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5-5-2017

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The Daily Mississippian

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The Daily Mississippian, "May 5, 2017" (2017). *Daily Mississippian (all digitized issues)*. 1125.
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MISSISSIPPIAN

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

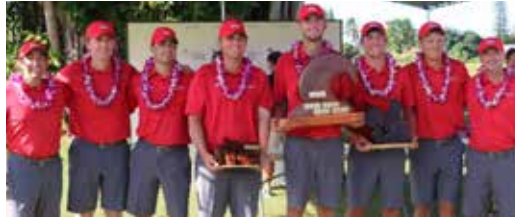
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Cinco de Mayo's historical significance and opportunity

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Pick up a copy of **Finals Frenzy on Monday**

In memoriam: 21 bells toll at Paris-Yates

Spring 2017: Semester in review



PHOTOS BY TAYLAR TEEL

Friends and family members gather in Paris-Yates Chapel for a service remembering Ole Miss community members who died in the past year.

JORDAN HOLMAN
thedmnews@gmail.com

Black suits filled the Paris-Yates Chapel yesterday as members of the Ole Miss family gathered to remember the 21 faculty, staff and students who died in the last year.

Brandi Hephner LaBanc, vice chancellor for student

affairs, delivered a message of respect and hope as she asked members of the congregation to think of a specific memory they had with the deceased. "A moment in the Grove," she suggested. "Or a lingering conversation after class – these seemingly insignificant moments are the reason for our existence."

A friend or relative of each of the deceased stood

in memory during the ceremonial laying of the flowers. Twenty-one bells rang to commemorate each life lost during the year.

As students, faculty and family gathered afterward, many expressed their appreciation for the university's hospitality. Members of the Columns Society ushered the event and offered their support to university staff.

"It was very difficult to work because it's always hard and very real when we come together to remember members of the family that have passed," Logan Christian of the Columns Society said.

The memorial service reminded the community that the 21 students, faculty and staff members who have died in the last year are still members of the Ole Miss family.

MADDIE MCGEE
JOHN TOULOUPIIS
thedmnews@gmail.com

January

Students came back for the spring semester as renovations for a new Student Union began. To compensate for the closed food court, the university responded with the POD Market Truck and the popular Chick-fil-A food truck. Located on business row, the trucks became a hot spot for students hoping to grab a quick bite between classes or getting a late-night study snack.

On Jan. 21, hundreds marched on the Square, alongside millions of others around the country, in response to comments made by President Donald J. Trump. Both students and Oxford community members marched in solidarity for those who may feel unsafe in today's political climate. The Women's March drew hundreds more people than the 150 originally expected.

February

President Trump released an executive order limiting travel into the U.S. from seven majority-Muslim countries, sparking outrage and protests in the Circle. Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter released several statements on the ban, explaining "one of our top priorities is a safe and welcoming environment for all our students, faculty, staff, and visitors." He outlined specific points in which they planned to help the 26 students and 11 faculty members affected by

Student leaders organize week of service

KIARA MANNING
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Organizers of Ole Miss's inaugural Rebel with a Cause week hoped to focus on small-scale changes to make a big community impact.

The campaign, led by Mr. and Miss Ole Miss (Cole Putman and Acacia Santos), kicked off Tuesday and wraps up Friday. Tuesday, local group More than

A Meal hosted a discussion on living affordably in Oxford. Student volunteers donated time to the Humane Society and canned meals to a food drive throughout the week.

"Rebel with a Cause's purpose is to unify the community by identifying ways for people to serve and love in the community," Putman said.

Putman said he and Santos worked to include campus and

community organizations in their initiative.

"Instead of sponsors, we're working on partnerships," Putman said. "We're partnering with all three Greek councils (IFC, NPC, NPHC), the Humane Society, More than a Meal, the UM Food Bank and ASB."

Junior public policy leadership and journalism major Savannah Smith attended events

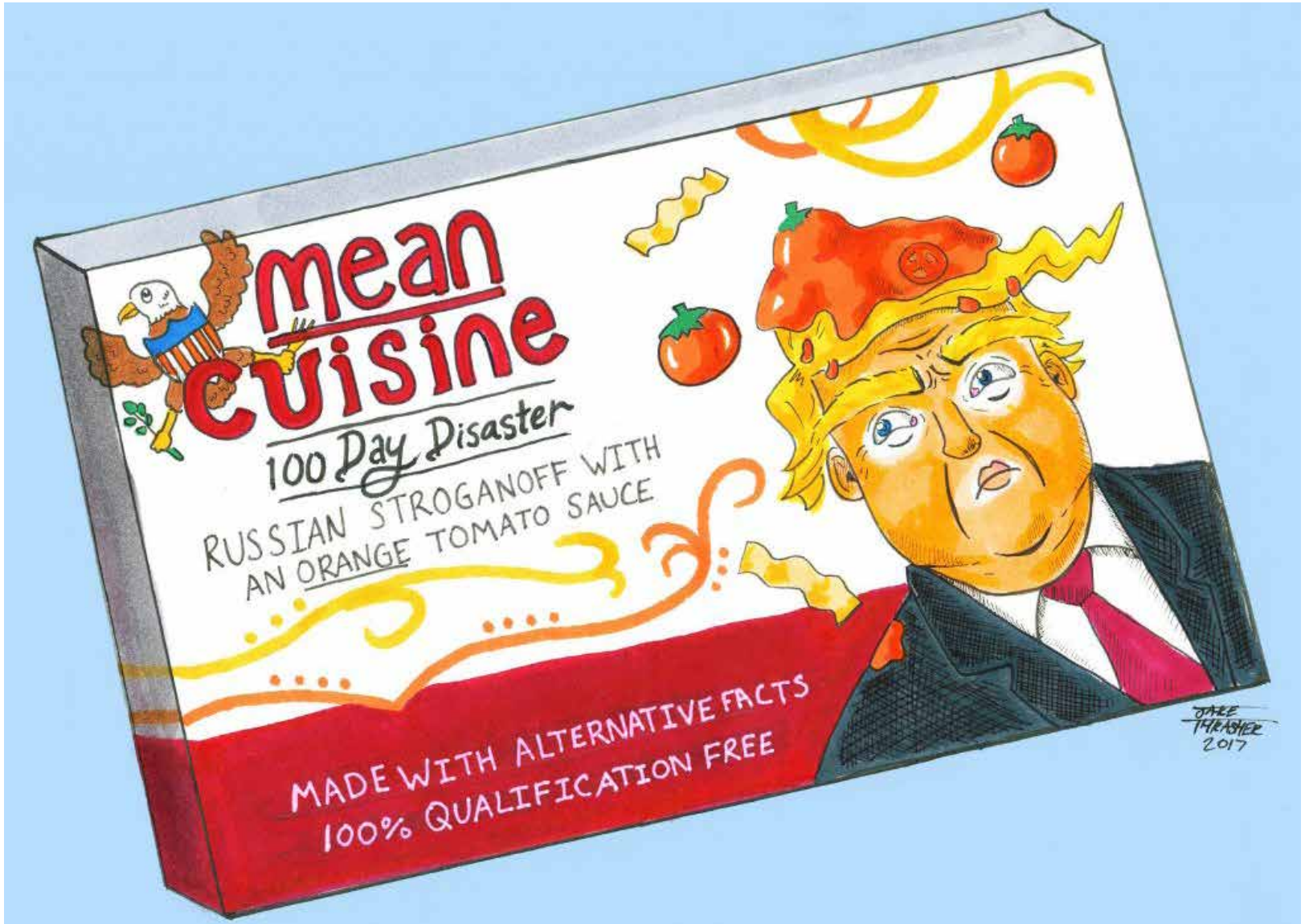
throughout the week. She said Rebel with a Cause gives Ole Miss a chance to come together to serve Oxford as a community.

"I went to More than a Meal and loved getting to spend the afternoon with these people and hear about their lives," she said. "I got to make friendship bracelets and eat dinner with several

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COLUMN

Cinco de Mayo should be respectfully celebrated



FRANCISCO HERNANDEZ
thedmopinion@gmail.com

ty to celebrate Mexican culture and history in the U.S.

Commemorating the day when a small Mexican army defeated the French in the Battle of Puebla and briefly contained their invasion, Cinco de Mayo could honor the culture and history of a region that has been subject to foreign domination since my fellow countrymen “discovered” it about 500 years ago.

However, in many ways, the holiday has just become an excuse for weekday drink specials, full of ethnically insensitive advertising and void of any actual cultural value – a spicier, though more distasteful and more humiliating, version of S. Patrick’s Day.

While there is nothing

wrong with celebrating diversity over food and drinks (it is often encouraged, actually), we should also respect and cherish that same culture.

We also shouldn’t forget that, while we enjoy margaritas and mostly sad versions of Mexican food, there is a group of immigrants and citizens with Mexican roots that is being unjustly blamed for economic and social problems.

Let’s use this day to remember that Mexico and the U.S. are not only neighbors – they are also roommates in the same continent.

Francisco Hernandez is an international studies major from Valencia, Spain.

With or without a wall, there is a Mexican import that is here to stay: the holiday of Cinco de Mayo.

Although south of the border this day is mostly celebrated only in the city of Puebla, Cinco de Mayo could be a great opportuni-

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I was saddened and embarrassed to see our ASB Senate pass a resolution to suspend the Chancellor’s context committee. This poorly reasoned proposal is both ill advised and logically infantile for countless reasons.

The stated problem with the committee, lack of student representation, is an absurd objection. The committee is staffed with scholars, experts in fields of history and sociology and others. Their goal is not a political one but a historical one.

Their proposals are aimed at more accurately representing the history of our university, and the Chancellor has chosen people who have the experience to know what is accurate.

What student is qualified to sit on the committee? I hope this bill’s proponents would not suggest any members of, say, the Our State Flag foundation, whose historical expertise does not extend beyond the headlines pulled up by their Google searches and whose sponsored Facebook post is rife with misspellings, poor capitalization, and grammar problems.

Why should undergraduate students who struggle to write three paragraphs without misspelling Chancellor Vitter’s name be placed on a panel of experts?

As for the unspoken sentiments of our newly elected Senate, I can only speculate at how it must feel for one’s political opinions to be threatened by greater accessibility of facts. I personally would suggest thinking about history in a way that fits what happened in the 1860s, not what fits the white-washed tragedy written in the early twentieth century.

If historical facts are too painful of a trigger for our senators, I would recommend just ignoring any new information. It has worked for them so far.

Michael Holman is a senior English major from Kosciusko.

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ISSN 1077-8667

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MEMBER NEWSPAPER

The Daily Mississippian is published Monday through Friday during the academic year, on days when classes are scheduled.

Columns do not represent the official opinions of The University of Mississippi or *The Daily Mississippian* unless specifically indicated.

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

VOLUNTEER
continued from page 1

children. It was just incredible to break down the university and Oxford and remember that Oxford is all of ours."

Putman said he began planning the week in January and that everything finally came together three weeks ago.

Senior IMC major Lindsay Miller said she was happy to volunteer for Rebel with a Cause. Miller said Rebel with a Cause is important because many people get to come together to support something bigger than themselves.

"I have a real appreciation for Rebel with a Cause," she said. "I honestly just love Cole and Acacia's idea of helping students become regular volunteers by offering opportunities to get involved."

Santos and Putman collaborated with James Thomas from the sociology department and Roane Grantham, the director of More than Meal, to build the week.

Putman said his friends have been instrumental in helping making Rebel with a Cause more than a one-time effort, but rather establish a movement at Ole Miss that will last long past his graduation date.

"We want people to find their cause and follow it," he said. "We really want people to come to these events and to identify an area, whether it's in Oxford or on campus, and feel passionate about serving."

SEMESTER
continued from page 1

the executive order.

Ole Miss hosted its fifth annual RebelTHON at the Turner Center to raise money for the Children's Miracle Network Hospital. The 12-hour marathon surpassed the initial goal of \$150,000, raising \$172,169.22 through dancing, games and entertainment.

On Feb. 22, the yearlong NCAA investigation into the Ole Miss football program finally came to an end. The university self-imposed a one-year bowl ban for the 2017 season after 21 sanctions were brought forth by the NCAA. "I feel terrible for our players and staff who have to handle the consequences of a very few," Freeze said. "Unfortunately, these penalties are necessary for our program to be responsible and to move forward."

March

Ole Miss men's basketball made an exciting and deep run into the NIT Tournament. After the regular season ended with an impressive 75-70 win over Final Four-bound South Carolina, the Rebels were bounced early in the SEC Tournament. Rather than sulking on missing out on the NCAA Tournament, the Rebels beat the fourth-seeded

Monmouth Hawks 91-83 before taking down the Syracuse Orange 85-80 in a huge win at the Carrier Dome. An NIT Final Four bid came up just short at home in the Pavilion against the Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets, ending what was an exciting season showing promise for the future.

Dion Kevin was elected the 2017 ASB president, winning with 58.04 percent of the vote, while Elam Miller won the vice presidential race, earning 58.08 percent of the vote. Both elections went to a runoff, and the ASB saw nearly 4,000 students cast votes. Both Kevin and Miller ran on platforms hoping to unite students to ensure everyone on campus has a voice.

April

C Spire brought technology to campus in its inaugural C Spire Technology Experience conference, held in the Pavilion on April 27. Big names in technology, like Michelle McKenna-Doyle, the NFL's chief information officer; Brian Uzzi, of Northwestern University and Randi Zuckerberg, founder of Zuckerberg Media, Facebook Live and former chief marketing officer of Facebook, presented. The festival aimed to connect technology and music by including performances by Passion Pit, The Lonely Biscuits and The Weeks after the lec-



PHOTO BY: ARIEL COBBERT

Participants walk through the Square during the Women's March in Oxford earlier this year.



PHOTO BY: CAMERON BROOKS

Senior Sebastian Saiz thanking fans after his last collegiate game.

tures.

Four Ole Miss Rebels were selected in this year's NFL draft. Senior star tight end Evan Engram lead the way, going No. 23 overall to the New York Giants. Other Rebels drafted included nose tackle D.J. Jones going 198th overall to the San Francisco 49ers and cornerback Derrick

Jones going 204th overall to the New York Jets. The final Rebel drafted and perhaps the most notable late-round selection by any team was the Denver Broncos selecting "Mr. Irrelevant" Chad Kelly 253rd overall. The last pick in the draft, Kelly fell to injuries and off-field concerns mid-season.

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Twin Peaks releases vinyl, plays Oxford tonight

ZOE MCDONALD

thedmfeatures@gmail.com

It's been a hell of a year for Chicago rock band Twin Peaks.

In the past 12 months, it's released its third album, "Down in Heaven," gone on extensive tours interspersed with festival appearances and recorded a live album, "Urbs in Horto."

And in a sort of physical punctuation to these successes, the "Urbs in Horto" vinyl will be released Friday, which is also the day of the band's appearance at Proud Larry's in Oxford with Chicago's Post Animal and Chrome Pony out of Nashville.

Chicago's motto, Latin phrase "Urbs in Horto," translates to "City in a Garden." For Twin Peaks, this was reflective of the pockets of natural landscapes throughout the members' home city. Known for its frenetic and sweaty live shows, it seemed like the right step for the band to channel that energy into a live record, according to vocalist and bassist Jack Dolan.

"Our live shows are probably one of the stronger things about our band," Dolan said. "(The album) happened to

be recorded over three of the best shows we've ever had in our hometown of Chicago, and it came out really well. ... It was three straight days sold out back-to-back, which was great. It was a little victory lap for us because we had a good year."

Dolan attests that Chicago's music community had a huge influence on Twin Peaks as the members, who started the band around age 16, matured. When the four original members – Dolan, Cadien Lake James, Clay Frankel and Connor Brodner (Colin Croom was added more recently) – were still in high school, they started playing live and released their first album, "Sunken," in 2013. They followed with "Wild Onion" in 2014, giving way to their growing career. In the releases following their first, the band's sound has become cleaner and has spanned across genres. When it comes to live performances and the new live record, songs from "Sunken," like "Irene" and "Boomers," still persist.

"Over time, you kind of add stuff to them, or you just get tighter in general and more comfortable with them," Dolan said. "At this point, we've been playing some of



PHOTO COURTESY: DANIEL TOPETE.

the songs for so long it's kind of second nature to us."

There are aspects of both punk and grunge in the band's first two releases. 2016's "Down in Heaven" offers something distinct. Edging on country rock and channeling rock-n-roll greats like The Beatles and The Rolling Stones, "Down in Heaven" is a window into another facet of the band's ability and propensity for constant change. Four band members contrib-

uted lyrics that are accepting of loneliness but still yearning for something more, interwoven with the feelings that come with growth. The album was recorded over a pair of two-week periods at a Massachusetts lake house.

"It gave us a lot of freedom and a lot more time than we were used to to finish what we had to do on a record like that," Dolan said. "It was really beautiful, and the vibes were all there. We were on a

big lake in a big wooded area and in a big house. We set it up all ourselves. ... So it gave us all the freedom to kind of take our time with (the record) and make sure it was exactly how we wanted it. We had the best time we could."

Twin Peaks will play in Oxford tonight as part of a tour through the South, whose notorious heat is a welcome change from the cold winds of Chicago. The show starts at 9 p.m.



COMMENCEMENT

2017

The week of Commencement, pick up your cap and gowns during the following hours:

- **Wednesday**, May 10, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the C.M. "Tad" Smith Coliseum
- **Thursday**, May 11, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. in the C.M. "Tad" Smith Coliseum
- **Friday**, May 12, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the C.M. "Tad" Smith Coliseum
- **Saturday**, May 13, 7:30 – 9:00 a.m. in the Ole Miss Bookstore at the Jackson Avenue Center

'Sleight' challenges Hollywood's superhero norms

ANNA KATHRYN HODGES
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Watching "Sleight," written by J.D. Dillard, I felt that I was taking in just a small glimpse into a fresh approach to the overdone superhero genre.

With a total budget of just \$250,000, "Sleight" proved that big, fancy special effects and flashy details don't make a movie – the characters and their developments truly seal the deal for a solid storyline.

The movie's teenage protagonist, Bo (Jacob Latimore), lives in a poor area of Los Angeles. He gives up his chance at attending college on scholarship to instead look out for his younger sister. Bo fights for their survival, performing magic tricks in the streets and slinging drugs, something he's pretty good at. His talents gain attention from clients and his supplier Angelo (Dulé Hill), and he never forgets the risk of his job. Even among the threats of his environment and the haunting idea of poverty knocking at his door, Bo continues his work



PHOTO COURTESY: COMINGSOON.NET

for Angelo.

Angelo shows Bo the darker, more sinister sides of the business with hopes to put his talents to use. This causes Bo to drop the drug business, as it was too dark for him to handle, and he goes out with quite a bang.

By double-crossing Angelo in an effort to make one last big cut of money from a sale, he puts himself in the

hot seat. His actions lead to his sister's kidnapping by the drug lord he had the audacity to cross. Now it's his turn to save his sister.

This storyline creates great opportunities for character development and illustrates the heart-wrenching struggles Bo and his family endure in order to survive in their broken world. Dillard's use of mag-

ic is a new take on the idea that a "super" hero doesn't always have to come with a suit of armor or genetically enhanced power. Instead, magic parallels typical Marvel superhero qualities. Bo's genuine desire to save his sister and his reliance on magic are truly moving.

I found Bo's character to be unique and appealing – the unlikely hero overcomes

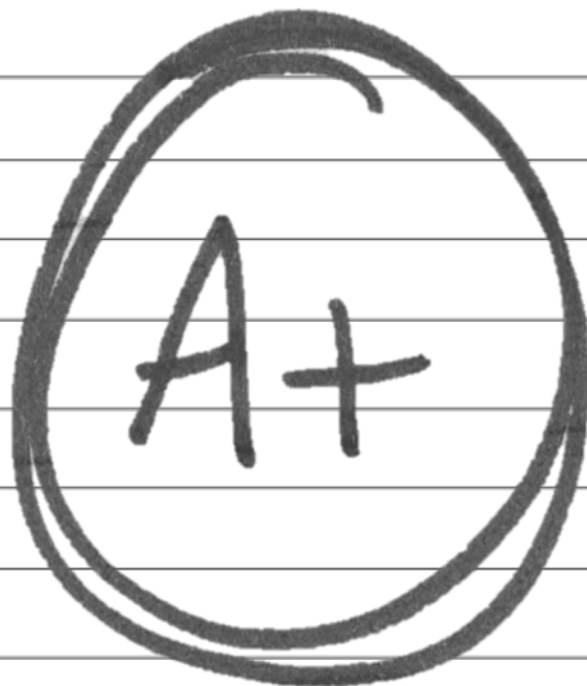
his personal wrongs and fears to go after what he finds most important. His magic and skills picked up in the Los Angeles streets come to his advantage, beautifully illustrated on film with dark hues of evening lights.

Not only is Bo presented as strong and smart, but his sister is, as well. The women in the film do not go unnoticed, nor do they dissolve into the background like so many others do in today's film industry. They are strong, brave and independent. Intelligence is a necessity for Bo and his sister and is always clearly portrayed.

Overall, I am incredibly glad I chose to see this film, as it was a beautiful and thought-provoking take on the tale of a hero and his unlikely parallels with those he is up against. A genre-redefining piece, "Sleight" challenges the industry's portrayal of what the norm must be for superhero movies and how they should be presented.

RATING: B

Looking for Extra Credit?



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Men's golf team poised for strong postseason run

TYLER BUTLER

thedmsports@gmail.com

The Ole Miss men's golf team wrapped up regular-season play at the SEC Men's Golf Championship in St. Simons, Georgia, on April 24. This season, the No. 21 Rebels found consistent success, led by the NCAA's sixth-ranked golfer, Braden Thornberry.

Thornberry has maintained a 69.75 stroke average after competing in 12 tournaments to date; if he maintains this mark, he will surpass Jonathan Randolph for the university's lowest stroke average in a season.

In only his second year with the team, Thornberry has already secured a place in Ole Miss history by crushing previous school records for most rounds in a year with scores in the 60s (19), most rounds under par (25) and most rounds

of par or better (31).

The sophomore Olive Branch native touts four tournament titles and eight top-five finishes. On the way to an October championship in Georgia, Thornberry set a school record with the lowest three-round score ever recorded (198). Thornberry has been aided by senior Ben Wolcott's five top-five finishes and 71.06 round average, as well as consistent play from Josh Seiple, Noah West and Kerry Sweeney.

On the season, the team has earned its top-25 ranking from tournament titles at the FACM Intercollegiate tournament in Tennessee, the Autotrader.com Collegiate Classic in Georgia, the Warrior Princeville Makai Intercollegiate tournament in Hawaii and an impressive win at the Lamkin Grips San Diego Classic in California.

This year's squad is now tied

with the 2000-2001 men's team for top five-finishes in a year with 10. At the Autotrader.com Classic, the men's team made history with its three-day score of 831. This score was the second-lowest tournament total in school history. The high mark stood alone for less than two weeks before the team tied that record with another 831 performance in the Warrior Princeville Makai tournament.

At the Autotrader classic in Georgia, in addition to a tournament total record, the team's 274 strokes on day two tied for the second-lowest score in Ole Miss history.

The Rebels faced a stacked field last month at the SEC Championship but played strongly throughout. The team qualified comfortably for match play before dropping a 3-2 round to the top-seeded Vanderbilt Commodores in a hard-fought quarterfinal loss.

In team play, the Rebels tied for seventh place with a notable three-day score of just 12 over par. Braden Thornberry placed third in the individual standings with a three-day to-



COURTESY: OLEMISSPORTS.COM | JOSH MCCOY

tal of six under par.

With consistently strong performances in the books, the Rebels stand poised to make an impressive postseason run. Coach Chris Malloy said he feels like his team will use its SEC Tournament loss as "fuel for their fire in our quest for a national championship."

The Rebels' road to the

championship will begin May 15 as they travel to Austin, Texas, for the NCAA Austin Regional at the University of Texas Golf Club. Ole Miss earned a four seed in the NCAA amongst a field of teams including golf powerhouses No. 2 Oklahoma State and No. 25 Arizona State.

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36				37			38		39				
40			41		42			43		44			
45				46		47			48		49		
50							51			52			
		53		54	55		56						
57	58	59				60			61		62	63	64
65					66		67	68		69			
70					71					72			
73					74					75			

SENIOR HONORS THESIS PRESENTATION

Elizabeth Susan Newsom

B.A. IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, CHINESE

"On the Lu to the Loo: Case Studies in the Changes of Public Restrooms in China Since the Cultural Revolution"

Directed by Minjoo Oh

Friday, May 5 at 9:00 am

Croft Hall Room 305

The defense is open to the public.

If you require special assistance relating to a disability, please contact Penny Leeton at 662-915-7266.

SENIOR HONORS THESIS PRESENTATION

Walker Daniel Bobo

B.A. IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, FRENCH

"They Call It Le Big Mac: The Importance of Adapting to Local Preferences in Marketing Strategy"

Directed by Douglas Vorhies

Friday, May 5 at 1:00 pm

Croft Hall Room 305

The defense is open to the public.

If you require special assistance relating to a disability, please contact Penny Leeton at 662-915-7266.

SENIOR HONORS THESIS PRESENTATION

Lane Jennings Proctor

B.A. IN ENGLISH; FRENCH

"Sans Fin: Language of Loss"

Directed by Matt Bondurant

Friday, May 5 at 1:30 pm

SMBHC Room 108

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Puzzles by KrazyDad

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

CHALLENGING

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

Rebel softball gears up for SEC championship

GRAYSON WEIR

thedmsports@gmail.com

After a historic whirlwind weekend series victory against No. 13 Alabama and a midweek rainout, Ole Miss softball will close out its regular season with a three-game series on the road against Missouri.

The Rebels, who are currently 8-13 in the SEC and 34-18 overall, find themselves sitting eighth in the SEC standings, looking to continue their hot streak going into the SEC Tournament. The Tigers, however, have struggled on the year. Hovering just over the .500 mark, they will look for just their second victory in the last eight matchups.

While the Rebels should have no problems leaving Columbia with two of three in the bag, head coach Mike Smith needs to be sure to keep their mindsets in check. The Tigers, who have only posted one series victory all season, have taken a game in each of their matchups against ranked SEC opponents.

The biggest factor for Ole Miss, as it has been all year,

is pitching.

Junior Kaitlyn Lee leads the team in every pitching category and has carried the team for a majority of SEC play. After starting 0-6 in league action, the Rebels have since gone 8-7, and Lee is a big reason for that. Since the start of the Kentucky series back on March 31, she's gone 5-5 with a 1.66 ERA and accounted for 67 percent of the innings pitched. All but one of her starts have resulted in complete games, and she's tallied two shutouts in that period with only 16 earned runs allowed in 67.2 IP. With Lee in the circle again this weekend, the advantage should be in favor of the Rebels.

That being said, in their most recent series, the visiting Tigers' hurlers limited No. 17 LSU to seven runs over the three games in Baton Rouge. Producing a 1.84 ERA and holding teams to a minuscule .209 batting average on the road is not easy, so the Rebel bats must heat up early.

On offense, recent co-player of the week Kylan Becker had two walk-off hits in the series against



PHOTO BY: TAYLAR TEEL

Paige McKinney prepares to hit earlier this season in a game against Memphis.

Alabama and posted a .400 batting average with six hits and two RBIs. For the Rebels to leave Columbia victorious, Becker must contin-

ue to roll, alongside Paige McKinney and Elantra Cox, who have hit well all year.

Although they are on the road with Knoxville on their

minds, the Rebels should have no trouble handling the Missouri Tigers — even if it requires their 10th walk-off of the year.

CLASSIFIEDS INFORMATION

The DEADLINE to place, correct or cancel an ad is 12 p.m. one business day in advance. The Daily Mississippian is published Monday through Friday.

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SENIOR HONORS THESIS PRESENTATION

Abigail Nicole Oehler

B.A. IN PSYCHOLOGY

"Loneliness, Meaning in Life, and Depressive Symptomology in College Students"

Directed by Danielle Maack

Friday, May 5 at 2:30 pm

SMBHC Room 016

The defense is open to the public.

If you require special assistance relating to a disability, please contact Penny Leeton at 662-915-7266. 27914

SENIOR HONORS THESIS PRESENTATION

Andrew Huff, Vera Gardner, Charles McEuen

B.S.M.E. IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

"Pens Up: The Development of the Ole Miss Ballpoint Pen"

Directed by Jack McClurg

Friday, May 5 at 3:00 pm

CME Boardroom

The defense is open to the public.

If you require special assistance relating to a disability, please contact Penny Leeton at 662-915-7266. 27908

SENIOR HONORS THESIS PRESENTATION

Brandon Carl Lynam

B.A. IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, CHINESE

"Dynamics of Cultural Specificity: Reviewing Meanings of 'Gay' Identities in Postsocialist China"

Directed by Minjoo Oh

Friday, May 5 at 4:00 pm

Croft Hall Room 305

The defense is open to the public.

If you require special assistance relating to a disability, please contact Penny Leeton at 662-915-7266. 27882

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Rebels head to Gainesville for three-game series

ETHAN WRIGHT
 thedmsports@gmail.com

The SEC Tournament and NCAA regionals are both less than a month away, and the Ole Miss Rebels are hoping to make a strong case for a trip to Omaha. Following a dominant two-game weekday showing against University of Louisiana Monroe, the Rebels are now setting their sights on the No. 7 Florida Gators.

The three-game series kicks off this Friday night in Gainesville, Florida. The Gators, who sit just a game away from the SEC East lead spot, will test the durability and talent of head coach Mike Bianco's young team. With the list of remaining regular season games shrinking each week, now, more than ever, the Rebels need a strong weekend showing. Here are a few keys to victory this weekend:

Bouncing Back

Florida has taken the opening game of all but three series this year. Losing the first game of a series is never a good omen. Often, nerves and untested depth can result in an embarrass-

ing, hard-to-recover-from loss.

Bianco and his players have shown, time and time again, that they have the maturity to recover from early adversity; series wins against LSU and Mizzou offer plenty of evidence to support this claim. Should Florida seize the opener, Ole Miss must remain focused enough to recover for game two and respond with an improved performance.

Stopping O'Sullivan

The Rebels are primed to face one of the nation's best coaches this weekend. Kevin O'Sullivan has coached the Gators for 10 years, taking his team to the NCAA Tournament in each of those years. Last season culminated with a No. 1 seed and an Omaha appearance. The veteran coach has also been awarded SEC Coach of the Year twice and NCAA Coach of the Year once.

While the statistics are flattering, numbers cannot do justice to the impact O'Sullivan has on his teams. For the Rebels to defeat the Gators, they must first defeat the Florida coaching staff. How?

Ole Miss will need to get on the Florida coach's nerves early and often with momentum shifting plays, quick scoring and precise pitching. If Bianco's men can accomplish these objectives while maintaining both offensive and defensive discipline, they can minimize O'Sullivan's impact.

Take Chances and Break the Six

Without taking a substantial amount of risk, Ole Miss will not stand much of a chance against this talented Florida. With six straight wins, the Gators are making a late postseason run both in their conference and nationally. For Ole Miss to step in and take down a talented, in-form team, it has to literally and figuratively swing for the fences.

In order to take the series in Gainesville, Bianco will need to take risks and adapt in the moment. Smart but aggressive play coupled with an unwillingness to back down, plus maybe an alignment in the stars, could be enough to give Bianco a series win over O'Sullivan and the Gators.



PHOTO BY: CAMERON BROOKS

Coach Mike Bianco takes a visit to the pitcher's mound to make a pitching switch earlier this season.

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