No charges for officer in machete incident

NICK JOHNSON
Daily Egyptian

No charges will be filed against a Carbondale police officer who shot a machete-wielding man while investigating a domestic disturbance last month, Jackson County State’s Attorney Mike Wepsiec said at a press conference Thursday.

Carbondale police received a 911 call about a domestic disturbance at 3:09 a.m. Jan. 20 at 1104 N. Robert A. Stalls Ave., Wepsiec said.

Three officers found an intoxicated 27-year-old Jimmy Ray Nelson, a twice-convicted felon, holding a machete and threatening Marissa Porter-Lilly, 32, who was holding a 2-year-old child, Wepsiec said.

After Nelson denied multiple requests by officers to drop the machete, he began moving toward Porter-Lilly and the child, the officer said. Nelson four times: once in the neck, once in the arm and twice in the chest, Wepsiec said.

Nelson’s blood alcohol content level was .252 upon his admittance to Memorial Hospital of Carbondale, Wepsiec said.

Poshard recently gained statewide recognition for her role in the Reform Commission, a commission that successfully advocated for campaign finance reform under Quinn, said John Jackson, a political scientist and visiting professor at the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute.

Simon: ‘Yes’ to lieutenant governor, if asked

JEFF ENGELHARDT
Daily Egyptian

SIU President Glenn Poshard made his message clear to faculty and students Thursday: “We will never close this university."

Poshard updated faculty and administrators about the university’s financial situation during the Board of Trustees meeting Thursday: “We will never close this university."

With the state about to collect income taxes in April, Poshard said he is more confident than he has been in a long time about making it through the fiscal year.

He said the cuts university deans and administrators made have put the university in the best situation possible, considering the dire financial situation.

“Think of the steps we have taken have been absolutely prudent and both campuses have pitched in and done a great job of holding the line,” Poshard said. “I think we’ve been ahead of the curve of taking steps necessary to … keep our doors open.”

Poshard also gave an early look into fiscal year 2011, saying the university should expect a significant reduction in state support.

COMMERCIALIZATION: A LOVE STORY

A variety of stuffed animals wait to be purchased on a Wal-Mart shelf. Other, smaller shops such as A Patch Florist, located at 217 S. Illinois Ave., say Valentine’s Day is one of their busiest times of the year, followed closely by Mother’s Day, said Patch employee Juanita Kimmel. “I call it hell week,” Kimmel said with a laugh. “I don’t see anything sweet about it.”

Derek Martin, a sociology professor at SIUC, said he does not think it is a bad thing to have a holiday that celebrates love and relationships, but says people should be good boyfriends or girlfriends year-round, instead of just one day a year. "If it becomes the end-all be-all that this (day) defines a relationship … I think that’s where Hallmark wins and we lose," he said.

JEFF ENGELHARDT
Daily Egyptian

On-campus wind turbine plans progress

On-campus wind turbine plans progress

Please see Cuts | 4
At 11:50 p.m. Sunday, Carbondale police responded to the 400 block of East Chestnut Street in reference to a report of an armed robbery. Officers learned that two days before the event, the suspect, a black male between 45-60 years old, 5 feet 6 inches tall and weighing 180 pounds with a slender build, round face and light skin color. The suspect was wearing a black stocking cap, black nylon coat, red T-shirt and blue jeans.

The suspect entered the business and stole store property, the report stated.

At 5:30 p.m. Monday, a tan or gold colored Pontiac left the roadway, struck a utility pole, caused damage and drove away, according to a report from the Carbondale Police Department. The vehicle sustained severe front-end damage and is missing part of the front bumper, the report stated. The vehicle was last seen traveling eastbound near the 400 block of West Main Street and the investigation is ongoing, the report stated.

At 11:30 a.m. Sunday, Carbondale police located a non-compliant suspect in the 1400 block of East Walnut Street, a department report said. Officers observed a black male, 20, of Carbondale, for failure to register as a sex offender, exceeding a a peace officer and criminal damage to property, the report stated. Jones is being held in the Jackson County Jail.

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Today
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The Daily Egyptian is published by the students 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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Upcoming Calendar Events

Dorthy Morris Scholarship of $1,500
- Deadline is March 1
- Available to traditional female of junior standing and minimum 3.0 GPA
- See the Web site and download application at: scholarships.siu.edu

C4 Juried Art Exhibition
- March 3 through March 16
- Sponsored by the School of Art and Design, Critical Forum

Guyon Scholarship of $1,500
- Deadline is March 1
- Available to non-traditional female of junior standing and minimum 3.0 GPA
- See the Web site and download application at: scholarships.siu.edu

Annual Shrove Pancake Supper
- March 30 at 6:30 p.m.
- Sponsored by the School of Art and Design

Love at the Glove
- 7 to 10 p.m. in the Surplus Gallery at the Glove Factory, admission: $5, $3 with a canned good donation
- Love-themed art show with music by Small Time London Thug
- Sponsored by L.O.A.D. (League of Art and Design)

Submit calendar items to the Daily Egyptian Newsroom, Communications 1247, at least two days before the event.
Gavin Wilson, of Carbondale, a freshman at John A. Logan College in Carterville, participates in a game of “skate” at the SIU skate park. “Skate is just like horse (in basketball),” said Keith Murray, of Carbondale, also a freshman at John A. Logan College. “The first person throws out a trick and the second person has to match it.” The SIU skate park has fallen into disrepair and many times the gates are padlocked, forcing area skaters to travel to skate parks in towns such as Carterville, Murray said.

DAN DWYER
DAILY EGYPTIAN
Grocery store representatives say liquor decision months away

**NICK JOHNSON** Daily Egyptian

“The City Council is likely months away from deciding whether to allow grocery stores to sell liquor; a representative from a local grocery store said at a press conference Thursday at Kroger’s Carbondale store.

Francis Murphy, general manager of Neighborhood Co-op Grocery, said the city is “likely months away from a decision,” based on a recent conversation with city Councilman Joel Fritzler.

Fritzler said he has submitted proposed liquor code revisions, which include omitting the requirements to grant licenses to grocery stores, to the city’s Liquor Advisory Board.

His suggestions will likely be discussed at the board’s March meeting, Fritzler said.

Current city code requires that any grocery store requesting a Class C, or retail, liquor license must construct a separate liquor sales area not accessible to the grocery area.

Additionally, the cap on available Class C liquor licenses is set at eight and there are currently licenses available, according to the city code.

Both sections of the code would need to be changed before grocery stores could sell beer and wine.

Kroeger’s Carbondale location plans to petition the city for the ability to allow grocery stores to sell liquor at the end of every one of its checkout aisles, company spokesman Tim McGurk said.

Representatives from local grocers Schnucks, Neighborhood Co-op and Schnucks general manager Grocery and Arnold’s Market were also present to outline their argument for allowing grocery stores in Carbondale to sell beer and wine.

Customers have been requesting local grocers sell beer and wine for convenience, for pairing with their food and for special occasions, store spokespeople said.

“This weekend, everyone is planning a romantic dinner. They would like to buy champagne at the same place they buy their food,” said Tom Eakin, general manager of Schnucks in Carbondale.

Dana Hallett, store manager for Kroger in Carbondale, said customers had to finish their Super Bowl party shopping elsewhere.

“Once again, we had everything but beer. If it’s important to our customers, it’s important to us,” she said.

Nick Johnson can be reached at nick39@siu.edu or 536-3311 ext. 263.

**CHARGES**

Illinois state law says, “A police officer is justified in the use of any force which he believes to be necessary to defend himself or another from bodily harm while making an arrest,” Wepsic said.

Under Illinois law, an officer is also justified in the use of deadly force “when he reasonably believes such force is necessary to prevent death or great bodily harm to himself or to another,” he said.

While no officer wants to use deadly force under any circumstance, the quick thinking and professional actions of all three officers involved ensured the safety of everyone involved, Carbondale Police Chief Andy O’Guinn said in a press release.

“The officers not only eliminated the threat of serious injury or death to a woman and her child, but in all likelihood subsequently saved the life of the suspect,” he said.

Nick Johnson can be reached at nick39@siu.edu or 536-3311 ext. 263.

**CUTS**

The university expects to receive the minimum funding level from the state required by the federal stimulus act, Pooshard said.

The cut would equal a 7 percent reduction from the current $236 million the university is scheduled to receive from the state.

The 2011 fiscal year budget would come to about $220 million.

To help soften the blow of less state support, Pooshard said the short-term borrowing legislation could be agreed on in the House as early as next week.

The legislation would allow the university to establish a line of credit and access it when the state is slow on payments.

Despite the financial struggles, the board voted to continue plans for building a wind turbine on the SIUC campus.

The turbine could save up to 7 percent on the university’s $9 million utility bill, said Phil Gatton, director of the Physical Plant.

The university has collected wind data for the past two years and has come to the conclusion there is enough activity for the turbine to be a feasible source of power, he said.

The turbine would not only save the university money, but would allow for multiple academic programs to incorporate turbine technology in their curriculum, Gatton said.

“There is going to be a lot more of these turbines popping up around the state and creating jobs; this would give students some hands-on experience,” Gatton said.

Funding for the turbine would come primarily from grants, with additional funding coming from performance contracts and possibly the green fee, he said.

The board asked Gatton to get more information on the steps necessary to keep our doors open.

Jeff Engelhardt can be reached at jengelh@siu.edu or 536-3311 ext. 254.

**SIMON**

“We now have caps on (the amount) someone can contribute to a campaign,” Jackson said. “We’ve never had that before. Sheila was an advocate for that.”

But Zorn wrote, “Sheila Simon’s experience in elective office is limited to three years on the City Council in Carbondale, where she lost a run for mayor in 2007,” and “though some blog commenters have mentioned her as a step-in for (Cohen), I doubt she was his ‘ready step-in fee’.”


Simon said she would do whatever she was called to do to help the Democratic ticket get elected.

“To the extent if there's anything I can do to help … I would do that, whether it's running for lieutenant governor, organizing fundraisers or getting friends out to vote,” she said.

The 38 members of the State Central Committee are charged with replacing a missing candidate, Jackson said.

Jackson said Simon would be the ideal fill-in for Cohen, as she would balance the ticket.

The State Central Committee is also looking for someone who is compatible with Quinn, and Simon also meets that requirement, Jackson said.

Simon and her husband, Perry, are also close friends with the governor, Jackson said.

“I think all that personal chemistry is important when you’re choosing a lieutenant governor,” he said.

Nick Johnson can be reached at nick39@siu.edu or 536-3311 ext. 263.
EDITORIAL CARTOON

Editorial Policy
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.

Find your personal true love this Valentine’s Day

CHRISTY HAMILTON
Wellness Center

Valentine’s Day can elicit emotions from excited, apprehensive and nervous to nauseous, angry, depressed or lonely. In fact, a person may have a few of these varied emotions all in the same week. Think of the pre-Valentine’s Day week of anticipation and expectations to the after Valentine’s Day disappointment and sometimes resentment.

Sounds pretty complex, doesn’t it? How many commercials or greeting cards ever realistically prepare any of us for all of these potential reactions? Many people choose to embrace being single. Perhaps they are recovering from a difficult breakup or have survived an abusive partner. Many men and women have realized that college seems to be less stressful for them if they postpone looking for or committing to a partner. I encourage those of you who have made this “choice” to rejoice and focus on the celebration of loving and caring for yourself. Celebrate your choice for where you are in your life today and find a way to pamper and treat yourself. Perhaps some people aren’t choosing to be single, but at the present time, a dating partner, potential romantic interest or committed partner just isn’t their realities. Perhaps a person is grieving the death of a loved one. In these examples, this may be a very challenging time. The barrage of heart-shaped boxes of chocolate and overpriced flowers can certainly bring up nagging feelings of loneliness, sadness, inadequacy or sorrow. If you can relate to these situations, or you know someone who is having a difficult time, it is important to know healthy ways to cope and to “repur-pose” this day.

• Think of doing an activity that you really enjoy but haven’t had time to do in a really long time.
• Watch a movie, paint, go to a cultural event, pamper yourself, read, write poetry, visit somebody, cook a new recipe, try an instructional DVD (Yoga, dance), get a massage, visit a nursing home or animal shelter or do a craft project.
• If you have suffered loss, spend time with someone who can help you use the day to focus on the celebration of your love and time together.
It is important to remember that no matter what, people’s relationship statuses do not define them. Plan time or an activity with another love in your life. This can include a friend, family member, pet or higher power. Focus on the celebration of love in all its variations. Not all love is or has to be romantic. If you are in a relationship, let go of high expectations. Don’t let your fantasy of this day ruin or dictate your personal happiness. If your supportive family or friends are far away and you are feeling overwhelmed by the loneliness, call one of the many campus counseling resources that are ready to help. These include: The Wellness Center (618-536-4441), Counseling Center (618-453-5371) or Clinical Center (618-453-2361).

Hamilton is the Wellness Center Coordinator of Sexual Health, Relationship Violence & Sexual Assault Programs and can be reached at wellness@siu.edu.

What the health is going on?

Find your personal true love this Valentine’s Day

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 300 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 voices@siude.com.

Notice
The Daily Egyptian is a “designated public forum.” Student editors have the authority to make all content decisions without censorship or advance approval. We reserve the right to not publish any letter or guest column.

Voices
Friday, February 12, 2010 • 5

www.siDE.com
Vancouver makes final preparations to welcome the Games

JACK BROOM
McClatchy Tribune

More than six years have passed since Jacques Rogge, head of the International Olympic Committee, stepped to a microphone in Prague to announce the result of a second-ballot, 56-53 vote: The 2010 Winter Olympics, the committee decided, would go not to South Korea or Austria, but to the Vancouver/Whistler area in which a BBC report explained is “situated in British Columbia province in Western Canada.”

Today, no one in the world of sport needs to be told where Vancouver is. More than 5,500 athletes and coaches from 80 plus countries are expected, along with 10,000 members of the news media and an estimated 250,000 other visitors. A worldwide television audience of 3 billion is expected, with an additional 1.5 billion tracking the Games online. More than 60,000 will be on other visitors.

A worldwide economic meltdow, to the highly personal, the October cancer death of Jack Poole, founding chairman of Vancouver’s Olympics organizing committee (VANOC).

A mountain of work and worry remains. Every detail of construction be completed on time? Will the Games’ transportation system smoothly move more than 100,000 people each day? How will anticipated protests color the world’s impressions of the event? Will nature deliver the optimal weather for such as Whistler and but also at the lower elevation snowboarding venue of Cypress Mountain? As the 20-foot-tall clock in downtown Vancouver ticks away the final days and minutes before the Games, John Furlong, VANOC CEO, likens the mood on his management team to that of an athlete who, although well-prepared, still feels “a nervous wobble” before competition. “Everybody is a little bit edgy and a bit nervous, and that’s good,” Furlong said in a year-end video statement. “We feel like we’ve earned the right for a great result.”

At the venues

The competition sites at Vancouver and Whistler are battle-tested. Many have hosted top-level events over the past couple of years, partly to work out bugs. But crews are busy putting up the additional temporary structures needed for the Olympics, such as grandstands at the base of ski-race courses, broadcast booths, “wave cabins” in which skiers prepare their equipment and more. Other workers are creating “a home away from home” for athletes at Olympic Villages in Vancouver and Whistler.

VANOC is “preparing for what we know will go wrong” and working out contingency plans for the unexpected, said Dave Cobb, VANOC’s deputy CEO.

Cobb said all Olympics face struggles in the first few days, as transporta- tion, security and logistical systems are put into operation. Screening of vehicles at security checkpoints, for example, will be slowest during the first days, when screeners and travel- ers learn the procedures.

Volunteers step up

Games volunteers, who will number more than 25,000, began arriving at Vancouver’s Pacific Coliseum to pick up their credentials in mid-January, along with their lighter “Wave Blue” tops and darker, navy pants.

During the Olympics, volunteers will perform a vast array of tasks, from taking tickets and ushering spectators, to more skilled and specialized services, such as providing medical care to athletes and visitors or maintaining competition venues.

An additional 4,500 volunteers will perform at, or help stage, the elaborate opening and closing ceremonies at B.C. Place.

“Volunteers are really the backbone of the Games,” said Allen Vansen, VANOC’s vice president of volunteer operations. “Vansen’s army of volunteers was selected from more than 75,000 applicants from 130 countries. Because these are Canadian Games and because nearly all volunteers had to arrange their own lodging, fewer than 1,000 are coming from outside Canada.

Traveling flame

The Olympic flame, which was flown in from Greece, will travel 28,000 miles back and forth across Canada. The journey started Oct. 30 in Victoria.

More than just an appetizer for the Games, the 106-day torch relay will be “probably the biggest event ever to have been staged in Canada,” Furlong said. By the time it concludes, the flame — carried on 3-pound torches — will have come within 100 kilometers (62 miles) of 90 percent of Canadian popu- lation, passing through more than 1,000 communities and points of interest.

Protests expected

Athletic competition and awards celebrations won’t be the only events drawing attention in B.C. Protests, and the law-enforcement response to them, will be part of the picture.

“I wouldn’t be honest if I said I wasn’t concerned at all about it,” Cobb said. “I know there will be people who will want the spotlight, and we don’t have a problem with it as long as they do it in a lawful, nonsus- capitive way.”

Demonstrators protesting Canadian treatment of native peoples have dis- rupted the torch relay several times in an Ontario town, a woman carry- ing the torch toppled on the ground and a demonstrator was charged with assault, though one reporter said the torchbearer may have fallen after bumping into a police officer respond- ing to the demonstration.

At each site, protesters have been greatly outnumbered by people cel- ebrating the torch and the Olympic spirit, a trend VANOC hopes will con- tinue once the Games are under way.

Canadian authorities have urged law enforcement to use restraint and let demonstrators have their say.

Security costs mounting

No aspect of the Games’ costs has risen more steeply than the price of trying to keep them safe. From a 2003 projection of $175 million, secu- rity costs have climbed to $900 million and concerns the Olympics could be a target of terrorism. Canada’s mili- tary, along with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and virtually every local, provincial and national law-enforcement agency, will be involved.

All told, it will cost billions to stage these Games, but determining the overall price depends on who’s count- ing and whether the cost of perma- nent public projects should be consid- ered an Olympic expense. VANOC has an operating budget of $1.8 billion Canadian (about $1.75 billion U.S.) and will spend $800 mil- lion on security.

That doesn’t include expenses by other agencies, or the complete cost of facilities created or improved for the Games.

For example, the VANOC venue budget accounts for just $63 million toward the $172 million Richmond Olympic Oval, built and owned by the city of Richmond. It will house long- track, speedskating during the Games and become a permanent sports-and- fitness complex operated by the city.

Other projects costing hundreds of millions of dollars apace, such as the expansion of Vancouver’s convention center and the extension of SkyTrain lines in the Vancouver area, are to be paid for with money from the Olympic Games, but backers say they shouldn’t be consid- ered costs of the Olympics because they address the area’s long-term needs.

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Horman had the third highest batting average for the Salukis last season as a freshman, hitting .322 and ranked second in hitting among MVC freshmen.

Junior outfielder Chelsea Held, a freshman for the MVC selection said she doesn't expect the team to struggle adjusting to the warmer weather in Miami.

"We have to do a season every year, so this year's no different than the last," Held said. "(We're) just gonna get out there and do what we know how to do."

Last season, Held was second on the team with a .556 average, had a team-high 144 total bases and led the team with five home runs.

The Salukis will get things kick off today against North Florida before playing UIC at 11 a.m. on Saturday and FIU at 1 p.m. on Sunday. They will wrap up the Comb Classic at 9 a.m. Sunday against Providence.

Timothy Hehn can be reached at thebgon@siu.edu or 536-3311 ext. 282.
Men’s Basketball
SIU hosts Purple Aces

Coming off two straight losses by five points or fewer, the SIU men’s basketball team is set to welcome Evansville to the SIU Arena Saturday. The Purple Aces (7-17, 1-13 Missouri Valley Conference) are coming off their first conference win of the season, upsetting second-place Wichita State Tuesday 63-62.

The Salukis (13-11, 5-9 MVC), meanwhile, dropped a 77-72 decision Wednesday to Missouri State that they once led by as many as nine points in the second half. Junior guard Justin Boceit said he has been frustrated with the team’s struggles as of late.

“We’re going through a stretch where we don’t know how to put up a full game together,” Boceit said. “The Aces have been led in scoring this season by freshman guard Colt Ryan, averaging 15.3 points per game.

Also averaging double figure scoring for the Aces is sophomore forward James Haarms, averaging 11.4 points, and sophomore guard Denier Holmes averaging 10.8 points per game.

Head coach Chris Lowrey said the team needs to learn how to step up and win close games.

“We’re not making excuses,” Lowrey said. “We’re young, but that’s an excuse.”

Freeman said the team must learn how to execute in the closing moments of close games.

“It’s not over until the buzzer sounds,” Freeman said.

The Salukis will welcome the Aces to the SIU Arena at 2:05 p.m. Saturday.

NASA

The SIU women’s basketball team extended its road losing streak to 22 games Thursday night in Omaha, Neb.

The Salukis, Bluejays (14-7, 9-3 Missouri Valley Conference) defeated the Salukis (14-8, 3-9 MVC) 63-44, marking the worst offensive performance of the season for SIU.

Head coach Missy Tibers said despite early foul trouble for three of the five starters, the Salukis just struggled to get into an offensive rhythm.

“We were just having trouble putting the ball in the basket, we were getting open shots,” Tibers said. “They were containable, but we were just having trouble scoring.”

Tibers said team’s have recently been game planning around the Salukis’ top offensive contributors, freshman guard Teri Oliver and senior guard Christine Presswood. And nobody else has stepped up to compensate.

The Bluejays had eight different players contribute offensively — led by junior forward Sam Schuetz with a game-high 17 points along with six rebounds and three assists. Junior center Kell Nelson added 16 points and five rebounds.

Oliver’s 15 points and senior guard forward Stephany Neptune’s eighth double-double of the year — 11 points and 11 boards — topped the stat sheet for SIU.

Presswood was held in check offensively for the third time in the last six days. Following four straight games with 20 or more points, Presswood has combined for a total of 12 points in the team’s last three games after scoring five points against Creighton.

Despite an immediate 7-0 run and points on their first three possessions, the Salukis struggled to find their shot in the first half — shooting 18 percent from the field.

Starting the game 9-34 from the field, the Bluejays also had difficulties getting into an offensive rhythm in the opening 20 minutes, but would put together a 20-6 run in response to the Salukis’ initial burst.

SIU managed only two field goals in the opening half’s final 14 minutes, and did not sink a single bucket in the final nine minutes leading up to the intermission.

The Bluejays came out in the second half for more efficient, closing out the game shooting 50 percent. The Salukis could not right the ship and finished 8-33 from the field in the second half.

For a team that relies heavily on transition points and support from beyond the arc, the Salukis found no success in either category. Off the game, SIU shot 3-15 from 3-point territory and tallied zero fast-break points.

Oliver said Creighton was face guarding both her and Presswood all game.

“We were just trying to do what we could to get our shots, but they weren’t falling... it was an off night all together for us,” Oliver said.

The Bluejays had the slight edge over the Salukis rebounding, 48-40, and only found six more points in the paint than SIU, 22-16.

Neptune said the team started the game with good intensity, but struggled to maintain that same level throughout.

“We were up by nine at the beginning of the game, and then I don’t know what happened,” Neptune said.

“They got few easy buckets and they got some offensive rebounds... and after their run we just couldn’t score like we were to start out.”

SIU will remain on the road at 2:05 p.m. Saturday as the team travels on Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. The Salukis had their best game offensively against Drake on Jan. 14th en route to an 80-60 victory at home.

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SWIMMING & DIVING

Groome shatters MVC 500 free record

Freshman makes waves in day one

STILE T. SMITH
Daily Egyptian

SIU freshman Kirsten Groome set a new school, pool and Missouri Valley Conference record with a 200 free time of 4.44.48 in day one of the MVC Championships.

Groome’s time places her inside the top 20 in the country. After one day and five events of competition, the Salukis sit in second place with 168 points, trailing only Missouri State, who finished the day with 251 points.

Senior Therese Mattsson finished in second place in the 50 free with a time of 23.77. Senior Towah Gapsarovitch was right behind in third at 23.96.

The Salukis finished in second place in the 200 freestyle relay, as the team of Gapsarovitch, Mattsson, Marcella Teixeira and Susan Minkel clocked in at 1:35.70.

The Salukis will continue the MVC Championships at 11 a.m. today at the Edward J. Shea Natatorium.

SOFTBALL

SIU prepares to open season with confidence

STILE T. SMITH
Daily Egyptian

The SIU softball team will have the weekend off after getting away from the snow of southern Illinois when it travels to Miami for the Combat Classic.

It won’t be about the sun and sand, though, as the Salukis will take on North Florida, the University of Illinois-Chicago, No. 20 University of Massachusetts, Florida International University and Providence College.

Head coach Kerri Blaylock said she thinks her team is prepared to start the season.

“We’ve practiced really hard, we’re doing all the disciplines well,” Blaylock said. “I want to see us come out and swing the bats aggressively: I want us to pitch well, because we’ve looked good.”

Blaylock said all three pitchers, juniors Danielle Glisson and Alex Peters and freshman Brittany Lang, will see the mound in the five games, but she’s not sure what the rotation will be.

The marquee matchup of the Combat Classic will likely come when the Salukis, who were picked to finish second in the Missouri Valley Conference and picked up votes in the USA Today/NFCA Top 25 Presseason polls, take on No. 20 UMass.

Blaylock said she doesn’t think the players think as much about the opponents as they think about what they’re doing.

“I honestly think if you asked our kids, they wouldn’t even know they’re ranked,” Blaylock said. “They kind of just go out and play. I think the coaching staff probably knows more. I just think we’re gonna go out and go after them.”

Blaylock said in the coming weeks the team would play No. 4 Michigan and No. 23 Florida State, so the team has to be ready to face talented opponents.

Sophomore shortstop Haley Gorman said if the team plays like it has in practice, it will have no struggles in Miami.

“We look good and seem ready; so I’m hoping that’s how we come out and play,” Gorman said. “We just need to come out ready and with confidence.”

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TRACK & FIELD

Salukis ready to face all challengers at Grand Valley State

TIMOTHY HEHN
Daily Egyptian

The SIU track and field team will head to Grand Valley State University today, with the women’s team looking to defend their No. 14 ranking.

The Salukis are coming off a huge meet last week that included 15 first-place finishes and will compete against a slew of other teams in Allendale, Mich., this weekend.

Following last week’s performance in the McDonald’s Institutional in Carbondale, the women’s team is now the No. 14 ranked team in the nation according to the Top 25 poll released Tuesday by the U.S. Track and Field Cross Country Association.

Sophomore thrower Jeneca McColl has been a big part of that ranking, accounting for 35.96 of the 62.68 points the women’s team received in the poll.

“The higher we get ranked, the more excited the other girls get and want to contribute as well,” head coach Connie Price-Smith said. “They just need to relax and let it happen, not necessarily push so much because we are in a great position and their potential level is high right now.”

The rest of the throwers could have a big meet as well, as they will be competing on a clement circle for the weight throw event. The harder surface is more conducive to speed and traction, leading to faster windups before the throw and adding to the overall distance.

Sophomore J.C. Lambert said he hopes to hit better marks in the weight throw for the men, and junior Gwen Berry is “about ready to explode” in the shot put and weight throw this weekend, according to throws coach John Smith.

The pole vaulters could also be poised for success due to the GVSU track. They will be competing on two raised runways over turf, which is considered a little more bouncy and has a little more spring, adding more speed to the vaulter’s pre-jump run, according to pole vault coach Dan Digman.

The Saluki jumpers are coming off a big meet as well. The women won first place in all three jumping events, with sophomore Malakiah Love taking first in the long and triple jumps, and freshman Casey Ogaard taking first in the high jump. The men, led by sophomore Maxim Bakana’s first place finish in the triple jump, also performed favorably last weekend.

The Saluki runners could have their hands full this weekend, as they will go head-to-head with Big Ten teams Purdue and Michigan State.

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