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A CONVERSATION WITH KERMIT DAVIS

The new men's basketball coach sat down with The Daily Mississippian to talk recruiting, his coaching philosophy and NCAA tournament hopes. See **page 7** for a Q & A with Coach Davis



Monday, April 2, 2018

THE DAILY

Volume 106, No. 92

MISSISSIPPIAN

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI SERVING OLE MISS AND OXFORD SINCE 1911 Visit theDMonline.com @thedm_news

Easter Sunday in the Grove



PHOTOS BY: CHRISTIAN JOHNSON



The Orchard Oxford Church holds their Easter service in the Grove on Sunday. Attendees brought lawn chairs and blankets to sit in front of the stage and listen to the worship team and Pastor Pat Ward's service. At the end of the service, Ward christened and baptized several people ranging in age from newborns to adults.

SEE THEDMONLINE FOR A GALLERY OF MORE PHOTOS

Students hold vigil honoring trans lives

RACHEL ISHEE
NEWS EDITOR

A group of students gathered in Barnard Observatory on Thursday night to hold a candlelight vigil in honor of trans individuals who have lost their lives. In 2018 alone, there have been 7 reported murders involving trans people. These peoples' names were read aloud preceding a moment of silence.

The vigil, hosted by UM Pride Network and co-sponsored by Queer People of Color was put on in acknowledgement of Transgender Day of Visibility.

"The vigil tonight gives visibility to those who identify within the transgender community, a community that has faced many hardships in this society," Brenna Paola, vice president of UM Pride said. "We light these candles because trans lives should be cherished."

Malik Pridgeon, Queer People of Color executive director, said he hopes the vigil raised more awareness about the violence being targeted at the trans community.

"One of the reasons why they are targeted and murdered is because they don't have a platform or a level of visibility," Pridgeon said. "I think it's important to have things like this so that there is some type of awareness raised around the issue and to let people know that trans lives do matter."

For some individuals, the vigil hit a little closer to home because it acknowledged the violence against individuals in

their own communities.

Beverly Malouf, who identifies as transgender said she decided to attend the vigil to support her trans brothers and sisters and to help move the community towards a brighter future.

She went on to say that she believes the university could be doing a lot more to ensure that the LGBTQ community feels safe and welcomed on campus and in Oxford.

"Why isn't there a support group for transgender individuals, for lesbian individuals, for gay individuals," Malouf said. "Why isn't there a group anywhere on campus where you can go and safely meet without fear of harm or anybody finding out?"

Malouf said many places lack the community support she is looking for.

UM Pride Network President Regan Willis, who also identifies as transgender, said the vigil was important because much still needs to change involving the LGBTQ+ community.

"There are many, many strides to be made in trans visibility, but I think that a common ground is definitely being aware of the murders that happen," Willis said. "There are seven so far (this year), it blows me away."

Willis said starting a conversation is the first step to changing the way society views transgender individuals.

"I think that's definitely a first step that we can realize that it's not ok and it's going on and it can further progress the community and build awareness," Willis said.

UM names new police chief

BLAKE ALSUP
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Ole Miss has selected a new chief of police for the University Police Department following the former previous chief's resignation earlier this year.

Ray Hawkins, a 22 year veteran of UPD, started his new position as chief of police Sunday. He previously held the associate director position.

"Ole Miss PD is pleased to announce Ray Hawkins as our new Chief of Police!" UPD said in a post on the Ole Miss Police Facebook page. "Chief Hawkins looks forward to the challenges of leading our department. He also looks forward to con-



PHOTO COURTESY: KEVIN BAIN/UM COMMUNICATIONS

tinuing to serve the University community and making Ole Miss a safe campus!"

Hawkins joined UPD as patrolman in December 1996. During his tenure, he served as a field training officer, police lieutenant, acting captain of investigation and detective lieutenant, among various other positions.

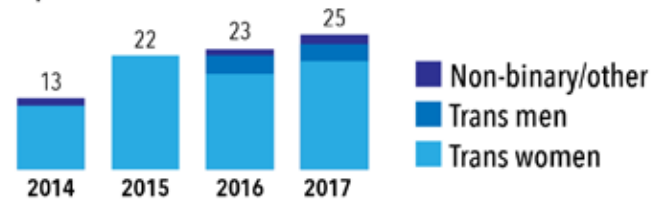
Hawkins is also an Ole Miss graduate. He received his bachelor's degree in public administration with an emphasis in criminal justice in 2001.

The university announced via UM Today on Friday that Hawkins was selected after a hiring process lasting just over two months.

The Division of Student Affairs held open forum interviews on campus near the beginning of March for the final four candidates to allow public feedback in their search process. Ultimately, the only internal hire option of the group was selected.

Former UPD chief, Tim Potts, resigned in January after 2 1/2 years of service to move back to his home state of Indiana and be closer to his family.

The known cases of fatal violence against transgender people in the United States has risen since 2014.



Source: Human Rights Campaign

GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION: EMILY HOFFMAN

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COLUMN

Violent video games are not the problem


WOODY DOBSON
STAFF COLUMNIST

Today, numerous genres of video games exist for enjoyment and the development of strategic skills. Video games, such as role-playing, puzzle and even “shooter” games like “Call of Duty” and “Battlefield,” are unique, practical and revolutionary for the modern generation.

However, the general populace of America feels as if “shooter” titles promote the use of violence.

Recently in Mississippi, a Monroe County 9-year-old shot his sister to death over a video game controller. This violent interaction led to a considerable political resurgence against vio-

lent video games.

Growing up, I remember playing my first violent video game. It was an “X-Men” fighting game played on the PlayStation 1, and though the video game didn’t show any blood, my mother was at first opposed.

Nevertheless, as I got older, I started to play the more mature “Grand Theft Auto” series at the ripe age of 12. Although this ascension to violence was rather quick and seemed illogical to many other parents of my community, this early exposure allowed me grow into a competent, mature child by dissecting real-world content.

Rather than the dangers of video games, the tragedy in Monroe County signifies the dangers of improper parenting. Parents not knowing if their child is ready to play a violent video game is a danger in and of itself.

Although I was 12 when I started playing “Grand

Theft Auto,” my parents taught me a considerable amount of real world knowledge beforehand, such as not to run over people with a car just because I could.

Astonishingly, it doesn’t surprise me that Mississippi is the target for the next phase of protests surrounding video game violence, since we rank so low in educational attainment.

Education is ultimately the most powerful weapon embedded within video games. And despite what some might say, the educational power of video games peaks when a child plays a violent video game since these titles tend to be content-heavy.

For example, the recent “shooter” title, “Call of Duty World War II,” not only possesses heavily violent content but also provides an often accurate depiction of World War II.

While parents tend to suppress important historical content such as war

and undermine its possible value to youngsters, violent video games can promote learning history and improving memory, even when children engage in a virtual playground of fake conflict.

While America is plagued with an ever-increasing amount of violence such as shootings and bombings, avoiding video games due to their violent content is completely illogical.

Just this year, veterans have started to use virtual reality to combat the debilitating effects of PTSD. Stories such as this show how video games can promote revolutionary technology and increase childhood learning capabilities, even when they contain violence.

Without video games, it seems that the world would miss out on large amounts of viable information.

Woody Dobson is a senior political science major from Tupelo.

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The Daily Mississippian welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be e-mailed to dmletters@olemiss.edu.

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

Campus construction continues in spring semester

JORDAN HOLMAN
STAFF WRITER

Construction on campus is continuing at a steady rate as the Department of Facilities Planning and the Special Planning Committee work together to implement a construction plan as part of the university-wide strategy known as Flagship Forward.

Flagship Forward was developed in 2016 under the leadership of Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter and focuses on five distinct areas of growth. The plan ultimately aspires to ensure that the University of Mississippi remains “a pre-eminent public international research university and a leading force for innovation and opportunity in Mississippi, the United States, and the world.”

“The vision outlined in the Flagship Forward plan is one that sets the university down the path of pursuing excellence in four different pillars: academics, health, athletics, and people, places and resources,” said Richard Forgette, interim dean of the College of Liberal Arts and member of the planning committee.

Included in this plan is the development of a STEM



PHOTO BY: MARLEE CRAWFORD

Workers complete the new concrete pathway in the Grove last month.

research center on campus. Partnering with Globalstar, Inc., a provider of mobile and data services, the university plans to have the facility on All-American Drive finished and opened by 2021.

According to head architect Ian Banner, work has just begun on the underground utilities for the center.

“This has been challenging for the contractor, especially since there was a significant amount of rain this winter and record amounts in February,” Banner said.

“However, this work continues and will be complete this summer.”

Other projects on campus, such as the work on the northern part of the Student Union, remain ongoing. According to Banner, though the main facade is clearly defined, some work remains.

“There are still some details to be finished in the ballroom,” Banner said. “Cleaning and detailing of the masonry is ongoing, so this part of the building will be complete in 2019.”

The north half of the Student Union will include administrative offices, student body offices, a bookstore with a coffee shop, meeting rooms and large gathering spaces.

Several other important projects on campus are being completed, such as the renovation of Paris-Yates Chapel, the bell tower on the north side of the football stadium, the recreation center and transportation hub across Highway 6, the renovation of Garland, Hedleston and

Mayes Halls and the renovation of Johnson Commons East.

Though Banner said he could not comment about future plans for construction on campus, it is evident from looking at the UM Flagship Forward and UM Master Plan manuals that construction will remain a constant force at the university in coming years.

Ideas for future construction plans in the manuals include turning the road between Guyton and Paris-Yates Chapel into a lane known as Magnolia Mall, demolishing or replacing “contributing buildings” – such as Guyton, Croft, Ventress, Bryant, and Fulton Chapel – and implementing a bicycle network on campus.

Though these projects have no set date, they are included in both the Flagship Forward and UM Master Plan, which are the guidelines for the vision of the University of Mississippi.

Such a vision, according to the introduction of the UM Master Plan, “draws from the past, addresses the needs of the present, and promotes a philosophy of stewardship and sustainability for the future.”



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Pick winner of Saturday, April 7 game *

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3

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Hurry! Contest closes Friday, April 6 at 4pm

Taking on career fairs like a professional

JOHN SCOTT
STAFF WRITER

The signs of spring: weekend baseball games, the warm sun on our backs, the smell of flowers in the air, and of course, the annual migration of dozens of corporate job recruiters from all over the South to The Inn at Ole Miss. It's career fair season.

Whether you're an anxious senior whose relatives constantly remind you that you still haven't found a job, a junior looking for an internship that doesn't involve pushing carts at the grocery store again this summer or an eager sophomore and freshman who wants to get a jump-start and get junior varsity team captain off your resume, *The Daily Mississippian* has the ultimate guide on how to maximize your time at any career fair. Follow these tips and tricks to walk away with more than just a business card.

Upgrade from the manila folder to a leather portfolio

This isn't a high school college fair. These companies are looking for professionals, which means they will be giving you more brochures and business cards than you can hold. This is where the portfolio comes in – its many pockets and folders are perfect for holding all those brochures for the company you only stopped to talk to for the free candy. It has also been reported that these portfolios can hold resumes, as well.

Research companies and prioritize who you want to speak to

Technology companies are going to have more flash drives and ear buds, and possibly phone chargers. Construction, industrial, and contracting firms will likely stock up on bottle openers and koozies. Do your best to avoid insurance companies – they typically have only pens and stress balls at best.

Look for the table with the drawstring bags first

Likely to be a construction or contracting firm, these bags are essential for any career fair. You will likely amass quite a collection of souvenirs with company logos, and you will benefit having something to carry them in. If you're lucky, the bag may come with bonus goodies inside, like a flash drive or koozie.

Walk with a purpose


Keep a good posture and solemn face. Walk with a pace level slightly above "really need to use the bathroom." This is generally ideal as it allows you to quickly survey the fair while simultaneously preventing the Army and Navy recruiters from talking to you about some really interesting opportunities you might be surprised by.

Keep an open mind and have some honest conversation

While many attendees dread going to a career fair, you would be surprised how many people get their lucky break at these events. If you take the chance to have an honest conversation with a recruiter, more than just your typical small talk, you might find a company and career you're sincerely interested in.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: EMILY HOFFMAN



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UM professor to present fourth poetry collection

TRENTON SCAIFE
STAFF WRITER

Award-winning authors Aimee Nezhukumathil and Ross Gay are teaming up in Oxford this Tuesday for the release of Nezhukumathil's fourth poetry collection, "Oceanic."

Coming to Off Square Books on April 3, "Oceanic" will be the first book Nezhukumathil launches in Mississippi. She'll spend the evening reading aloud from her book, along with new poems featured nowhere else. Later, she'll be interviewed by Gay, fellow poet and co-author of "Lace and Pyrite."

This will be Nezhukumathil's second event at Square Books since moving from Buffalo, New York to Mississippi in 2016. During her first visit, she signed and read from her 2011 collection, "Lucky Fish."

Turnout was high according to Square Books general manager, Lyn Roberts, who expects this event will draw more fanfare.

"She's a really good poet, as well as a really good presenter," Roberts said. "It should be really entertaining and interesting."

Nezhukumathil's poems typically start when an object catches her attention, whether natural or man-made. She first follows the subject through quick drafts, exploring possibilities and finding the story she wants to tell through rewrites and revisions.

"For me, it's only upon a much later reflection that I make specific choices with regard to the line and diction



PHOTO COURTESY: SQUARE BOOKS

of a poem," Nezhukumathil said. "Sometimes I only recognize the tone or mood of a poem when the poem is long done. The 'what is this poem really about?' usually doesn't get answered until I'm done revising."

On rare occasions, such as with "Oceanic," Nezhukumathil starts with a title, building up the work around the feelings attached to the discovery. The idea for "Oceanic" came to her while teaching a summer workshop to writers for the Chautauqua Writers' Center in western New York.

"There was such a clear moment of gratitude for their brave hearts that they split wide open," she said. "And though I was at the lake, flipping through my manuscript, waiting for my sons and husband to join me for lunch, the word I rested on was 'oceanic.'"

The bulk of writing "Oceanic" wouldn't take place in

her home state, however. In 2016, Nezhukumathil, her husband Dustin Parsons and their sons were all headed for Mississippi. Nezhukumathil had been selected for Ole Miss's John and Renee Grisham fellowship, a \$60,000 scholarship requiring her to live in Oxford for the academic year. Parsons, then a university professor on a year-long sabbatical, came along.

"When we got here, it meant that there was a lot of discovery, and part of that was looking at new trees and new birds and, also, new culture, the new world around her – new food, new relationships, new music," Parsons said. "In pursuit of a poem or essay, she'll kind of absorb all this knowledge of the world around her, and that's kind of what's changed about her writing, and you know, maybe mine too."

Six months into her stay at Ole Miss, the university of-

fered Nezhukumathil the chance to work as a professor with the Master of Arts in English program. Shortly after, Parsons would be hired as Senior Lecturer of English.

Along with her growing teaching portfolio at Ole Miss, Nezhukumathil edits poetry for "Orion," a bi-monthly nature magazine. She also mentors with the nonprofit Asian American writers' association, "Kundiman."

"It makes it unfathomable that she's as successful and prolific as she is with her writing," Parsons said.

With this latest launch, Nezhukumathil hopes to instill in readers the passion for the natural world she bases so much of her work around, not only in discussion, but in action as well.

"I hope to get people thrilled and excited about the urgency and loveliness of nature writing," she said. "And that at any age, they could possibly be part of that conversation or at the very least introduce them to writers who ignite a sense of protection of their planet."



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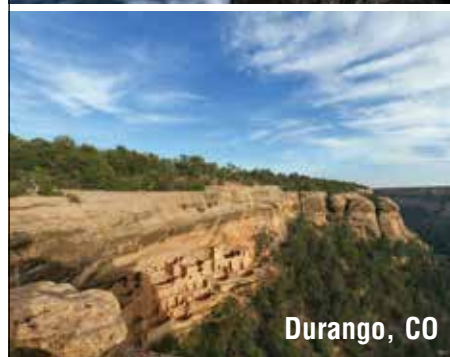
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COLUMN

Kermit Davis says team will stand for anthem; why?

SAM HARRES
SPORTS EDITOR

At his public introduction as head coach of Ole Miss basketball, Kermit Davis gave the usual answers. As a seasoned professional - a college coach for some 35 years - Davis knows how to handle the public.

So if you were wondering, yes, his teams are going to play fast, hard-nosed basketball. And apparently they're going to transition well, too. One thing they won't be doing, however, is disrespecting the flag during the national anthem.

"We're going to play fast and smart in transition. We're going to try to get easy baskets. We're going to try to play with great body language," Davis said at his introductory press conference.

"We're going to be a team that respects the flag and the



PHOTO BY: LOGAN CONNER

Kermit Davis speaks during his introductory press conference in the Pavilion on March 19.

national anthem. All of those things from culture is what we're about. It's who we're

going to be."

Zero Ole Miss basketball players knelt for the national anthem during the 2017-2018 season. The same number of Rebels knelt during the 2016-2017 season's anthems.

Ole Miss is not unique here; kneeling during the anthem - the "disrespect" Davis seemed to reference in his statement - is virtually unheard of at the collegiate level. A few members of the Vanderbilt women's basket-

ball team knelt before an exhibition game last October while College of Coastal Georgia players of both genders knelt during pregame anthems in November of 2017. But these are outliers. Kneeling just isn't an issue in college basketball.

"I hate [my statement] caused anything. It was a four second clip," Davis told The Daily Mississippian in an interview last Friday. "I respect that guys can have the freedom and platforms

and voice their opinions."

It is not Davis' personal opinion that raises concern - he is free to think what he wants - but rather his declaration's timing and setting. Unprompted and in front of fans and members of the media, Davis shared his personal thoughts on a highly controversial issue. Now, he is offering some context for his quote.

"We agreed, in our locker room [at MTSU] that the thing we were going to think about when the national anthem was played is that all men and women of all creeds - black, white, Hispanic, and Asians - who have lost their lives for our country and gave us the great freedom to play basketball on this day. And in our locker room they said 'cool coach, that's good.'"

Davis' former players told him it was okay to have a no-kneeling policy at MTSU. And why wouldn't they? Davis had direct control over their playing time.

Those players knew better than to speak up.

Colin Kaepernick spoke up two years ago. Today, the six-season NFL veteran is still without a contract. It's too bad his coach didn't talk to him about respecting the flag beforehand in the locker room.

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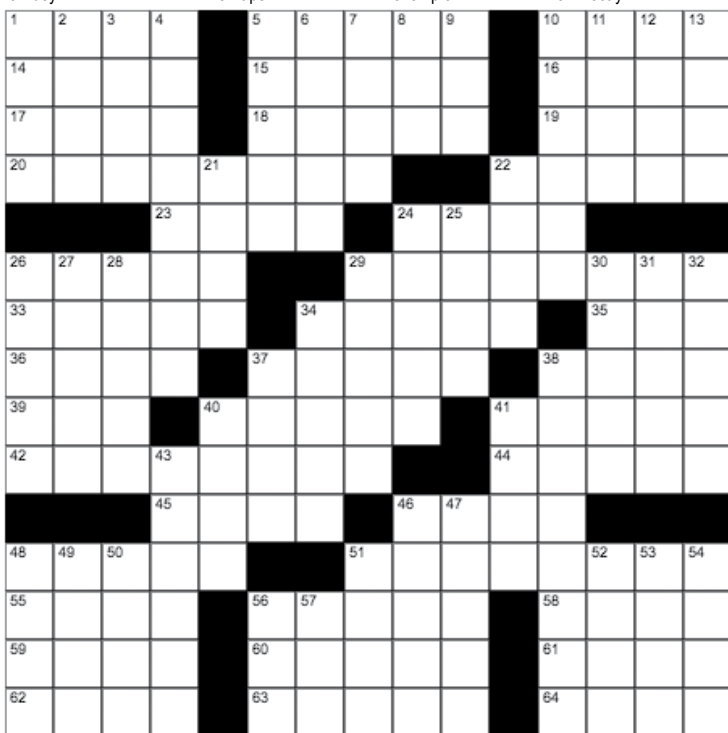
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 - 10 Ditto
 - 14 Vintner's prefix
 - 15 Transpire
 - 16 Leave out
 - 17 Hebrew month
 - 18 Actress Phoebe
 - 19 Prefix with Tibetan
 - 20 Deli meat
 - 22 Red fluorescent dye
 - 23 Swallow eagerly
 - 24 Office note
 - 26 President Garfield's middle name
 - 29 Composure
 - 33 Hauls
 - 34 In a shy way
 - 35 RR stop
 - 36 Behind schedule
 - 37 Island off Venezuela
 - 38 Beginning on
 - 39 Small island
 - 40 Make up for wrongdoing
 - 41 Advil rival
 - 42 Pastoral poet
 - 44 Cruise ship
 - 45 Chooses
 - 46 To ___ (exactly)
 - 48 Busy
- DOWN**
- 1 Work up lather
 - 2 Mother of Helen of Troy
 - 3 Collections of anecdotes
 - 4 Pledge
 - 5 Not express
 - 6 Rogue
 - 7 Broadway beginning
 - 8 Calendar abbr.
 - 9 SAT takers
 - 10 Already?
 - 11 French friends
 - 12 Prefix for small
 - 13 Prince William's school
 - 21 Jamaican exports
 - 22 TV award
 - 24 Perhaps
 - 51 Psychiatrist
 - 55 Strike out
 - 56 Gloomy, in poetry
 - 58 Yours, in Tours
 - 59 Pitcher
 - 60 Leader of the Mel-Tones
 - 61 Shipping deduction
 - 62 Canonized Fr. women
 - 63 Rose
 - 64 Zeno of ___
 - 25 Jazzy Fitzgerald
 - 26 Two-time loser to Dwight
 - 27 Plait
 - 28 In bad shape
 - 29 Enumerate
 - 30 Ruhr Valley city
 - 31 Range
 - 32 More secure
 - 34 Crucifix
 - 37 Arguing
 - 38 Make hostile
 - 40 Mont Blanc, par exemple
 - 41 Sheltered
 - 43 Runners-up
 - 46 Texas shrine
 - 47 Exhausted
 - 48 Bad day for Caesar
 - 49 Salamander
 - 50 Peter Fonda role
 - 51 Dynamic start
 - 52 Romance lang.
 - 53 Open infection, painful
 - 54 ___ yellow ribbon...
 - 56 Skid row woe
 - 57 Decay



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Puzzles by KrazyDad

		2		8	6			9
		5		1		2	7	6
	9	3						
	2						5	
						6	4	
9	6	4		7		8		
8			1	3		4		

HOW TO PLAY

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 with no repeats.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL

TOUGH

2	9	4	6	3	1	7	5	8
5	6	7	8	9	4	1	3	2
1	3	8	2	5	7	4	6	9
3	4	6	1	9	2	8	7	5
7	5	6	3	4	8	9	2	1
8	2	1	7	5	9	3	6	4
6	7	2	4	1	6	5	8	3
4	8	3	5	2	7	6	1	9
9	1	5	6	8	3	2	4	7

Q&A with Kermit Davis

BEN MILLER
STAFF WRITER

Just over two weeks after being named the new face of Ole Miss Basketball, former Middle Tennessee State head coach Kermit Davis sat down with the Daily Mississippian to talk goals for the program, recruiting, foreseeable challenges and more.

THE DAILY MISSISSIPPIAN: You had three NCAA tournament appearances at Middle Tennessee State. What's the secret to success for you?

KERMIT DAVIS: Recruiting is the main thing. You know getting good players. Getting talented guys to play with toughness and passion. I think the biggest thing is that in our locker room everybody got great satisfaction from the success of others there. There was no hidden agendas, the culture was about winning and impact winning. Our leading scorers could score nine or ten points and we win and it still felt good. I just think that's a culture that takes time to put into other locker rooms.

DM: How would you describe your coaching philosophy?

KD: Being able to coach my players the hardest. It's teams that play with an arrogance and an edge and passion but they have great body language and they're humble people off the floor, you know and I do think we have a great system of play. If we trust the process, I think we will be successful.

DM: Are there any particular coaches that you've looked up to throughout your career?



PHOTO BY: MARLEE CRAWFORD

Kermit Davis talks about his first few weeks as head coach of men's basketball at the Tuohy Center on Thursday.

KD: There's a lot. There's a lot of great ones in our league. You know, I worked for a guy named Tim Floyd in the business, he used to coach the Bulls and Charlotte. Also a guy who you would have no idea who this is, a guy named Bob Boyd who was my head coach when I played and I was his graduate assistant. I learned more basketball from him than anybody. And then just the guys that I work with, so there's really not just one per-

son who I've just sort of taken their philosophy of basketball.

DM: What goals are you setting for Ole Miss basketball?

KD: I think everybody wants to play in the NCAA tournament. I think that's been said. But I just think the biggest thing for us right now in this program is what kind of practice team we are going to be. Are we going to have accountability, are we going to go through ups and downs because of non

academic accountability when we're off the floor. So the biggest thing for us is really, I'm serious, week to week the process this team is going to have off the court. If we do that, we are going to win games.

DM: What kind of time frame should fans expect for you to have NCAA tournament levels of success at Ole Miss?

KD: Here, the infrastructure is here, we've got the best on-campus center in America,

the [Tuohy Basketball Center] is as good as anywhere, the Manning Center, the FedEx, etc, so. It is here. With that being said we have pieces and we have to add to these pieces. This is the best the SEC has ever been, top to bottom. Players, coaches, funding is all at the highest level, so it is a little more difficult to get to the top real, real quick. But let me tell you, we're going to try to get to the NCAA tournament every single year.

DM: Can you give us any sort of update on how the recruiting class is going for next year?

KD: It has been very receptive. After the Final Four we'll have "unofficials," we'll have official visits coming in. We might not have four or five guys signing on signing day. Ole Miss people just have to be patient. We're close on a lot of guys, but we want to be selective. As you go through this process, you can't be in a hurry, you have to make good, sound decisions that are going to be there for three or four years. We have a lot of 2019s and even a few 2020s and we're going for top-50, top-25 prospects in the country and I think we have that to sell. We're going to swing for the fences in recruiting, and I think that's going well.

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Baseball takes top-5 series against Arkansas 2-1

JOSH GOLLIHAR
STAFF WRITER

Ole Miss and Arkansas duked it out at Swayze Field over the weekend in a showing that proved both teams as College World Series contenders. Entering the matchup ranked as high as fourth nationally, the Rebels came away with the series win against the fifth-ranked Razorbacks after claiming wins on Friday and Saturday.

The top-five matchup drew the fifth-largest crowd in Swayze Field history to Saturday's game, and the 11,146 fans in attendance witnessed a game as competitive as the rankings would suggest. A total of 40 runs were scored over the course of the weekend series that was decided by only four.

Although Arkansas outhit Ole Miss in each game, it was the Rebels' ability to take advantage when runners reached base that ultimately made the difference. Over the course of the weekend the Ole Miss' pitching staff stranded 27 Razorbacks on base, while the Rebel offense left only 15 of its own stranded.

Offensive fireworks were put on display by both teams, but the most valuable player of the series has to go to newly-cemented Ole Miss closer Parker Caracci. When coach Mike Bianco saw multi-run leads dwindle away on Friday and Saturday, there was no hesitation to call upon his right-handed flamethrower to close it out. Caracci produced a six-out save on Friday and a five-out save to clinch the series



PHOTO BY: TUCKER ROBBINS

Grae Kessinger (15) slides into third base during Saturday's game against Arkansas. The Rebels won 11-10, winning the series 2-1.

on Saturday.

Since game two against Texas A&M, Caracci has tallied four saves over eight days. His ability to locate a mid-90's mph fastball keeps hitters off balance and means very few hitters can make solid contact. Almost everyone would have guessed this would be Dallas Woolfolk's spot coming into the season, but Bianco has found lightning in a bottle and must continue to harness it.

On offense, Ryan Olenek was the catalyst at the top of the order and notched seven hits over the weekend, including a

double in each game. With a lot of the top guys in the lineup struggling this weekend, Olenek stepped up in a big way.

Backing up Olenek's hits was Cole Zabowski, who had one of the better series of his time at Ole Miss. Adding two more home runs to his resume, the 6-foot-5 sophomore's average continues to climb, and now sits at .333. Zabowski's emergence at the plate this season allows Coach Bianco confidence in his start at first base.

The weekend series showed that while the offense was on fire, the Rebels' starting ro-

tation needs to become more reliable. Both Brady Feigl and James McArthur were credited with wins, but it was McArthur who was clearly the best on the weekend. Feigl went 5.1 innings in his win, only allowing two runs. However, he gave up seven hits and four walks which led to a high pitch count. McArthur lasted 6 innings in his appearance and surrendered three runs on only four hits. However, two were home runs, which Arkansas is known for. More notably, as assistant coach Mike Clement pointed out in the postgame, the most

glaring piece of evidence of how good McArthur was on Saturday is what transpired when he left: an onslaught of seven runs in three innings.

While Feigl and McArthur have been relatively sound, the ace of the staff has been subdued early on in SEC play. After entering the year with the eyes of MLB scouts upon him, Ryan Rolison suffered his third loss of the season on Thursday.

Strikeouts have not been an issue for him this season, and he added another eight against Arkansas. The problem lied in the nine hits and five runs he gave up, which proved to be the difference in Thursday's game. His struggles have not hampered the team to this point (the team has won each series in which Rolison has a loss), but the road will only get harder as conference play continues, and Bianco will need to see his ace start to dominate lineups.

At the end of the weekend, another test came up and the Rebels passed once again. Ole Miss has solidified itself as a championship-caliber team with a 25-4 record and 6-3 conference record. Boasting road series wins over Long Beach State and Texas A&M, the Rebels have also seen Tennessee and Arkansas fall victim to Ole Miss at home. The Rebel resume is good as any team's in the country, with the next test coming Tuesday at Memphis before a weekend road series against the in-state rivals from Starkville. Tuesday's first pitch is set for 6:30 p.m. in Memphis.

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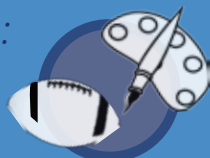
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