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Voter ID rule is one step closer



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY QUENTIN WINSTINE | The Daily Mississippian

The Mississippi Senate recently voted in favor of House Bill 921, which would require voters to show their ID to cast a ballot. It still has to go through the U.S. Justice Department before it becomes official.

BY OKSANA DEMCHENKO
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The Mississippi Senate voted in favor of House Bill 921 this past Tuesday, which will require voters to show their photo ID before voting.

The bill now has to be approved by the U.S. Justice Department. Federal officials rejected similar laws in Texas and South Carolina. Whether they will approve the Mississippi bill remains unclear.

"The mandatory approval by the U.S. Justice Department is the issue going back to the civil rights movement," said assistant professor of political science Jonathan Winburn. "Laws that change voting rules in some Southern states need to be pre-cleared to make sure they are fair to minority voters."

If approved, Mississippi voters will be required to show current photo identification, which would include a Mississippi driver's license, an Indian tribe identification, a U.S. passport, a Mississippi pistol permit or a student ID from any public or private college in Mississippi. Voters will also be able to present any other form of identification issued by the federal or state government or a Mississippi city, county or local agency.

Thirty-four of 50 Mississippi senators voted in favor of House Bill 921.

"I see no disadvantage of showing a government-issued ID to verify who you are," Sen. Tony Smith, a Republican from District 47, said. "Our right to vote is the only thing that cannot be taken away, and I believe we must ensure the integrity of elections."

Winburn said voter identification is an ongoing issue.

"The state has already passed the initiative requiring to show a photo ID in 2011," he said. "But the state has been slow to implement it. Now, it's up to courts to decide whether the Senate's initiative is constitutional or not."

House Bill 921 has stirred controversy in Mississippi.

"This bill has problems on (the) voting-rights side," said constitutional law professor George Cochran. "There are serious problems with the pre-clearance by the U.S. Justice Department because it can negatively impact minorities. They are less likely to have a driver's license because of the low income."

Winburn said he thinks people's views of the law's necessity depend on political preferences.

"Republicans think it is necessary, Democrats think it's not," he said.

Winburn also said proponents of voter ID laws tend to like the idea of limiting voter fraud, while those against it think the rules go back to Jim Crow Laws.

"I think it's probably a good idea to prevent voter fraud," junior and Meridian native Will Craven said. "Though it may hurt impoverished people."

Cochran said he is doubtful that the bill will be approved. He also said he is unaware of any voter fraud issues in Mississippi.

"There has not been consistent determination of the legality of this bill," Winburn said. "It's more unlikely to be approved by the current Justice Department with the Democratic president in the White House."

Track and field lap competition at Rebels' Choice Awards

BY JAKE THOMPSON
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The stars were out at the Gertrude C. Ford center Monday night as Ole Miss rolled out the red carpet for the second annual Rebels' Choice Awards, honoring the best and brightest in Ole Miss athletics during the past calendar year.

"I can't speak to a better way to kick off my tenure than being with our student-athletes and being with our coaches at an event like this," athletics director Ross Bjork said. "To me, it's a perfect way to start, to be at this event."

It was not just Bjork's first Rebels' Choice Awards, as first-year football head coach Hugh Freeze was also seen walking down the red carpet before the festivities began.

"It's impressive, very impressive," Freeze said. "Looking forward to getting in and seeing the excitement that comes with celebrating accomplishments here



AUSTIN MCAFEE | The Daily Mississippian

Junior Ricky Robertson (left) and sophomore Valencia McFarland (right) accept their respective Most Valuable Rebel awards at last night's Rebels' Choice Awards.

at Ole Miss."

ESPN's Clay Matvick, who emceed the inaugural event a year ago, returned for a second turn at hosting duties.

The theme of the night was "Celebration," and the track and field teams took that to heart, running away with several awards.

Sophomore track and field

star Fabia McDonald started the night winning the Female Rookie of the Year with freshman basketball player Jarvis Summers taking home the Male Rookie of the Year.

Senior tennis player Gabby Rangel and junior football player D.T. Shackelford won

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Ole Miss releases new iPad app

BY HOUSTON BROCK
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Ole Miss students can stay more connected than ever with the release of the new Ole Miss App — iPad Edition. With the help of over 30 University of Mississippi employees, the app was created as an outlet for all things Ole Miss.

The project kicked off this past summer when the university formed a partnership with Mercury Intermedia, which is located in Brentwood, Tenn., and specializes in mobile application development. Mercury has produced apps for companies including USA Today and CNN.

After several design sketches and brainstorming sessions, the Ole Miss app has taken shape.

In an instant, users can navigate through the application and find out what's going on around campus. There are five different sections that the app provides: Top News, Alumni & Friends, Athletics, Faculty &

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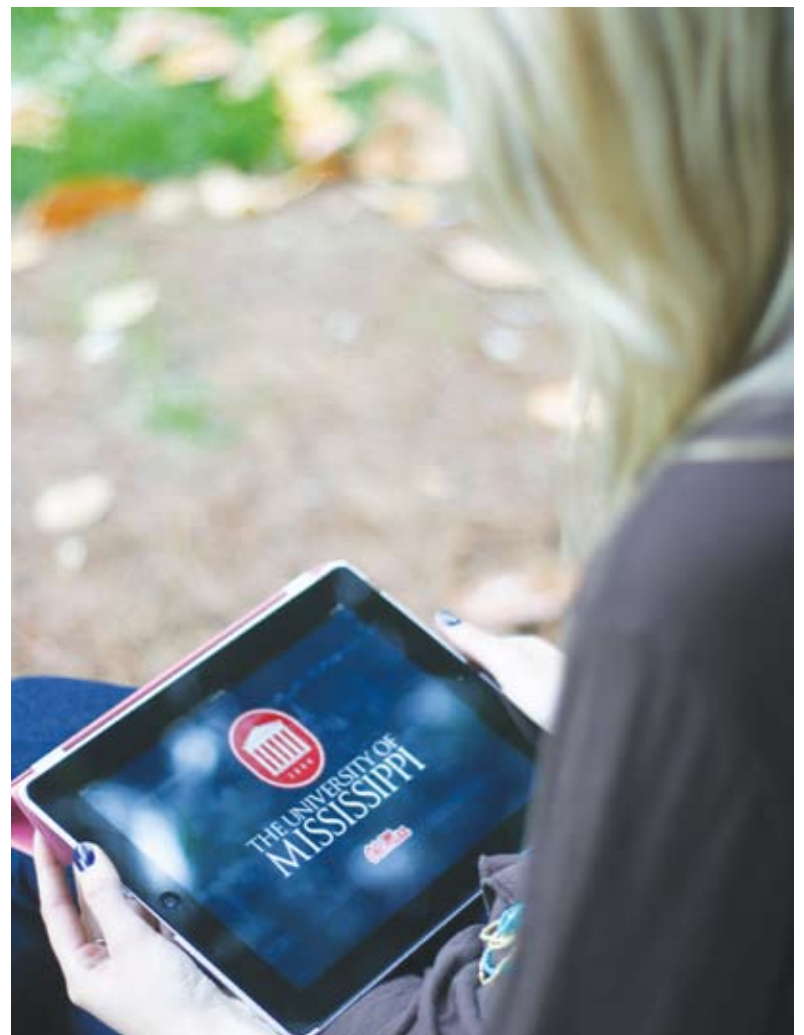


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CAIN MADDEN | The Daily Mississippian



Having a hard time getting it together?

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Politicians should party more



BY ADAM BLACKWELL
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Part of my daily routine includes scrolling through CNN's home page, looking for headlines that catch my eye. When I read news on the Internet, I try to read serious pieces, but at the same time, I enjoy reading the funny pieces that tend to humanize public officials and celebrities. When I reached CNN's Political Ticker, I came across a headline that read, "Hillary Clinton lets loose in Colombia." Well, of course, I had to read this one. Not only am I a huge fan of Hillary Clinton, I also

thought it would be a funny read.

When I clicked the link, two photos of Clinton appeared along with the short article. In one picture, the U.S. Secretary of State is seen drinking a "bottled beverage," and in another Clinton is dancing the night away. I'm sure disapproval and speculation from her critics will be rolling in over the next few days (although possibly not, because of the recent Secret Service scandal). However, if I could speak to Clinton, I'd say, "Right on!"

I think more politicians need to be seen doing this all around the world. We hold our public officials and politicians at too high of a standard — they, too, are human.

Furthermore, this kind of interaction with local people can lead to amazing public relations

and promotion. Foreign citizens don't have a positive view of the United States because their government tells them they should. Foreign citizens have a genuinely positive view of the United States because they have experienced it first hand. Our politicians should not be these great figures who appear unreachable to the masses. They should be seen as your average citizen who likes to relax and enjoy life.

We need public officials who will relate to the people in other countries and continue to win alliances for the United States.

While this kind of interaction is good for our country and our foreign relations, it's also good for our public officials' psyches.

Politicians and public officials hold stressful positions, and their lives are always in the public eye.

They very rarely get to let loose and have a good time. If you look at the picture of a politician when they come into office and then when they leave office, you'll find their signs of aging have dramatically increased (And I want to work in this field ... Crazy, right?).

No one's job should be so stressful that they are unable to enjoy themselves and find happiness in life. Even our powerful officials should be able to enjoy a beer and dance without being scrutinized. Again, our politicians should not be seen as people who are high above the rest of the population; they should be treated just like your average citizen, especially when visiting a foreign country.

I'm sure there are conservative citizens in the country who will find Clinton's actions unacceptable. However, I have to disagree

with them. This type of publicity is good for the country's international image, especially since many Latin American countries like Colombia hold happiness and the enjoyment of life in very high esteem.

Furthermore, sometimes public officials just need to take a break and have some fun. Of course, they must still keep their personal security and the nation's security in mind. The next time a politician gets a little crazy, let's remember the extremely stressful life they lead. And, they don't always have to be in a boardroom in a suit to win alliances and favor in the international world.

Adam Blackwell is a junior public policy leadership major from Natchez. Follow him on Twitter @AdamBlackwell1.

Romney's religion: will it affect his chances in the Presidential Election?



BY LEXI THOMAN
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As the news of Rick Santorum's withdrawal from the Republican primary race sinks in, the political arena is abuzz, asking what this means for the November presidential election. Even with contenders like Newt Gingrich still in the arena, it would be hard to argue that Mitt Romney is anything but the obvious nominee. Romney's substantial lead of 666 delegate votes, compared to Gingrich's 136 as of April 13, only drives this reality home.

Though I am far from surprised by Santorum's announcement, I must admit, I did not expect it to happen so soon. While it is customary for a candidate to congratulate his or her opponent and promise some level of sup-

port in his or her conceding speech, Santorum did not mention Romney once. The lack of love between the two candidates was never a secret, and this omission did not go unnoticed.

Along with many other factors, religion has always been one of the dividing characteristics between Romney and Santorum. It played a role in the primaries over the past few months, especially in historically evangelical Southern states, where voting along religious lines is extremely common, and Romney's Mormonism struck many with unease.

A recent poll conducted by Public Policy Polling only furthers this point. According to the poll, about half of Mississippi GOP voters (52 percent) still believe that President Obama is Muslim, and they remain preoccupied with the idea.

This poll leaves me wondering. If some voters are so concerned with the president's religion, would they be willing to vote for a Mormon to

be the next president of the United States?

Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (the official name for the Mormon faith) account for nearly 2 percent of Americans today, but many Americans still look upon the religion with a eyes. What they fail to remember is that like the extremists of any faith, the cult-like Fundamentalist LDS sects that make national news do not represent the religion as a whole.

Regardless, according to a Public Religion Research Institute survey conducted this past fall, 42 percent of voters said a Mormon president would make them "somewhat or very uncomfortable."

Romney has already been attacked for being too moderate. He has been called weak, a flip-flopper and even a Democrat by members of his own party.

Now that his nomination for the Republican ticket is all but inevitable, one has to wonder whether the lack of

enthusiasm for Romney from many social conservatives because of his Mormon faith will have a noticeable effect in the November election.

Do I believe that a candidate's religion should play a decisive role in the presidential race? No. But do I believe it will this fall? Most likely.

Though I cannot claim to be a Romney supporter, I cringe at the thought of negative campaign ads attacking his faith, playing upon stereotypes and spreading nothing but hate and intolerance.

We live in a country that prides itself on diversity and freedoms for all.

The separation of church and state ought to guarantee the American public that a president's religion would not interfere with his or her presidency, and his or her policies should reflect what is in the best interest for all citizens of the United States.

A president's religion should be his or her own private affair, and we should judge each candidate this fall by his plat-

form and proposed policies, not by his faith.

As November approaches, the world will be watching as the American people react to Romney's Mormonism. I pray that we do not embarrass ourselves.

Lexi Thoman is senior international studies and Spanish double-major from St. Louis, Mo.

Correction

The April 16 article "Green week kicks off today" contained incorrect information. The Aluminum show and the Yokna Bottoms Farm's Patawpha Fest will not take place this year. The Green Week tour will be Saturday, April 21. The details concerning the tour, including the buses and locations, are accurate, with the exception of the Robert C. Khayat Law Center Library, which will not be part of the tour. The Green Week website is <http://greenweek.olemiss.edu/>.

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Letters should be typed, double-spaced and no longer than 300 words. 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.

Student submissions must include grade classification and major. All submissions must be turned in at least three days in advance of date of desired publication.



REBELS,

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the Female and Male Community Service Outreach awards, respectively. Scholar-Athlete of the Year honors went to senior soccer player Dylan Jordan and junior golfer Chad Bounds.

In what was probably seen as the upset of the evening took place in the Play of the Year award, as junior track and field star Katie Breathitt won for her record-setting steeplechase. Breathitt beat Reginald Buckner's one-hand slam dunk against Mississippi State, Preston Overbey's walk-off sac fly against the eventual national champion South Carolina Gamecocks and Charles Sawyer's 96-yard interception return against BYU.

"I was not prepared to win this

award," Breathitt said. "I did not expect this at all."

The Hotty Toddy awards went to senior volleyball star Morgan Springer and senior defensive end Jason Jones.

The Coach of the Year award set the tone for what was to come later in the evening, as outgoing track and field coach Joe Walker swept the award winning for both men's and women's teams.

"Well that's pretty neat," Walker said. "That's a good way to go out. Those kind of awards are not about me. They're about my assistant coaches. They're about our team. Everybody had an impact on that. You get one award, but it's really for everybody."

Baseball took home Game of the Year honors with their victory over defending national champions South Carolina, which won them the two out of three game series. The Fan Favorite award,

which was selected by an online ballot cast by the fans, went to senior basketball star Terrance Henry.

"It means so much to me," Henry said. "It means a lot that the fans appreciate me enough to nominate me for Fan Favorite, as well as win the Fan Favorite. I just appreciate the four years I've been here."

Most Valuable Rebel went to sophomore women's basketball guard Valencia McFarland and track and field star Ricky Robertson.

Track and field, then, cemented their dominance on the night by sweeping the Team of the Year awards.

"We are like anybody else," Walker said. "We are just humbled to be selected, but I am really proud. The reason they got it was because they excelled, and I am very proud of them."



AUSTIN MCAFEE | The Daily Mississippian

Senior Terrance Henry accepts the Fan Favorite award at last night's Rebels' Choice Awards.

APP,

continued from page 1

Staff and Students. These sections do not include the photo and video galleries, Twitter feeds, scores and weather reports that the app also provides.

IOS app expert Ryan Rigney said the new app is a breath of fresh air.

"The apps that the university (was) putting out before were awful," Rigney said.

"This new app does almost everything right. The interface is clean, and I love the way they integrated Rebel Radio."

With the new app, Rebel Radio listeners can make requests and listen to live broadcasts from anywhere.

The app is more than a content provider, though. Arvinder Kang, a technology consultant for the S. Gale Denley Student Media Center, worked on the construction of the Ole Miss App, and he sees the app as a way to reach out to students.

"It's a good recruitment tool for students, more than anything," Kang said.

Although it's only a week old, students all over campus are already finding it useful.

Accounting sophomore David Lambert said he was surprised at how the application turned out.

"It's not really what I expect-

ed," Lambert said. "It's easy enough to navigate through, and it's still pretty cool."

To download the application, go to the iTunes App Store. After using the app, users have the option to take a survey. Anyone who takes the survey will be automatically entered to win a \$100 prize. If one does not have

an iPad and still wants to see all the new features, a demo is available online at <http://www.olemiss.edu/ipad/demo/>.

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BASEBALL, continued from page 8

and 34 RBI. Snyder is hitting .363 and is tied for the lead in the SEC in RBI with 34 RBI to go along with his seven home runs on the season. For Mississippi State, sophomore infielder Daryl Norris is the leader at the plate with a .367 average and 17 RBI.

Tonight's contest will see two freshman right-handers go head to head as Sam Smith of Ole Miss will battle Brandon Woodruff of Mississippi State.

Smith, who holds a 2-2 record, boasts a 3.60 earned run average this season in 30.0 innings pitched. Woodruff, who is making just his second start of the year, is 0-0 with a 2.71 earned run average in 13.1 innings pitched.

Bianco searching for answers in the bullpen

The bullpen struggles, once

again, reared its ugly head this past weekend, and Bianco knows that has to be fixed in a hurry.

"Obviously after the Thursday night game, it's disappointing," Bianco said.

"We've been in position to win several conference games in the end. It's not one particular guy. We've got to figure it out. We've got to figure out how to close the game out, and we've do it. We have some close game wins, but we have some close games where we've blown it. We've got to do a better job."

Junior right-handed closer Brett Huber and junior left-hander Dylan Chavez have both had their struggles as of late, and Bianco pointed freshman right-hander Hawtin Buchanan as a guy who could see himself fulfill a bigger role.

"We're kind of searching for a little consistency at the end of the game," Bianco said. "Not necessarily Huber, but not not includ-

ing him, all of them. In doing so, I think the freshmen that pitch the best will get more opportunities."

Gatlin filling a role

In the weekend's series loss to Georgia, a new designated hitter came to fruition as junior John Gatlin filled the role against two left-handed pitchers the Bulldogs threw. The Tupelo native went 2-for-5 with two RBI and a run scored in his two starts.

"At the time, my adrenaline was flowing pretty good," Gatlin said.

"I saw it as an opportunity. There are so many roles on this team, and I saw it as my role for the day. That is what they needed me to do."

SEC Roundup

After dropping this past weekend's series at Georgia, Ole Miss fell in every major poll. The Rebels are now ranked No. 22 in both the Baseball America poll and the USA Today/ESPN

coaches' poll. In the National Collegiate Baseball Writer's Association (NCBWA), Ole Miss is now No. 23, while falling to No. 24 in this week's Collegiate Baseball Newspapers standings.

LSU swept Alabama this past weekend, and the Tigers are now ranked as high as No. 1 according to Collegiate Baseball. Kentucky won two of three on the road at Arkansas, who travels to Oxford to face Ole Miss this weekend. The Wildcats are now as high as No. 2 in Collegiate Baseball's rankings, while the Razorbacks are listed No. 15 in both the USA Today/ESPN coaches' poll and the NCBWA poll.

South Carolina, ranked as high as No. 6 in NCBWA, swept Mississippi State over the weekend. Florida, which is now No. 1 in every poll aside from Collegiate Baseball, took a series win over Tennessee. Vanderbilt got a series win over Auburn this weekend by taking two of three.

sports briefs

OLE MISS HOOPS INKS NEW YORK FORWARD

Terry Brutus signed a national letter of intent to join the Ole Miss basketball program for the 2012-13 academic year, Ole Miss head coach Andy Kennedy announced on Monday.

A native of Spring Valley, N.Y., Brutus rounds out the Rebels' class of six signees, which also includes Jason Carter (Houston, Texas), Marshall Henderson (Hurst, Texas), Derrick Millinghaus (Schenectady, N.Y.), Martavious Newby (Memphis, Tenn.) and Anthony Perez-Cortesia (Cumana, Venezuela).

"We are pleased that Terry has chosen to join our program," Kennedy said. "He is an explosive forward with exceptional ball-skills. His versatility will allow him to contribute in a number of areas."

Brutus, a 6-foot-6, 235-pound forward, attended Massanutten Military Academy (Va.) in 2011-12 and averaged 17 points and nine rebounds while leading the Colonels to the eight-team National Prep Championships. His squad lost to eventual champion Brewster Academy (N.H.).

Named a three-star recruit by Rivals and ESPN.com, Brutus finished at Spring Valley High School in his hometown before enrolling at Massanutten for one year. He will have four years to play four with the Rebels.

ERIN STEPHENS NAMED SEC FRESHMAN OF THE WEEK

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — For the second time this year, Ole Miss women's tennis player Erin Stephens has been named the SEC Freshman of the Week, as announced by the league office Monday.

Stephens, a native of Santa Rosa Beach, Fla., went 2-0 in singles and doubles to help lead the Rebels to a 7-0 shutout of Mississippi State, their 23rd straight win in the series.

The Rebels finished the regular season 8-3 earning a top four seed in the SEC Championship for the second time in three years.

Stephens concluded the year 6-5 in the SEC, all in the top half of the lineup. She has won four of her last five. Stephens also teamed with Gabby Rangel for a 6-5 doubles record at No. 2.

Ole Miss will host the SEC Championship Thursday-Sunday at the Palmer/Salloum Tennis Center/Galtney Courts.

The Rebels earned the No. 4 seed and will play the winner of the No. 5 Vanderbilt/No. 12 Mississippi State match Friday at 3 p.m.



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Scrimmage look back: 'inconsistent' defense



AUSTIN MCAFEE | The Daily Mississippian

Senior cornerback Wesley Pendleton (left) tackles sophomore wide receiver Donte Moncrief (right) during Saturday's scrimmage.

BY BENNETT HIPPI
jbhipp@olemiss.edu

Hugh Freeze described his offense as "up and down" during Saturday morning's scrimmage, while Ole Miss defensive coordinator Dave Wommack called his defense "inconsistent" during the two-hour affair.

"I feel some guys are really making some improvement out here, and you can see it," Wommack said. "Some of them are rallying together, but I don't re-

ally see 11 guys that are really doing it every single day."

"I didn't think the energy was as good as it has been in practice the last few days, for whatever reason. We have to learn to play one snap at a time, like it's the most important play and for everyone to execute and do their job."

On Saturday, the defense started out strong but began to struggle once the Rebel offense started utilizing some zone read and the quick passing game. Part of the problem was the pass rush from a

defensive line that is banged up.

"We've been thin on the defensive line," Wommack said. "Gerald (Rivers) hasn't been out here and some other guys. I like our inside guys. I think the defensive tackles and nose will be the strength of our defense next year."

"We haven't had a full group, but we've got to get them all going."

One group that has consistently performed well all spring is the defensive secondary. Junior college transfer Dehendret Collins

has performed well at one corner, including an interception Saturday, while senior Wesley Pendleton has locked up the other corner spot.

Their performance at corner this spring, combined with holes to fill at safety, have meant that junior Charles Sawyer has been working at the position.

During the scrimmage, Sawyer turned in the play of the day, picking off junior quarterback Barry Brunetti in the second overtime period.

"(The scrimmage) was up and down like Coach Wommack said, but at the end, the defense stepped up, and we did what we were supposed to do," Sawyer said. "The spring has been good. It's a learning process with everything new, but it's been real good. I'm glad we got this coaching staff."

With only a week left of spring practice, Sawyer said the defense can't rest on its good spring. Instead, it needs to build on it.

"You've just got to keep working every day," Sawyer said. "You've got to take what you do in the spring, do it in fall camp and then get ready for the season. Once you have a good spring and good fall camp, then things will go well for you."

After the scrimmage, Wommack admitted that in a perfect world, he would play Sawyer at corner.

"I'd love to play Sawyer at corner, but we're not at that point right now with our people," Wommack said. "I think that's really what he is, but we're going to have him at safety. I like Charles Sawyer."

SENIOR HONORS THESIS PRESENTATION

Meredith Thompson Moore

Language Policy and Linguistic Rights in North Alabama

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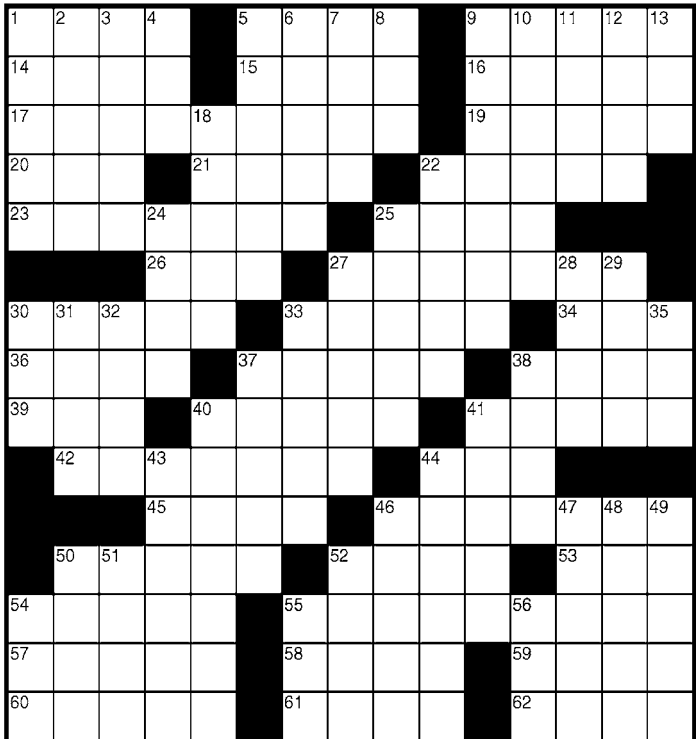
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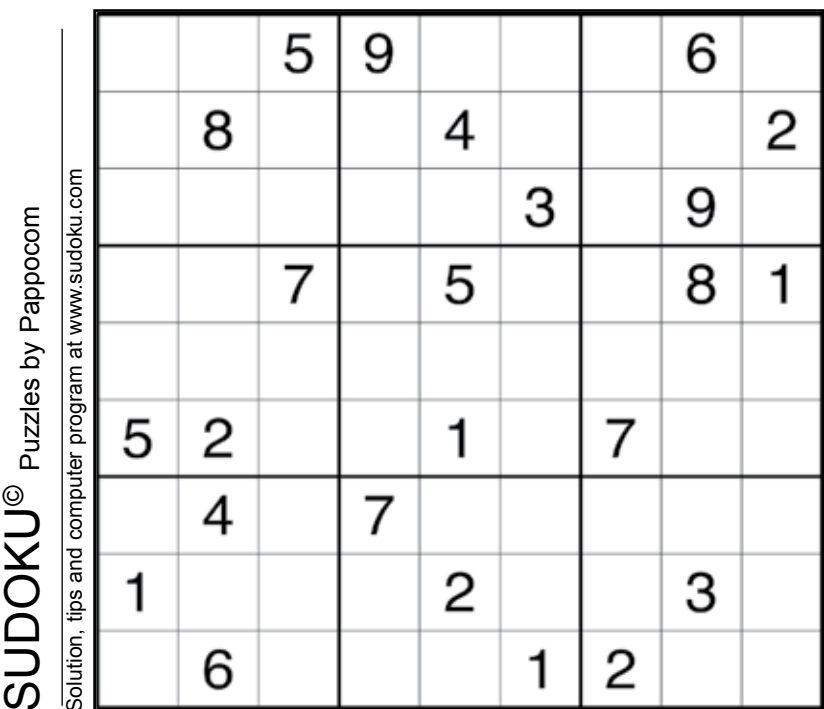


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- ACROSS**
- 1 Soda fountain order
 - 5 Tosses
 - 9 Hydroplane part
 - 14 Right on!
 - 15 Bombay nanny
 - 16 Martini extra
 - 17 Cliff-nesting gull
 - 19 Scoped out
 - 20 Poached edible
 - 21 Orpheus played it
 - 22 Smog creators
 - 23 Beginners
 - 25 "Lohengrin" bride
 - 26 Flair for music
 - 27 Checks for size (2 wds.)
 - 30 Throbbled
 - 33 Drizzles
 - 34 Awful noise
 - 36 Zen riddle
 - 37 Gaynor or Leigh
 - 38 Ugh!
 - 39 A fifth of DX
 - 40 Faxes, maybe
 - 41 Gauguin's prop
 - 42 Moral weakness
 - 44 Symbol of might
 - 45 Cronies
 - 46 Easy victims
 - 50 Advertising play
 - 52 —noire
 - 53 Hush-hush org.
 - 54 Beauty aid
 - 55 Motel extras
 - 57 Gambling stakes
 - 58 Slightly open
 - 59 Wishes one hadn't
 - 60 Snicker (hyph.)
 - 61 Hoedown honeys
 - 62 Grand Ole —
- DOWN**
- 1 Inventor
 - 2 Friendly hombre
 - 3 Dismiss (2 wds.)
 - 4 Blaster's buy
 - 5 Counselor
 - 6 Sharif and Khayyam
 - 7 Harden, as clay
 - 8 Lauper's "— Bop"
 - 9 Concentrates
 - 10 Andes animals
 - 11 Belgian river
 - 12 Wide sts.
 - 13 Slugger — Williams
 - 18 Priam and Hector's story
 - 22 Fire starter
 - 24 Piercing
 - 25 Iroquois speakers
 - 27 Cronyn's frequent costar
 - 28 Ben Jonson works
 - 29 Polite
 - 30 Canine registry
 - 31 Afro or bun
 - 32 Kojak's lack
 - 33 Harangues
 - 35 Goalie's org.
 - 37 Simple dessert (hyph.)
 - 38 Ties up the phone
 - 40 Chatty feline
 - 41 Fridge raider
 - 43 Orbit extreme
 - 44 Movies with a posse
 - 46 Sachet component
 - 47 Get slippery (2 wds.)
 - 48 Lightweight quilt
 - 49 Brash
 - 50 Cornbread
 - 51 "Ask Dr. —"
 - 52 Lower California
 - 54 Wharf denizen
 - 55 Shake a finger
 - 56 Good buddy



Want more puzzles? Check out the "Just Right Crossword Puzzles" books at QuillDriverBooks.com



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
IIIIII

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

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No. 22 Diamond Rebs set for annual Governor's Cup

BY DAVID COLLIER
dlcollie@olemiss.edu

The Ole Miss baseball team (24-12), now ranked No. 22 in the nation, will try to get back on track following a series loss at Georgia over the weekend when they take on in-state foe Mississippi State (21-15) in the annual Governor's Cup tonight at Trustmark Park in Pearl at 6:30 p.m.

"It's terrific," head coach Mike Bianco said. "We get to play down there in front of a lot of people that we don't normally get to play in front of. We usually get great crowds. It's at an outstanding ballpark, and I think it kind of breaks up the mid-week monotony."

Tonight's matchup is a non-conference game. The two teams will meet later in the year when Ole Miss travels to Starkville for a three-game series beginning April 27.

The Bulldogs defeated the Rebels last season in the Governor's Cup 6-1 before taking two out of three games in Oxford, but junior left fielder Tanner Mathis said the Rebels are excited about the opportunity.

"I love playing them," Mathis said. "It's fun. It's always a great game. It's always close. Both



PHOTO COURTESY CODY SCHMELTER | The Red & Black

Members of the Ole Miss baseball team before this past Thursday's game at Georgia.

teams are chirping the whole time. Your adrenaline is always running. The fans are always down there. Hopefully, they'll get to see us beat State."

Despite so many guys on the roster from all over the country,

Mathis said everyone knows how much beating Mississippi State means for Ole Miss.

"We've talked to them a little bit," Mathis said. "It's a non-conference game, but it's still Mississippi State. You have to approach

it like it's just another game, but you hate to lose to State. It means more to the fans if we beat them every chance we get."

Entering tonight's contest, Ole Miss boasts a .315 team batting average compared to a .270 team average for Mississippi State. The Rebels also put across 6.6 runs per game, while the Bulldogs are averaging 5.1 runs per game.

Ole Miss is led at the plate by junior second baseman Alex Yarbrough and senior first baseman Matt Snyder. Yarbrough has a .421 average, which is second in the Southeastern Conference, to go along with three home runs

See BASEBALL, PAGE 4

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