

Candidates Grilled at Presidential Debate

Three A.S. hopefuls offer promises of change, visions of dramatically improved council-student relations.

By Matthew McArdle
 SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Touting individual platforms and shying away from direct personal criticism, candidates for next year's A.S. presidency faced off at a midday debate Tuesday in Price Center Plaza. While all four called for increasing the council's connection to students, they offered different approaches to this longstanding A.S. goal, ranging from online polling and Library Walk tabling to creating an A.S. Twitter account.

Upgrading the Sun God Festival; fighting for free-speech rights on campus; reducing the Grove Caff's massive debt; expanding athletics programs; streamlining student organization funding allocations; and working to reduce UC student fees rounded out the major issues on the candidates' platforms.

Hoping to extend her slate's three-year streak in the council's top office, Student Voice! candidate Erin Brodwin stressed her dedication to student empowerment, access and affordability and building a strong campus community.

Brodwin, the current associate vice president of local affairs, said she was the best candidate for the job because her experience working with student organizations, administrators and campuswide committees has afforded her the ability to address student needs from multiple perspectives.

Sixth College junior Utsav Gupta, current associate vice president of student organizations, is running as an independent candidate after failing to secure the backing of Student Voice!.

Though he identified with Brodwin on many issues, Gupta stressed that he would also work to "uncage" the Sun God Festival from RIMAC Field — challenging the unpopular model implemented last year in response to safety concerns — and institute an annual Fall Quarter survey to gauge student priorities.



Clean Slate candidate Adam Teitelbaum, former president of fraternity Alpha Epsilon Pi, criticized previous Student Voice! administrations, asserting that the A.S. Council had become out of touch with the average student because of its extensive bureaucracy.

Teitelbaum said that if elected, he would attend campus events and establish AOL Instant Messenger, Facebook and Twitter accounts for the council — a grassroots effort to gather peer input and make sure students set the A.S. agenda, not administrators.

Giang Pham, a Thurgood Marshall College junior running independently, made a brief statement criticizing the administration for its handling of the Literature Building cancer cluster. He then stood up and exited the stage, declaring, "Don't vote for me."

During the last 45 minutes of the debate, candidates fielded questions from audience members about issues ranging from the cost of housing and dining to funding for campus nightclub the Loft to due process during eviction proceedings.

Students will cast their votes in the 2009-10 A.S. elections on TritonLink from April 6 to April 10.

Readers can contact Matthew McArdle at matt.mcardle@gmail.com.

Regents Approve \$1M in Admin Pay Raises, Executive Appointments

Public, lawmakers furious over exorbitant administrative perks and pay amid systemwide financial uncertainty.

By Kelsey Wong
 STAFF WRITER

Within the last two months, the UC Board of Regents hired two news administrators and awarded several existing executives with bonuses, promotions and salary increases — and politicians and members of the public across California are not having it.

The new Office of the President executives will be receiving base salaries of over \$350,000; the former chancellors of UC San Francisco and UC Davis will receive \$315,000 and \$402,000 this year, respectively, while on administrative leave.

According to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the regents also approved perks and pay increases of up to 22.3 percent to a half dozen senior managers since January.

The controversial cash appointments took place in the middle of a \$415 million budget deficit, alongside a push by the regents to cut student enrollment and increase tuition.

Sen. Leland Yee (D-San Francisco/San Mateo) has condemned the regents' decisions as an unjustified violation of the public's trust.

"The UC continues to disrespect the taxpayers, students and their low-wage workers and faculty," Yee said in a statement. "The UC administration and regents continuously violate the public trust by catering to the university's



COURTESY OF SIMONE WILSON
Top: The candidates are asked what they will do to prevent students from being kicked out of on-campus housing for alcohol offenses. **Above:** Current A.S. President Donna Bean details the hardships of the position to the three hopefuls.

See **EXECUTIVE**, page 3

THE REAL WORLD IS VIRTUAL



ERIK JEPSEN/GUARDIAN

Over 150 local high-school students visited UCSD as part of the San Diego Science Festival April 1, where they were treated to a demonstration of the StarCAVE, a virtual simulation facility at Calitz, and the Varrier, another 3-D virtual reality display.

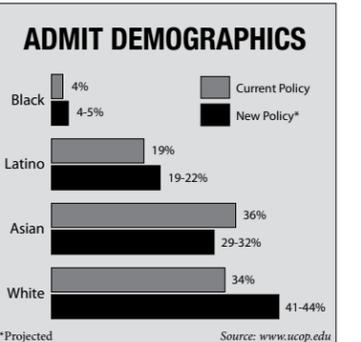
UC Defends Admissions Overhaul Before Lawmakers

By Vanessa Do
 SENIOR STAFF WRITER

The UC Board of Regents defended its recent overhaul of systemwide freshman admissions standards before a state legislative panel on Tuesday. The hearing was scheduled in response to vocal outcry from critics of the changes.

Facing scrutiny from interest groups and legislators who assert that the university should have sought greater public input before approving the new eligibility guidelines, representatives from the UC Academic Senate — who conducted the research behind the changes — insisted that underprivileged students now have a better opportunity to attend a UC campus.

The regents approved the changes at their February meeting in San Francisco. Beginning fall 2012, applicants will not be required to take the SAT subject tests, which university



officials found prevented students with fewer resources from applying. The new policy will also create an "entitled to review" option that allows applicants who have completed only a portion of required courses by their junior year in high school to submit an application for consideration.

The panel also addressed con-

See **ADMISSIONS**, page 3

HIATUS The Little Prince

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PAGE 6

SPORTS An Epic Turnaround

Baseball: UCSD's nine-game winning streak has vaulted the previously 23rd-ranked team to No. 6 in D-II.



PAGE 12

INSIDE

- Comics 2
- Currents..... 2
- New Business..... 3
- As the Page Loads..... 4
- Classifieds 10
- Sudoku 10

ONLINE

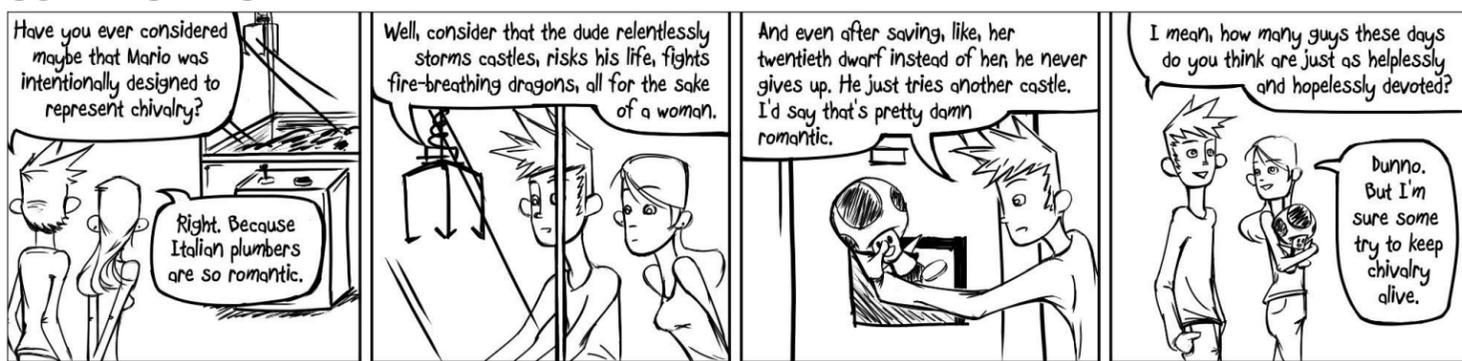
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April 2 H 65 L 53
 April 3 H 57 L 48
 April 4 H 64 L 47
 April 5 H 67 L 50

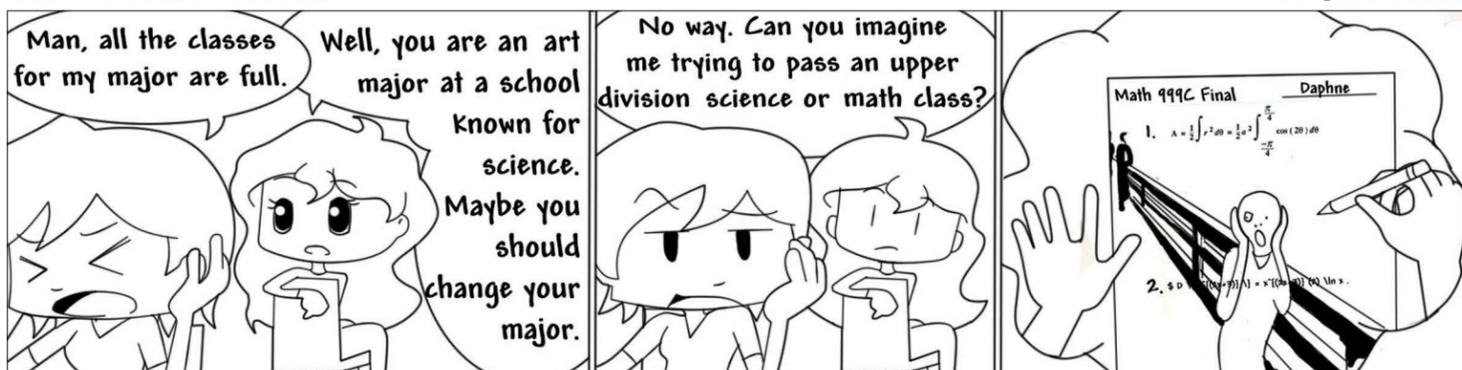
SUNNY-SIDE UP

BY PHILIP RHIE



TWO COKES SHORT

BY SAM PELLE



CURRENTS

Campus E-Mail Mistakenly Welcomes All Applicants

UCSD sent out an erroneous e-mail Monday inviting all students who had applied for Fall Quarter 2009 to their college orientation — even those who had been rejected.

“The minute the e-mails were sent out, we noted that it was sent to a much larger pool than was admitted,” Admissions Director Mae Brown said in a statement. “We immediately recognized the error.”

The invitations were intended for the 18,000 students who were accepted by the university, but were instead sent to all 47,000 students who applied, Brown said.

“We’re thrilled that you’ve been admitted to [UCSD], and we’re showcasing our beautiful campus on Admit Day,” the e-mail read.

Within two hours, Brown sent an e-mail apologizing for any distress the mistake may have caused students.

“In all humility, I ask that you please accept my apologies and those of [UCSD], and know that we

continue to wish you success in your educational pursuits,” she wrote.

Many parents have complained that the e-mail added insult to injury for students who were already overwrought by the college application process. Brown said every admissions officer was on hand to take phone calls from applicants and their parents on Tuesday, adding that she stayed at her office until midnight on Monday, responding to e-mails and phone messages.

“They are deeply concerned that we have been insensitive in that we already denied this student and then sent them a notice inviting them to Admit Day,” Brown said. “They are upset that happened, and rightly so.”

Brown said a complete review of the situation was currently under way.

Administrators Awarded for Green Initiatives

The California Center for Sustainable Energy recognized Vice Chancellor of Business Affairs

Stephen Relyea and UCSD’s transportation department for contributions to energy efficiency at the annual San Diego Excellence in Energy awards ceremony last week.

Relyea’s achievements include the implementation of several sustainable technologies and the formation of the climate solutions work group — a committee comprised of faculty, staff and students charged with the development of campus energy projects.

“UCSD has made increasingly more impressive achievements in energy-efficient building construction and maintenance, electricity generation and alternative transportation,” Executive Director of CCSE Irene Stillings said in a statement.

Director of Parking and Transportation Brian d’Autremont accepted an award recognizing his department for substantial energy savings and reduced carbon dioxide emissions. Alternative transportation — such as the free bus zones and the vanpool, transit and Coaster programs — all contributed to the department’s achievement.

Campus Researchers Find Link to Healing Process

UCSD biologists have uncovered a link between a protein involved in both diabetes and eczema — one that plays a critical role in the healing of surface wounds.

In the March 26 issue of the journal *Nature*, researchers reported that the protein, known as caspase 8, is deficient in humans with eczema and excessive in diabetics — a discovery that may explain why many diabetics suffer severe complications from minor cuts and scrapes, while those with eczema exhibit a chronic inflammation of the skin.

“[Humans with] eczema and diabetics with complications from impaired wound healing are both rising dramatically, and we hope that our current efforts will contribute to alleviating the pain and suffering of the millions of people with these diseases,” Colin Jamora, the assistant professor of biology who headed the research team, said in a statement.

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Jokes and Fools Abound as Council Debates Constitutional Revisions

Councilmembers were remarkably boisterous for the first A.S. meeting of the quarter, which coincidentally fell on April Fools' Day.

Associate Vice President of Programming **Garrett Berg** gave a special presentation on this year's Sun God Festival, promising a slew of positive changes for the May 15 event. Berg and his office are hoping to get the colleges more involved with activities in the week leading up to the event, to create a campuswide Sun God spirit and compensate for the fact that the entire campus would not be open to festival-related antics.

A number of joke legislation pieces were submitted to the order of business, including an A.S. Support of Human Life document and an A.S. Resolution Against Resolutions.

Nearly an hour was spent on laughter-filled discourse about pretend bills in committee.

"Can we get on to real stuff, because I'm getting tired," Revelle College Senator **Katie Hall** finally said, interrupting colleagues' quips.

After a brief discussion of whether April 20 should be declared Meghan Clair Day in honor of All-Campus Senator **Meghan Clair** — the motion failed — the council moved on to real bills in committee.

The evening's major piece of legislation involved changes to the A.S. Constitution that would eliminate voting powers of the vice presidents and president. It would also give the president veto power, which could be overridden by a three-fourths vote by the senate.

"I thought this was an April Fools'

joke when I first saw it," All-Campus Senator **Chris Westling** said before explaining his discomfort with granting the position of president veto power.

The council decided to split the two issues for separate discussion and spent two hours discussing whether the executives should have voting power.

Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs **Lana Blank** informed the council that the recommended constitutional changes

were consistent with the constitution that preceded the last two years, adding that she did not believe the current system of giving

the executives voting privileges has helped unify the council.

"I think we did have a better functioning senate and exec with the old system," Sixth College Senator **John Cressey** said. "Too often we've seen the interest of offices supercede the interest of the students."

In the end, the council remained undecided on the changes. The verdict on whether the executives should be able to vote will be resolved with an open roll call vote to be tallied this Friday. The issue of whether the president will have veto power was tabled for a week.

Patience around the room was noticeably wearing thin as side conversations picked up toward the end of the meeting, forcing A.S. Speaker **Jordan Taylor** to bang his gavel. Councilmembers were reminded of the date and tried to lighten the mood before scurrying out of the forum chambers to enjoy the remainder of a day of pranks.



New Business
Connie Shieh
cshieh@ucsd.edu

Yee: Excessive Salaries Undermine Student Interests

► **EXECUTIVE**, from page 1
elite rather than serving the students, faculty and workers they are appointed to represent. The public deserves better."

Adam Keigwin, Yee's chief of staff, added that executives already get paid a healthy salary.

In response to Yee's remarks and a March 25 *Chronicle* article criticizing the UC system's actions, regents Chair Richard C. Blum and President Mark G. Yudof coauthored a follow-up piece that ran in the next day's *Chronicle*.

Blum and Yudof pointed out in their op-ed that the university has instituted a systemwide freeze on bonuses, incentive pay and salaries for all senior management, and are working to curtail faculty recruitment.

They also claimed the university is working toward severely cutting

back on nonessential expenses such as business travel, and is trying its hardest to reduce UCOP operating costs in order to minimize cuts to student programs.

"It's a difficult balancing act: We are reducing budgets and staffing in many areas to deal with the significant shortfall in state funding, but at the same time, we have an obligation to the public to continue the work of the university," UC spokesman Paul Schwartz said.

The UC Student Association hopes the UC system will prioritize students at the regents' next meeting in May.

"Speaking on the behalf of students, we understand that it's a difficult time with the university and the state," UCSA president Lucero Chavez said. "Students are first priority with fees going up at an unrea-

sonable pace. We as students don't want to see student fee increases paying for any additional increases that the university puts on."

Yee has proposed new legislation that would prohibit pay raises for executives in years that the regents vote to raise student fees. He said he hopes his bill, titled SB 217, will put an end to "UC's egregious compensation practices."

"The goal is not to have the best paid executives in the country, but rather, we're looking to provide the best education possible," Keigwin said.

SB 217 will be heard by the Senate Education Committee within the next few weeks, and could be passed as soon as this summer, according to Keigwin.

Readers can contact Kelsey Wong at klw009@ucsd.edu.

New Policy Could Shortchange Asian Americans

► **ADMISSIONS**, from page 1

cerns over the changes in admission demographics that could be brought on by the new standards, an issue that first arose after a number of Asian-American organizations expressed concern over the university's projection that the modified admissions standards could result in up to 7 percent fewer Asian admits due to the elimination of the SAT subject tests. Research has shown that Asian Americans tend to perform well on these exams. The same estimates found that admission of white applicants could rise by as much as 10 percent under the new policy, while that of black and Chicano applicants would barely increase.

Retired UC Berkeley admissions officer Patrick Hayashi said the university should suspend the policy and begin consultations with members of the public before proceeding with the

changes.

"The UC has an obligation to consult widely when it makes a major change in admissions eligibility policies," Hayashi said.

However, UC Academic Senate chair Mary Croughan, who also attended Tuesday's hearing, said the policy had been under development for two years and that lawmakers and members of the public were kept well informed during the process.

Hayashi also griped that the new policy shrouds the admissions process in uncertainty by clarifying admissions requirements.

"If you do the minimum required, you don't know what will happen," he said. "Thousands of people will be denied and they won't know why. The move from clarity and transparency to uncertainty and ambiguity is bad public policy."

A leaflet distributed at the hearing emphasized that the main objective of the new policy is to "invite and consider applications from the broadest possible group of qualified students, thereby improving the overall fairness and educational soundness of UC's freshman admission outcomes."

Steve Boilard, director of higher education for the Legislative Analyst's Office, said the university overstepped its authority by implementing the new admissions requirements.

"We are concerned that the new policy increases uncertainty for students, that it departs from the Master Plan, that it could create cost pressures for enrollment growth and that there is no clear, consistent rationale for the changes," he said.

Readers can contact Vanessa Do at v3do@ucsd.edu.




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Props to first lady Michelle Obama for choosing to speak at UC Merced's commencement ceremony, honoring the university's first graduating class.

Flops to the UCSD Admissions Office for incorrectly sending an Admit Day e-mail invitation to approximately 28,000 rejected applicants.



EDITORIALS

University Credibility Evaporates as Pay Freezes Melt

Meeting the University of California's current \$450 million shortfall is no easy task. Throughout the 2008-09 academic year the university has scoured its budget for places to cut, freezing senior-executive pay, shrinking programs, eliminating excess expenses, tweaking energy policies and curbing faculty recruitment. Recently, the UC regents have thrown up their hands in budgetary defeat and conceded they will most likely raise student fees in May. The supposed problem: They just don't know where else to find funds. But considering the regents' decision last week to hire two executives at salaries of more than \$350,000 a year, this board knows exactly where to start.

In addition to these new hires, the regents granted a year of paid administrative leave to two former chancellors at salaries exceeding \$300,000. They also approved a 22.3 percent "pre-emptive retention" raise for a financial officer, increasing his annual base salary from \$310,800 to \$380,000. These extravagant benefits came just two months after UC President Mark G. Yudof instituted a plan freezing 285 executive salaries. Of course, immediately after he instituted the plan, Yudof flaunted an exception in the policy's language: Administrators could consider salary increases on a case-by-case basis for employee retention.

The university's decision to tiptoe around its own budgetary measure proves that the pay freeze is like most of the university's proposals: a publicity stunt that offer little scope in an economic crisis that's not disappearing anytime soon.

In January, regents decided to streamline the UC Office of the President by shuffling unrelated pro-



BEN HOLM/GUARDIAN

grams to different departments — supposedly cutting down its spending by simply relocating costs.

In February, Yudof boasted his commitment to affordable education when he passed a plan that fully covered student fees for students whose families earn \$60,000 or less. But this program simply streamlined existing aid sources and didn't cost the university much more than it was already paying.

And now, by abusing its own pay freeze loop holes, university higher-ups have added another shallow attempt at budget reductions to its ever-growing list.

Though the pay freeze is only in place until the 2009-10 fiscal year (a naive time limit for anyone who recognizes California's budget will take much longer to fix), administrators couldn't wait a mere 18 months to

inflate their already six-figure salaries.

That's why our university must institute long-term salary freezes that consider a future deficit, and stick to them. Keeping up with market salary rates — as Yudof described it in a *San Francisco Chronicle* op-ed last week — by offering \$80,000 retention packages is not a viable option for an institution that is cutting admissions acceptance rates and increasing student fees.

Stricter limits must be placed on administrative leave salaries and benefits. No employee should receive a \$300,000 salary, let alone any annual pay above \$60,000, if they're not directly serving the university. Our public institution simply can't afford to support a six-figure paycheck when we're not seeing anything in return.

The university cannot continue to renege on its promises of a more

accountable and less wasteful administration. With the possibility of student fee hikes as soon as summer session, it won't be long until college becomes so unaffordable there won't be anyone left to gouge.


 THE GUARDIAN

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Media Devotees Flock to Social Networking Aviary

It's easy to reel off a few names when it comes to publishing: Houghton Mifflin, for one, should be familiar to UCSD students. They're the guys stiffing you another \$300 for that new chemistry book with the extra graph or problem set every couple years. Unfortunately, it's been getting tougher and tougher to put a finger



As the Page Loads

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on who will be the new royalty of the publishing world in a few years; revenues at traditional venues nose-dive as a casualty of the information available online. Move aside, Houghton. Enter, Twitter.com.

At the risk of sounding like a huge nerd, I've got to say Twitter has absolutely blown up in the college sphere recently. While I admit the premise is creepy and even a little disturbing (Who really needs to know your every thought? Not me), in practice it works wonderfully as a news distribution center. I can easily follow (not stalk, that's Facebook) prospective employers, especially those at small companies where the head honcho actually has to write the updates himself. It's a great way to check out people you may be working for, or with, in the future; it can also bring people with niche interests together. Oh, you like competitive bass fishing too? Awesome.

Twitter's greatest use may be its ability to connect companies with their constituencies. It's obvious that Southwest Airlines prides itself on being young and lively, and its Twitter feels like an introduction to the apparently young, lively people who work there. A recent tweet linked to a blog entry listing instructions to be the best pickup artist on your next flight.

You also get to find out what famous people are up to. Newsflash: Barack Obama does not personally update his Twitter. Now that I've ruined the equivalent of Santa Claus for all of you faithful believers, wipe away those tears, and realize the power inherent in getting the chance to talk to even Obama's press secretary's intern's sister's ex-boyfriend — or whoever they have posting tweets.

Yes, updates are called tweets. Silly, right? I don't know who came up with the terminology: Oh wait, it was probably Jack Dorsey, founder of Twitter, and a paradoxically terrible Twitterer. Recent tweet: "Buying some Camper shoes." One hour later: "Shoes on, time to walk and discover." This kind of overuse (abuse?) makes Twitter an easy target for naysayers.

But while instances of social networking faux pas abound — that guy who called in sick and then posted pictures of himself in a sparkly green fairy costume at a Halloween celebration comes to mind — that's not the only thing to watch out for as you delve deeper into the tweet-sphere. The speed at which Twitter operates, as well as the prevalence of cell phone use connected with the site, function both as the reason for its popularity, and a reason to take care what you

Since When Do We Crave More Standardized Testing?

Remember how much applying to college sucked? The entire second half of high school was spent in a scramble to fill in as many multiple-choice bubbles, cram in as many AP practice tests and tally up as many extra community-service hours as humanly possible — all while keeping that qualified, well-rounded smile sparkly enough to cover the fresh stench of bull.

So you'd think the new UC admissions policy — which eliminates those superfluous SAT subject tests, offered at 5 a.m. Saturday morning for reasons most likely not of convenience, and gives students without the resources to complete all required

courses a chance for comprehensive review — would be welcomed with open arms by all us psychologically wounded vets of the system. Especially in conjunction with the new guaranteed admission windows, adjusted to include more students (even if they'll probably just end up at Merced) in the top of their class at less advantaged schools, who maybe wouldn't have stood out statewide.

Of course, the cutting of so much red tape will mean a tidal wave of newly eligible applications: Officials expect 30,000 more applicants for fall 2012, when the policy will go into effect. It would be virtually impossible for UCSD readers to review such a

range in applications with its existing point system, since many hopefuls won't bring AP-inflated grades to the table, and so much more weight will be put on circumstance. But a fade to anything humanized should be appreciated at this point — considering we can't even add classes (not to mention friends) without plugging in anymore.

There's always someone who feels like he's getting the short end of the stick. This time, it's Asian-American interest groups, less than thrilled to learn the number of admitted Asian students would most likely drop, seeing as they're such stellar subject testers. But projections are too preliminary to take seriously, since Asian stu-

dents could easily apply those efforts to all that other crap the university still requires, and end up as the reigning ratio once again. And in the end, no matter what the slight shifts in demographic, we're all just a bunch of people trying to get an education; may the best man win on the most level playing field possible.

One gripe remains legit: The regents should have allowed for a bit more public input and a better analysis of these demographic impacts before they up and passed those changes. But of all the policies passed under less-than-ideal circumstances, this is one for which they actually deserve some props.

Local Transit's Fading Heartbeat Calls for Public Resuscitation

By Trevor Cox
ASSOCIATE OPINION EDITOR

LOCAL NEWS — The ability to travel from one place to another is a pretty basic necessity — but those in San Diego County without a car may want to consider investing in a new, comfortable pair of kicks, because unless we resist current threats to public transportation, the most dependable form of transit for non-driving San Diego residents will be provided by their own two feet.

Since 1971, San Diego has relied on the State Transit Assistance fund to supplement money for public transit. But in light of the current state budget crisis, those funds are about to run dry for at least five years, presenting an \$11 million deficit to the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System, the primary public transport provider in the

county. As a kneejerk response to the impending shortfall, the MTS board voted in an 11-2 decision last week to scale back a whopping 37 bus routes (which would go into effect this June) and to implement service fare hikes, buying MTS an estimated \$4.7 million.

To be fair, MTS hasn't had very much time to respond to the budget cuts; they came into law with the approval of the new California state budget on February 19. Before any of the cuts were approved, MTS conducted extensive research to determine which routes are the most profitable and widely used. The routes that will be cut back in June are those that have the lowest ridership; MTS determined which routes are ridden most infrequently and at which hours, and adjusted their schedule accordingly.

It also held presentations at different transit centers to discuss the possibility

of such changes, taking into account public feedback before reaching a final decision. But none of that changes the fact that the board approved to cut services before sufficiently investigating funding alternatives.

Board members suggested real-locating stimulus funds to MTS at a March 27 meeting of the San Diego Association of Governments' Transportation Committee — soon shot down, as opposing members expressed a reluctance to impose a one-time fix on the transit system. But the recently approved \$4.7 million in service cuts certainly don't provide the sort of panacea MTS needs either. San Diego City Councilwoman and MTS board member Sherri Lightner, who was one of two board members to reject the approved service cuts and fare hikes, said that at this point, the board doesn't know how or where

MTS will find other sources of funding, though she advocate going to SANDAG for funding.

Despite the fact that SANDAG stands to inherit \$127 million in funding for transportation from federal stimulus dollars, those funds are going almost entirely to highway revisions.

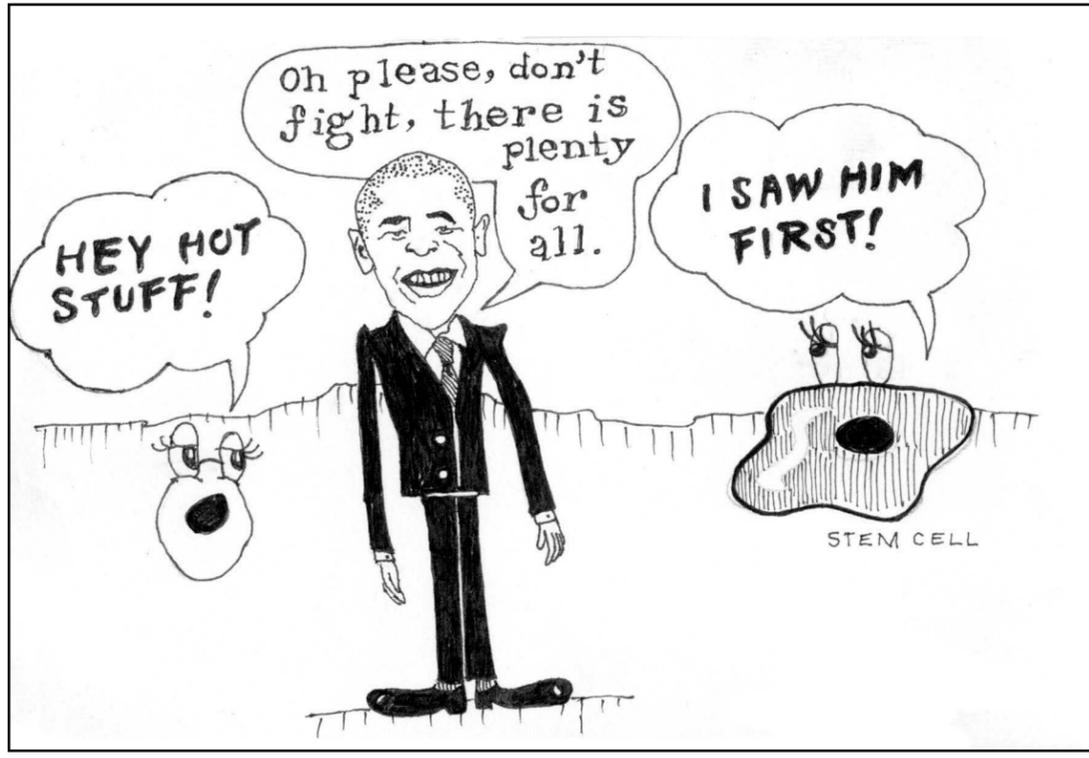
While a one-time bailout from SANDAG would only postpone the damage to MTS, that time could prove tremendously valuable in locating funds. Santa Rosa County's City Bus, for instance, plans to lean on a reserve of surplus funds for the next 15 months as it looks to find new sources for operating funds. Though it estimates that at the end of that period it, like other public transit providers, would face a \$20 million deficit, the logic is that it makes more sense to

See **TRANSIT**, page 5

See **PAGE**, page 5

A DROP FROM THE INKWELL

By Priscilla Lázaro



Transit Service Must Buy Time for Long-Term Solutions

► **TRANSIT**, from page 4
 sustain services for as long as possible while simultaneously evaluating future changes. MTS may not have the privilege of an operational surplus, but a funding allocation from SANDAG would serve the same purpose: to offer MTS desperately needed time to look into new sources, as it has never faced this kind of challenge in the past. State funding has always been a primary source of operational funding.

The focus, at this point, must be on maintaining and sustaining the services that MTS already provides. Nevermind the fact that it takes more than three times as long to get to

the Gaslamp Quarter from campus by bus than it does by car, and that critics of current public transit services complain of inefficiency and inconvenience; thanks to a little something called the budget crisis, our system only stands to get worse — unless we actively seek new sources of funding, such as SANDAG.

The elimination of these routes will naturally hold direct consequences for students. Decreased bus access means decreased mobility; students won't be nearly as able to access the greater San Diego area through connecting lines. Limiting public transit access limits student access to internships, to

job interviews and to the world outside our cozy La Jolla bubble. Public transportation ridership as a whole has risen recently in response to the current economic crisis; we can't justify immediately cutting routes when more and more people are relying on them.

Lightner noted that San Diego can't and won't have a reliable public transportation base without reliable transit. Indeed, with the dramatic reduction of state funding, it's critical that we look to new funding sources — or brace ourselves for a whole lot more walking.

Readers can contact Trevor Cox at t2cox@ucsd.edu.

With Great Access to Instant News Comes Great Responsibility

► **PAGE**, from page 4
 post.

Recently, in a move that provides direct evidence for my theory that the human population is getting dumber by the second, a man posted a few sentences following an interview that ended in a job offer. His choice to tweet his indecision about making a tradeoff between getting a "fatty paycheck" and the fact that he would assuredly "hate the work," begs the question: Who would hire this moron?

When a representative for the company responded moments later, informing him that the company was indeed aware of the invention of the Internet, and in fact used it on a regular basis, the potential hire immediately shut down his account, but the damage was done.

Within hours, a Web site, YouTube parodies and millions of tweets related to the debacle were floating around online.

You kind of have to feel for the guy. This is so different from the days of yore when you could bash

a company prepared to pay you big bucks in a tanking economy and not have it emerge until the guy you share a cubicle with gets drunk at the company holiday party and tells your boss. That gives you *months* of income to live off of once they fire your ass.

Whether you're looking for a job upon graduation, keeping up with your favorite columnist's latest rant or you just find it hilarious that Ashton Kutcher recently posted a TweetPic of his wife in her swimsuit without telling her, just think of Twitter as the new Facebook, but with less photos of drunken nights and a higher chance of actually accomplishing something with all the time you spend on it.

Houghton Mifflin doesn't seem to have a Twitter account, and judging from the number of friends I have pissed off about their book prices, it seems like the right time for the company to start forming connections with the people putting money in their pockets. @HoughtonMifflin: get with the program.

WRITE WHERE IT MATTERS

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OPINION

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From the director of SUPERBAD

AIN'T IT COOL NEWS

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"★★★★ IT'S HILARIOUS. An irresistible story that sparks with comic life. Put it on the top of your list."
 —Dera Revel, SIXTY SECOND PREVIEW

Adventureland
 Long hours. Low pay. High times.

JESSE EISENBERG KRISTEN STEWART MARTIN STARR BILL HADER KRISTEN WIIG AND RYAN REYNOLDS

MIRAMAX FILMS PRESENTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH SIDNEY KIMMEL ENTERTAINMENT THIS IS THAT PRODUCTION "ADVENTURELAND" MUSIC BY TRACY MCKNIGHT MUSIC BY YO LATENGO EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS WILLIAM HORBERG BRUCETOLL PRODUCED BY SIDNEY KIMMEL ANNE CAREY TED HOPE WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY GREG MOTTOLA

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In theaters APRIL 3RD

The Decemberists

- "Annan Water"
- "The Hazards of Love 2"

Pete Doherty

- "Last of the English Roses"
- "A Little Death Around the Eyes"

When Gamers
Were Geeks
— and Liked
It That Way

Being a computer science major — as opposed to a writing major, like many of the staff members here at the *Guardian* — I have the unfortunate job of penning a column that isn't really taken "seriously." As such, most of the things I write about have no real semblance to the overall stature of publication. (Whether or not this is actually true, I can't say, but it does allow me to speak my mind freely without the expectation of a writer's lofty prose.)



Critical Hit!

PHILIP RHIE
prhie@ucsd.edu

The only real standard I'm asked to meet is to consistently share my expertise on one topic: video games. I'm given more freedom due to my lone "game" status, one that is mostly misunderstood, and that only a few in modern society truly get. Fewer wear it proudly, like a heart on a sleeve.

That's how it used to be, anyway. As a gamer, I used to believe I was special. Well, not special per se, but I used to feel like I was in on an incredible secret, a hilarious inside joke. You know that feeling you get when you hear something really funny, and while you're laughing your ass off, you laugh harder because some people don't really get it? Yeah, that was me, all the time.

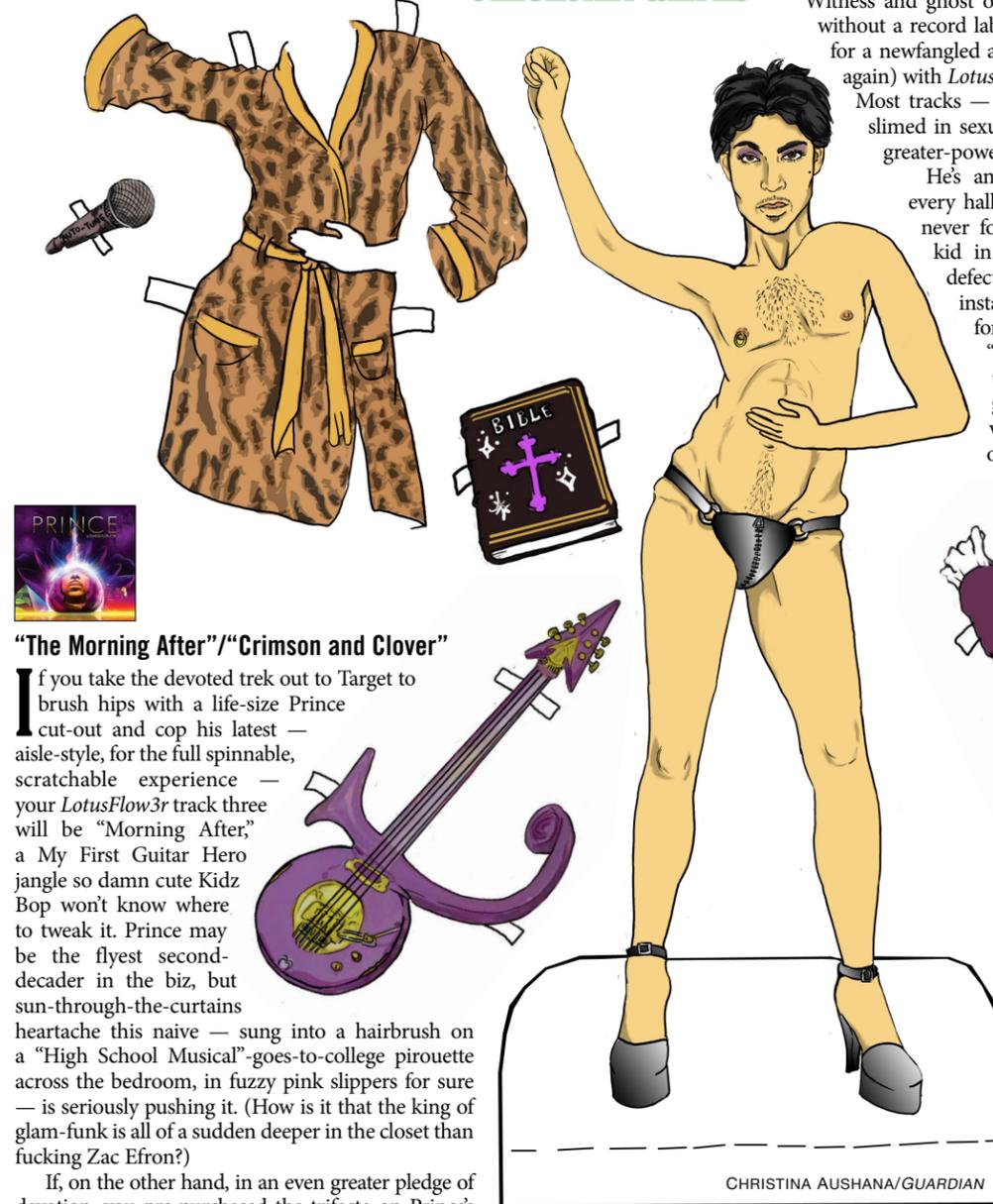
Most people scoff at the mere mention of video games — but really, they scoff because they don't get it. Many think gaming is reserved for misanthropes in their basement lairs. But their ignorance makes it that much more enjoyable for us: the pasty elitists. We not only get the joke, but we get that it's fucking brilliant. We share, we laugh together, and most especially, we pity those who could never fully understand this sly brand of humor.

Inevitably, like everything mysterious and fascinating, the gamer eventually needed an explanation. At some point, the rest of the world had to know what the big deal was — after all, it's human nature to rub-berneck the rabbit in the hat.

But, like a magic trick revealed, all the mystery and preciousness disappeared when games became the everyman pastime; something had invariably been lost in the mass appeal. We've reached a point where Playstation, Wii and other consoles have made gaming completely mainstream.

To the unease of original gamers across the globe, it's now cool to be a geek.

To be honest, though, it's not all that surprising. The mass growth of video games probably has more in common with the rising popularity of comics than anything else. Upon their inception, comics were seen as a detriment to high literature for their picture-book appeal —

YOUR VERY OWN
PRINCE
DOLL
BY SIMONE WILSON & ALLIE CUERDO
SENIOR STAFF WRITERS

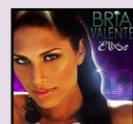
"The Morning After"/"Crimson and Clover"

If you take the devoted trek out to Target to brush hips with a life-size Prince cut-out and cop his latest — aisle-style, for the full spinnable, scratchable experience — your *LotusFlow3r* track three will be "Morning After," a My First Guitar Hero jangle so damn cute Kidz Bop won't know where to tweak it. Prince may be the flyest second-decader in the biz, but sun-through-the-curtains heartache this naive — sung into a hairbrush on a "High School Musical"-goes-to-college pirouette across the bedroom, in fuzzy pink slippers for sure — is seriously pushing it. (How is it that the king of glam-funk is all of a sudden deeper in the closet than fucking Zac Efron?)

If, on the other hand, in an even greater pledge of devotion, you pre-purchased the trifecta on Prince's swirly-ass opium-den Web site, your track three will be "Crimson and Clover" (which has some "Wild Thing" thrown in for dramatic stop-and-go, and electric shreds to remind us how awesome it'll sound on the Target tour). Hard to go wrong with a love-hurts anthem this universally warm 'n' fuzzy, you'd think — but an over-Auto-Tuned falsetto salts even the most electric of the shreds into nothing more than a bed-bouncing air-guitar sesh. I mean, what does that say about the world, when motherfucking Prince think he needs Auto-Tune? We'd almost rather hear ourselves singing in the shower. Over and over... (SW)

"Colonized Mind"

While we scratch our chins over which version of track three was supposed to feel more exclusive, "4Ever" sneaks up for the crystal-clear line of soul pain since original *Sign O' the Times*' big-love ballad "Forever in My Life." Unfortunately, the whole thing melts into a barfy puddle of terrible screeching chori — only halfway redeemed by parting words "Stop lookin' at me like dat/ Unless you're wanting me to bite dat." And just when we think he's finally tossing the scripture for sexytime, first single "Colonized Time" waddles out. OK, so both the Dems and the Pubs are not to be trusted — could have told you that — but now you say the only answer to the corrupt two-party system is accepting God into our hearts? Shhh — baby don't talk. (SW)



INTERVIEW WITH BRIA VALENTE'S ELIXER

BV: "But seriously, I'm sitting down right now/ On the floor of the shower, just wow!"

G: OK. I was really wondering what it's like working with Prince.

BV: "I'm a kept woman ... He likes it when I dance for no reason/ But he

doesn't like it when I raise my voice."

G: So ... does that ever get weird?

BV: "He takes my breath cuz he takes his time/ He takes what he wants and that's just fine!"

G: I don't know, sounds sort of ... stifling.

BV: "Two animals, spawning in a river/ They go there."

Prince

LotusFlow3r/
MPLSound/Elixer

★★★

A prince under any other name (or symbol) would be just as charming — but then we wouldn't get three discs for the low-low price of \$11.98 at our friendly neighborhood Target branch, would we?

The devout Jehovah's Witness and ghost of "Purple Rain" barrels into '09 without a record label, doing all his own marketing for a newfangled attempt to evolutionize pop (yes, again) with *LotusFlow3r*, *MPLSound* and protégé Bria Valente's *Elixer*. Most tracks — especially Valente's pillow-talk fantasies — are still slimed in sexual innuendo, but one toe-dip in this pond and the greater-power agenda becomes brutally clear.

He's an international wax-museum staple and famer of every hall ever, and still, he's here to serve you — of course, never forgetting to serve himself in the meantime. He's a kid in the ProTools candy store on jumbled space-age defect *LotusFlow3r*, and the unspeakably bland Valente installment exists solely so he can pretend he has boobs for a day, talking sexy through her lips like this is "Lamb Chops: Night on the Town," oversexed and underwhelming. *MPLSound* hits the most funkadelic groove of the bunch with "Kiss" and "1999," albeit veering from Hendrix and James Brown into dangerously bubblegum blonde.

There's still time for Prince to rebuild his '80s throne, but he better hurry: The fat 51 is fast approaching this June, and dude just doesn't rock the leather thong like he used to. Lend him a hand, will ya? I mean, when's the last time you did something nice for Prince?



"(There'll Never Be) Another Like Me"

Another Like Me" is a scene-stopping ode to Prince's own relevance — a class-act Slim Shady wading through a fog-machine bank of cocky genius. "Ask your mother/ Your sister/ Your brother/ There'll never be another like me" he fires off, rapid, matched by the body of the beat and the shout of the crowd. And funky purple Princeworld is hard to turn down. He promises everything a material girl could ask for — even a sped-up version of "Whatever You Like." Trim the last 1:30 of random experimentation, and you've got perfection (no one really wants a six-minute dance song — unless it's the next track. Or he's playing in our living room). (AC)

"Chocolate Box"

The ultimate radio candy — and not just for its title — "Chocolate Box" captures Prince at his most courtly. As he giggles and sighs his way through a cacophony of wink-nudges, glistening sweets and nimble metaphors — panting pre-orgasm, a la Britney's "I'm A Slave 4 U" — he works ProTools to its electronic core. After cuing a "Hey Mickey" beat with a super-smooth "Where the drums," Prince pulls out every skirt-flipper and electric zipper on the board, then does a saucy Stefani: "She want a B-O-X of chocolate every day." Together, it's guilty-pleasure pop at its finest, and we're falling hard. (AC)

"Valentina"

Billed as an ode to Salma Hayek's new baby girl (but really odeing Hayek's rockin' body) "Valentina" is secretly the finest M.I.L.F. song ever made. (Take that, "Stacy's Mom.") Following the blatant flattery — "Your mama was a movie queen, she was one of the best/ Mexican bombshell come to conquer the West" — his private fantasy takes off on shadowy, suggestive synths and probing guitar pulls. Reggaeton runs it to the bedroom, undulating with the simple-enough catcall, "Hey Valentina." It's a rhythmic give and take, and Prince succeeds in loving Mama straight into next week. Wonder what Valente thinks about that. (AC)



CONCERT PREVIEW
FOREVER THE SICKEST KIDS



Shaggy preteen-idol wannabes stick a little TRL to the Loft

By Imran Manji
 STAFF WRITER

Once upon a time, not long after the six boys and girls of Forever the Sickest Kids converged in Dallas circa 2006, lead singer Jonathan Cook was browsing PureVolume, an advertising network for musicians, when he accidentally spent \$350 the band didn't have on a front-page promotion for a song that didn't exist.

To patch the blunder, they forced out a brand-spanking new single in a matter of days. But instead of a hurried, half-assed track dooming all hopes of a future, "Hey Brittany" sparked all sorts of Internet firecrackers. Angsty, love-struck lyrics ("Why are you messing with me/ Is your boy on your mind/ Is your boy in the car/ Or are you alone?") were delivered over squeaky-clean strings and bucketfuls of bounce — practically drenched in preteen pheromones.

Cyber-audiences clicked and dragged all over the infectious track, and Universal records responded with Forever's inaugural *Underdog Alma Mater*, forged from Blink-182's polish-punk blueprint and the Kids' own hormonal breakdowns (see: "Breakdown"), crammed with just enough riffy climaxes and washed-over vocals to mirror every fresh-faced TRL guest conceived in the history of Viacom.

As always, in the aftermath of their initial explosion, the Kids' intrigue began to wane. Perhaps their target audience finally realized they had seen it all before: whining self-pity, guitar/keyboard duos, sensitive hair toss — just another My Chemical Romance at the Disco. Unfortunately, there's little chart space left for an anguished kid with no lunch money (let alone six of them). Only a chosen few have made it



COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL MOTOWN

through the emo furnace, and only with necessary transfusions from purer blood — Romance paired with the Clash to spin critics right round in neo-goth glory. Mass appeal for pop-punk hooligans died gracefully with Blink-182, whose decade-old hits are still on radio repeat. Without a harder core, the Kids might get a good aw-shucks from a secret scenester or two, but they're more likely to sink into total obscurity by the six-month mark.

Still, it won't hurt to fill a block of week-one playtime with some digital-age heartbreak. You can bet the Kids' Loft performance will trump Thursday night's alternative entertainment — a stoned trek to Burger King — but do yourself a favor, skip the merch table.

Forever the Sickest Kids will perform live at the Loft on Thursday, April 2 with Mercy Mercedes and Artist vs. Poet. Doors open at 7:30 p.m.

'Furious' Takes Joyless Two-Hour Ride — Clothing Optional

By Sonia Minden
 HIATUS EDITOR

It begins promisingly enough: butch bad-girl Letty (Michelle Rodriguez) and racially ambiguous hunk o' man meat Dominic (Vin Diesel) attempt to hijack an oil truck that's hurtling across a treacherous mountain range somewhere in South America.

One thing leads to another, and the truck catapults off the highway, exploding into a million pieces and nearly devouring our duo with flames — but that's when Dominic puts pedal to metal, zooming past all the smoke and ashes and cuing the flashy title, followed by two hours of high-octane, seizure-inducing inanity.

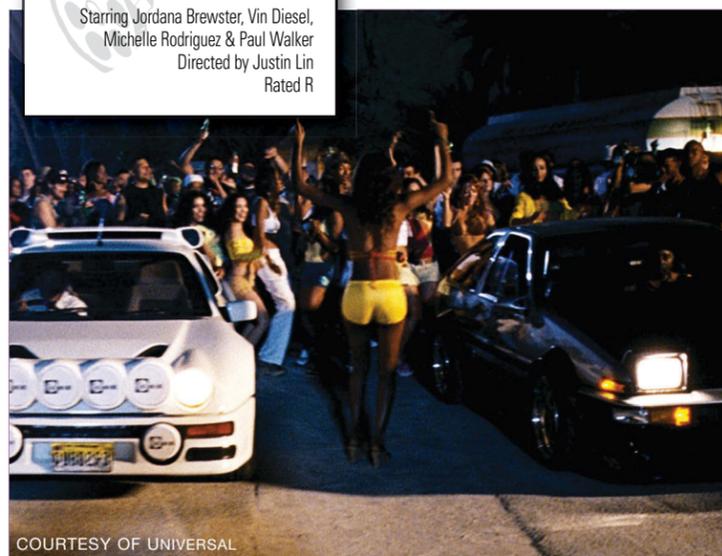
Unlike its streamlined prede-

cessor "The Fast and the Furious," which depicted L.A. street racing as the modern, bootylicious return of the spaghetti Western to become 2001's fanboy phenomenon, its comeback kid plays more like a soap opera on steroids. Diesel wields moralistic woes, doubting whether he's really a "good" guy after all, and Paul Walker's chiseled visage proves too chiseled to actually express more than one emotion.

Director Justin Lin stretches the cast's drama-club posturing just long enough to ensure an intense crash from our adrenaline high. Rather than the anticipated barrage of auto-fetishism and long legs, we're forced to reflect on dim vestiges of plot that are ultimately nonessential to the film's banking points: senseless violence and hot chicks.

Fast and Furious ★
 Starring Jordana Brewster, Vin Diesel, Michelle Rodriguez & Paul Walker
 Directed by Justin Lin
 Rated R

See **FURIOUS**, page 9



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recordings

In a Perfect World...

• **Keri Hilson**

INTERSCOPE

★★★

Two tracks into *In a Perfect World*, "Get Your Money Up" sums up Keri Hilson's entire repertoire. The catchy collab showcases all the subdued, synthesized quirks of Keyshia Cole and Trina, setting themselves against an electro-lite club beat (a la Polow da Don and Danja Handz) and defending their God-given right to mack.

In case you couldn't spot her in the crowd, Hilson's the one that sounds like a missing member of 3LW: when she's not waxing saccharine with an R&B 2.0 trill on slower, pseudo-soul ballads like "Make Love" or "Slow Dance," she's channeling her inner Timbaland with a real fem-cee's come-hither allure and a get-your-hands-off-my-ass sass ("Do It").

After getting her start as a songwriter for the likes of Ludacris and Ms. Spears, Hilson's waited around to make the Santogold transition for quite a while. And now that her solo's finally dropped, it's clear that the interim was spent pulling industry strings. Aside from the album's

lyrics, which are all Hilson's own (though with credit owed to a masterful production crew), hired help includes upstaging BET celebrities like Akon and Kanye.

Per usual, a ubiquitous Lil Wayne pulls the gravity from a thumping bass line on the album's first single, "Turnin' Me On" — a patter-heavy hit bookended by Hilson's vocal hijinks. Like other keynote tracks, it rings in the same clipped, ringtone-ready choruses that repeat no more than 10 words no less than four times over (you guessed it — "You're turnin' me on").

The most lasting facet of Hilson's solo debut is without a doubt her more talented godparents. With tracks crafted by dance mogul Timbaland, World — with its honeyed vocals over warbling synths, spaceship chimes tangled up in strings — does right by any down-and-dirty dance party.

— **Edwin Gonzalez**
ASSOCIATE HIATUS EDITOR



The Hazards of Love

• **The Decemberists**

CAPITOL

★★★

The Decemberists' darling of a concept album *The Hazards of Love* is — a mystic saga of tragic lovers, starring Becky Stark of Lavender Diamond as the maiden Margaret, Shara Worden of My Brightest Diamond as the Forest Queen and the Decemberists' own Colin Meloy as ... what was he again?

The first problem with the narrative-as-an-album scheme lies in Meloy's insistence on playing the narrator, the Rake and Margaret's lover William in his delicate, watery tenor — even books on tape usually come up with more vocal variation.

Hazards' other woe as a 58-minute-long epic is that it's a 58-minute-long epic. It's the entire album, or bust — and who has the time, not to mention the patience, to listen that closely in an age of iPod Shuffles?



Still, the the Decemberists' velvety baroque endures Meloy's ambition. Stark's wavering, flutey vocals float high above harpsichords; Worden's musky, powerful alto trembles to the Queen of the Forest's vintage rock thuds, all heavy electric guitar chords and thunderous bass knells.

Meloy's nasal whine underscores both William's fragility — accompanied by the folksy strum of an acoustic guitar and soft pats on the bongo — and the Rake's sneering, hickish drawl.

Each element of *Love's* detail-oriented orchestration echoes a deeply bruised organ note, oppressing even the most sugary strains like poisonous apples. There are no happy endings here: only the curse that the title forewarns.

— **Hannah Kang**
STAFF WRITER

druthers

HIATUS PICKS THE WEEK'S BEST BETS

Mishka

CANE'S BAR AND GRILL / APRIL 2 / 8 P.M. / \$10

Apparently, bronzed man-candy Matthew McConaughey started a record label. On top of that, he hunted down Mishka for his first artist, even heralding the sleepy Caribbean reggae-pop as the "soundtrack [to] his life." McConaughey's life must sound like one of those spiritual beach retreats with a squeeze of Jack Johnson for good measure, featuring such heartfelt themes as free love and material dependency: "It's a shame to see Mother Earth and the children being bought and sold." We recommend stealing his album and saving the money for the show. (SM)



COURTESY OF DOUG SEYMOUR

MFA Vis Arts Open Studio

VISUAL ARTS FACILITY / APRIL 4 / 2 P.M. TO 8 P.M.

Imagine a constellation of 50 mini-museum galleries, jammed into a six-hour view space: you've pretty much got an idea of what the Visual Arts MFA students will proffer to the public come Saturday. Showcasing everything from the conceptual to the absurd, artists will be standing by to discuss their creative process — along with a symposium, performances (e.g. Assembly of Mazes at 8:30 p.m.) and film screenings — in an open house for the artistically inclined. (EG)



COURTESY OF SUZANNE WRIGHT

exit strategy

THIS WEEK'S ON-CAMPUS EVENTS

VERSION LAUNCH PARTY Calit2 Gallery April 2, 5 p.m. FREE	SUN GOD BATTLE OF THE BANDS The Loft April 4, 7 p.m. FREE	DEVIN VARGAS Espresso Roma April 6, 8 p.m. FREE
EXPERIMENTAL FILMS The Loft April 2, 8 p.m. FREE	CULTURAL CELEBRATION Marshall Campus April 4, 10 a.m. FREE	SOCAL SOUND BYTES The Loft April 17, 8 p.m. FREE
SPRING BREAK REMIX The Loft April 3, 8:30 p.m. FREE	"DOUBT" Price Center Theater April 4, 6 p.m. & 9 p.m. \$3	"THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON" Price Center Theater April 7, 6 p.m. & 9 p.m. \$3

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Grace/Wastelands

• Pete Doherty

PARLOPHONE

★★★

Pete Doherty is a walking, talking BBC daytime series that the general populace should have axed ages ago when quality began to plummet. But against all odds, the shitty sitcom lumbers on. Though the audience is dwindling and the supporting cast keeps changing, die-hard fans of lead Libertines singer will be pleased to stumble upon the vintage trove of debut solo *Grace/Wastelands*.

The first single, "Last of the English Roses," reads like a junk mail headline but sounds like a rehash of "Guns of Brixton." Its foreboding shuffle beats down in Clash fashion, but is soon lifted by Blurry lyrics — quite possibly because Blur guitarist Graham Coxon is present on all but one track in Doherty's debut.

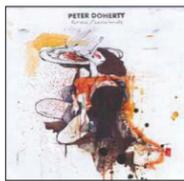
"A Little Death Around the Eyes," co-written by fellow Libertines frontman Carl Barât, could be a "James Bond" theme: Lethargic strings and harmonica-laced organs

draw silhouettes of tousled-haired, heat-packing vixens with enough suave to make any Anglophile proud.

Anyone expecting *Wastelands* to pull out the typical man-and-guitar act will be disappointed — this is the closest the pale and pudgy Doherty has come to channeling the romanticized, long-lost England he probably envisions while shooting up. Many of the tracks date back five years — pre-Babyshambles and pre-tabloids — but were put aside because they didn't suit the Libertines aesthetic.

Most disregard Doherty as a comedy of errors: a judgment his solo experiment hopes to combat. Apparently, the bloke has more balls than his powdery nose would suggest.

— Josephine Nguyen
STAFF WRITER



Chrome-Plated Sex, Explosives and Stabs at Sincerity



COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL

► **FURIOUS**, from page 7

It's unfortunate, really, considering Lin's former success on 2006's "The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift," which brought shameless, testosterone-pumped indulgence to a new level.

The fourth "Furious" installment disbands the franchise's original members with Letty's premature offscreen death, which prompts fugitive ex-con Dominic — ripped and bald as ever — to put a vengeful beating on her murderer, who also happens to be one of the world's biggest heroin smugglers. The quest reunites Dominic with fed gone foul Brian O'Conner (Walker), also hunting down the drug pusher. But before the chase can begin, Dom and Brian must first race each other (a trope diligently exhausted throughout the flick).

The cars themselves are show-stealing character foils. Dom's is an older, humbler model with its share of muscle and wear, while O'Conner gets his pick from the government's line up of shiny, candy-colored brands. The vehicles bump and grind, garnering as many lustful "oohs" from the audience as the film's frequent, requisite booty shots, the

whole shebang cut and pasted in breathless, machine-gun montages.

The rest of the camerawork is slick and straightforward, alternating between a handheld, first-person perspective and zoomed-out views of glittering urban sprawl. Club- and border-hopping are equally disorienting, as we're snaked through a labyrinth of dark corners, where either a French-kissing lesbian or angry Mexican is bound to be lurking.

"Furious" clearly has its demographic appeal down to a science, spitting up every feasible MTV commodity in the form of an extended, ultra-streamlined commercial — one-liners and spank-bank material included. Even the street races are packaged with Grand Theft Auto's CG-smoothed appeal.

But it's only when the film tries to become somewhat self-aware of its nonstop cockfest that the flick fails miserably. This is no Oscar contender; Diesel's Dominic will never be Heath Ledger's chilling Dark Knight. But that's not the point. The point is guns and girls, and there will always be room for more guns and girls. Bring on the fifth installment already.

Low-Brow Games Repopulate a Massive Industry

► **HIT**, from page 6

but those who fell in love with the medium at 12 and understood its huge potential finally grew up, pioneering sophisticated graphic storylines to combat the literati.

A very similar phenomenon is happening within the world of gaming. Every prodigy child who grew up absorbed in game culture back in the '80s and '90s has gone on to create hyper-sleek, evolved versions of their old favorites. They all played Super Mario, The Legend of Zelda, Metroid, Megaman — these games are considered classics today. As creators, they could see the potential in interactive storytelling and the kind of emotional response it could evoke, especially by way of a virtual universe that could provide endless hours of entertainment. Ten years later, it's hard to find a male between the ages of 18 to 30 without a console of some kind.

No one could predict how massive gaming culture would become. As a result, the market's long been flooded with low-brow action games that cater to the most

savage desires of amateurs. Not that I don't play the occasional blood-and-guts mindlessness — there's a time and place for B-raters. But video games have become lucrative, enough so that the nerdy connotations of "gamer" are slowly fading away.

Even the fact that I know more about gaming than most is now irrelevant to my identity as a gamer. Truth is, everyone is a gamer of some sort these days. If you've held a joystick for over an hour, congratulations: You're officially one of us. It's that easy.

I suppose, then, that I'm reacting against what used to be the nature of a gamer, sort of like punk music, when it went catchy and marketable. Punk was a reaction against pop, but when it became a fad — blasted on radios everywhere — it suddenly became less relevant. Its very rebellion was packaged and redistributed as the new pop.

Similarly, being a gamer is hardly a mark of distinction: The badge of honor that I wore proudly growing up is slowly deteriorating, and along with it, a small piece of my identity.

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	2			4	5			

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit www.sudoku.org.

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Senior Captain Shines in Home Victories

► **WATER POLO**, from page 12 as they had in the first half, giving up eight goals in the second while only netting two of their own. The Roadrunners kept the Tritons' leading scorer Gstettenbauer in check, relegating her to a lone goal.

"We just broke down against Bakersfield," Heinrich said. "It wasn't a great game for us. There were a lot of things that we should have done that we didn't do, and we just made a lot of mistakes."

Against the No. 2 University of Southern California, the Tritons faced an impressive offensive force. The Trojans have a 17-1 record and are perfect in conference play, largely due to a prolific offense that averages over 13 goals per game. They started fast and never looked back, storming out to a 6-0 lead in the first quarter. The Tritons finally got on the board in the second when Heinrich and Gstettenbauer each scored to bring the score to 6-2. But the Trojans quickly squashed any hope of a comeback when they scored the next five goals of the quarter to take an 11-2 lead into halftime.

"It was really tough playing the top two teams in the nation back to back," Heinrich said of UCSD's games against the University of Southern California and Stanford University.

Out of halftime, the Tritons' defense slowed the Trojans down, holding them to four goals in the third quarter, but the Tritons could only muster three goals. After a 6-0 shutout in the final period, the Trojans swam away with a 21-5 victory in the Tritons' home pool.

The University of Southern California wasn't the only powerful opponent the Tritons faced during spring break. UCSD began its week with a loss to top-ranked Stanford University.

Despite the daunting task, the Tritons played incredibly well early

in the game, taking a two-goal lead in the first quarter before giving up three to end the period.

"It felt good taking an early lead on Stanford," junior utility Stephanie Bocian said. "We really took them off their mark and made them wary."

The Tritons tied the game at three with 5:38 remaining in the second quarter. From that point on, however, the Cardinal could not be stopped, scoring another three goals to take a 6-3 lead into halftime.

"It was a little overwhelming playing such a high-ranked team in Stanford," Bocian said. "We just played like we had nothing to lose."

After a strong start, the Triton offense suffered, scoring only two goals in the second half, falling to Stanford 11-5.

The Tritons did get a taste of victory to begin their three game home stretch, putting Occidental away despite a poor effort. The win might have gone the other way if Gstettenbauer and senior utility Bridgette Bugay had not had stand-out games, both scoring three goals and stepping up on defense in the fourth.

"It was a little disappointing to see," head coach Larry Sanders said. "We played really well in the tournament last weekend, and I thought that we would have come and played a little better."

The first quarter was all UCSD with Gstettenbauer striking first in the game, and the Tritons playing well defensively, holding Occidental to a lone goal. UCSD swam with vigor early on, jumping out to a 4-1 lead in the first period. The Triton offense was too much for the Tigers to contain and its defense too fast for the Tigers to beat. But in the second quarter, the Tritons slowed down defensively, giving up several fast-break opportunities and penalty shots.

"Sometimes when we play a team

that we're supposed to be better than physically, we don't play as well as we should," Heinrich said. "It happens in a lot of sports, and we just need to focus and play."

On offense, the Tritons made poor decisions and bad passes that cost them great scoring opportunities. The second quarter progressed slowly and the Tritons only managed to find the back of the net once, taking a 5-3 lead into intermission.

Coming out of the break, Bugay scored the first two goals of the third quarter to give the Tritons a four goal advantage. UCSD played another great defensive quarter, holding Occidental to a single goal and dominating the time of possession. Capping off the quarter, sophomore hole set Janice Aguilar turned her defender around to score at the last second to close the third, bringing the score to 8-4.

Unfortunately, UCSD was unable to use its impressive play to garner much momentum in the fourth quarter, struggling both offensively and defensively to make things interesting.

Gstettenbauer played a terrific fourth quarter, scoring the Tritons' lone goal to seal the victory and dominating on defense, covering the ball aggressively and preventing several shots. Defense continued to dominate the second half of the fourth quarter, as no team could muster a goal during the last four minutes. Despite missing a lot of great opportunities to put the game away early, the Tritons held on for the 9-7 win.

The Tritons will travel next to the Santa Clara Invitational, where they will begin a round of four games, facing off against San Jose State University on April 4 at 10:40 a.m.

Readers can contact Tyler Nelson at tnelson@ucsd.edu.

Tritons Aim to Improve on Last Season's Third-Place Finish

► **ROLLER HOCKEY**, from page 12 out on top and win our school's first title."

After coming out to a slow start in the playoffs, managing only a 2-2 tie with Cal Poly Pomona on Feb. 28 in Irvine, the Tritons' road smoothed out, allowing them to sail easily through to the championship game.

"We came out flat-footed in the first game and everybody was trying to do everything," head coach Brian Keefe said. "We were moving our feet too slow. We started to get in a good rhythm and good flow after the first game. We just needed to shake the cobwebs out."

The Tritons advanced to the semifinals after a 4-2 win over the University of San Diego in round-robin play. In the semifinal contest, UCSD was once again pitted against the Broncos — the same team that overpowered the Tritons for the regional crown a season ago. UCSD gave Cal Poly Pomona no chance at a repeat championship, pummeling the Broncos 9-1 and advancing to the final against the University of Southern California.

Having defeated the Trojans twice already during regular season play, UCSD battled past USC using a 3-0 first quarter advantage to dominate the Trojans in the final. The Tritons led for the entire game, eventually taking a 5-1 victory.

"We started to click as a team, and when that happens we run the game," senior defender Lafe Ball

said. Even though the team won a championship, the relative ease with which UCSD took the crown left the Tritons wanting more.

"This year, the caliber of teams at regionals wasn't the same as it usually is," Keefe said. "It felt great and we're excited that we've won, but we want to prove ourselves nationally and take care of business."

The Tritons will have that chance as the No. 1 seed in their pool at the national championships April

2 to April 5 in Feasterville, Pa. A total of 16 teams will compete in round-robin play for the first round of the Division-II tournament, and UCSD's opening pool includes Truman State University, University of Texas - Dallas and Kennesaw State University.

"Nationals is definitely going to be a battle for us every game," Ponton said. "There are some real solid schools out there, but we have a great team. As long as we play our game and work hard we can compete for the title."

According to Keefe, most of the teams at nationals have been playing together for a few years, improving every season.

"Most teams haven't changed too much since last season and all these teams did something right to get there," he said. "It should be pretty tough."

Readers can contact Janani Sridharan at jsridhar@ucsd.edu.

It felt great and we're excited that we've won [regionals], but we want to prove ourselves nationally and take care of business."

— Brian Keefe, head coach

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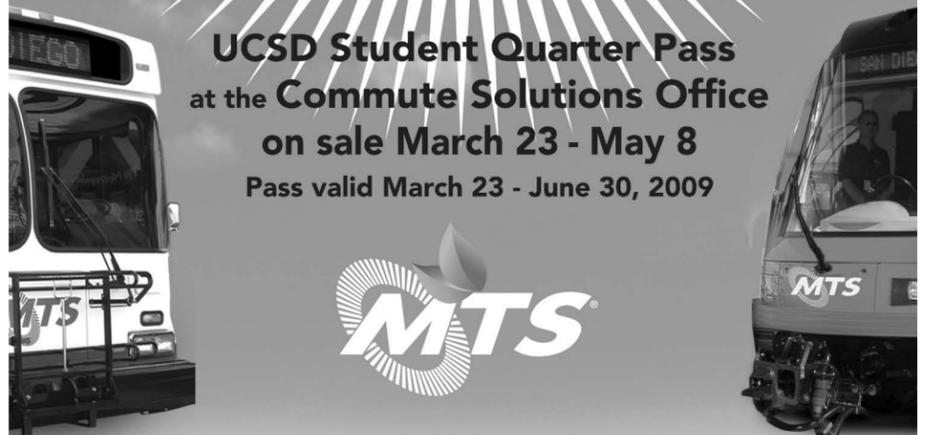
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The senior attacker led the women's water polo team with eight goals in four matches last week, and has scored a team-high 50 goals this season for the Tritons.

TRITONS REEL OFF NINE STRAIGHT VICTORIES



DANIEL CADDELL/GUARDIAN

Senior Trevor Decker pitched six innings of two-run ball against SFSU on March 28 to pick up the win in UCSD's 10-2 victory. Decker pitched the first no-hitter of his collegiate career in the Tritons' previous series against Cal State Stanislaus.

By Janani Sridharan
SPORTS EDITOR

BASEBALL — The UCSD baseball team is ranked sixth in all of Division-II, riding a nine-game winning streak and witnessing its pitcher throw a no-hitter against the top-ranked team. With the Tritons clicking on all cylinders as of late, it's hard to believe that less than three weeks ago, UCSD was at its lowest point of the season.

The Tritons left Sonoma State on March 8 demoralized after losing three consecutive one-run ball games to the Seawolves. But without the striking wakeup call from Sonoma State, the Tritons may never have pulled off a streak quite so impressive.

"We went into Sonoma almost tentative and apprehensive about our opponent, and it showed in our play," junior catcher Kellen Lee said. "We gave up three games that I felt like we should have taken. After that we all

got together and realized we needed to start playing better."

Coming home to face then No. 1 Cal State Stanislaus March 13 to March 15, the Tritons immediately stepped up their game, pulling out an extra-inning victory in the opening match before sweeping the four-game series.

"Any momentum they had, anytime they scored any runs, we punched back and scored as many or more," Lee said. "Momentum was a key factor in the series."

The Tritons followed with another four-game sweep at home, this time at the expense of San Francisco State March 27 to March 29. UCSD scored early and often in the series, putting up 10 or more runs in three of the contests.

"All week, our coaches preached that we had to jump on San Francisco State early," Lee said. "We weren't going to give them any chances or

opportunities."

Against CSUS, UCSD gained early momentum off the bat of redshirt junior Brandon Gregorich in the bottom of the 11th inning of the first game. With two outs, the third baseman hit a bloop single that scored junior shortstop Vance Albitz, giving UCSD a 3-2 win.

"It was really important getting that first win," senior pitcher Trevor Decker said. "It's always nice to jump on top in a series because the other team tends to back off and play on their heels."

Gregorich set the stage for quite possibly the Tritons' best day of baseball all season. UCSD started off the morning with a solid 8-3 victory, anchored by eight strong innings from redshirt junior pitcher Matt Rossman. Then, Decker took to the mound for the backend of the double header and took complete control of the series.

"He was just so composed, I knew

from the third inning on," said Lee, who caught the first no-hitter of his career. "He was throwing them exactly where we were calling them. A lot of pitchers rely on their second pitch — their offspeed pitch. Decker had his fastball working, pitching into and outside of hitters."

According to Decker, it was the pitcher's third no-hitter: the first was a perfect game in Little League and the second was another perfect game in high school.

"It's one of those things where it's hard to describe how it happened," Decker said. "There were one or two really nice plays on defense ... All of the pieces of the puzzle just fell into place."

After playing eight straight home games — and posting a perfect record for the homestand — UCSD will hit the road to play Chico State University this weekend.

"Going up to Chico, it's always

SWEEPING TRITONS

UCSD used an aggressive offense and strong starting pitching to sweep its last two four-game series, closing out the month of March strong and moving up to No. 6 in the rankings.

RUNS SCORED	63
RUNS ALLOWED	24
AVG. IP BY STARTERS	6.2

fun," Decker said. "You expect big crowds and bashing from the fans. We know they're always one of the top teams in our conference; they hit well and have pretty good pitching, too. We have to just keep doing what we're doing, keep executing pitches and have the same approach at the plate."

Readers can contact Janani Sridharan at jsridhar@ucsd.edu.

UCSD Stumbles Against Offensive Powerhouses

By Tyler Nelson
STAFF WRITER

WATER POLO — The women's water polo team has experienced its share of ups and downs over the past several weeks. Although the Tritons scored a 9-7 victory over Brown University, they lost a disappointing 12-6 decision at No. 19 Cal State Bakersfield last weekend. The team followed with back-to-back home-game losses against Stanford University and the University of Southern California, the top two teams in the nation. UCSD managed to defeat Occidental University by a 9-7 margin on March 12.

With its most recent match this weekend, UCSD took on Brown University in Bakersfield and claimed a tight victory. Falling behind 2-0 early in the first quarter, the Tritons mustered an offensive charge and regained momentum before halftime with two goals, trimming the deficit to 3-2. In a few recent matches, Tritons have come heartbreakingly close to the lead at halftime, but have been unable to follow through for the win.

The tables turned as UCSD stormed out of halftime with senior captain Sydney Gstettenbauer and freshman attacker Jessica Tran scoring unanswered goals, giving the Tritons the lead at 4-3. The teams engaged in back-and-forth scoring until the match stood tied at six with one minute left in the third. Freshman hole set Kirsten Bates scored the



ERIK JEPSEN/GUARDIAN FILE

The Tritons had mixed results in its games leading up to and during spring break, but senior attacker Sydney Gstettenbauer made sure that UCSD posted a victory over unranked Occidental College on March 12, scoring three goals in the 9-7 victory.

seventh goal for the Tritons just before the end of the period, giving UCSD the lead for good. Gstettenbauer and sophomore attacker Hanalei Crowell then scored back-to-back goals, giving the Tritons a three-goal lead before Brown could fight back, ending the game at 9-7.

"It felt good to get the win," junior utility Stephanie Heinrich said. "We were a little upset about our loss earlier in the day to

Bakersfield, which is why we fell a little early. But it was good to make the comeback."

Just a few hours prior, the Tritons faced Cal State Bakersfield in the Roadrunners' home pool with less success. The Tritons and Roadrunners fared evenly, with the halftime score tied at four. Unfortunately, the Tritons were unable to keep up with the Roadrunners

ROLLER HOCKEY RETURNS TO NATIONALS WITH REGIONAL TITLE

By Janani Sridharan
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CLUB SPORTS — Made up of former '90s kids who never gave up on the art of roller-blading, the UCSD roller hockey team has created a quiet legacy over the past three years as an elite Division-II squad. The Tritons have gone to the last three national championships, finishing in the top eight each time — most recently placing third.

This season, UCSD's astonishing 16-1-1 overall record has once again earned the team a spot at nationals. This year, for the first time in the program's eight-year history, the team will enter nationals with a regional championship under its belt.

"I've been on this team for four years and we lost in the [regional] championship game the first three," senior defender Jeff Ponton said. "It was a great feeling to finally come