Student fees to go up 10 percent

By Megan Poindexter
The Collegian

Fresno State is being forced to make new plans in adjusting to the country’s economic crisis.

University President John D. Welty said, in a video posted on Fresno State News, that the university is awaiting the passing of the state and federal budgets for education, before making any final decisions.

“We’re making progress getting the budget established for 2009-10, but there still remains continued uncertainty,” Welty said in his video address.

However, the most recent proposed budget is most likely to see an $8.8 million cut.

The budget is pending on the passing of federal legislature’s passing of a $10 billion education plan, $60 million of which would be issued to the California State University system and $1 million which would be received at Fresno State.

In order to reduce the high cuts, it has been proposed to increase student fees by 10 percent, which would cover $4.5 million of the cut.

There is also the possibility that class sizes will increase as a result of the elimination of nearly 100 low-enrollment classes. Many part-time teachers will not be rehired as well and overall enrollment may decrease by 500-600 students.

The budget is only a proposal and will not be finalized until anywhere from late April to early June, Welty said.

Possible threats

No one knows which beetle is to blame for the deterioration of O’Neill Park, but a few particular species are strongly suspected to have infiltrated Fresno State.

• The Redhaired Pine Bark Beetle (Hylurgus ligniperda), a Mediterranean native about 5 to 6 millimeters long, was believed to have crossed the ocean to the U.S. in wood packing material.

It was first sighted in November 2000 in New York and three years later in Los Angeles. It multiplies quickly, laying up to 500 eggs at a time in vertical galleries underneath the bark. It may complete two generations per year. USDA forest scientist Steve Seybold said scientists have not yet detected it anywhere north of Lancaster, Calif.

• The Mediterranean Pine Engraver, a native of the Mediterranean region and Central Asia (Orthotomicus erosus), was first caught in Fresno by the USDA in May 2004, but it has now been spotted all around the Central Valley. It can lay up to 75 eggs at a time and burrows just underneath the tree bark, creating an overlapping network of tunnels. It is 2 to 3 millimeters long.

Beetles, drought conditions threaten Afghan Pines and other trees in campus’ O’Neill Park

By Ben Keller
The Collegian

The Afghan Pine, like the ones that grow on the Fresno State campus, is a 30- to 40-foot evergreen tree with a fragrance that makes it an ideal at Christmas time. It has soft, short needles with sturdy branches that seem to stretch toward the sky. But lately, the branches of some of these trees in O’Neill Park have started to sag.

The now brittle needles are showing more brown than green and the once-firm bark has taken on the consistency of Styrofoam.

Ryan McCaughey, the university’s manager of grounds and arboretum, said six to eight trees in the park are showing such symptoms. A few are already dead and will have to be removed.

The likely culprit: beetles.

McCaughey has seen emergence holes of a boring beetle underneath the bark, but it is still unclear which species is sinking its teeth into the wood. There remains much speculation as to why the beetle threat has penetrated the campus within the last year.

“It’s very difficult to treat and [the infestation] is hard to get rid of without getting rid of all the trees,” McCaughey said.

Beetle infestation of this degree is not common in
APPLICATIONS: ASI making year-end push to promote itself

CONTINUED from page 1

But following the amount of attention surrounding the resignations of former President Mackee Mason and former Executive Vice President Sandra Flores last semester, some ASI members believe that students still do not want to deal with the mess of ASI.

Smith said that the most challenging hurdle the organization is gaining student interest and participation.

“I think the most difficult aspect of getting students to apply is that they don’t want to get involved in ASI,” Smith said.

“But once students learn about the contributions they can make to their campus, they become more interested.”

— Allison Smith, Election Commissioner for ASI

In order to create more interest, Wahlberg said his staff is attempting to make an end-of-the-year push to promote the positives of ASI and all the organization does.

He said that the job can be stressful, but he has learned more in his near-

by four months in office than he ever thought possible and believes that it has made him a better officer.

“When you are part of the senate you get to represent an entire college,” Wahlberg said. “You get to be a voice to a body that actually matters and make a difference.”

In order to put the word out about the positives of running for a student position, ASI is encouraging students to participate in ASI events.

The organization is considering new avenues to promote positive change.

“Once students learn about the contributions they can make to their campus, they become more interested.”

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CONTINUED from page 1

California’s low altitudes like Fresno, but recent research headed up by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service has found a fairly new and foreign species of beetle infesting the Central Valley.

He discovered that the Redhaired Pine Bark Beetle, a native of Europe, Russia and the Mediterranean region, had developed populations in places like Dinuba in Tulare County, attacking pine trees in parks, backyards and golf courses.

Known for the tiny reddish hairs on its wings, the Redhaired Pine Bark Beetle has few natural enemies in California, making it particularly menacing.

When Seybold learned what Fresno State had on its hands, he paid the campus a visit.

Exploring the trees in O’Neill Park on Feb. 28, Seybold noticed emergence holes typical of a Longhorned Beetle, a 10 to 15-year California resident, in some of the trees. No beetles were found, however, and he said he couldn’t be sure of their presence until the higher branches were taken down and could be examined more closely.

“Typically when bark beetles are the cause of tree mortality, we see signs of their colonization at the base of the tree or at least at head height,” Seybold said.

Professor of entomology at UC Davis Mary Louise Flint, Ph.D., who contributed to Seybold’s research, suggested that Fresno State should also be the Mediterranean Pine Engraver beetle, another less-established resident to California that’s been found as far north as Fresno.

“The Mediterranean Pine Engraver [beetle] has been there for five or six years,” Flint said. “They do attack pretty much all the pines.”

What’s the cause, there is reason to believe that drought conditions in California made trees of all kinds more susceptible to parasites.

The state has experienced three years of below-average rainfall.

A similar lack of precipitation is believed to have led to the Mountain Beetle outbreak in Colorado that has depleted 1.5 million acres in the state since 1996.

The really healthy trees are beginning to fend off attacks of the bark beetle, said Flint, pointing out that bark beetles generally target trees that are weakened, often due to a lack of water.

This is especially true of the American Pines in O’Neill Park that need well-drained, moist soil to build strong defenses against insects.

Pesticides can prevent attacks for a time, but the solution, Flint suggested, is removing the trees that are infected.

McCaughley said 10 or 12 trees in the park will have to be cut down in the coming weeks at a cost of around $450 each.

COMMENT: The Collegian is a forum for student expression.

The Longhorned Beetle (Anoplophora punctipennis) has been detected in California for the last 10 to 15 years. It has antennae often longer than its body and can grow to about 12 to 13 millimeters. It tends to burrow deeper into the wood than bark beetles and leaves large, oval-shaped exit holes and fine shavings behind it. These characteristics lead Seybold to suspect that this particular beetle might be plaguing some of the trees at Fresno State.
Let's just get ‘em a beer

By Daniela Lopez

Huge bawl spot, he’s got way bigger problems to solve. Get that man a beer!

Here at Fresno State we’ve seen American alcohol paraano a lot this past year, most prominently in the ASI scandals that have rocked the campus. The first involved Mackee Mason and Sandra Flores, who were of age themselves, but didn’t prevent others who were underage from drinking in their presence at a retreat in July. Thus, they violated ASI’s “substance free” policy and lost their positions. Now they’ve been kicked out of school. The violation wasn’t the issue, it was the alcohol. Would they have been scolded for not stopping other drivers from breaking the speed limit en route to the conference? Of course not.

Mason was really screwed after they found out he had bought alcohol with an ASI credit card. Students were outraged at how their student fees were being spent.

But it wasn’t the money either, it was the alcohol. He was fully expected to pay for his dinner on the card, just not the drinks his party had with it. Had the same amounts of money been spent on a few extra slices of cheesecake we’d never have heard about it.

This semester, ASI president Graham Wahlberg’s refrigerator was randomly searched and found to contain (gasp) beer cans. Wahlberg is of age, but some of his roommates aren’t.

Did they expect him to hide beer under his bed? In a closet? Even more terrifying, did they expect him to drink it warm?

While, alcohol-related post- ers on campus don’t even attempt to discourage underage drinking, because people know better.

Why are we so paranoid about this subject? What are we afraid of? Obviously Wahlberg, Flores and Mason’s alcohol consumption didn’t stop them from reaching the top of student government, and it didn’t stop the under-ASI senators on the trip from reaching their positions.

Yes, drunk driving ruins lives and so does teenage pregnancy, but these are not the issues at hand. Education is the key here, not unrealistic legal consumption ages and overlawn media reactions to the mere mention of the “A” word.

America, it’s time to go to class, nurse your hangovers and relax. Get this country a beer!
Caffeine Crazy

From The Coffee Spot to the new Starbucks, Fresno State offers several coffee options

By Kaley Delarosa
The Collegian

It’s no secret. Coffee is a staple in many college students’ diets. But what guides you to where you purchase your daily cup? Price? Taste? Convenience? Selection?

The recent addition of Starbucks has given Fresno State students yet another option when choosing to buy specialty coffee drinks, sugary pastries and convenient snacks on campus. Starbucks, Planet Java and Coffee Spot offer similar selections:

Starbucks

Location: The newest choice for coffee on campus is located on the second floor of the library.

Atmosphere: In addition to tables and chairs, students can lounge on couches and enjoy the offbeat, eclectic background music synonymous with the Starbucks brand. Step just outside the store, and you are surrounded by the quiet of the library, free to take your cup of joe along with you as you browse the shelves or study by a window.

Drink selection: The complete Starbucks menu, ranging from a tall cup of coffee to a venti double-chocolate chip Frappuccino, is available to order.

Food selection: While Starbucks carries the largest selection of pastries on campus, the pastries themselves are the smallest in comparison to their competition. Starbucks also carries a small selection of sandwiches, salads, fruit, yogurt and juices.

Price: A regular cup of coffee will run you anywhere from $1.55 – $1.85. Tea ranges from $1.45 – $3.85. Specialty espresso drinks cost $2.65 – $3.95. On average, the Frappuccinos are about $4.85 but can cost you more than $4.90. A muffin or bagel with cream cheese runs $1.75 and the sandwiches and salads cost about $5.75.

Planet Java

Location: There are two locations on campus, in the Leon S. Peters Business Building and in the Kremen Education Building.

Atmosphere: This “coffee shop” is more of a window that you order from. While the shop itself doesn’t have a designated seating area, there are plenty of areas to sit or study at or around the buildings.

Drink selection: All the usual offerings are available here. Planet Java sells coffee, tea, a wide assortment of specialty espresso drinks and their own unique selection of blended beverages including one called “Malibu Beach” and another called “Chocolate Cake.”

Food selection: The selection of pastries is small here, mostly muffins and bagels, but the pastries themselves are big. You can also find sandwiches, salads, granola bars, chips and cookies here.

Price: Regular coffee will cost you $1.80 – $1.95. Tea, in any size, is $1.60. The blended beverages range from $3.25 – $4.25. A bagel with cream cheese costs $1.75 and a muffin is $1.25. The sandwiches and salads are $6.75 and include your choice of chips, cookies or granola bar.

The Coffee Spot

Location: This option for your caffeine fix is located downstairs in the USU next to the bowling alley.

Atmosphere: The place itself is small and doesn’t have anywhere to sit, but there are several options inside and just outside the USU. While there is plenty of space here, it is more likely to be loud since this is the spot for frequent university activities.

Drink selection: This option “proudly brews” Starbucks brand coffee and carries the same selection of Tazo teas as Starbucks. It also offers specialty espresso drinks and blended beverages but has fewer flavor options.

Food selection: Coffee Spot offers muffins and bagels and has a case full of donuts and cookies. It also carries sandwiches, salad, wraps, ice cream and sushi.

Price: A cup of coffee runs $1.60 – $1.95. Tea, in any size, is $1.60. Specialty espresso drinks range from $2.50 – $3.25. The blended drinks cost $3.25. The sandwiches and wraps cost $6.75 and include a fountain drink and chips.

Coffee Facts

Coffee is more than a fixture of U.S. diners and cafes. It is a product of global importance.

Coffee commerce
World’s second most important commodity export (first is oil); revenue is over $10 billion a year

Second largest source of foreign exchange for developing countries

Coffee growing...
Grown in over 80 tropical countries, mostly by small farmers...

...in Latin America
Acres in production: 6.7 million

Farmers: 1 million, 75% small-scale

Production: 66% of world’s coffee

Production growth: 196% since 1950

Top consumers
Imports as percent of total coffee produced

U.S. 23%
Germany 17%
France 8%

Sources:
Smithsonian
Migratory Bird Center

Word of the Day

Whole Grazer

A person who feels as though Whole Foods is so expensive that in order to get their money’s worth they have to try every sample available, often multiple times.

From UrbanDictionary.com

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From UrbanDictionary.com
College students might think of the game of beer pong as a way to get drunk, but for the teams that compete in the All-American Beer Pong league there is more at stake.

Every Tuesday night, students from Fresno State and Fresno City College, as well as avid players of the game, gather at Jimbo's bar in Clovis for a round robin tournament.

"On an average night there are anywhere between 10 and 15 two-player teams," Mitch Norton, co-partner of All-American Beer Pong, said. Norton, 22, is a Fresno State graduate with a degree in business marketing.

All-American Beer Pong founder and CEO Marc Jamieson, 24, started the group two years ago. Jamieson, a psychology major with a minor in entrepreneurship, is also a member of the Pi Sigma Epsilon business fraternity, where he is vice president of marketing.

"I saw it as a challenge," Jamieson said. Now, All-American Beer Pong hosts regular tournaments in bars and homes throughout the Central Valley.

Twenty plastic cups, two ping pong balls and a regulation size 8-foot long, 2-foot wide and 27.5 inch tall table are required to play. The 20 cups are put into two pyramids, the two 10 cup pyramids sit on opposite sides of the table; the cups are filled one-quarter to one-third of the way full with water.

Unlike most home games, the games played at Jimbo's do not require the teams to actually consume alcohol.

"It's not about getting drunk," Jamieson said. "It's about good competition and meeting people with similar interests."

While most of the participants do engage in some drinking, not all do. Tiffany Sellars, a 22-year-old newbie to the league, enjoys playing because she does not have to drink.

"I don't really like drinking all the beer. I just like the game," said Sellars, a Willow International Center and Fresno City College student. As the first round of play begins at Jimbo's, teams are assigned to their tables and opponents. From then on it's free reign. After the teams complete their first round they return to the scoreboard to post their win or loss and their cup ratio, as they do after every round, they then look for teams who they have not yet played.

Some teams chose teams they know they will beat, others choose teams they know will be stiff competition. The main goal: make it to the finals.

After completing five games the teams wait to find out their standings. The top four teams make it to the semi-finals. A best out of three series decides who advances; the winner from each game is then placed into the finals.

All of those who have participated watch as the final teams duke it out. The winner takes home the prize and a week's worth of bragging rights.

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PONG: Teams travel far

CONTINUED from page 6

“We play all around the state and we have the best competition in Fresno,” Danny Kirby, 25, said.

While Kirby and partner Matt Walker have the means to travel and play, not all of Fresno’s players have the same ability. The game of beer pong, which is also known as “Beirut,” “bob pong” or simply “BP” has gained popularity over the years. Along with being popular at house parties and bars, beer pong has even gained enough recognition to hold a World Series.

The World Series of Beer Pong is the largest, longest-running organized beer pong tournament in the world. Last year’s event drew nearly 600 participants from 39 states and three Canadian provinces, offering the biggest payout in beer pong history of $50,000, its Web site proclaims.

Although the prize for the round-robin tournament at Jimbo’s is only $50, it gives participants an opportunity to perfect their skills, offering them a chance to attend the World Series.

To compete in the World Series players may buy in to the event, or they may choose to win their way to the event by competing in an official satellite tournament.

Earlier this year the Green Man team, made up of players Kirby and Walker, won their bid in a San Diego satellite tournament for next year’s World Series.

All-American Beer Pong is excited to be hosting its own satellite tournament on March 14. The winning team from this Jimbo’s tournament will be given a bid to the World Series and four nights stay in a Las Vegas hotel, a prize worth over $1000.

COMMENT: The Collegian is a forum for student expression. http://collegian.csufresno.edu
Book Review: The Student Cookbook

By Sarah A. Peterson
The Collegian

As a perennial college student who inhales ramen like a true addict, I was delighted to discover “The Student Cookbook: 200 Cheap and Easy Recipes for Food, Drinks and Snacks” on the clearance table at Urban Outfitters. Finally, a cookbook for cheap-ass penny-pincher like me.

Its recipes range from no-brainers like grilled cheese and “Hungover Pizza” (“all you need is a phone and the number of your local pizza haven”) to more ambitious fare, including Swedish meatballs, Mexican lasagna and very difficult muffins.

But food is only the half of it. “The Student Cookbook” is packed with quotes from Family Guy (“I’m going to microwave a bagel and say go ahead and take your little section devoted to desserts, “The Student Cookbook” pays ample tribute to chocoholics everywhere. Brownies for dummies, Snicker pie, and M & M cheesecake squares, however, are rounded out by healthier treats like fruit smoothies and shrimp.

And what kind of cookbook for students would be complete without a section on alcoholic beverages? Nightclub mainstays like cosmopolitans, mai tais, and margaritas are presented alongside mixed drinks that sport much more odder titles (a piece of asx, alien secretion, popped cherry, and scooby snack, to name just a few). The book is divided up pretty simply into three sections, food, snacks & desserts, and drinks, with further breakdowns depending on the kind of mood you’re in (no money, hungry, the munchies, and really hungry, of course).

I am also happy to announce that there is a whole little section devoted specifically to ramen trivia (instant noodles were invented in Tokyo in 1958), as well quotes from Sesame Street, South Park and Magnum, P.I.

But it is perhaps the quote from The Muppet Show that best sums up how I feel about “The Student Cookbook.” “Holy Guacamole! This is what you call a job worth doing.”

Well, I finally saw the remake of “Friday the 13th,” or should I say the “reimagin-ion”?

And guess what? It’s nothing more than a connect-the-dots sequel. In fact, if it weren’t for all the sex and violence, I’d say go ahead and take your two-year-old. It’s that easy to follow.

What we have here is another bunch of pretty white people (with the token Asian and African-American just to let you know the filmmakers are down with diversity) fol-lowing in the woods near the now-abandoned Camp Crystal Lake, where Jason once roamed.

Director Marcus Nispel would have you believe that all young people think about are sex and pot, and not only that, but they’ve all just stepped out of an Abercrombie & Fitch ad.

But don’t worry, there are plenty of tits and blood to go around, as “Supernatural” hunk Jared Padalecki and good-guy Danielle Panabaker go in search of his missing sister (Amanda Righetti), encountering all manner of grubby hicks and succulent marijuana plants along the way.

So, of course they stumble upon Jason’s white-trash hide-away, and off they go to warn the others.

What ensues is a series of garden-variety killings that don’t mush up much origi-nally (with the exception of being dangled over a campfire to roast alive).

I don’t know, maybe I’m just becoming desensitized, but as a hardcore horror buff, it takes a lot to get me to cringe anymore, having seen every murder get done and recreate to the point of literal overkill.

The dialogue is not much better, the script adequate at best, but a few pornic gems do somehow manage to slip through, like “they don’t call me the wood wizard because I masturbate a lot.” (I dare any Oscar-winning screenwriter to try and top that.)

And you know, I prob-ably would have enjoyed this kind of mindless splatter fest several years ago when my standards were considerably lower.

“Anything with a sex scene and a beheading,” that was my motto.

But when true prize like “My Bloody Valentine” come along, it makes you realize that horror movies don’t have to suck when it comes to production values.

And perhaps the greatest sin of this new “Friday the 13th” is its predictability.

When your mom is snor-ing in the seat next to you, your best friend is laugh-ing her ass off and you’re shouting out the scares before they even occur, it’s kind of like watching a repeat of “Mystery Science Theatre 3000.”
Erick Garcia feels that his new training partner, Paul Zwama, will help him take his game to the next level.

Cross Country star Garcia may have met his match Wednesday, March 18, 2009

Fresno State’s long distance running star Erick Garcia is preparing for the 2009 track and field season, and this year he has a new running partner, Zwama, who will help him take the team to a new level.

“Two people from different walks of life came to Fresno and run together,” said distance and cross country Coach Sean McManus. “When it comes to athletics, they found common ground.”

Garcia, born in Mexico, and Zwama, born in the Netherlands, both run the 5,000 meters and the 10,000 meters. McManus said the team does a pretty good job staying together and runs with him in the long runs, but when it comes to the hard workouts, Garcia and Zwama are training at the same levels.

In practice, if either of them is having an off day, the other runner will help by pulling him along, McManus said.

Garcia said that on days he doesn’t feel like running, Zwama motivates him to go out there and do his best.

“I have never had a training partner at Erick’s level,” Zwama said. “It’s good to train together and push each other.”

Zwama says that both he and Garcia like to run behind people during practice, which causes some conflict in their training, especially if they have to hit a certain time or run a certain percentage.

“Every practice I go behind Paul,” Garcia said. “Then he wants me to take the lead, so I go in front of him. We switch off.”

Garcia, who is coming off an impressive cross country season, said Zwama is a talented athlete who understands the sport and knows what it takes to be a good athlete.

McManus said it was a good opportunity to pick up a guy with high caliber and he was excited because of Garcia. Zwama did his homework and recognized that Garcia did well during cross country; it’s a good fit for both the team and for him.

Zwama came to the United States after his friend lived here for a couple of years. The friend told him stories on how the whole system of running is valued more than back at home.

“People thought you were crazy back at home,” Zwama said. “Here, running is more respected.”

Before transferring to Fresno State, Zwama attended the University of Maryland in Baltimore.

McManus said that Zwama wanted to transfer because he wasn’t getting the results that he wanted. He went through three different coaches in three semesters; now he is on his fourth coach in his fourth semester.

According to McManus, Zwama didn’t have consistency where he was. The workouts are adjusted so he can get used to the training. He didn’t do a lot of weight lifting in the past so he is sore from the adjustment.

On the track, Zwama has already hit a time of 20:40 for the 10,000 meter, 6.2 miles and 14:35 for the 5,000, 3.1 miles. Last year as a freshman, Garcia hit 14:35 for the 5,000 and a 9:16 for the 3,000 meter steeple chase.

The steeple chase is 200 meters shy of a two mile with four barriers and one water barrier. The barrier is 36 inches high and the water pit is 12 feet long and about 28 inches deep.

McManus said he hasn’t had a chance to see Zwama race yet.

“We will find out how his training translates to races,” McManus said. “Erick always races up to his ability. If Paul can run with Erick in training and runs with him in the races, they can do pretty well. Both have a chance to do well in WAC.”
In a room full of suits, TV cameras, one university president and even a few football coaches, the women’s basketball players were joking.

Even with their NCAA Tournament fate still unknown, the Bulldogs were as loose and lax as ever. According to two-time WAC Tournament MVP Jaleesa Ross, the laughter and smiles were just the ‘Dogs way of using nervous energy.

“We are really good at hiding that,” Ross said. “Don’t let them see you sweat.”

But still, it was clear the Ross and the Bulldogs have been here before. For the second straight season, the women’s basketball team will be playing in the NCAA Tournament.

Fresno State earned both the WAC regular season and tournament title and with that, the 13th seed and a date with the fourth seeded Cal Bears.

After tense wait, Bulldogs learn opponent

The women’s basketball team will be playing the Cal Golden Bears in Los Angeles, the closest regional game to Fresno. The ‘Dogs earned a No. 13 seed, one seed higher than their first NCAA Tournament in 2008.

The ‘Dogs were in the game late, but ended losing by four points.

“We only lost to them by four points. Their team is pretty similar to that one [that the Bulldogs faced in 2007],” forward Haley Munro said. “It’s great to know that we can go down there and give them a run for their money.”

Wiggins was pleased with the pairing and the fact that the Bulldogs got a higher seed than they received in the 2008 tournament. He hopes that in their next meeting with the Bears, his team will again be close at the end.

“We’ve got to find a way to be in the game like that again and then at the end of it to make the plays,” Wiggins said.

This time around, the game will be played on a neutral court. With the regional being so close, the team hopes that relatives and fans will be able to make the trip and show support.

“We are going to have a lot of Fresno fans down there,” Ross said. “It is going to be a really great atmosphere for us to try and get this win in.”

After the celebration and excitement of the selection, the Bulldogs will get to work and begin to prepare for Cal.

Last year, the team was happy just to make it to the NCAA tournament. This year, Fresno State has a winnable matchup and will not be content with just making it.

“Right now, you can’t relax or rest and feel like you have accomplished something,” Wiggins said. “You still have to practice hard. We have to change our practice environment to make it even tougher.”

Wiggins and his team have accomplished a lot in the past few years. But he feels that his team still has more to accomplish.

“Right now, they are playing to stay,” Wiggins said.
Happy to be ‘Mad’

Picks and upsets for the 2009 NCAA Tournament

Starting tomorrow I will not only lose my mind, but my life as well. I’m no psychic, but I already know how the next 19 days will play out.

I guarantee my neighbors will say, “what is going on next door?” at least a half dozen times. When I visit and go back home, my mom will say, “more basketball?” And I apologize in advance, because I could already picture girls telling me how much of a flake I’ve been for the last couple weeks.

Every year around this time, my voice isn’t the same until April. My heart doesn’t need an energy drink to speed up the beat and if my blood pressure and stress level were an earthquake, it’d be off the Richter scale. All of this can only mean one thing - it must be March Madness.

As the NCAA Tournament’s first game tips off at 6:30 p.m. tomorrow, there still is time to finalize your bracket. I’m no expert, but is there such a thing as an expert? Every ESPN “expert” is just making their best guess in reality.

My guarantee is in breaking down the field of 64:

Midwest Region Winner: Louisville

I like the Cardinals, however if something goes as planned, Louisville will face one of the toughest Sweet 16 games ever; if they end up playing Wake Forest. Wake arguably has the most talent in the nation, but I couldn’t pick them this year due to the youth of their team and the inconsistency they showed in the second half of the season. If Louisville gets past Wake, I am confident they will breeze through the rest of their bracket.

Further breakdown:

I like West Virginia to make a surprise run to the Elite 8. Also, I feel Michigan State and Kansas are overrated. I have the Spartans to the Sweet 16 and the Jayhawks losing to West Virginia in the second round.

Upsets:
No. 9 Siena over No. 8 Ohio St., No. 12 Arizona over No. 5 Utah
Siena features guard Kenny Hasbrouck, who is an explosive player with good range. The Saints won their first round game last season and I wouldn’t be surprised if they send the Buckeyes home early.

Arizona has a good trio, but that’s about it. If the combination of Chase Budinger, Jordan Hill and Nic Wise don’t perform, the Wildcats don’t stand a chance. However, Budinger and Hill are NBA prospects and I feel they will be a little too much for Utah.

Attractive Upset Picks:

No. 13 Cleveland State over No. 4 Wake Forest. No. 10 USC over No. 7 Boston College

I have to admit, I really wanted to pick Cleveland State over Wake, but couldn’t pull the trigger. If you’re feeling bold, this Cleveland State team is athletic enough to pull off the upset.

USC is coming off winning the Pac-10 championship, and if the Trojans could slow Boston College’s Tyrese Rice down, they should win.

West Region Winner: Memphis

Believe me, I didn’t want to pick Memphis or UConn to the Final Four. But the West region, in my mind, is by far the weakest region. If the Tigers and Huskies face off in the Elite 8, it’s a tossup. I chose the Tigers, because they have arguably the best defense in the nation and have an easier road to the Elite 8 than the Huskies.

Further breakdown:

This region is full of inconsistent teams. Missouri, Maryland, Marquette, Purdue and Washington can make runs, but I like UConn and Memphis to survive.

Upsets:
No. 9 Texas A&M over No. 8 BYU, No. 10 Maryland over No. 7 CAL
Texas A&M will rely on senior forward Josh Carter for scoring as they have trouble locating 3-pointers. However, BYU and A&M’s lack of depth was enough for me to choose A&M.

I like Maryland for one reason: Greivis Vasquez. Vasquez is capable of scoring 30 points and having a triple double on any night. He must not let his emotions get the best of him. Vasquez likes big games. Cal likes the 3-pointer too much.

Attractive Upset Pick:

No. 11 Mississippi St. over No. 4 Washington

This is a possible upset pick due to center Jarvis Varnado for Mississippi State. He leads the nation in blocks and will change the route of Washington guard Isaiah Thomas, and make it tough for Jon Brockman to score inside. But this game will be played in Portland giving the Huskies home court advantage.

East Region Winner: Pittsburgh

I am confident that Pitt will make the Final Four. There is no one in this region that can match up with forward Dejuan Blair. Their hardest game may come in the second round when they face a big Florida State team.

Further breakdown:

There’s a lot of good teams in this region, but no great teams with the exception to Pitt. Duke’s Gerald Henderson is explosive, but the Blue Devils don’t have enough fire power to go along with talented teams like Duke and UCLA. However, the Volunteers could pull off an upset.

Upsets:
No. 11 Virginiam Commonwealth (VCU) over No. 6 UCLA
VCU’s Eric Maynor is one of the best point guards in the nation. The Rams shocked Duke in 2007, and if Maynor’s 5 pointers are falling, I like UCLA to fall to VCU.

Attractive Upset Pick:

No. 9 Tennessee over No. 8 Oklahoma St.

With a talented starting five, Volunteers could pull it off. However, Oklahoma St is playing well at the right time and is a bad matchup for Tennessee.

South Region Winner: North Carolina

The Tarheels have too much talent not to reach the Final Four, but do face a couple tough teams. A second round game with LSU is tough, along with Gonzaga in the Sweet 16 and Syracuse in the Elite eight.

Further breakdown:

I don’t see Oklahoma making much noise in the South region. Blake Griffin is the best player in the nation, but won’t have enough help when the Huskies go on a 12 game stretch, look for Valdez to take the big shots. Oklahoma is an overrated No. 4 and prime for an upset, I’m confident.

Attractive Upset Picks:

No. 11 Temple over No. 6 Arizona St. (ASU), No. 10 Michigan over No. 7 Clemson

I really wanted to pick Temple, and if streaky guard Dionte Christmas is able to score around 30 points, ASU should lose. However, the Sun Devils have James Harden and must win to keep their tournament going.

I have chosen the Wolverines. Almost any other No.7, I would have gone with North Carolina. I really wanted to pick Temple, and if streaky guard Dionte Christmas is able to score around 30 points, ASU should lose. However, the Sun Devils have James Harden and must win to keep their tournament going.

Michigan has proven they could beat some talented teams like Duke and UCLA. If Wolverine guard Manny Harris plays well, the Tigers have a good chance of ending their dance early.

Final Four: Louisville over Memphis. UNC over Pitt.

Championship: UNC over Louisville, 76-67, MVP: Tyler Hansbrough

My Guarantee

Now, I have picked the national champion in five of the last seven years, but I’m only 1-2 in the last three years. I’m ready to get out of my mild slump, and that is why through research and my past experience I guarantee that I will have at least two correct Regional winners, four teams selected right and the national champion correct.

In the end, there will be buzzer beaters and heartbreakers, jubilation and tears, outstanding individual performances and Cinderella sightings. But only one team will get to cut down the nets.

While teams around the nation are anxious to get to the tournament underway, I am too, and more than happy to be ‘mad.’

Tyler Hansbrough and UNC are the favorites to win the NCAA Tournament. The senior has just one last shot to capture a national championship.
REMEMBERING COACH DAN BROWN

Forever a Bulldog

By Logan Hopkins
The Collegian

Dan Brown will not be remembered as just a football coach, but as a respected and inspirational man. It is apparent just how many lives he touched and how important he was to the entire Fresno State community and everyone who came through the football program.

Brown passed away last Friday after a two-year battle with brain cancer at the age of 50. Throughout his illness, he always deflected attention away from himself and never complained about anything. Tomorrow the university will honor Brown’s life by flying the flag at half-staff on campus.

A viewing will be held from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. tonight, followed by a Rosary at 7 p.m. and a Mass will be celebrated tomorrow morning at 10 a.m. All of the services will be held at the St. Paul Newman Center at 1572 E. Barstow. The Newman Center is just north of Bulldog Stadium.

“Simply stated, Dan Brown was a great man and a great coach. I’m saddened by the passing of coach Brown because he was such a good guy. He was an inspiration to me and everybody who met him; throughout his sickness he rarely missed practices or games and stayed with a positive attitude all the time. He was just so dedicated to the team; he always put the Bulldogs as a priority. He loved us and he loved the program. His spirit will live on through his family and the Fresno State Bulldogs.”

— Will Harding, Former Fresno State cornerback

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Career at Fresno State

• Brown was a key to Fresno State’s postseason success since 1997. In nine of the past 10 seasons, the Bulldogs have reached a postseason bowl game.

• The Bulldog defense was best in the WAC two times in the last five seasons. In those years, the defense led the conference in both scoring and total defense.


• Brown’s defense led the Bulldogs to their only conference victory over Boise State. In the 2005 season, the Broncos were held to only seven points and the defense pitched a second half shutout. The game was the first time in almost 20 seasons that Boise State scored only seven points.

• In 2008, the defense struggled at times, but also set school records in rushing defense. In two games, against New Mexico State and at San Jose State, the Bulldogs held their opponents to negative rushing yards. The ‘Dogs held the Aggies to minus-8 yards and the Spartans to minus-5 yards on the ground. Both games were victories for Fresno State.

• Multiple defensive players have made it to the pro ranks after learning under Brown. NFL players including James Sanders, Richard Marshall and Marcus McCauley all made it after playing for Fresno State and coach Brown.

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