President Anderson suspends varsity basketball

By Lindsay Drabek, Lorsan Piea, and Antonette Brotman

As detailed in an email from President John Anderson, the IIT varsity men’s and women’s basketball programs were suspended on Thursday March 26. This decision came as a surprise to many, including many of the athletes on the basketball teams. Though the President insisted that his decision was independent of the teams’ performance and it was simply a way to address extracurricular needs of more students, the reality of the students’ understanding of the situation was much hazier.

Junior point guard and Captain Rashida Joiner stated that the women’s team was informed on Sunday March 22 of the President’s decision by Coach Antwon Johnson. In a previous interview with Jessica Najarian added that Athletics Director Lee Hitchen was scheduled to inform both teams on Monday March 23 but as a result of Coach Johnson’s decision to tell the women’s team a day prior, the women’s coach was fired. It is believed that Coach Johnson informed the women’s team a day prior in an effort to prepare them for the the decision and allow them to come to meet Director Hitchen with questions.

At the Monday meeting, Razeq informed that Director Hitchen stressed his role as simply a messenger of the news and that the teams that they were being suspended because of budgetary and performance reasons, and though the President’s email did not cite these reasons. Following this sudden announcement and the lack of clarity in the information communicated, the women’s team decided to stage a protest to increase awareness of their concerns regarding the suspension of the basketball program.

The basketball players participated in scrimmages with their fellow members on March 26 in Keating Hall, beginning at 5pm. Though the number of non-team members who attended the protest was very low, the basketball teams proceeded to play for their cause. The team claimed that many of the players publicizing this were taken to court even though they were approved for posting by the Office of Student Life. The Flyers also claimed that the Chicago Tribune would be present to report on the suspension of the program but Ms. Joiner informed it became difficult to find a school of IIT’s academic caliber that also offers a competitive sport of their interest.

Mr. Razeq also expressed the concern that many upperclassmen will not have the opportunity to play basketball for IIT in their final years at this university. As for the younger members, it is very late in the year for them to apply to play basketball at other universities and still have the quality of education offered by IIT.

Many team members are obviously lamenting this decision from President Anderson’s office, as was the suspension of a more thorough explanation as to why the program was suspended. Both teams have had to get used to new coaches and as reported by the players, the progress has been steady and promising, making the suspension all the more surprising.

TechNews sought to speak with Athletics Director Hitchen about the matter but he was unable to comment at the time of the interview. We hope to have continued coverage on the matter from the administrative side as the story unfolds in coming weeks.

Tuition hike

By Chris Roberts

The IIT Board of Trustees will increase the cost of tuition by 6.75% for the 2009-2010 academic year, or approximately $900 per academic year, or approximately $900 per academic year, or approximately $900 per academic year, or approximately $900 per academic year. As many of you have experienced, IIT’s server crashes or are just unbelievably slow in the registration process, holds you had no idea about interferes, and sometimes things just won’t work. Peter Zachok, head of the Registrar, has been working with SGA to try to make the registration easier for faculty and students alike.

IIT注销了IT二年生和想要使得事情更简单由删除能够使得可能问题的他们, such as parking fines, which even at small amounts were able to prevent a student from being able to register for classes at all. Zachok also wanted to put students more in control of their academic careers. The pin number that is used for registering is an example of this. It lets students pick their classes, but also ensures they’ll at least touch base with their advisors. He has now worked out a system that will make registration uniform and fair.

On April 20th, IIT will begin using what is referred to as “Tiered Registration.” Instead of class registration beginning at midnight on Sunday, it will start at 8:30 am on Monday. Each day a new set of students will be able to register at that time. Monday, April 20th, undergraduate students with 111 or more credits and graduate students will be able to register. Tuesday, April 21st, undergraduate students with 98 or more credits can start registering.

Wednesday, April 22nd, registration for undergraduate students with 60 or more credits will open. Thursday, April 23rd, open registration for undergraduate students with 30 or more will begin. Friday, April 24th, registration opens for student with less than 30 credit hours. After 5:00 pm on Friday, April 24th, registration will be open for all active students and will stay open until the end of the drop/add period, which is June 7th for the Summer semester and September 9th for the Fall semester. The class schedules for the Fall and Summer semesters will be posted April 8th. Every student will receive a personalized email detailing any holds on their account, how many credits they have earned and what day they can register on.

This new system is being implemented for a number of reasons. Moving the start time to 8:30am each day of the week from the midnight Sunday start allows for staff to be available to assist students if they need help, and technical support will actually be available to fix any problems immediately. Expanding the time frame when students register to a week makes it easier for advisors to meet with everyone because not everyone will need their pin at the same time. Tiered registration also ensures upperclassmen get the classes they need to graduate, so they don’t get stuck with an extra semester and added expenses. Additionally, it will help with scheduling rooms for classes based on their size, because there should be fewer petitions for students who need to get into classes after they fill up.

As of now, this is the future for registration at IIT. However, the Registrar warned that until the final communication is sent out, there could be changes to the plan.
The chill of the rain penetrated my body as I gripped tightly to my umbrella forcing back the tears. “It’s just a studio assignment,” I told myself. But ever again as I walked across the Quad toward the God-box. Somehow trying to encourage myself to move past the assignment I had failed to turn in on time only made me feel more and more like a failure. Slowly the tears were breaking loose as I drew closer and closer to the God-box. I now had no motivation to actually enter. “I can’t do this tonight. God can’t be the enemy?” I prayed as I found the corner of MSV and heard laughter and music coming from the sanctuary. I usually felt so relieved to enter. I took a deep breath, told myself to get it together and stopped a ways before the entrance to put on a smile.

As I walked through the door I was quickly told about an additional announcement to make. My heart dropped when I remembered that I had to get up in front of the group to make the announcement and invite them to praise God. It must have shown on my face, because within an instant one of the members of my small group Bible study gave me the biggest hug and did not let go when the tears started pouring down my face. “I can’t be the enemy tonight! I just can’t!” I choked out through what I thought were the most audible sobs anyone had ever made. I felt the eyes of the thirty other people in the room and was scared. I thought they thought they would think less of me for being unwilling to stand before them to start off the night as I did each week. But I was so thankful for what happened instead. 

Within minutes I had been hugged by four people and was sitting in the audience, the tears drying on my cheeks, while a laughter and music coming from the sanctuary I usually felt so enjoyed the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”

You may be thinking, “That’s a nice story, but so what?”

Why should you care that I have a community of close friends who constantly encourage me and show me Christ’s love? Why should you care that this type of community exists at IIT? Why should you continue reading this article? Why have you read it thus far?

Regardless of whether or not the Bible is true, you have even stepped inside of a place of worship, or you call yourself a Christian, you have strengths and weaknesses. The purpose of community is to enrich one another’s lives by giving freely of these strengths and accepting help in areas of weakness. For example, as an extremely organized person, I help my sister clean her room, while she adds spontaneity to my schedule by reminding me from my schoolwork with a trip to a coffee shop. We compliment one another, we make each other’s lives more full; we were meant for community. If you desire to get plugged in to a community that puts you before yourselves, ask God to show you how, who, when, and where. As authentic and active members of Christ’s body, we must give of our strengths unselfishly and accept the encouragement of others in fellowship, even if that means giving up a few hours of free-time each week. What are you waiting for? Connect to Christ’s community.

For a list of campus ministries and information regarding their events, check out http://www.iit.edu/~ministry/
group.html. If you have questions about this article or would like a specific topic regarding Jesus or Christianity to be addressed in a future article, please e-mail seeking.His.Spirit@gmail.com.

Illustration by Berenice Kaczi

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SUBMISSIONS

TechNews is published on the Tuesday of each week of the academic year. Deadline for all submissions and announcements is 11:59PM on the Saturday prior to publication. Articles must be submitted electronically to the TechNews website at technews.iit.edu. Photos should be uploaded to the website as well.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The editors reserve the right to determine if submitted material meets TechNews’ policy and standards.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the editor may be submitted by anyone, but are subject to review by the editor-in-chief. All letters-to-the-editor become the property of TechNews once they are submitted. TechNews does not accept or publish anonymous letters.

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Illustration by Berenice Kaczi
Basketball suspension: what about us?

By Courtney Fisher

I am one of the many student athletes here at Illinois Institute of Technology. I, at least, was at 9:00 pm on Sunday, March 22, 2009.

On Thursday, March 19th, my teammates and I were informed of a mandatory team meeting that was to take place Sunday, March 22. Since the basketball season had just ended and we had just had our two weeks of break, we all assumed we were meeting to talk about our spring workouts. One by one, we entered the meeting, and sat down wondering what coach had cooked up for us this spring. Our coach, Aron Johnson, entered the room. From the moment he started talking, the life of every member of my team and the Men’s basketball team was changing. He informed us that the Men’s and Women’s basketball teams were being cut. Apparently, the president John Anderson required there to be cuts in the athletic department, and the basketball teams took the hit.

At first I couldn’t believe what he was saying, it was surreal, as if I were in a dream...a nightmare. I figured he must be joking, trying to play some sort of mind game with us. No one wanted to be the first one to cry. I let tears run down my face and refused to grab a tissue, because I didn’t want everyone to see that I was crying when coach said he was joking. But it wasn’t a joke. After reality set in, we cried – every member of the Women’s basketball team wept. I know that normally you wouldn’t want to admit to the entire student body that you broke down into tears, but this is not a normal situation. I cannot speak for the Men’s team, but I know that every person on the Women’s team was heartbroken. All I could think was, “What about us?”

I came to this school because it offered the two things I wanted in a college: architecture and basketball. Now? My college had to remove one of the two in the middle of the year. How could I do that? How could a president say he would cut the program without consulting the people involved? That is what Anderson decided with these few reasons and without consulting the people involved, that at this point the program should be suspended. He informed us that he did not want us to find out from our coach we had, but that he had wanted us to find out at the meeting with him, from him. My teammates and I, however, are glad that our coach told us ahead. I feel a lot of gratitude towards him for this decision, because it allowed us to deal with the situation in a more appropriate manner, and also be prepared for what came next. Hitchhen was willing to offer an explanation to how the decision was brought about. About two months ago, President Anderson asked Hitchhen about the sports’ history, records, and how long they had been around. At this point, he specifically mentioned basketball. Sometime later, President Anderson knew that we had suffered a heavy defeat, and brought it up in one of the periodic meetings between Hitchhen and himself. He said that this was becoming too much and that “we” should think about suspending the program.

At the time there was the idea of keeping the program around for another year, but the decision was eventually decided against. Some reasons for disregarding this option were that the coach may decide to leave, and if that players decide to leave, the school would not be able to recruit players, leaving the school in a worse position. Again I thought, “What about us?” Why did no one ever think to ask the people whom this decision would affect? If I were given this option, Coach Johnson and every returning player on our team would stay. President Anderson decided with these few reasons and without consulting the people involved, that the program should be suspended. Hitchhen mentioned that he brought up some points in our favor, but they were not enough to sway Anderson’s decision. The decision was both single-minded and non-democratic. Hitchhen tried to comfort us by saying that this decision doesn’t mean it takes basketball away from us. Also Hitchhen offered, if we choose to leave, that he would do everything in his power to help us transfer.

After explaining how this situation has come about, Hitchhen asked us for our questions. We had many questions – what was being ripped from us and we wanted as much information as we could get. When asked if the decision was made related to money, we were told that was not the reason. If money is not the problem, why cut basketball now? We are building the program, and there has been a steady positive improvement. Why are we paying for the problems in the past?

We asked why we were never given warning or the possible options such as the program be cut, or have a second basketball program in school, where are we going to go? We don’t want to leave, but if we wanted to transfer, other schools have already done their recruiting. What options are there? Hitchhen said that at that point two months ago, he didn’t believe this would happen. But it happened, and we were left unsupporting. He agreed that it would have been nice for us to have been told sooner.

I asked why the proposal of a conditional year was disregarded so quickly. I wanted to know why no one thought to simply ask us, the people being most directly affected by the president’s decision, if we were given one year and no new recruits on the basis that we were to be above 500 or our program would be cut, would we stay? Each and every one of us would have stayed. We offered many other options to entirely cutting basketball from the school. It was even asked on several occasions what he would recommend we do in an effort to save our program. We were told if we could come up with something feasible, it may have an impact on the president, but that it was highly unlikely because his decision was made. There were many more questions, and we are still searching for some answers. As Hitchhen told us, he did not make the decision. President Anderson is not a dictator, he could not know everything. I still wonder why there was no warning, how an entire program is being discontinued at this school and no one was given any notice.

I understand that basketball at Illinois Institute of Technology has not been the most successful of sports, but we were just starting to make progress. Sports are not just about wins and losses, they are about making a difference. Our team is not just about our wins and losses, we are more about making a difference. We are a team, but this is not a normal situation. I cannot speak for the Men’s basketball team wept. I know that normally you wouldn’t want to take away a sport from a team, but this is not a normal situation. I cannot speak for the Men’s basketball team.

After reality set in, we cried -- every member of the Women’s team was heartbroken. All I could think was, “What about us?”

Basketball suspension: what about us?
It’s the end of March, and sports fans across America swarm to television screens in order to catch a thrilling college basketball tournament game. It’s the time of the year where the March Madness kicks in as CBS and TNT broadcast multiple games simultaneously on both the men and women’s side. It’s considered to be one of the most exciting times in the history of sports that dare to draw in huge crowds. It’s one of the most popular sporting events in the history of sports, and is probably most looked forward to. Everyone is talking about their brackets, making their picks on who’s going to win it all. It could be considered mayhem. Pure pandemonium. But sports fans across the nation call it March Madness. Well here at IIT, we are experiencing our very own March Madness.

Our very own "March Madness"

By Zak Estrada and Tim Winter

What would you do with $30 million?

What would you do with a Million Dollars? How about a million 1990 dollars (that’s $299,977,842.84 in 2009)? Possibly buy a new car? A car for every friend? How about a nice house? Pay off debts? Save it? In 1980, Southside preacher Frank Gussanaus convinced William Davis to give him $20,000 so that he could buy a bottle of wine and the timeless, priceless gift of friendship.


“Million Dollar Sermon” in his speech to students receiving a full scholarship. In part of that speech he says: "In 1963 I graduated from Illinois Institute of Technology called the school started 70 years earlier so students of all backgrounds could prepare for meaningful roles in a rapidly changing industrial society. Afterwards, Philip Danforth Armour (of meat packing fame) approached Gussanaus and asked him “Do you mean what you say?” Gussanaus replied: “I do.” Armour said “Then I will provide you with the one million dollars.” In 1893, Armour Institute of Technology opened its doors with Frank Gussanaus as first president. It would later merge with Lewis Institute to become the Illinois Institute of Technology (hey, I know that place!).

Every time I think about that speech, I’m moved. Every time I think about that speech, I think of it something that got a renewed sense of purpose. Frank Gussanaus didn’t want to found a school so people could get jobs and make a nice living, he wanted to create a place that would change the world. He wanted to build a school where people could prepare to take meaningful roles in society – roles that would help make this world a better place for everyone. He wanted to create a place that would challenge students to change the world. I apologize for a lack of better words, but that’s just freaking awesome. It’s one of those things that make you go “Wow!” Every time I think about that speech, I’m moved. Every time I think about that speech, I think of it something that got a renewed sense of purpose. Frank Gussanaus didn’t want to found a school so people could get jobs and make a nice living, he wanted to create a place that would change the world. He wanted to build a school where people could prepare to take meaningful roles in society – roles that would help make this world a better place for everyone. He wanted to create a place that would challenge students to change the world. I apologize for a lack of better words, but that’s just freaking awesome. It’s one of those things that make you go “Wow!”

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If you’re on campus and are receiving work-study money, you may have noticed a recent change to your pay. It might be that you’re working less, it might be that more money is coming from the department you’re working for, rather than your work-study money. Did the money just dry up? We spoke to Vice President Gerald Blaha to find out.

For the unacquainted, work study is money provided to universities by the federal government and allotted to students based on need. Students then can take on-campus jobs and are paid out of that account. Everyone wins - there are more campus jobs, more students with jobs, and more money coming back to the university to pay for student financial aid. But this year, however, it was clear by November that students didn’t earn any of that money letting them know that the amount of money IIT has received has increased in the past. Financial Aid started to send out emails analyzing year to year trends usually helps to ensure that there’s enough money to pay for student financial aid. The hope is that a better handbook will open a better channel of communication between the university and its students. We hope that this truly marks the end of work-study shortages - and if all goes according to plan, we’re confident it will.

Incorporated in helping to shape the future of work-study, financial aid, or the student handbook? TechNews will be coordinating a series of roundtable discussions meant to facilitate student involvement in these changes. Keep reading TechNews for more information!

By Joe Kaiser and Karina Powell
EDITOR IN CHIEF AND BUSINESS MANAGER

Whatever happened to work-study?


**MBA Luncheon**

11:30am-12pm, Downtown Campus, 1st Floor Lobby and Auditorium

Presentation by Assistant Professor Elizabeth Durango-Cohen, Ph.D.

Topic: "How to Succeed in Today’s Economic Trends: Solutions, and Insight"

**11T Stuart School of Business**

Celebrates Women History Month

4:00-5:30pm, Downtown Campus, Room 5817

Guest Speaker: Ann Berg, a leading expert in commodities, commodity futures, capital markets and food security issues.

Start Smart Pay Equity Seminar for Third- and Fourth-Year IIT Women

5:30-8:30pm, MTCC Ballroom

Learn how to negotiate salaries and benefits to receive fair and realistic compensation at a free seminar presented by The Wage Project.

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**Wednesday, April 1**

**Writing Contest deadline**

5:00-6:15pm, 3424 S. State, Room 4000 South Building

Full-time IIT undergraduate students are invited to enter the 44th Annual Writing Contest, sponsored by IIT’s Lewis Department of Humanities. For more information contact owritingcontest@gmail.com

**CMC Workshop: Getting a Job - Researching Companies**

3-4pm, Galvin Library, CMC

Interviewing can be a stressful, nerve wracking experience. However, there is a way to make interviewing less painful - preparation. At this workshop you will learn how to prepare for interviews so you can build confidence and reach your potential.

**Social Sciences Lecture**

4-5:30pm, WH113

Nadja McClain of NYU will trace the “careers” of organizational efforts to shape the material envisions of the subway, and the work practices of “tunnel-level” employees against vulnerability to both mass violence and mundane disorder.

**Computer Science Invited Talk**

6-7pm, MTCC Auditorium

Duarte Wijayawardhana of Bioische and Biow Soft Microsystems gives a talk entitled Data and application scaling horizontally.
Spring Formal 2009

Saturday April 18th
at the luxurious Congress Hotel
from 7:00 - 11:00 pm
enjoy Fine Dining &
Dance in Style to the swingin' rhythm of a live Jazz Quartet

wb.iit.edu sponsored by Union Board and the Student Activities Fund
Spring break: a period of recess, usually lasting one week, during the spring term at school.

For 25 of IIT’s own, Spring Break 2009 meant taking a trip down to Foley, Alabama to spend a week building houses for Habitat for Humanity. What happens in Foley doesn’t stay in Foley.

It all started on a Sunday morning (very, very early). Students met at Midway airport via van, train, and car for an 8:15 flight to Nashville, Tennessee. The flight was only the beginning of “let’s take this opportunity to sleep during transportation periods.” They arrived in Nashville, where the excitement and Southern accents really began. The group always found ways to entertain themselves: card games, “Zip-pong,” “Chiz-pong,” and again, sleeping. The day continued with a seven-hour van ride down through Alabama to Foley. Memorable quote of the ride down there:

Hubbard (in a van, yelling across a gas station): Hey Sheila! Sheila, you got a safety pin?

Sheila: No, why?

Hubbard: I have a booger so far up in my nose I can’t reach it.

A safety pin? Really?

Around 8:30 they finally reached Foley, Alabama. Megan French, the woman in charge of Habitat for Humanity down in Foley (a very, very early), waited in front of every van and greeted the group with a smile, handing them house keys. The students unpacked and settled down in an intense game of “Mafia.” The mafia won in the end, the townspople were sad, the cops failed, and blood was spilled. Okay, maybe not that dramatic.

The first day of work came around on a rainy day in Foley. The three houses assigned to our group were down the block from each other. The three houses: a Women Build project, Habitat house meant for women to build together, GreenBuild (a LEED Certified house), and a Youth United house (a Habitat house where high school and college students worked together). All three projects were unique opportunities in their individual ways. Nothing could have been done without the supervision of the site managers. Lu was the supervisor of the Women Build house, Jaime the supervisor of the LEED house and Cathy the supervisor for the Youth United House. Working for these charismatic, smart women was an experience for itself. What they do is incomprehensible. Some of the doorways and stairwells were not meant for the tall or clumsy. On other parts of the site there were old war airplanes and submarines you could walk around inside. It was a really fun field trip with which to end spring break. The last dinner was at a seafood restaurant called Oysterella. The students sat at a long table and reflected on the week with their new friends. It was a delicious meal followed by ice cream sundaes and bread pudding. The last part of the trip got sad when the students realized it was time to pack up for their home the next morning. Memorable moment at 4 am, the morning they were to leave: leaving the keys to the van. Turns out someone threw them away. Yay dumpster diving!

As tech school students, it was a bit difficult for the group: not being the most physically fit, there were a lot of tedious tasks to be had. Each person was there with the unique purposes that made them invaluable to the team. People for years.” It was really hard to tell who didn’t know whom or even just an acquaintance. By the end of the trip, a family was formed. There were others who went with their best friend or even just an acquaintance. By the end of the trip, a family was formed. Many of the students said “I feel like I’ve known these people for years.” It was really hard to tell who didn’t know whom before this trip.

This left the group in desperate need to find someone to provide a location for the students. Lots of phone calls were made, and eventually the ASB leaders contacted Megan French down in Foley, and they were more than happy to give IIT the opportunity to work down there. Unfortunately, food budgets were not included, which left the group $2000 short for food. Through the creativity of the students, they found ways to fund raise most of the money back, and coordinate with companies and restaurants down south to support meals throughout the week. They made money by selling Krispy Kreme doughnuts and homemade pies. Habitat for Humanity in Foley gave at least two lunches for the students, the Methodist church stayed in fed a delicious dinner, not to mention the two amazing meals sponsored by Outback Steakhouse and Applebees. Some sentimental lunches were sent to the group on site: an elementary school packed brown bag lunches for each student. Hand drawn notes were placed in many of the bags, telling the students for their hard work throughout the week. Very touching. Being in Foley for a service project definitely made it hard for the students to go hungry during the days.

A lot of people on the trip came not knowing at least half of the students. There were others who went with their best friend or even just an acquaintance. By the end of the trip, a family was formed. Many of the students said “I feel like I’ve known these people for years.” It was really hard to tell who didn’t know whom before this trip.

So much was accomplished during the week. The outcome was so rewarding. At the very least of twelve of them managed to drywall the entire Women Build house. Some of the hard work is amazing work ethic. A lot of thanks go out again to those who helped the IIT-ASB group, but first Stephanie Harmon and David Parry get a ton of credit for making this trip possible from the beginning. Megan French arranged everything last minute for the group down in Foley, and helped more than ever. Last, it’s America’s Best Friend Joe from Boy Scouts of America set up the outstanding meal Outback Steakhouse and get the students American Red Cross cots to sleep on each night. Last but not least, Lu, Cathy and Jaime showed the students the love and dedication for helping those in need of a home. Every family deserves a home, and these 25 made it possible:


If you know and see any of these people, please be sure to recognize what they’ve done and thank them for positively representing the Illinois Institute of Technology down in Foley, Alabama. Each one has their own story that is definitely worth hearing.
Ratatat meets expectations and surpasses them

By William Sawyer

When one has listened to a certain band for a number of years and never been disappointed by their music, they are typically setting themselves up for this disappointment that they have managed to elude thus far. It may come about with the release of a new album that does not meet these raised expectations or, in many cases, a particularly dry live performance. Fortunately for me, this was not the case with Ratatat’s performance at the Metro on the night of Monday, March 30.

Opening for the band were two smaller acts: Think About Life, a Canadian band I had never heard of prior to the night of the concert, and Despot, a rapper hailing from New York City. Both bands were featured on Ratatat’s second mixtape. The first band put on a great performance, delighting the audience with catchy, frantic melodies, a light show matching the frenzy of their music, and their crazy on-stage antics. The lead singer never stopped dancing throughout any of the songs, and at one point, the drummer stood up mid-song to dance wildly in his underwear after somehow removing his pants while playing and keeping the audience from noticing the fact that he was indeed undressing.

The second act was slightly disappointing in comparison to what it followed. As soon as Despot introduced himself, it was quite clear that he was very inept at what he did, often not even opening his eyes, whatever they were doing. He then went on to open a water bottle without spilling it across his pants. During the first half of his set, which lasted a total of 30 minutes, he did not put much energy into his performance, and the crowd was not responding very well. However, during the second half of his set, he either sobered up significantly or realized that the crowd was not receiving him well and thus played some more energetic songs and just generally improved the quality of his performance.

After Despot’s set, there was nearly an hour wait until Ratatat performed, and the crowd grew quite restless as a result. However, their patience was handsomely rewarded as Mike Stroud and Evan Maut, the two members of the band, entered the darkened stage through a cloud of smoke, accompanied by the beginning of a video accompaniment to their performance. They started off their set with “Shiller”, a slower song from their most recent album, LP3, which then transitioned directly into the next song. This transition was quite exciting, seeing as how it involved a sudden burst of lights, spotlights, and several color-coded LEDRs placed alongside the band. Also, the video accompaniment changed as the set progressed, reflecting the individual feel of each song. And by video accompaniment, I am in no way referring to anything remotely similar to something like Windows Media Player visualizations. This was a visual presentation which clearly took numerous hands to create, featuring various film clips which moved in rhythm with the music. It may seem that the spectacle of the overall visuals may have drawn the audience’s attention away from the music itself, but in fact had the opposite effect, drawing the crowd into the performance, creating something similar to an immersive experience.

It may seem that my review speaks so highly of this band’s performance due to a personal bias, and I will be the first to admit that some of my views about the performance may be seen through eyes easily ignoring mistakes; however, a friend of mine who goes to concerts as part of his job, and who also had never heard any of Ratatat’s music prior to the concert, was greatly impressed by the show they put on that night as well. So next time Ratatat comes through Chicago, I highly recommend that you invest in some tickets to see them, and hopefully this investment will pay off for you as well as it did for me.

Is Coetzee’s Slow Man a good deviation from his style?

By Udayan Das

John Maxwell Coetzee is not a writer that favors traditional narratives. His novels are often allegorical, hard to mark down as to exactly what is being said. Usually I like to think of them as non-linear, in the sense that a traditional narrative is linear, and his work is not that. He believes in writing exactly, devoid of sentimentality as much as possible (not devoid of emotion, though). Slow Man might be his most sentimental work yet. In a way, it also lacks that acuteness of prose that is the signature of Coetzee.

As with any Coetzee work, Slow Man is eminently readable, and indeed its sentimentality is surprising, until we realize that the author has a tremendous twist up his sleeve. In a traditional narrative, a twist is something extraordinary that happens in the plot that surprises us and gives new life to the story. Perhaps it causes characters to behave in a certain way, and go above and beyond what they would have done under normal circumstances. Something similar happens in Slow Man, but here it is an exceptional twist in that it is not an actual event in the life of the central character Paul Raymont, but is a twist in the narrative arguments put down thus far in the book. Elizabeth Costello appears in the book (she was the central character of Coetzee’s most recent work before Slow Man) and essentially we are told that she is the one who has been writing the first third or so of the novel.

Up to that point, Slow Man has been the story of Paul Raymont and his family, and we are dealing with the fact that he has lost a leg in an accident. It is extremely interesting to follow what goes through his mind, and, as we have said, the narrative is unique as it is devoid of sentimentality. The book is about slight sentimentality (I mean, after all, this is Costello, so we are not going to see great sweeps of sentimentality ever). I think then that this twist is worth examining.

It has been argued that Elizabeth Costello is the author’s surrogate (a claim that seems to be backed up by the novel Elizabeth Costello and similarities with Coetzee’s self therein). However, it is always dangerous to draw such conclusions prematurely, and indeed, with Slow Man, Coetzee throws us a curve ball in providing us more information about Costello and essentially drawing her clearly as being fairly different from Coetzee. It seems to be one of his purposes here: to clarify the character of Costello and hence facilitate a re-reading of Costello, the novel.

The other thing this does is to bring into focus those metaphysical questions and about writing. Costello’s work is always thought of as exploring what it means to be living. In my opinion, it has been as much about him exploring what it means to be writing (especially in his post-Nobel-prize work). What happens when the narrator is face-to-face with his/her central character and becomes a participant in that person’s life? Certainly in Slow Man all the major actions taken by Paul Raymont occur after the appearance of Costello, and are, in fact, in some way or other fueled by her persuading. That brings up an interesting question: if an author finds that the character he/she has been following is stuck in some way, how does he/she deal with that? Costello’s appearance is real in the sense of this conversation taking place between the author and the character. It is also allegorical, metaphorical in the way that Costello chooses to make this conversation (that is, a writer likely has a part of the narrative itself. In the role that Costello plays in the novel and its ultimate resolution (here again is the most linear, almost happy ending ever by Coetzee), there is that implied question of artistic honesty: to what extent does an author pull strings to bring his narrative together to a readable form? Great authors argue that one is helpless in the face of an interesting character; one must just follow without questioning or controlling.

All this is very interesting and there are several other questions that are raised and there are different ways of reading such a work. The problem is that in a traditional narrative, a twist can seem contrived, because it is unnatural in the way that it fits with the essential rules that have been set up so far by the narrative. And this is true of Slow Man. Coetzee succeeds in raising some important questions but leaves a bad taste in the mouth. From one so accomplished, the bad taste becomes doubly sour. It seems in a way that Coetzee is arguing against the assumptions of traditional narrative (its sentimentality, its superhuman twists) by presenting us with an example of what can happen when the narrator contrives and conspires to lead his character. It results in less than the best book like Slow Man, something that is not to the author’s standard. Unfortunately, this experiment in itself seems contrived, and for sure is something that Coetzee never would have indulged in in his pre-Nobel days, and hence disappointing. It feels a bit like an outtake.

TECHNEWS WRITER
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Nas + MF Doom = Nastradoomus

By David Thomas

I feel like I have been saying the same two things for years when I talk about rap music:
1. Nas is still a great MC since Illmatic. The only thing that has changed is his production of the albums, which have dragged down his career since his debut.
2. MF Doom is wack. He raps off the latest Marvel franchise, and heucks the life out of every track he is featured in. But, he has some great beats, which for the most part he makes himself.

Apprently I was not alone in my assessment, since DJ Max Bedroom laid down Nas’s vocals over Doom’s beats, making the best hip-hop mashup album in years. Also, it became apparent to me that my argument is kind of old, as this mixtape has been sold on hippsychite.com since 2006. But to be fair, hippsychite.com and Max Bedroom are both from Las Vegas, which does not make a lot of noise in the wider hip-hop community. So I still think I am making the news with my reviews.

Now first I should state that I believe Illmatic was the greatest rap album ever made. If you do not share that sentiment, I would hope you will not find Nastradoomus to be anything but a disappointment. I think that Doom deserves the same title that I just gave it above. However, if you do agree with me, then you will be pleased to know that Nastradoomus is basically Illmatic 2 (forget about Stillmatic, it really wasn’t that good). To us, this is what Nas’s legacy should have been, it was just 12 years in the making. “Nas is Like,” “Thief’s Theme,” “If I Ruled the World” — just think about Stillmatic, and you’ll get an idea of what I mean.

Nastradoomus takes its beats from Doom’s Special Herbs album and for the most part takes vocals from the weaker side of the spectrum of Nas’s repertoire (“If I Ruled the World” is an exception). Still, the album isn’t perfect. Bedroom’s mixing is off, especially in the early moments where the vocals are drowned out by Doom’s more shattering beats. Also, it seems Nas’s setlist doesn’t go “You Owe Me” from the other album, but Nastradoomus album on 1999 is beyond saving, since an amazing beat is set up and it still is embarrassing. Nonetheless, Nastradoomus definitely gives a new found respect for Nas’s lyricism by simply coupling it to a better beat, thus making previously unlistenable tracks by Nas and Doom into classics.

The Prodigy fails to innovate

By Karl Rybaltowski

After their hit release of “Fat of the Land” back in 1997 — home of the songs “Smack My B— Up!” and “Firestarter” — The Prodigy’s Liam Howlett released a solo album where he remixed various tracks (with little hype surrounding it) and then disappeared for a while. Finally, in 2004, Invaders Must Die – Outgunned was released, finally bringing the band that was the face of the UK rave scene in the 90s back to the public — and it wasn’t particularly good while not particularly bad, it felt that Howlett’s talents had not evolved a great deal. After another five years, we now have Invaders Must Die — and I’m starting to feel like it might be time for The Prodigy to hang up its hat and retire.

Two tracks stand out on this album — First is “Omen,” introduced with a member of Does It Offend You, Yeah? Though in many senses it is just standard Prodigy fare, take it up another notch, there’s enough atypical influence on the beat (my bet being influenced by The Prodigy to make it a bit more interesting than most of the other tracks. And the mid-album track “Warrior’s Dance” is reminiscent enough of the pioneering UK rave scene tracks, was polished and touched up for a new age, to let it stand out. If it appears to be sparse on the details, that’s because there are few to give. If you have never heard any track by The Prodigy, nothing on this album will be a surprise to you. It’s the same thing he was doing over a decade ago, just crystallizing in many senses, going beyond even the idea of resting on one’s laurels.

Many of the tracks are passable, but just that. It’s a little unfortunate to think that such a big and influential artist in the electronic scene has stagnated like this, but the truth remains. Those who have heard The Prodigy will hear nothing new year. If you’re a raver, this might not be too bad an album to hear being blasted through a rigged sound system in a warehouse. If you’re looking for something interesting in the realm of electronic music, on the other hand, this Invaders Must Die is not where you should look.

Toi et Moi: A French romantic comedy to cure a dull evening

By Udayan Das

On the surface, Toi et Moi (“You and Me” in French) is a romantic comedy about two sisters (half-sisters) played by Julie Depardieu (Arianne) and Marion Cotillard (Lena), who are searching for love. But perhaps because it is a French film, it drifts away from the conventions (and clichés) of the romantic comedy genre and fills the movie up with tenderness for its characters and an often realistic outlook on the lives therein. It is poignant in a way that has been tempered into assumptions about what the genre is by the various Hollywood rom-coms that I have seen over the years. Maybe the French approach to the rom-com is markedly different as evidenced here.

Toi et Moi tells the story of Arianne, who is the writer of photo novels (i.e. stories that are illustrated by photographs). They are simple stories, staying within the limitations of the genre, and are mostly about women who are struggling with life in some way and are rescued by handsome, wealthy men. Often, Arianne takes certain events from her own life or that of her friend Lena’s and heightens them (read: simplifies them) into the photo-novel setting. Both Arianne and Lena do have issues in their own lives, and their respective journeys through the romantic life are not going all that well. Arianne has a boyfriend (if he can be called that) named Farid, who has commitment anxiety, to say the least. Arianne is also being pursued by a certain Spanish construction worker that is at work at the building where she lives. Lena is engaged to be married to Francois, but is having second thoughts because she doesn’t appreciate Classical music as much as she does either.

To complicate matters, Lena becomes involved with Mark, who is a violinist and is, in many ways, what she desires. The movie follows these issues that the two women are facing.

The style of the film is to intercut normal narrative with shots from Lena’s latest photo novel, giving us a glimpse of how she perceives all that is going on around her. (In fact, at one point this becomes the means of discovery of a certain secret affair). The way that these photos are shown is one bit (the music is great too).

It’s the same thing he was doing over a decade ago, just drifts away from the conventions (and/or clichés) of the romantic comedy genre and fills the movie up with tenderness for its characters, the subtle, precise acting and the way that the movie goes away with obligatory scenes of romantic interludes and an all-too-familiar ending all work together to elevate the film beyond its modest ambitions. Besides a wonderfully nuanced performance by the exceedingly pretty Marion Cotillard (she really is a find for Hollywood, and I am currently looking forward to Public Enemies), looking prettier and more frail than ever doesn’t hurt either (the music is great too).

This is not a movie that one really has to put on a must-watch list, but certainly is one that can take away the dullness of a depressing evening.
Across
1. Outlay
7. Mex. miss
10. Pay tribute to
12. Questions
13. ... the wiser
15. Sushi wrap
17. ... Zeppelin
18. Driver’s need (abbr.)
20. It’s spotted in casinos
21. Entirely
23. Building annex
24. “Rugrats” dad
26. Pepsi or RC
27. Goes up and down
29. Stampeders
31. Mongolian tent
32. Filly’s father
33. Souffles do it
35. Cavalry weapon
37. Dr. Frankenstein’s assistant
39. WWW address
41. Furrow
42. “La la” preceder
43. Lungful
44. ... & don’ts
45. Grocery holder
47. Tabs
50. Impoverished
52. Surrealist Salvador
53. Napa Valley drink
54. Inconceivable
55. ... mite
56. Bed board

Down
1. Lock site
2. Watergate, e.g.
3. Dog in Oz
d. “Peter Pan” pirate
5. Vacantly
6. Jack-o’-lantern feature
7. Christmas tree topper
8. What’s left
9. Bridal path
16. Mil. training site
18. Acrobat’s attire
19. Storage places
22. Cake part
25. Not our
26. Caboose, e.g.
27. Calendar spans (abbr.)
28. Word said with a salute
30. Patriotic women’s org.
34. Extra
36. Able to float
38. Byrne of “In Treatment”
40. Auction offering
42. “It takes ... to tango”
43. Supplemented
46. Super
48. “If it ... broke ...”
49. Tribeca neighbor
50. ... it again, Sam
51. Birds in barns

xkcd by randall munroe

THREE HOURS LATER:
“INTERNALIZED?”
LIED? ANALYZED?
OR IS IT ATTITUDES?
THINK HE'S INTERNALIZED
HIS GIRLFRIEND'S ATTITUDES—
NO PUN INTENDED—AND SO...
**Sports**

**Swimming prevails at the NAIA Championships**

*By Melanie Koto*  
*TechNews Writer*

Two and a half hours a day, six days a week, twenty weeks out of the year, the Illinois Tech swim team spent time together in the pool. The goal: work hard in order to qualify for the National meet in March. This quality time was no piece of cake, as head coach Rob Bond knew that in order to accomplish this goal, the team would have to train hard every day. “I believe that this is the most talented team I have had the opportunity to coach in my eight years here,” Bond said, “I am impressed with the team work ethic and believe our success this year was a direct result of the swimmers pushing themselves and each other to be the best they can be.”

The work paid off. The Scarlet Hawks had a good showing at the 2009 NAIA Swimming & Diving National Championships. Twenty swimmers qualified for nationals, and out of forty events, thirty-five had an athlete from IIT in the lineup. But simply qualifying for the meet didn’t mean an end to the hard work. The National meet, held in St. Peters, Missouri, spanned four days, each day requiring about nine hours at the pool. With a great showing of team spirit, the team cheered and helped their fellow teammates to endure the long meet. Even the Scarlet Hawk showed up in full uniform to support the team.

Even though it was a challenge, the team left the meet with a handful of accomplishments. Among them was the men’s 200 Free Relay, where IIT took first by less than a half a second. “When we won the 200 Free Relay, it was the best feeling that I have ever felt,” Kyle Pinsonneault, who led off the relay, said, “The building shook. All the hard work and sweat put into the year turned into a national title.” Joe Taylor, who followed Pinsonneault in the relay, agreed. “Nationals was great and the highlight was the relay. I have won an individual championship, but it doesn’t even compare with the relay we won, due to the fact that I got to share it with three other guys, who I consider to be some of my best friends.” Following Pinsonneault and Taylor in the relay were Dale Cuffe and Andrew Mehr. All four men swam with an intensity that burned, taking first despite the fact that they were ranked fifth.

Overall the Scarlet Hawks had thirty-one top sixteen finishes, and thirteen new team records were set, including one that had been set previously in 1986. Three All-Americans (given for a top three finish) were awarded to the Men’s 200 free relay, and also to Taylor for the 100 fly and Cuffe for the 500 free. Overall, the men’s team finished 6th, and the women’s 10th, keeping with Bond’s expectations for both teams to stay in the top 10.

Add to all this the eight conference champions, seven conference records, an award for Conference Swimmer of the Year and Coach of the Year achieved three weeks prior at the Liberal Arts Championship in Iowa, and the season as a whole looks pretty amazing. And even with all this, Bond still thinks the team can achieve more. “It’s hard to say, when we had all these accomplishments, because when you look at it, this was a great year, but as good as it was, next [year] will be much better.”

Next season, six of the eight members of the women’s team will be returning, as well as ten of the twelve members of the men’s team. On top of that, there are a handful of new swimmers expected to be joining the team. The team will say goodbye to two seniors, Nicole Mallinger and Andrew Mehr. “Mallinger and Mehr have been the foundation for their respective programs over the past four years, and they will be impossible to replace.” stated Bond, “Their contributions to the team in and out of the water will be desperately missed.” But even without these two leaders, the team will continue to strive for bigger and better things.

**IIT Badminton club: a silent force in athletics?**

*By Krishna Rao Vijayanagar*  
*TechNews Writer*

How many readers know that IIT beat UIC last week? “What is that again? IIT beat UIC?” Where, when … how? Yes, sir! A very very small contingent of shuttlers (you know, those badminton geeks) went over to UIC to answer a challenge and surprisingly came out the fastest racket sport for yourself! I’ll be there for sure…

Out of the 27th of March. There will be free pizza and coke for all the attendees! So what are you waiting for? Be there and check out the fastest racket sport for yourself! I’ll be there for sure…

How about organizing an official team with a coach? (Take it from me, one look at them practicing and selection will be a handful.) Better nets and dedicated practice times at Keating? Or encouraging more students to take up the sport and organizing free Summer camps with all the equipment sponsored? With the only overhead being shuttles (or birdies as they are often referred to), this could be one sport where IIT could carve a name for itself.

In anticipation of all this and much more, an open house has been arranged at Keating Hall by the Badminton Club of IIT on the 27th of March. There will be free pizza and coke for all the attendees! So what are you waiting for? Be there and check out the fastest racket sport for yourself! I’ll be there for sure…

Cheese pizza for me, please.