yearly on the progress made toward their list of goals.

“Just because number 75 won’t reach all the goals in the plans, but that long range plan is still very much in effect,” Poshard said.

The National Science Foundation determines the list of top 75 research institutions.

The foundation only includes sciences such as engineering and medicine in its ranking.

The colleges still have a list of goals to strive for, however. Poshard said it’s more important to be the best research institution possible.

“The rankings are moving targets and what my concern is and what our goal should be is to be the very best we can be in research, to accomplish, to every year get higher and higher in our ability as a research-oriented university,” Poshard said.

Although the plan was approved by the SIU Board of Trustees and has been reviewed by Poshard, a report done by an outside marketing firm concluded it causes a conflict of interest. The month before Wendlor’s November removal, the SimpsonScarbrough marketing firm said the university’s goals of being a top 75 research institution serving the local community were in conflict and should be remanaged.

See SOUTHERN, Page 5
State dinner features British touches

Jennifer Loven
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President George W. Bush cozied up to the British prime minister across a 1776 tableware and candelabras made of silver.

WANGARI MUTUNDE

Kenyan activist Wangari Mutunde was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her efforts to protect the environment in Kenya.

The Associated Press

Heidi Vogt
The Associated Press

The Associated Press

Jennifer Loven
The Associated Press

Sixty-eight killed or found dead in Iraq

Ravi Nessman
The Associated Press

BAHGHAD — Suicide bombers killed 13 people in a pair of attacks Monday around the Sunni Arab city of Ramadi.

The Associated Press

Laurie Stouffer

She was among the many who were killed or wounded in the attacks.

The Associated Press

Queen Elizabeth II of England and U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice as she is welcomed in Washington by George W. Bush and first lady Laura Bush for a dinner ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House Monday on House on House on Monday.

George Bridges
The Associated Press
**CAFE TOWN, South Africa (AP) — A woman was convicted Monday of hiring a hit man to murder her lover's baby daughter, ending a trial that had dominated headlines for months with details of South Africa's first known contract killing of an infant.

Norton, who grew up in the town of Wereld Leader, South Africa, was convicted Tuesday by High Court Judge Basheer Waglay also convicted four men of murder and robbery in connection with the murder of two-year-old girl. The trial had been delayed several times due to the death of one of the accused men and the later appearance of another.

The murder took place in 2001 when Norton was 17 years old. She was charged with the murder of her lover's baby daughter, who was found dead in a suitcase in a car park in the town of Wereld Leader.

Norton, who is believed to be the first woman to be convicted of hiring a hit man to murder an infant, was found guilty of hiring a hit man to murder her lover's baby daughter.

**FLORENCE, Ky. (AP) — A man who spent his life savings after being told he had months to live is seeking compensation after doctors in Britain conceded they had got his diagnosis wrong.

John Brandrick, 62, was told two years ago that he had terminal pancreatic cancer. He decided to spend his remaining time in style, quitting his job and spending his savings on hotels, restaurants and holidays.

A year later, doctors at the Royal Cornwall Hospital in southwest England reviewed their diagnosis and Brandrick was suffering from diabetes.

"My life has been turned upside down by this," Brandrick said. "I was told certainly, by the doctors, that I had cancer, and from that day I lived life in full."

"I was told I had limited time to live. I got rid of everything — my car, my house, my everything."

Brandrick said he had not wanted to take the hospital to court, but "if they had made the wrong decision they should pay me something back."

**LAS VEGAS (AP) — A device left in a casino parking garage exploded early Monday, killing a man who tried to pick it up off the top of his car, authorities said.

The device exploded shortly after 4 a.m. on the second floor of a parking garage located behind the Luxor hotel-casino, said Officer Bill Cassell, a police spokesman. He declined to describe the device, but said initial reports that it was inside a backpack were wrong.

The blast was not a terrorist act but an apparent murder of a man who worked at a business inside the hotel, he said, adding that the case was being investigated as "a homicide with an unusual weapon."

"No threat had been made against the Luxor," Cassell said. "We believe the victim of this event was the intended target," Cassell said. He added that no one was hurt.

Aerial video showed no apparent damage to the parking structure, where entrances were blocked while police, firefighters and federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives agents investigated.

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Disability doesn’t hinder job search for grad-to-be

Student reaps benefits of Transition to Employment

Joe Crawford
DAILY EGYPTIAN

When Ben Von Bokel walks across the stage at graduation commencement Saturday, he can be confident his degree will be put to use.

Von Bokel, a senior from Aviston studying information technology, was the first student to get a job while working through Transition to Employment. The program, which is funded by the Illinois Department of Employment Security, was eligible for retraining through the Home. “It was a challenge to get back in the swing because whenever you’re used to reading a lot, you just get out of it for all those years,” he said. “I can read a lot faster now than I could then.”

Von Bokel received funds to cover all his expenses to attend the university. When he began talking to his wife about his classes, she wanted to take classes too. “I’m doing as well as he is. I’m not getting awards, but I’m making good grades,” she said.

Currently, Luehr works as an accountant for Project 12 Ways, but he doesn’t have any future job prospects in mind because he still has to worry about graduate school — which he will also attend at SIUC.

“There’s no bias against you — but at the same time I’m feeling pretty confident with my skills.”

Jim Spencer, a career service specialist with Transition to Employment, said the average initial cost to an employer to accommodate a person with a disability is less than $500. Depending on the individual, a special chair or a custom keyboard may be all that is needed to make a workplace comfortable for him or her, he said.

“Interviews are a time for you to brag, and I wasn’t very good at that,” he said. “(The program) definitely helped me out.”

Before the program was offered this semester, students with disabilities worked through the same program. Von Bokel taught him to improve his interviewing techniques and polish his resume, he said.

“Was I worried about it? Yes and no,” he said. “Yes because I know what’s out there — there’s a bias against you — but at the same time working through Transition to Employment conduct mock interviews with the participants and videotape them so the participants can watch the way they respond to questions.

“The biggest challenge is understanding how they seem to the interviewer,” he said.

Spencer said the program has worked to establish and cultivate relationships with employers, especially those within a 60-mile radius. Although the area job market is congested, he said the employers have responded positively to the program’s presence.

Jennifer Frost, coordinator of Disability Support Services at John A. Logan College, said about five students from the college have participated in the program. Before this semester, students with disabilities worked through the same placement offices as other students, she said.

“That’s one of the great things about this grant is that it’s looking specifically at this population, targeting them and working with their needs to help find employment,” she said.

Luehr received funds to cover all his expenses to attend the university. When he began talking to his wife about his classes, she wanted to take classes too. “I’m doing as well as he is. I’m not getting awards, but I’m making good grades,” she said.

The hardest part about returning to SIUC was the reading, Luehr said. “I was glad to get it over with,” he said.

“Interviews are a time for you to brag, and I wasn’t very good at that,” he said. “(The program) definitely helped me out.”

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Ben Von Bokel demonstrates how a book is cut before it is scanned into a computer and converted into an electronic format. Von Bokel is a student worker in Disability Support Services and is the first student to get a job working through Transition to Employment, a program that helps employ graduates with disabilities.

Clinton, Obama criticize federal government response to Katrina

John Moreno Gonzales
THE TIMES-RECORD

BATON ROUGE, La. — Hillary Rodham Clinton criticized the Bush administration’s response to Hurricane Katrina and pledged Saturday to funnel more federal aid to the still-recovering Gulf Coast if elected.

Speaking to the National Conference of Black Mayors, Clinton warned that “many people are invisible to this president,” she said in a morning speech punctuated with applause.

Obama’s appearance later in the day was moved to a much larger venue than the conference room in which Clinton spoke.

Organizers said the move to an arena was necessitated by a high level of interest in hearing him among reporters and conference attendees.

The size of the crowd, which gave Obama several standing ovations, wasn’t lost on him. “I wish I could say it was me, but it’s mostly that people are yearning for change,” he said.
Compromise a must for Bush, Dems

At least they’re talking. After congressional Democrats passed a troop withdrawal timetable for Iraq — which was promptly vetoed by President Bush — both sides have settled into talks, in which the president for once seems open to a deal that would include some benchmarks for measuring progress in the war.

One hopes the president does not slip back into his recalcitrant, no-compromise posture that has only succeeded in making this war ever more unpopular with the American people.

And yes, Democrats for now have to be willing to back off from a date certain for the beginning of troop withdrawals. Frankly, it’s hard to argue with the president’s position that a deadline would undermine his “surge” strategy before it’s had a chance to be fully tested, and probably would cause our enemies in Iraq just to sit back and await the arrival of the withdrawal date.

The ultimate goal must be the departure of United States troops from Iraq, ideally under conditions in which a democratic Iraqi government is able to function and protect citizens from attack by homicidal insurgents. Toward that end, it’s reasonable for the president and Congress to set benchmarks for the Iraqis to meet, demonstrating their own commitment to the goals for which more than 3,300 Americans have died.

Four years after U.S. forces toppled the tyranny of Saddam Hussein, it’s long since time the Iraqi government did more to resolve the internal strife that has frustrated efforts to establish democracy — or whatever form of representative government can find support in Iraq. There have been thousands upon thousands of Iraqi deaths as well, not to mention a gathering of terrorists in the country.

Benchmarks of progress would encourage Iraqi self-sufficiency and clarify what will happen when those goals are either met or not met in terms of reducing American involvement.

The president doesn’t want to “lose” this war, of course, because there could be negative long-term implications in the region, and because his very troubled administration would be pronounced a complete failure if he did. Bush undoubtedly believes that his policy in Iraq has been right and necessary.

But even with the troop surge now under way as a last-gasp attempt to salvage the war effort, many Americans have concluded that the war was a poorly conceived mistake, and that the prospects for some kind of positive military outcome are not good.

Members of Bush’s own Republican Party are beginning to move away from him. In other words, the president simply must listen seriously to other voices and let Congress have some say in the decision-making. At this point, he has no choice.

Democrats who took control of Capitol Hill largely on the strength of anti-war sentiment must be constructive as well, and they obviously must pass a bill funding our troops in combat. In that, they have no choice.

At the end of the day, these two widely divided sides must begin to come together and forgo partisan advantage-seeking for the 2008 election. We have a mess here. It will take more than one policy to get us out of it.

This editorial appeared in the Raleigh (N.C.) News & Observer on Friday.
Chancellor candidate Fernando Treviño speaks with faculty in the Student Center Auditorium Monday afternoon. Treviño answered questions raised by faculty members regarding his experience and ideas for SUC.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“It’s been an enormous amount of teamwork and trying to sell a vision and getting enough people to believe in that vision to make it a reality.”

— Fernando Treviño, chancellor finalist

He said the university has been too compliant in keeping up with other universities regarding issues of enrollment and has suffered from too much administrative turnover.

“Your constantly coming up with a new vision, a new this, new that,” he said. “I think you need some stability. I hope you get the best chancellor you can get.”

Treviño said he realizes he must make a large leap from a former dean to the position of chancellor.

“I am ready to make that leap; I’m not sure,” he said.

Treviño said he believes experiences in the Health Science Center — which he described as a microcosm of a university with six departments reporting to him — and leadership experience as president of the World Federation of Public Health Associations have prepared him some.

Dyer, an associate professor of chemistry, said Treviño seemed like he would interact well with the various campus groups, but he was concerned with his lack of knowledge in long-range university plans.

When asked about the massive campus overhaul Saluki Way, Treviño said he did not have enough information to make any comments.

“His didn’t seem to really have studied that, which I think is something that I would expect from someone coming from a chancellor position — that they would do their homework on the university and try to understand what are the goals of the university, so I just thought he didn’t really have much vision,” Dyer said.

Dyer said he has been impressed overall with the candidates brought in.

“I think they were all pretty decent quality,” he said. “It’s hard to tell until the person shows up and is here for several years.”

Treviño said he is set to announce his choice for the position at the Board of Trustees’ June 14 meeting in Carbondale.

Wendler said he doesn’t think what’s going on with the plan and has come to the conclusion of making the move to architecture professors.

After Wendler was accused of plagiarizing the parts of the vision and later determined to have committed academic dishonesty in summarizing words from a similar Texas Tech University, the future of the long-range effort was in question by many at the university.

Poshard said the plan is still very much in effect. However, budget cuts have caused some programs that helped the university move toward the plans’ goals to be eliminated.

One of the plans’ goals is to recruit and retain more faculty members, but the faculty hiring initiative has been suspended because of budget cuts. The plan also called for expansion of library resources, but budget cuts have forced the library to cancel many journal subscriptions.

Officials are trying to maintain an adequate balance of resources in a limited budget, Durr said, and are concentrating on preparing the plan, such as focusing on enrollment and recognizing excellence throughout the university’s community.

Poshard said he plans to discuss Durr’s goals for the plan before he assumes his new position at Western Michigan University on July 1.

Durr said he is confident the new chancellor will want to help sustain many of the initiatives of the plan but will most likely want to tweak it first.

Faculty members have asked the four chancellor finalists who have visited campus in recent weeks about their thoughts of the long-range plan development.

In his public forum Monday, chancellor finalist Fernando Treviño said he appreciated the ideas behind the plan, but wasn’t sure if the goal of reaching the top 75 was attainable.

“I don’t know that there’s anything magical about being 75,” he said. “If you’re 82 or you’re 91, I don’t know if there’s any magical number that we need to hold ourselves up to.”

Treviño said the rankings might not gauge the process of a research institution.

“There’s nothing wrong with where you are. You were at 105, I think you’re now at 109, not because you didn’t do better — you did do,” he said. “You did all the things that plan called for, but the things around them, in the end, is what matters.”

Treviño said it’s more important to keep academic goals and constantly improve.

“I think it’s important to keep this going,” he said. “I think it’s important to keep this going are the people around this room and around this country who are finding other people to get involved.”

Michelle Obama, a 43-year-old Chicago hospital executive, drew more media coverage on her solo day trip to the first primary state than some presidential candidates.

Her husband, Sen. Barack Obama, was in Detroit, speaking about fuel efficiency and the auto industry.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

— Jason Johnson

The City Hall Tile Project was spurred by Brad Cole after he saw a similar project by an elementary school in Tainan City, Taiwan.
Deer Editor:

I have been honored to serve as the chair of the chancellor search advisory committee. A pleasant part of the process has been my interviews with the DE. What I have been reminded of in the last two weeks is the dynamic power of the press to affect public opinion, including the conclusion that a tiny incorrect phrase in an otherwise perfect article or a tidie with multiple meanings can cause (as in the May 3 Lowest Ranked Finalist 7). To help the university community understand the process, I wish to explain that the committee believes we have brought in the four best candidates to campus. All are interesting, experienced and dynamic leaders with differing backgrounds, differing strengths and differing weaknesses. Two are provosts and two are professors who recently chose to step down from deanships. Now is the time for the entire community to help the world know the great things here at SIUC.}

Susan Ford
Chair, Department of Anthropology and chancellor search advisory committee

American recoverable coal has the energy equivalent of one trillion barrels of oil, a figure roughly comparable to all the world’s known oil reserves. As our own experience has shown, increasing the use of coal to generate electricity does not equate with deteriorating air quality. During the past 35 years, the use of coal in the US has nearly tripled, while at the same time, air quality has improved. In fact, overall pollution has been reduced by more than 50 percent and emissions in the coal-based electricity sector are one-third lower than they were in 1970, despite the increased usage.

Renewable energy sources such as wind, solar and bio-mass may one day play larger roles in America’s energy portfolio, but the substitution is a matter of degree and not the complete replacement of energy and not capable of meeting base-load requirements like coal. The facts are clear — we’re making amazing progress on reducing the environmental impacts of using coal. That is not to say that we can’t do better. Technology is always providing opportunities to further reduce emissions, and our organization embraces the progress toward the eventual reality of pollution-free and carbon-neutral energy from coal. Kudos to Dr. Poshard for bringing much needed attention to the issue of rising energy costs and environmental pollution in our nation’s colleges and universities, and for proposing a practical solution that may even prove to be profitable in the long run. Simply stated, increasingly clean, affordable and abundant coal remains the most viable fuel source for electric generation in the United States.

Scott Wiseman
Center for Energy and Economic Development

More often on the persecuting side.

And in 2007, the US has right-wing Christians controlling the White House, the Congress, the secret system, the military and the corporate media, but still little Colton feels vic- timized and oppressed because there are people in her classes who disagree with her! I am glad that there are people standing up for freedom in her classes. Look at what hap- pened to the people of Iran and Afghanistan when religious fundamentalists took over their countries. That won’t happen here as long as...
Police: Serial sock snatcher knee-deep in trouble again

Jim Suhr
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BELLEVILLE — James Dowdy has admitted his basking for women’s history has been his undoing, earning him three arrests in prison and repeated scoldings from judges over the years.

So police say it’s no surprise the 36-year-old man is knee-deep in trouble again because of his lust for leggings.

St. Clair County prosecutors charged Dowdy on Friday with felony theft, for stealing socks from a home, ultimately getting caught by police with a bag of socks.

His troubles stretch back at least 13 years. In 2004, Dowdy was sentenced to seven years in prison after pleading guilty to attempted residential burglary, a felony reportedly tied to his stalking of a female neighbor’s home for her socks. Seven years earlier, Dowdy got a six-year sentence for breaking into another woman’s home and stealing socks.

In 1994, Dowdy was sentenced to three years for trying to burglarize a home, ultimately getting caught by police with a bag of socks.
Bumpy Maxim Gunner Virtuey

Yesterday’s Jumbles:

Answer: SEAT ON THE ISLE

Lindy’s Birthday (05-08-07). You’ll be asking questions this year, and constantly learning something. This can be awkward at times, as you know, but you’ll consistently make high marks.

To get the advantage, check the day’s rating: 10 is the easiest day, 0 the most challenging.

Aries (March 21-April 19) - Today is a 7 — You’re learning from experience and finding good deals. This will make it possible for you to get something really nice you’ve never done before. Some of those things should never be done. Have fun, but don’t get crazy.

Taurus (April 20-May 20) - Today is a 8 — Today is an 8 - Watch for an excellent deal. This lucky streak is not very long. Only move on offers you know from experience will pay big dividends.

Gemini (May 21-June 21) - Today is a 7 — You’re gaining experience at finding good deals. This will make it possible for you to get something really nice you’ve never done before. Some of those things should never be done. Have fun, but don’t get crazy.

Cancer (June 22-July 22) - Today is a 7 — You’re becoming more interested in business. This could complicate your personal plans. Make your life easier by postponing as much travel as you can. Work from home.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) - Today is a 7 — Every task you finish leads to something else to do. Fight off the feeling of being overwhelmed, you are making progress.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) - Today is a 6 — Get somebody to help with the stuff you find too difficult. Even better, get somebody who finds those things easy.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) - Today is an 8 — You’re seeing new possibilities popping up all over the place. A lot of these can be yours, but more research and planning is required.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) - Today is a 7 — You’re seeing new possibilities popping up all over the place. A lot of these can be yours, but more research and planning is required.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) - Today is an 8 — Get everybody up as much as you can and don’t say a lot about it. No need to make the others jealous. Instead, start researching investments.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20) - Today is a 7 — You’re getting luckier for the next couple of weeks. Don’t lighten up on your practice schedule, however. Relax and enjoy it.

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Sudoku

By Michael Mepham

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit www.sudoku.org.uk.

Solution to Monday’s puzzle

7 2 8 6
5 1 7
9 3 1 5

Solution to today’s puzzle

TUDOO
LUMPE
LOOSCH
FENTAS

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.
**NASCAR**

Jenna Fryer  
**The Associated Press**

CONCORD, N.C. — Dale Earnhardt Jr. couldn’t defend Talladega from the Hendrick Motorsports domination.

Then Richmond fell like Las Vegas, Atlanta, Bristol, Martinsville and Phoenix before it: With a whine from Kasey Kahne, a weak charge from Jeff Ward and a tantrum or two from Tony Stewart. 

Ging Biffle squeaks NASCAR’s last hope. Please keep your hold on Darlington Raceway, where you’ll try to win your third straight race this weekend.

Somebody has to do something to end this Hendrick domination, because seven wins in the last eight Nextel Cup races is hardly the parity Earnhardt is looking for this season. Although Hendrick has sud-

Recently statistics show otherwise.

Jimmie Johnson led a Hendrick parade at Richmond International Raceway, where he scored his fourth win in the past two rounds. 

Johnson’s win was the third consecutive Hendrick victory and the fourth time this season Hendrick cars finished 1-2.

It wasn’t always Hendrick underfat-

Jeff Burton, who had an early escape from Hendrick, was buoyed by the fact that TRW Car of Tomorrow will help send the best teams to the NCAA Tournament.

“Tournament will help send the best teams to the NCAA Championships because the top-two seeds have a tremendous advantage with getting to sit in the top-two seeds getting byes in the first two rounds, and the third and fourth seeds getting a first-round bye.

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Jeff Burton, who had an early escape from Hendrick, was buoyed by the fact that TRW Car of Tomorrow will help send the best teams to the NCAA Tournament.

“As the No. 3 seed, the Salukis will play the winner of the game between the No. 7 seed Bradley and No. 6 seed Missouri State. SIU is coming off a 2-10 season against champion Missouri State and is 3-0 against Bradley this season.

Missouri State and Bradley are two of the closest teams in the MVC going into the tournament. Missouri State has lost its last five conference games, while Bradley has dropped four of its last five conference games.

“If the Salukis were to get past the first round they would play Illinois State. SIU dropped two games to the Redbirds during the season.

**SOFTBALL**

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16**

Past tournaments were double-elimination style, but this year the tournament is single-elimination with the top-two seeds getting byes in the first two rounds, and the third and fourth seeds getting a first-round bye.

Blakely said she thinks the tournament will help send the best teams to the NCAA Tournament.

“What does it do is protects your higher seeds and gives them a better chance to get a berth to the NCAA Tournament,” Blakely said. “The top-two seeds have a tremendous advantage with getting to sit in the top-two seeds getting byes in the first two rounds, and the third and fourth seeds getting a first-round bye.

Bellak said she thinks the tournament will help send the best teams to the NCAA Tournament.

“What does it do is protects your higher seeds and gives them a better chance to get a berth to the NCAA Tournament,” Bellak said. “The top-two seeds have a tremendous advantage with getting to sit in the top-two seeds getting byes in the first two rounds, and the third and fourth seeds getting a first-round bye.

Jeff Burton said he was confident that Hendrick’s cars can be beat.

“They’ve got a great company, two, three really good cars every week, great crew chiefs. That’s why we got a twinge of jealousy in his voice while explaining that Hendrick has used several different test drivers this season to gather data. Max Papis, David Green and 17-year-old development driver Landon Cassill have all had legitimate consideration hours with the Chevrolet Impala for Hendrick.

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Senior pitcher Ashley Hamby said she is confident SIU will play well.

“We want to face anyone who beat us during the season,” Hamby said. “Wichita State has two great pitchers and we’re likely to see them in the championship when we make it.”

The championship game will be at 1:30 p.m. Saturday and will be broadcasted on Comcast SportsNet. The Salukis first game will be at 6:30 p.m. Thursday and will be broadcasted on Vigeo TV along with the rest of the tournament.

jeff_engelhardt@dailyegyptian.com

**BASEBALL**

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16**

The Salukis went into the Missouri Valley Conference Championship May 6-7, favored to win and finished each day in first place. Sophomore Brandy Hood, who has 312 at-bats and was 8-for-17 favored to win and finished each day in first place. Sophomore Brandy Hood, who has 312 at-bats and was 8-for-17 favored to win and finished each day in first place. Sophomore Brandy Hood, who has 312 at-bats and was 8-for-17 favored to win and finished each day in first place. Sophomore Brandy Hood, who has 312 at-bats and was 8-for-17 favored to win and finished each day in first place. Sophomore Brandy Hood, who has 312 at-bats and was 8-for-17 favored to win and finished each day in first place. Sophomore Brandy Hood, who has 312 at-bats and was 8-for-17 favored to win and finished each day in first place. Sophomore Brandy Hood, who has 312 at-bats and was 8-for-17 favored to win and finished each day in first place. 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As the women, we need to finish in the top three. As far as individual performances, our men were third in the shot put and won the discus,” SIU coach Connie Price-Smith said. “Overall though, you are looking at overall team goals Friday.

The SIU track and field outdoor season has been filled with great individual accomplishments, but the Salukis will focus all their attention on team goals Friday. The Salukis will travel to Des Moines, Iowa, for the Missouri Valley Conference Championships May 11-13.

SIU coach Connie Price-Smith said individual performances would determine the Salukis’ overall success.

“To make it successful, you have to have individual performances. Overall though, you are looking for team performance,” Price-Smith said. “Our men were third indoors and we definitely think we can finish top in the top three. As far as the women, we need to finish better than we did indoors, which was fifth.”

Junior thrower Brittany Riley will have a target on her back as she defends her MVC Female Field Athlete of the Week title. In her last meet, Riley broke the SIU, MVC, stadium and Drake Relay’s hammer throws records with a toss of 237 feet and 11 inches. Riley is undefeated in the hammer toss and has won seven meet titles. This season she also has the second longest hammer throw in the nation this season and has won MVC Female Field Athlete of the Week 10 times.

“I feel confident but I have a lot of work to do in the shot and discus,” Riley said. “I’m going for second in the shot and I’m going to try to contend in the discus as well as the hammer.”

Freshmen sprinters Sammy Biggs, Brandon Love and Kendra Deck are preparing to make some noise in their first MVC Championship.

Biggs, who garnered attention after he was named MVC Male Track Athlete of the Week April 10, said he is confident after getting some rest.

“I’m feeling pretty good. The week of rest will probably pay off for us,” Biggs said. “I just hope everybody can stay healthy over the next week and practices well and is ready to compete.”

Indiana State took both the women’s and men’s titles at the Saluki Spring Classic March 24. The Northern Iowa men captured the MVC Indoor Championship and Wichita State won the women’s Indoor Championship February 24.

Price-Smith said MVC teams have been competing well and the Salukis hope to overcome the challenge.

“I think it’s going to be tough with Indiana State and Northern Iowa,” Price-Smith said. “Everybody is competing really well right now. I look for Wichita State and Indiana State on the women’s side of it. I think all of them it’s going to be very competitive.”

Do you have questions for the Saluki Banter that you want answered? de_editor@dailyegyptian.com

WOMEN’S GOLF SCHEDULE
May 10 NCIAA Regionals All-DAY
May 11 NCIAA Regionals All-DAY
May 12 NCIAA Regionals All-DAY
May 22 NCIAA Championships All-DAY
May 23 NCIAA Championships All-DAY
May 24 NCIAA Championships All-DAY

BASEBALL SCHEDULE
May 11 Northern Iowa 2 p.m.
May 12 Northern Iowa 2 p.m.
May 13 Northern Iowa 1 p.m.
May 14 Eastern Illinois 3 p.m.
May 17 Indiana State 6 p.m.
May 18 Indiana State 6 p.m.

SOFTHALL SCHEDULE
April 10 Evansville 4 p.m.
April 11 Middle Tenn. State 4 p.m.
April 10 Austin Peay 1 p.m.
April 23 State Farm HVC All-DAY
April 24 Wabash All-DAY

MEN’S GOLF SCHEDULE
April 10 ASU Indian Classic All-DAY
April 23 State Farm HVC All-DAY
April 24 Wabash All-DAY

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Teams eye tourney title

Jeff Engelhardt
The Daily Egyptian

Trouble could be on the horizon for the SIU softball team. The No. 21 Salukis will try to overcome their championship drought when they head to the Missouri Valley Conference Tournament. The tournament will run Thursday to Friday and take place at the Redbird Softball Complex in Normal.

SIU has had rough outings in past tournaments, including in 2006 when it was eliminated after losing two straight games to Creighton and Drake.

The Salukis have a tournament record of 35-44 with only one championship, coming in 1991, despite having the highest winning percentage among Valley teams over the last eight years. SIU coach Kern Blaylock said the Salukis (38-13, 17-7) have to throw out the past and take a fresh approach to the tournament.

“Honestly, I told them that since we have done so bad in the past, let’s just try to make a new precedent,” Blaylock said. “Let’s try to be unique and do well. We are going to play with a chip on our shoulder and try to prove some people wrong.”

We are going to play with a chip on our shoulder and try to prove some people wrong. — Kern Blaylock, Salukis head coach

The No. 22 Redbirds are the host of the tournament and the No. 2 seed. They could make history if they win, as no host team has ever won the MVC Tournament.

Illinois State was able to secure the No. 2 seed after it defeated Missouri State 1-0 Sunday along with Wichita State defeating the Salukis twice Saturday. SIU held on to the third spot by defeating Wichita State 2-1 Sunday.

Seedings were important this season because of the new tournament format.

See SOFTBALL, Page 14

Salukis set for the NCAA Regionals

Scott Mieszala
Daily Egyptian

The SIU women’s golf team is set to play in its biggest event in team history, but one obstacle still stands in the Salukis’ way.

The last of the golfers will finish up their finals today before leaving for Alto Adore, Mich., for the NCAA Regionals, hosted by the University of Michigan. The 21-team tournament will begin Thursday and conclude Saturday.

SIU coach Diane Daugherty said the Salukis are the best team she’s coached in her 21-year career. The team will depart for Michigan today, and had rescheduled the golfers’ finals to last week, Monday and today.

“It’s just been a crazy time with the weather and their schedules. We’ve really practiced very little,” Daugherty said. “I’m just hoping that once we get on the plane and we head to Michigan, we can start focusing them.”

Senior Josie Lowder said she knew from the first tournament that this was going to be a special year, as the Salukis saw the return of junior Kelly Gerlach, who redshirted in 2006 with a wrist injury.

The NCAA Regionals, Lowder said, will be among the biggest events she has ever played in.

“In my college career, this is the biggest tournament I’ll have ever played in,” Lowder said. “And for my personal career, it’s definitely up there. A couple amateur tournaments are pretty big, but I’ve never been more excited in my life, to be there with my best friends and to have accomplished something like we’ve accomplished.”

See GOLF, Page 14

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

May 8, 2007

WOMEN’S GOLF

BASEBALL

SIU has plenty left to play for

Six games left to decide season

Matt Hartwig
Daily Egyptian

The SIU baseball team has six conference games left that could make or break its season.

With the exception of Missouri State, every team in the Missouri Valley Conference has to play for one of six bids to the MVC Tournament May 23-26 in Springfield. The Bears host the tournament so they get an automatic berth.

The Salukis (29-18, 9-9) are in fifth place in the MVC and are only three games behind Evansville for the No. 3 seed in the tournament.

SIU coach Dan Callahan said it is an honor to be in the tournament because not everyone qualifies.

"Once you get there, it’s a special feeling and they really do a good job putting it together," Callahan said. "While we don’t have a chance at first or second place in the regular season, we still have a chance to make some noise while we’re there."

The Salukis begin a three-game series with Northern Iowa Friday at Abe Martin Field. The Panthers (19-23, 5-13) have struggled throughout out the entire season and were swept by No. 9 Wichita State May 4-6.

SIU also has one more non-conference game Saturday at home against Eastern Illinois, which is swept by Illinois last year and was outscored 22-5 in the series.

Eastern Illinois (13-24) has struggled throughout the Ohio Valley Conference play and has lost nine of its last 10 games.

If SIU wins two out of three against Northern Iowa, the outcome of the Eastern Illinois game may not be a factor.

The Salukis’ finish up the regular season against Indiana State in Terre Haute, Ind., May 17-19.

The Sycamores (21-23, 4-14) have also struggled this season and are in last place in the MVC. Indiana State was swept by Bradley May 4-6 and has lost four of its last six.

Callahan said it’s possible to grab a third place finish in the MVC, even though it’s nearly impossible to finish first or second.

“We could finish anywhere from third place to seventh or eighth place with two weeks left,” Callahan said. “There’s a lot of ground that can be gained or lost.”

See BASEBALL, Page 14