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MISSISSIPPIAN

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI | SERVING OLE MISS AND OXFORD SINCE 1911

NEW SPIKE LEE JOINT: OLD STORY GETS NEW MEANING

The film, "BlacKkKlansman," tells the story of a black detective who infiltrated the Klan in the '70s. Released a year after riots in Charlottesville, it comments on today's political climate.



SEE PAGE 9

REBEL ROLL CALL: RECEIVERS LIVING UP TO THE HYPE

Coach Phil Longo struck gold when he coined the term 'Nasty Wide Outs.' This year, the group of receivers known for its infamous NWO belt is poised to prove last year wasn't a fluke.



SEE PAGE 12

Alcohol safety ordinance vote postponed



PHOTO: CHRISTIAN JOHNSON

The Oxford Board of Aldermen delays its impending vote on the Downtown District ordinance on Tuesday. The board considered voting today on the controversial legislation but ultimately didn't because of increased public concerns.

BLAKE ALSUP
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The Oxford Board of Aldermen postponed a planned vote on the highly contentious alcohol safety ordinance at its monthly meeting Tuesday night.

Board member Janice

Antonow suggested the delay, citing substantive unread emails from citizens regarding the ordinance that were received as recently as earlier that day.

"In fairness to the people who sent these emails, I think we really need to postpone the vote for two weeks so that we have a chance to consider

some of the information," Antonow said.

The board agreed, and the vote will be held at a later meeting date.

More than half of the audience got up from their seats and left the room immediately when the vote was postponed. Many had anticipated a vote Tuesday night.

Mayor Robyn Tannehill made her own statement regarding unread comments from concerned citizens while introducing the ordinance vote on the agenda.

"I have received numerous emails – that I haven't even gotten to read

SEE **ORDINANCE** PAGE 4

ASB proposal revived in landslide vote

DEVNA BOSE
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A "homecoming king" will potentially join the homecoming court this fall after the Associated Student Body passed a resolution to override a veto on a bill creating the title during the senate's first formal meeting of the semester Tuesday night.

The legislation, first presented in spring 2018 and created by former senators Nekkita Beans, Chris Cross and Zacchaeus McEwen and current senator Gabi Wells, was initially vetoed by former ASB president Dion Kevin in April after the bill was accidentally published in the ASB constitution online before full approval.

"We proposed this piece of legislation as a way to provide an opportunity for more Ole Miss students who identify themselves as males to get more involved on campus and feel included," Wells said. "Homecoming is a long time celebrated event that we want to make more accessible and inviting to all Ole Miss students."

Wells said the reasoning behind the bill was driven by inclusivity.

"I think having the position of homecoming king will allow more students who are weary of running for Mr. Ole Miss a chance to put themselves out there," she said. "I hope more camaraderie among the students results from this change as well as an open door to the possibility of more positions."

According to ASB Public Relations Chair Jackie Kruljac, the bill was centered around representation on campus.

"It became pretty clear (the veto) was going to be overridden," Kruljac said.

Fall Convocation honors William Faulkner



PHOTOS: ALEXIS T. RHODEN

LEFT: Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter introduces Jay Watson prior to his discussion about William Faulkner's impact on the university at the 2018 Fall Convocation. **RIGHT:** The Ole Miss Class of 2022 convocation coin, which features William Faulkner on its front, matches the freshman common reading experience book. Keynote speaker Jay Watson discussed Faulkner's impact on the university.

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WE SHOULD EXPLAIN...

our new look

For those new to campus, welcome. And for those returning, you might have noticed our new design when picking up the paper Monday morning. We have released a new flag after several years of using the previous design to better reflect the DM’s brand identity that we introduced to our readers nearly a year ago. You’ll see this new look throughout all of our social media platforms, our newsletter and our website. We believe that this modern look matches our digital focus and our aim to build on our digital footprint. Our design goal was to find a typeface that better matched our values, direction and platform as well as something that was crisp, simple and effective both in print and online. We believe that this new look confirms our commitment to our readers – serving our campus and community first by providing the news. We hope you like our new look.

**HAYDEN BENGE
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Letters should be typed, double-spaced and no longer than 300 words. Letters may be edited for clarity, space or libel. Third-party letters and those bearing pseudonyms, pen names or “name withheld” will not be published. Publication is limited to one letter per individual per calendar month.

Letters should include phone and email contact information so that editors can verify authenticity. Letters from students should include grade classification and major; letters from faculty and staff should include title and the college, school or department where the person is employed.



**MISSISSIPPI
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MEMBER NEWSPAPER

HOMECOMING

continued from page 1

“There was mostly worry of representation, both for and against it. You could argue that (the bill) misrepresented Ole Miss on both sides.”

After senators voiced their concerns, the resolution to override the veto passed with a 42-4 vote.

As per Senate rules, because the veto override was not voted

on last year, it was set to be voted on at the first formal meeting of this year.

The homecoming king position will not be realized until Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Brandi Hephner LaBanc, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Melinda Sutton Noss and Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter sign the legislation, which, according to ASB President Elam Miller, is “going to have to happen quickly with campaigning starting on

“I think having the position of homecoming king will allow more students who are weary of running for Mr. Ole Miss a chance to put themselves out there. I hope more camaraderie among the students results from this change as well as an open door to the possibility of more positions.”

Gabi Wells
ASB Senator

Friday.”
Campaigning for all homecoming court positions begins Friday.

Miller said he was not made aware that the Senate was set to vote on this legislation at Tuesday’s meeting. ASB posted a list

of which items would be coming to the floor to its Facebook page after the Tuesday night meeting had already begun.

“The reason for the last-minute formal meeting was to swear in (ASB Attorney General) Austin Fiala,” he said. “It wasn’t their intention this (bill) be voted on (at the) last minute.”

ASB Chief of Staff for the Vice President Brady Kies acknowledged miscommunication between branches on the night of the vote.

COLUMN

The Controversial Conjugation

JOSH BAKER
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On Jan. 6 of last year, noted political commentator and podcaster Dave Rubin and his friend, economist Eric Weinstein, met in Rubin’s home studio. They discussed many of the then-popular theories about the Trump presidency that had yet to come to fruition. For two hours, they examined the issues in detail for Rubin’s podcast, satisfying the skyrocketing demand for long-formatted discussions that examine issues television shows simply can’t handle.

Weinstein and Rubin had spoken previously, in 2016, and had a similarly thought-provoking discussion. Rubin, a former progressive and a member of “The Young Turks” network, had recently turned to a far more libertarian view of society and has since been called a “classical liberal” because of his ardent support for free speech. Weinstein, however, has remained far more politically left of Rubin, though he differs from today’s mainstream Democratic focus on identity politics and progressivism.

The two opened their conversation by discussing Weinstein’s educational background, which is deeply rooted in mathematics, physics and finance. Specifically, they talked about the struggles Weinstein had in college at Penn before earning his Ph.D. at Harvard. Rubin and Weinstein then transitioned into political dialogue, demonstrating remarkable civility as they debated immigration policy, Trump’s rhetoric and Peter Thiel.

Rubin pivoted the conversation to ask Weinstein about

his response to the 2017 version of the Edge Foundation’s annual question, “What scientific term or concept ought to be more widely known?”

“In 2017, I chose the Russell Conjugation,” Weinstein said. “The thing that I was searching for: What words should I use that sound like synonyms but, emotionally, are antonyms? Turns out Bertrand Russell had been here earlier and, in 1948, was on the BBC. (There) he looked at three constructions: ‘I am firm’ (positive empathy), ‘You are obstinate’ (neutral empathy) and ‘He, she or it is a pig-headed fool’ (negative empathy).”

A seemingly simple linguistic object, the Russell Conjugation demonstrates how the use of emotionally charged language can influence one’s point of view. It can easily explain why so many claims of “fake news” are spouted by both sides of the aisle.

It’s become harder and harder to fake objective journalism through the use of false or misleading information. The rise of organizations like Snopes and FactCheck, as well as the adoption of in-house fact-checkers at major publications, has virtually eliminated false stories.

Yet the question remains: If something objectively happens, how can two different publications have such obvious differences in reporting? Many publications claim to be closer to the truth than others are but fail to sound remotely alike.

Weinstein further elaborated by pointing out, “I like the fact that someone is firm and steadfast, and I dislike the fact that someone is pig-headed. And then I realized this could be weaponized. Maybe the newspapers

were, in fact, conjugating president, strongman and dictator.”

The answer lies within the tool itself. The conjugation and many other linguistic weapons are used to persuade readers, leaving them unable to comprehend how their neighbors could possibly disagree on the “facts” they see so clearly.

Weinstein added, “What I came to understand is that the big boys don’t play around with faking the facts. What they realized is that we have multiple opinions on everything, but our emotional state selects which opinion.”

Most of us are completely unaware of the manipulation and linguistic sleights of hand being pulled.

Publications have had the ability to alter perception of an objective event through, at minimum, ethically questionable grounds. That is changing thanks to the work of people like Frank Luntz, an American political commentator and public opinion guru. Luntz recognized, through his use of focus groups and other psychological studies, that the Russell Conjugation sets the dominant tone for political debates, and the acceptance or rejection of political positions is almost entirely dependent on emotion rather than facts.

Like many faltering institutions, print media appears to become more and more violent in its dying throes, leaning on tricks and an assumption of the stupidity of its readership. Much of the political polarization of today can easily be attributed to the aggressive rise in reporting on a far smaller number of noteworthy events. How many different stories do you really hear on a weekly basis? Crime rates have steadily fallen. The

global poverty rate has more than halved. More women than men are now enrolled in college. Yet few realize how far the world has come.

It’s time modern journalism surrenders its abusive, malevolent monopoly on being the sense-making instrument of people. A far more objective and

non-manipulative return to form must occur for society to correct the course it only recently embarked on if we ever hope to address the serious issues of today.

Josh Baker is a junior economics and mathematics major from Houston, Texas.



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The University of Mississippi Department of Parking & Transportation (DPT) in Oxford, Mississippi hereby gives notice of enactment of the University’s Traffic and Parking Regulations for the 2018-2019 academic year. These rules and regulations are enacted by the Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, State of Mississippi, and are effective from and after July 1, 2018. The full text of such rules and regulations are available at www.olemiss.edu/parking the website of DPT.

ORDINANCE
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yet – from people as late as 10 minutes before I walked into this meeting, and we’re continuing to read and continuing to be thoughtful about the input that we’ve received from all of you,” Tannehill said.

Although no vote occurred, two changes were made to the proposal.

Alderman Rick Addy proposed removing a phrase from Section 14-103 that would require businesses covered under the section to pay a \$75 processing fee for events with 150 people or more.

After a request from Antonow, a sentence about security cameras was added back to the ordinance. That sentence in Section 14-100 had been included in a previous draft and was previously removed because of its unclear wording.

The sentence now reads, “Other than minimum footage required during an inspection to determine whether the cameras are present and functioning properly, video footage shall not be required to be turned over to the authorities absent a lawful order for such production.”

The revision requests from Addy and Antonow were accepted.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Mississippi issued a lengthy statement on Tuesday addressing problems it has with some sections of the ordinance that were brought up by aldermen in the meeting.

“We believe the ordinance poses a serious threat to the



PHOTO: CHRISTIAN JOHNSON

Mayor Robyn Tannehill and Alderman Ulysses Howell listen to a concerned resident of Oxford during the Board of Aldermen meeting on Tuesday.

constitutional rights of Oxford’s citizens and UM students, including, but not limited to, the rights to privacy and freedom of association,” the statement read in regards to the provisions requiring mandatory surveillance cameras.

That letter also addressed the section that requires venues to “notify the police chief five days in advance of the event and pay a \$75 dollar processing fee

per event,” reporting that it “appears to be specifically targeted at an Oxford business known for its events sponsored by and for Oxford’s black students and citizens.”

Dec Hobbs, an attorney with the Harris Shelton law firm who is representing several bar and restaurant owners, said he was pleased that the vote was postponed and the revisions were made.

“But we still have concerns about ... the ordinance, like the fact that every public access area of a bar or restaurant is going to have to be covered by a camera,” Hobbs said. “To be quite candid, some of my bigger clients can absorb that cost, but I think it’ll put a lot of the smaller ones in Oxford out of business.”

Tonight’s meeting comes at a time in which the board is receiving criticism from local organizations and businesses.

Hobbs released a letter on behalf of several Oxford businesses on Tuesday afternoon raising concerns with the ordinance. It was undersigned by The Lyric Oxford, Round Table, The Levee, Southern Craft Stove + Tap, Lenora’s Restaurant, Funkys Pizza & Daiquiri Bar, Proud Larry’s and The Library Sports Bar.

The letter’s primary focus was the proposed surveillance camera measures and asked that the city of Oxford and board of aldermen research the cost-effectiveness in the same manner the businesses would if they

were to purchase them independently.

“The city has stated that many of the bars and restaurants already have enough cameras, but this is not true, based on the breadth of the proposed ordinance,” the statement said. “Several bars and restaurants have received quotes of \$10,000 to \$20,000 for these broad camera requirements. It is likely that city-wide installation costs will exceed six figures.”

Businesses also took issue with the provision requiring every public access area of a bar to be surveyed by a camera, arguing that it is “a substantial and unwelcome invasion into our patrons’ privacy.”

“There is legitimate concern that some patrons simply will not visit the Square rather than subject their every movement to surveillance,” the businesses’ statement said. “The fact that no top-50 U.S. metropolitan area requires private camera systems in bars and restaurants is telling.”

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New students welcomed at Fall Convocation ceremony

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Hundreds of Ole Miss freshmen, transfer students and faculty members filled The Pavilion on Tuesday night for the annual fall convocation, a ceremony welcoming new students to campus.

The convocation centered around the “common read,” a tradition since the first convocation, which is the book gifted to all new students at orientation that they’re tasked with reading for discussion in EDHE and honors classes.

This year’s common read is an Ole Miss special edition of “Collected Stories of William Faulkner,” which includes 42 short stories that were hand-picked by Faulkner as his best.

“This marks the first time in the eight-year history of the program that the common read is not a book by a living author, and this means that your convocation speaker is not the common read author but, instead, a common read reader, just like all of you,” keynote address speaker Jay Watson said.

Watson, an English professor at Ole Miss, also holds the title of Howry Professor of Faulkner Studies.

Watson emphasized that Faulkner, who never graduated



PHOTO: ALEXIS T. RHODEN

Keynote speaker Jay Watson discusses the collection of stories by William Faulkner that all freshmen will read this year at the 2018 Fall Convocation

high school or college, should not be looked to as an example of educational success. Instead, Watson urged students to learn from Faulkner’s artistry and innovation.

Freshman biology major Reagan Husband said she felt encouraged by this idea.

“At first I was scared that everybody else was going to be smarter than me, but from listening tonight, success is not just about being smart,” Husband

said. “William Faulkner didn’t even graduate college.”

Watson also highlighted the concept that intelligence takes on many shapes, including that of creativity.

“William Faulkner is a great storyteller,” Watson said. “Faulkner educates. He leads us out into other lives and other experiences and other worlds.”

Watson explained that Faulkner pushes his readers outside of their comfort zones through

his invention of new vocabulary and storytelling techniques.

Watson claimed that, in this way, Faulkner’s goal is synonymous with the function of the university – to teach through exposure to a variety of perspectives.

Watson also discussed the startling disconnect between Faulkner’s personal and public lives. He said, “Learn from the artist this year, not the man.”

In his final piece of advice, Watson said, “As you set off on

your own journeys of growth and discovery, I wish you all the pleasure, the profit and even the occasional growing pain that such an education holds.”

Following the keynote address, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Brandi Hephner LaBanc presented the Class of 2022 with convocation coins.

Convocation coins have become an Ole Miss tradition that students receive to mark the beginning of their college careers.

“This year, the coin depicts Oxford native and world-renowned author William Faulkner,” LaBanc said. “As Faulkner once said, ‘To understand the world, you must first understand a place like Mississippi.’”

Freshmen business majors Garrett Dillon and Sarah McClain agreed that the fall convocation helped students gain a greater understanding of the university and that it was a positive start to their time at Ole Miss.

“Our teacher wanted us to come to convocation because he wants to make EDHE all about relationships,” McClain said. “We can build relationships with our peers instead of just being in a classroom and not ever saying anything.”

“It’s a good kickoff to school, with everyone being together and getting to know exactly what Ole Miss is about,” Dillon said.

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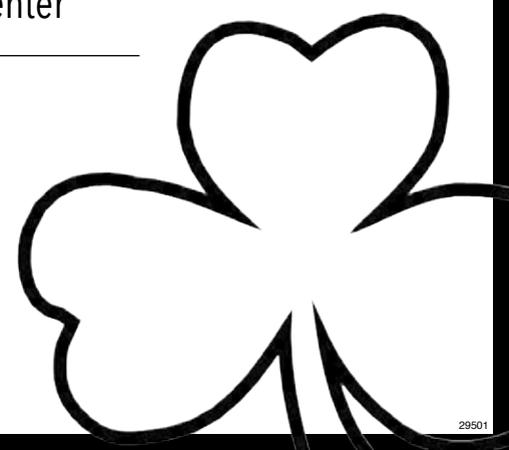
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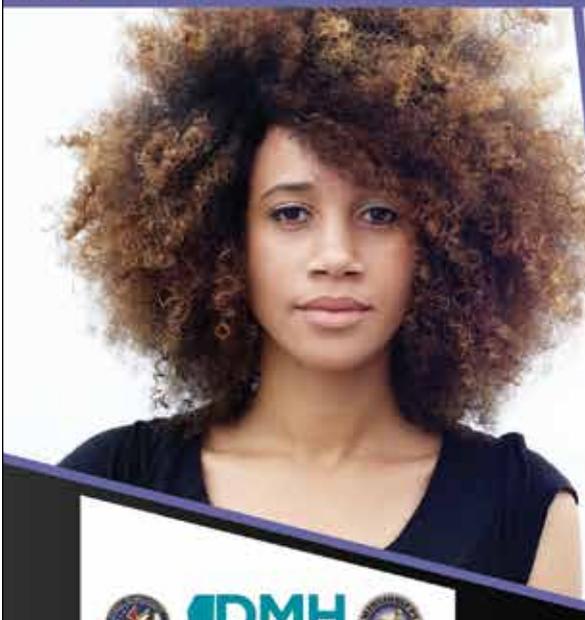


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Spike Lee's 'BlacKkKlansman' recalls past, critiques today

LIAM NIEMAN
THEDMFEATURES@GMAIL.COM

The latest Spike Lee joint, "BlacKkKlansman," tells the "crazy, outrageous, incredible" story of a black man who infiltrated the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1970s. Although the film is set nearly 30 years in the past, its narrative and themes resound in today's political climate, and the kicker is that it's based on a true story. "BlacKkKlansman" depicts the life of Ron Stallworth (John David Washington), the first black police officer in Colorado Springs, Colorado. After Stallworth is transferred to the intelligence department, he finds an ad in the paper for the local chapter of the Ku Klux Klan and makes a call in which he pretends to have interest in joining the organization.

Stallworth's partner Flip Zimmerman (Adam Driver) goes undercover as "Ron Stallworth" while the real Stallworth keeps up the identity over the phone. The investigation leads them to the center of Colorado Springs' network of white nationalists, a meeting with Grand Wizard David Duke (Topher Grace) and a rush to thwart a plan by the Klan.

Despite the intelligence Stallworth gathers, his investigation brings pressure from the police chief and a confusing romantic relationship with Patrice Dumas (Laura Harrier), the president of the Colorado College Black Student Union and a locally known activist.

Like the officers whose story it tells, the film investigates and interrogates a wide range of topics including police brutality, white nationalism, racism and the resistance of the black community to all these facets of white supremacy.

Recently, left-wing activists have accused the media of normalizing the radical viewpoints of white supremacists by publishing profiles of white nationalists, including one published in The New York Times in November 2017. Lee seems to ignore this criticism and deeply



explores the everyday lives of white nationalists.

The film also has an element of black power organizing, but scenes of the Klan dominate screen time. This intense focus on the Klan's activities — which include cross burnings, discussion of plans to kill black people and countless racial slurs — does make the film hard to watch at times.

But Lee's retelling of Stallworth's story is also about resistance from the inside. An outsider to both the obviously racist Klan and the Colorado Springs Police Department, which has a history of brutality against the city's black residents, Stallworth is able to infiltrate both organizations.

Lee's film could be viewed as a crime drama, because the

film continually shifts between the detectives' and the Klan members' perspectives, creating tension and suspense as both groups try to uncover each other's secrets and plans. Like other Lee movies, however, the primary intent of "BlacKkKlansman" is to send a powerful message its viewers.

The movie seemed to drag on until its final minutes, during

which the pace picked up with startling intensity. I was speechless, breathing heavy and on the verge of tears. In near silence, I could hear similar reactions from the crowd, even though there weren't more than 10 people in the theatre.

Though the story "BlacKkKlansman" tells happened decades ago, Lee's presentation of the narrative feels closely connected to current events, especially when one considers its release date, which was right around the one-year anniversary of the white nationalist march and ensuing riots in Charlottesville, Virginia, in August 2017.

The film's script, written by Charlie Wachtel, David Rabinowitz, Kevin Willmot and Lee, includes several direct allusions to politics in the era of Donald Trump.

For example, in the film's opening scene, a talking-head Southerner named Dr. Kennebrew Beauregard (Alec Baldwin) refers to black people as "murderers and rapists" in the way that Trump referred to Mexican immigrants when he said, "They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people."

Beauregard makes a reference to "superpredators," a word lifted directly from a 1996 speech given by Hillary Clinton in support of increased policing.

As these references came up, they seemed a bit forced. But, when considering the film as a whole, they were small, necessary links to connect Stallworth's story to the present day.

"BlacKkKlansman" features plenty of '70s black culture, such as funk and soul music, as well as casual references to Blaxploitation films such as "Shaft" and "Coffy." Visually, Lee uses split screens and fonts that allude to '70s style, and the film has a color palette full of wood paneling and dark leather.

With details like this, "BlacKkKlansman" is somehow as specific to the '70s as it is to the present day. It is as thrilling and important a story now as it was then.

PHOTO COURTESY: "BLACBKLANSMAN" FACEBOOK PAGE

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Revamped Landshark defense making a splash in practice

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As the Rebels' first test of the season draws closer, the Ole Miss football team is putting in work to succeed on the gridiron.

The Ole Miss defense will face quite the challenge when facing the Red Raiders' offense, which finished the 2017 season at No. 9 in the nation for passing yards per game and No. 16 in the nation for total yards per game. However, head coach Matt Luke said he likes where the Rebel defense is and feels that his players are up to the challenge.

"I think we're deeper. We have more guys that can contribute that are pushing for playing time," Luke said. "I think we're a little bit faster and ... (our) knowledge is better."

He also mentioned that the Rebels' communication is better this year, but he wants to see how the defense performs in a game. When asked about the injuries to the secondary, Luke said he felt good about his players and that cornerback may be one of the deepest positions on the roster.

Coach Luke addressed the defensive line regarding the depth chart and rotations.

"I think it'll be a committee. You'll have starters, and everybody makes a big deal about that," Luke said. "But on the defensive line you have to roll people through, and you have to do that to stay fresh."

Coach Luke isn't the only person who's been impressed



Head coach Matt Luke goes through drills with players during the first practice of the 2018 season this summer.

PHOTO: CHRISTIAN JOHNSON

by what he has seen from the defense throughout camp. Wide receiver D.K. Metcalf gave the defense plenty of praise, talking about how well the defense

practices against one of the top offenses in the country.

"They're doing well against us every day, so I just can't wait until they play against Texas

Tech," Metcalf said.

Defensive tackle Benito Jones said he feels good about the way camp has gone so far and said that the rotation on the D-line is looking strong. Jones finished the 2017 season with 18 solo tackles, 1.5 sacks and 7.5 tackles for loss.

"We just have to lock in and take what they give us," Jones said. "Stop the run and win."

This dedicated effort to stopping the run means that the secondary will need to pick up the slack in coverage. Defensive

back Javien Hamilton reiterated Luke's point about the secondary when he was asked about the defensive backs being left on islands with such a heavy emphasis on stopping the run this season.

"(In 2017) we played a lot of man-to-man on the back end, so it shouldn't be a lot of pressure, even though (Luke) is going to load the box a little bit more to stop the run," Hamilton said. "We've got great guys in that DB room."

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Rebel Roll Call: Wilkins' exit provides opportunity

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In Phil Longo's first season at the helm of the Ole Miss offense, the Rebels relied heavily on a high-flying passing attack. That reliance proved to be successful. With the return of a deep receiving core and efficient quarterback Jordan Ta'amu, nothing about the Rebels' passing game looks poised to change in Longo's second year.

However, Rebel running backs will play a vital role during the 2018 season, and Rebel fans can look forward to a more balanced scheme.

When Shea Patterson went down for the 2017 season with an injury, Longo adapted to his circumstances. No longer able to rely on the star power of Patterson through the air, the Rebels averaged 164.4 rushing yards per game with Ta'amu at quarterback after averaging only 94.7 in Patterson's first six starts.

Additional responsibility makes this season's backfield all the more interesting. During the 2017 season, Jordan Wilkins, who has since been selected in the fifth round of the NFL Draft by the Indianapolis Colts, returned to the field for his senior year to rush for 1,011 yards on 6.5 yards per carry, making him the first 1,000-yard rusher for Ole Miss since 2009. Now that Wilkins has taken his talents to Lucas Oil Stadium, the Rebels are looking for players to step up and fill the hole he left in the backfield.

A flock of players hope to do



PHOTO: CHRISTIAN JOHNSON

Running back Isaiah Woullard practices with a coach during the first Rebel football practice of the season.

exactly that. In the latest release of Ole Miss' running back depth chart, junior college transfer Scottie Phillips was listed at the No. 1 spot, ahead of junior Eric Swinney and true freshman Isaiah Woullard. Phillips averaged 123.6 rushing yards per game last season at Jones County, and coaches and teammates have

raved about his physical attributes and quiet demeanor.

"We have talented running backs in the backfield," Ta'amu said. "We're looking for that firm running back that can do the job — who can block and run."

Though Phillips seems to have locked down the starting

role, Swinney and Woullard will certainly get snaps in Longo's offense. During the 2017 season, Wilkins handled 42 percent of the team's carries. With no proven replacement for Wilkins, duties are expected to be divided in the backfield.

Swinney had a solid season in 2017, managing to record 195 yards on 41 carries while also recovering from two seasons cut short by injury. Achieving similar or improved averages would put him in line for more touches in 2018. Woullard, on the other hand, was a 2-star recruit only months ago, but his impressive showing in camp has vaulted him up the depth chart and made it possible for him to make an immediate impact.

A key player who will be missing from the field, at least for the beginning of the season, is D'Vaughn Pennamon, a 5-foot-11, 238-pound bruiser who dislocated his knee in last

year's outing against Texas A&M. Pennamon was a change of pace from the shifty, smaller backs in the Ole Miss backfield, and the Rebels will miss his production. Senior D.K. Buford will look to step into the role of the short-yardage back now, as he is the only experienced back taller than 5-feet-9-inches and heavier than 215 pounds.

"You know, it's four good guys that can go," wide receiver DaMarkus Lodge said. "I think they're just going to elevate their game."

Despite the absence of Wilkins and Pennamon, there is an air of optimism about the run game from the rest of the roster.

"Our running game is going to be a lot better," Lodge said. "Even though we had a 1,000-yard back last year, I just think that the offensive line has an edge now and the running backs have motivation because of the competition."

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Rebel Roll Call: ‘Nasty Wide Outs’ motivated by past wins

JOHN MACON GILLESPIE
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Ole Miss has been dubbed “Wide Receiver U” and perhaps rightfully so.

The Rebels’ receiving corps, nicknamed the “Nasty Wide Outs,” looks to be one of the deepest and most talented in the nation heading into the 2018 season. Offensive coordinator Phil Longo’s passing attack, headlined by names like A.J. Brown, D.K. Metcalf and DaMarkus Lodge, has the potential to torch opposing secondaries this season.

“The wide receiving corps, they’re one of the most talented in the country,” head coach Matt Luke said. “They’re very talented, unselfish and they work really, really hard.” Luke’s love of his wide receivers doesn’t just stem from their performance on the field but also from their desire to see their fellow receivers succeed.

“They’re very driven,” Luke said. “They push each other to be better, and that’s what I like about those guys. You know they all want the ball every snap, but it’s fun to see when one of them catches a touchdown – the other two chasing after them. I think that’s a unique blend of guys that have that swagger, but they also pull for each other. I think that’s huge.”

The Rebel receivers’ support of each other stems from their common



FILE PHOTO: TAYLAR TEEL

A.J. Brown celebrates his touchdown during the wgame against the Louisiana-Lafayette Ragin’ Cajuns during the 2017 season. Ole Miss won 50-22.

goal – being the best offense in the country.

“(Our expectation is) being the best in the nation,” Metcalf said. “In my opinion, no one can stop our offense.”

Considering Metcalf is from Oxford and Brown is a Starkville native, a little extra emotion was involved in the 2017 Egg Bowl win for Ole Miss. Luke and some of his players have credited this win with

giving the Rebels momentum coming into 2018.

“There was a lot of emotion in that game,” Lodge said. “A.J. being from Starkville – he’d been getting trash-talked all week. Coach Luke’s job was on the line, and we all wanted him to get that job. You could just tell that it was a different energy that night.”

With the three-headed wide receiver attack the Rebels will return

in 2018, it could be

easy to overlook some of the new names and faces that have joined the unit. Sophomore Braylon Sanders secured his first collegiate touchdown reception versus Texas A&M in the 2017 season.

“I think Braylon Sanders was a kid last year at this time that we didn’t really know what he was going to be able to do,” Longo said. “He’s poised for a lot more reps this year.”

Other additions to the NWO include high school signees Demarcus Gregory, Elijah Moore and Miles Battle as well as junior college transfers Ryan Drew and Jacob Carter.

“We have the three freshmen that are kind of in the same role that Braylon was in last year,” Longo said. “I think any of those guys will have some opportunities. Hopefully we can incorporate them all somewhere throughout the year.”

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