

OCT. 22,  
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# small TALK

VOLUME 47  
ISSUE 4



Why is it so HOT  
in here?



Newest ZELDA  
review!

Trustees receives  
bathroom renovation!  
(featured cover)



THE STUDENT VOICE OF METHODIST UNIVERSITY  
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# Stress Less



Amanda Stewart  
Staff Writer

Midterms have come and brought with them the bitter taste of stress. We have all experienced pressure and feelings of stress. So how does one get through the stress that this world often brings?

One great way of getting through stress is keeping healthy and exercising. Ask any athlete you know and they will tell you that exercise can make anyone feel good. If burning off calories and expending energy does nothing to help you, then simply getting your mind off your busy life will help.

Of course, if exercise is not your idea of a stress reliever then try listening to music. In his article in *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, Robert E. Krout speaks of how music is used in therapy to help people relax. He explains that music is interpreted by the brain and eventually drowns out everything else.

Music is the one thing we all have access to and usually all enjoy

Journaling or writing out your thoughts always helps to relieve stress. No guys, I don't mean you have to write in a diary! This simply means taking time to jot down how you feel; possibly write down the different activities and tasks you have on your plate that could be causing you so much stress. These ways to relax are never promised to work, but one of them should ease your suffering.

# Preventing Flu and Colds

Daniel Lee  
Staff Writer

Nurse Sandy Combs of Methodist University Student Health Services was recently interviewed concerning the spread of seasonal illness and ways to prevent it. She stated,

"The most common problems this time of year involve the upper respiratory area; such as sore throats and colds. Also, there are a few viruses going around that can cause nausea and vomiting."

Another major concern is flu prevention. Flu vaccines are available in Student Health Services on Oct. 22 for \$20.00. Nurse Combs advises,

"We strongly suggest that any student dealing with problems such as asthma, a low immune system, or recurring respiratory difficulties should receive the vaccine." However, she also warns,

"Students that are allergic to such substances as thim-

ersol and eggs should not receive the flu vaccine."

The following is a list of basic tips from Student Health Services to prevent catching common illnesses:

1. Wash your hands frequently.
2. Don't touch your face with your hands. (This is the reason for 90% of germ transportation.)
3. Don't drink after anyone else.
4. Stay away from people who you know are sick.
5. Drink plenty of fluids.
6. Eat a proper diet.
7. Get plenty of sleep.
8. Take multivitamins to improve your bodily resistance.



# RHA Discusses Housing

Daniel Lee  
Staff Writer

Significant changes to the housing policies were discussed at a recent Resident Housing Authority meeting.

At the top of the RHA

agenda, is working on getting wireless computer access in the halls. Currently, using a wireless router is grounds for losing all computer privileges for the semester.

One member mentioned that smoking is a major concern. Regardless of the Methodist

University Smoking Policy, which states, "All residence halls of Methodist University are non-smoking," there have been reports of people smoking in the residence lobbies when it rains. One suggestion included installing a cabin or gazebo structure for smokers during bad weather.

# The do's and don'ts of private student loans

Marshall Loeb  
MarketWatch  
(MCT)

NEW YORK — With college costs continuing to rise, parents and students are increasingly turning to private lenders to cover the cost of tuition.

Between 1995 and 2006, the amount of money borrowed from private lenders to pay for college went from \$1.3 billion to \$17.3 billion, according to MSN Money columnist Liz Pulliam Weston. Why should this concern you? Because not all loans are created equal.

There are three basic types of loans available to undergrads: federal loans issued directly by the government, loans from private lenders that are subsidized and guaranteed by the government and private loans.

The interest rates on federal loans are typically in the neighborhood of 6.25 percent and 8 percent; the interest rates on private loans, by contrast, regularly run from 12 percent to 13 percent and can sometimes go as high as 28 percent, according to Alan Collinge, founder of Student Loan Justice.org, a grassroots organization dedicated to reforming predatory lending practices.

Private loans also offer less flex-

ibility when it comes time to pay them back, Collinge warns. There are options available to borrowers who fall behind on their federal loans, such as forbearances and graduated repayment plans. Some private lenders offer help for borrowers experiencing financial hardship as well, but they tend to be less forgiving.

It's not uncommon for a lender to significantly jack up the interest rate on a loan when you miss payments, Collinge says. Furthermore, unlike credit-card debt, private student debt isn't wiped out when you declare bankruptcy.

The lesson: proceed with extreme caution. Collinge offers a list of do's and don'ts for borrowers considering private student loans:

## Do

Tap all federal loans. Work closely with your school's financial-aid office to ensure that you're taking advantage of all of the federal funds you have coming to you. According to a 2003 study by the Public Interest Research Group, 50 percent of borrowers take out private loans before tapping all of the federal loan money available to them.

Try to negotiate a better package with your school. "People don't realize that, unless your going to a Top 30 school, there's a good

chance the school will be willing to revisit your financial-aid package," says Collinge. If you're unhappy with the mix of loans, grant and scholarship money being offered, go back to the bargaining table.

Consider all of your options. Before you take out private loans, exhaust every other option available to you, urges Collinge. Be diligent about applying for scholarships, grants or other loans, including loans from family members.

## Don't

Stop with only the financial-aid office. While many private lenders that advertise directly to the consumer charge high fees and exorbitant interest rates, there are deals to be had outside the financial-aid office, so cast a wide net. If the lender your school suggests isn't offering competitive rates, try approaching another reputable lender. You may get a better deal.

Have your parents cosign unless it's absolutely necessary. If you decide to go ahead and take out private loans for schools, avoid having your parents cosign, warns Collinge. "Oftentimes cosigners' houses and retirement packages end up as a part of the collateral on these loans," Collinge says. This means that if you fall behind, your parents may pay the price.



Why's it so hot? Because the hypnotist said so! Wednesday night, a hypnotist visited Methodist and made student volunteers act extremely strange. These student experienced heat waves, cold fronts, flaming feet, werewolf howls, invisible people. One student was hypnotized into thinking his name was Cha-Cha!

Photo by Matt Bietzel

## Homecoming Festivities Online @ [smalltalkmu.com](http://smalltalkmu.com)

Unfortunately, because of our print schedule, we are unable to write about Homecoming in the print edition of this issue. Fear not! Info on the king and queen, football score and a picture slideshow will be available on our new website [www.smalltalkmu.com](http://www.smalltalkmu.com). Come check it out!



Male students, professors, and guests walked a mile around the Ramapo College campus in women's high-heel shoes to support the rape prevention movement in Mahawh, New Jersey, October 09, 2007. (Carmine Galasso/The Record/MCT)

## Fraternities Feel Women's Pain with High Heels

**Ruth Padawer**  
*The Record (Hackensack N.J.)*  
 (MCT)

HACKENSACK, N.J.- Ramapo College frat boys and male athletes clomped around campus in high heels last week, in an unusual effort to raise awareness about violence against women.

With their hairy legs and jock socks peeking out, the 70 students wended past the student center, freshmen dorms and academic halls carrying anti-violence placards and chanting.

"What do you want?" boomed the baseball team's relief pitcher, wearing white Mary Janes with ankle straps.

"No more rape!" the marchers in stiletto heels and pointy-toed pumps-bellowed back.

"When do you want it?"

"Now!"

Three fraternities joined the Oct. 9 march, as did players from the baseball and track teams.

"I think male athletes tend to get a bad rap that they're not concerned about these issues, so I raised it at a team meeting and they needed no convincing," said Rich Martin, head baseball coach,

who drove alongside his players in a golf cart, a huge pile of temporarily discarded sneakers next to him.

The team also donated \$50 to the Bergen County, N.J., Rape Crisis Center, drawn from the cash the players pay when they show up late to practice, don't run out a ground ball or don't back up a throw from the outfield.

Called "Walk a Mile in Her Shoes," marches like these began in Los Angeles six years ago, after a male family therapist there argued that rape is a men's issue, given that 99 percent of perpetrators are male.

Inspired by the saying "You can't understand someone's experience till you've walked a mile in their shoes," organizers maintain that the campy scene draws much needed attention to the cause, and provides an opportunity to consider the gender stereotypes that sexualize women and glorify machismo and male violence.

The marches have since spread to 12 other states, including Connecticut and New York.

This is Ramapo's second year hosting such a march, part of the school's "violence awareness

week," which addresses rape, stalking, domestic violence and relationship abuse.

Waddling and stumbling, the marchers tried pumping their arms for momentum and complained about their numb toes, aching ankles and contorted knees, hips and backs.

"I can't feel anything right now," muttered one marcher, his wide feet bulging out of his heeled sandals.

For a topic so serious, the march seemed more like a football pep rally than a women's studies class. The men chanted, "Hey! Hey! Ho! Ho! Sexual violence has got to go!"

But by the end of the mile, as the men massaged their ankles and wiped blood from their toes, some said the experience made them realize there was a lot about women's experience in society that they hadn't previously considered.

"Wearing those heels is like being hit

with a huge hammer," said Brian McCarthy, a junior from Oradell, N.J., who walked with his Tau Kappa Epsilon brothers.

"You get the part about the oppressiveness of women's fashion within the first 10 seconds. But it also gets you to think about

women's perspective on other things.

"Most guys don't ever think about how many men commit violence against women, because unless we're forced to think about it, we get to bypass this stuff in our everyday lives."



# With Fresh Toilet Paper and Soap For All

*Ashley Young  
News Editor*

A “monumental event” occurred when the ceremonial “Christening of the Bathroom” was held on Oct 5 at the Student Women’s bathroom in the Trustees building.

The ceremony started a bit late due to the fact that Dr. Bonita Belcastro, the person responsible for the changes, was late arriving.

Dr. Belcastro is the Dean of the School of Public Affairs and she is a faculty member in the Social Work Department. Upon her arrival she was crowned “Queen of the Latrine,”

Left, Dr. Bonita Belcastro poses like a beaut queen with her crown and plunger / septer.

Below, the bathroom’s new “nameplate.”

Right, Dr. Belcastro cuts through the toilet paper ribbon on the door.

All photos by Roxana Ross.



by all the teachers present at the christening and was given an actual crown with a roll of the “finest toilet paper” that the school has to offer.

The renovated bathroom features motion sensitive sinks, new soap dispensers, cleaner toilets and a new white tiled floor.

“By this ceremony you can see how important the renovation was to the faculty and stu-

dents,” one of the professors said.

At the ceremony only limited seating was available and the professors there were said to be “no longer be afraid to flush,” in reference to the renovated toilets.

Whitney Larrimore, an English instructor said, “The roar from the flush is exhilarating!”



The Writing Center Staff smiles for a picture. Contributed Photo

## Writing Center Revamped

*Daniel Lee  
Staff Writer*

The Methodist University Writing Center has had significant renovations since last year.

The main difference in the new and improved Writing Center is that the faculty offices have been removed from the Center, which creates more space. Last year, the Writing Center and the extra offices were separated by narrow passages.

The faded and dirty carpet was replaced with shiny new wood, and three new pallet rugs were placed on the floor. The old chalkboard was replaced with a whiteboard. All of the walls were repainted, and new lamps were installed beside each desk.

Stella Whitlock is one of five

tutors working in the Writing Center. “All of the new changes were designed to make students feel welcome and comfortable,” said Whitlock.

Robin Green, the manager of the Writing Center explained, “The Writing Center uses the Mycomplab program, which is the computer companion to the Little Brown Handbook. Mycomplab contains sample papers in all the major writing styles, as well as ‘dirty dozen’ grammar exercises.”

The Writing Center aims to work closely with faculty, especially in writing intensive courses. “We use consistently up-to-date dictionaries and thesauruses, as well as literature anthologies for English classes,” says Whitlock.

The ideas expressed in the Opinions section do not necessarily reflect the ideas of smallTALK, or of Methodist University.

# Opinions

## The Angry Liberal

Jameson Jones



*"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."*

Political correctness in the media

and on campus boils my blood.

This, along with many other things, I dislike about this country and Methodist University. This is in regards to journalism, and the freedom of expression, while on my journalistic journey in the past four years. During that time, I have come to appreciate more the freedom of speech and press. Here are a couple examples why the "Political Correctness Police" tick me off so much.

Various news outlets and different forms on the internet and in print have shocked me with political correctness. For example, while we are still fighting a

pointless war in Iraq, many news outlets are afraid to tell the truth. Instead of bluntly saying, this war is a quagmire and we need to get our troops out of Iraq now, the media somehow spins information provided by President Bush and General David Petraeus. We need to stay in there and protect what we have. What we have is an uninformed, low-intelligent president, who probably did not pass his history classes. If had, he would know about

Vietnam and the mistakes made there. I hate to break it to all the Bush supporters, but this war is Vietnam repackaged 30 years

later, and yet our media wants to say what is politically correct too often.

When it comes to writing for the newspaper, I have been told I cannot criticize people or groups in their performance, that they may be doing, because such criticism is not politically correct. My goal is to report the news as I see it regardless if it is politically correct. I am not going to bow down to trustees or deans who control this campus and worship them as gods. The last time I checked, these people who control the campus are nowhere close to gods and face the same mortality as the rest

of the world. And yes, the words that they speak are not infallible either. So if in a later column, I go about exposing the truth about some organizations that exist and never get anything done, like student government, I am doing my job as a journalist and reporting it as it is.

When it comes to the freedom of speech, the First Amendment says you have to be politically correct in this country.

**Comments, questions and column ideas are always welcome. Please send them to [muangryliberal@yahoo.com](mailto:muangryliberal@yahoo.com).**

## Girls Only Gym Hour Causes Dispute

Mary Davis  
Staff Writer

Women having their own time in the gym is a problem?

For some students it is, they are letting their voice be heard and it is not just the guys but also a few girls. Both claiming that it is enifcent and a waste of time to the people who are waiting to use the gym.

Although there is a group of women that do not feel completely comfortable working out in front of guys. Most of the complainers believe they think that guys will be hitting on females as they work out. This is not

their reason for a all women work out time. The women feel more self conscious exercising in front of men.

Morally, I believe that if it were a issue for these women to work out alone then it is bias to not give them their privacy in the gym.

Although is it not also being bias to give the ladies a time to themselves and nothing for the guys. Maybe it simply does not matter one way or another for them.

Or maybe we need a men's only hour too!



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### Remille's Rhetoric: At Least We're Trying....

This rendition of Remille's Rhetoric will be kept short and to the point. I was on a mini-vacation at the time this article was written.

In the last issue of smallTALK, I made references to Methodist being a high school with various segregation across the board. I've received a good amount of feedback from this article, and all of the suggestions led me to one possible solution. I encourage us students to look out and stand by anybody that may be falling through the cracks out there. This is the time when students look to leave Methodist for various reasons, and I believe we can improve that by looking out for those who aren't necessarily fitting in.

With that said, I also realized that the administration has shown more effort than ever in attempting to give students more ties to Methodist University. Two examples come to mind:

-We've had three pep rallies this semester to support the fall athletic teams. In my three prior years here, we had zero. None. Pep rallies are meant to stir up school spirit and a sense of belonging; although attendance and participation have been inconsistent at best, the dedication to continue both the pep rallies and the Monarch

Zone events deserve to be commended.

-This semester has also seen the colonization of a new fraternity and a new sorority on campus. The Adelpia Society and the Sigma Society have already gained significant numbers and have already started to take steps toward making their mark on campus. In addition, my fraternity, Phi Alpha Gamma, is making strides to reestablish themselves while also holding true to the notion of bringing individuals together.

I know from attendance at Retention Committee meetings that there is effort being made to change things. It will be interesting to see the results of these efforts. If you wish to give feedback to this article, email me at [eshipman@hotmail.com](mailto:eshipman@hotmail.com). Also, if any student has any interest in participating in Retention Committee meeting, please contact committee chair Mike Safley at extension 7515.

I'll try harder next time as I give a full-blown review of my final Homecoming.

### Remille's Rhetoric

Remille Shipman  
Staff Writer



# Entertainment

## Proper Attire for a Burial Rocks the Shop

Mary Davis  
Staff Writer

At 8:30 on Oct. 7 at The Rock Shop which is located at 106 S Eastern Blvd. a show was being played.

The small shop was filled with around ninety people all awaiting one band or another or just there for the experience.

A majority stood on the dance floor directly in front of the hidden stage.

Tension was high as they waited for the array of lights to come up and the navy blue curtain to be drawn.

As two Rock Shop employees made their way to the stage the noise began. Cheering and instruments combined with multicolored and strobe lights made the energy high.

Then the curtains were pulled and their



stood the five guys of Proper Attire For A Burial.

As the techno metal sound filled the shop the number of fans on the floor multiplied.

People leaving their cozy couches, pool games, and video watching on the LCD screens to get a better grasp on the

sound that they were experiencing.

The Band consists of sixteen year old Landon Ryan with unique and spirited voice on vocals. Twenty one year old hard pounding Zeron on drums. Sixteen year old massively quick fingered, talented, and a new band member Matt Drake on lead guitar. Eighteen year old passionate Ichcan guitarist who is no longer with the band. And eighteen year old intense and hard working Jon Benton on bass guitar.

## Bring in a canned food donation on Wednesday, November 7th to help those in need within our community.

At the same time, you'll be taking part in attempting to set a new Guinness® World Record for the most canned food donations collected during a single event, nationwide.



The event takes place on Wednesday, November 7th from (insert start and ending times).

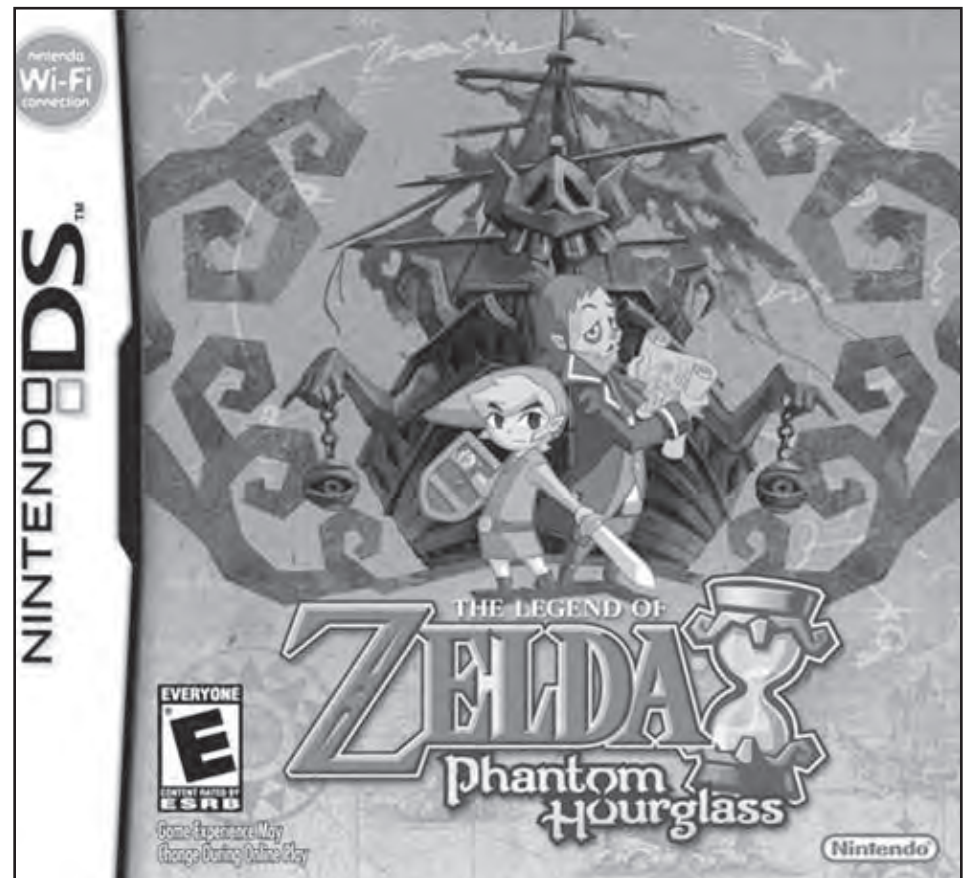
For more information on how you can help to stop hunger visit [helpstophunger.org](http://helpstophunger.org).

Visit [www.forstudentsbystudents.com](http://www.forstudentsbystudents.com) for complete details.



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## Legend of Zelda Makes Nintendo DS Premier in 'Hourglass'

Austin \*\*\*\*\*  
Staff Writer

Link here, the Hero of Time, Wielder of the Master Sword, Owner of the Triforce of Courage. Once again Princess Zelda has been captured by the forces of evil.

Sure, the actual girl is a reincarnation in pirate form, but the point stands, girl is kidnapped and I must risk my life too many times to count trying to save her. You know what, someone will probably get possessed and I might, just might, have to cut lawns for spare change once again.

I've updated my looks with the classic cel-shading from a previous journey dubbed "The Wind Waker." The biggest change in this adventure is that I'm controlled completely by a ladies touch (or man) depending on who's using the stylus. A greedy guy by the name of Linebeck lets me use his boat to sail around the world in hopes of finding priceless treasure, erm....

I mean spirits and metals to forge a sacred sword and all that other standard hero stuff. Oh yeah and there's something about a magic hourglass.

Overall my new adventure is pretty good, despite the fact I'm stuck with another annoying fairy creature, the princess was stolen again, and that cel-shaded graphics don't do me justice on the DS. It's even kid friendly with a creature of complete malice possessing people and the chance to talk to the spirits of slaughtered explorers hovering over their skeletal remains. Of course everything is set in a cartoony style and it's Legend of Zelda so who cares. Just go out and buy it.

The Legend of Zelda: The Phantom Hourglass  
Nintendo DS  
8.5 out of ten

# Sports

## Freshman Football Players Rise to the Challenge

Melinda Anderson  
Staff Writer

It is 5:30 a.m. The alarm clock's shriek echoes inside the dark dorm room.

A roommate rolls over and mutters something offensive about someone's mother.

He reaches for the snooze but stops himself just in time. No snooze today. Today is Tuesday. The weekly football team meeting starts in 30 minutes – got to get up and shake off the exhaustion. No matter that he only got three hours of sleep last night.

He needs to find something to eat, because after the meeting there's an hour of workout time scheduled.

Then, it's off to class.

Somewhere in the back of his mind is the need to figure out a speech topic for an upcoming class. Maybe in that one hour between classes today, he can squeeze in algebra homework. Spanish is starting to take over his dreams, so maybe that's enough to get him through the quiz this afternoon.

And his knee is acting up. Again.

Practice is every afternoon Tuesday through Friday. Monday

is the only day of the week there is nothing scheduled for members of the Methodist University football team. It's a day off from football but not from being a college student.

"I do my homework at night when I'm tired and beat up," says Taylor Fisher, a freshman accounting major and defensive back.

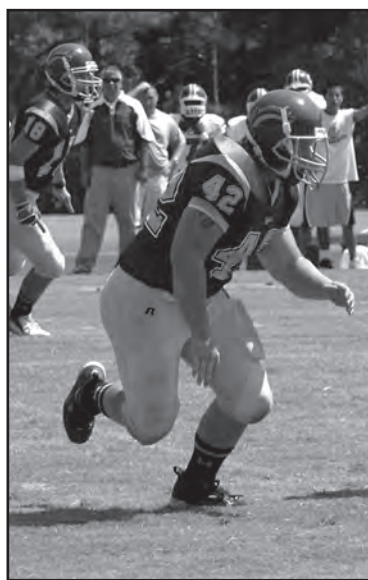
Mark Baker, a freshman business administration major, says he does his homework in between classes. He also plays defensive back.

"I'm too tired at night," Baker says.

Weekends are workdays too. There's the game on Saturday, then game review, conditioning and weight lifting on Sunday.

"They run us to death on Sunday," says Mario Miralles, freshman business administration major and starting kicker. Miralles is known by the nickname "Miami Assassin." The name was given to him by the coaches because of his facial piercings and unflappable personality on the field.

This grueling schedule is added to the other aspects of college life, to which every freshman must adjust. Most are away from home and family for the first time. New freedom comes with responsibility, and like everyone else, these freshmen make social and aca-



Todd Hocker, number 42, is a freshman football player.

dem choices during their first year that can determine whether they succeed in college.

"It's easy to make a mistake, like drinking, smoking, sex," says Head Football Coach Jim Sypult. "It's tough to handle all of this."

The discipline and structure of the football team is designed to help the players stay out of trouble.

"I kick their butt when they mess up," says Sypult.

Extra workouts and early morning runs are strong behavior modification tools. Sypult says he hates to give up on anyone, and he gives the players every opportunity to "do right."

To help with the academic adjustment, football players must meet weekly with each coach to discuss classes. They are directed to tutors if needed.

Players must have an attendance and grade report signed by their professors every two weeks. There are consequences for missing classes – like taking a 6 a.m. run.

"Our players understand that they are students first and athletes second," said Sypult.

There are no academic concessions made for incoming football players. Methodist University has the same admission guidelines for every student.

Linebacker Todd Hocker completed a tour with the United States Marines before deciding to pursue college and college football. A freshman exercise science major, Hocker feels that not everyone believes football players work as hard academically as other students.

"I want people to know we're not dumb," says Hocker.

Football players must learn to deal with criticism and the stereotype of being a dumb jock, says Sypult. What "really bothers" him, however, is "when our faculty and staff have this prejudice."

The football team has an average GPA of 2.29, but individual GPAs tend to get better over four years. The graduation rate for football players who stay on the team four years is 95 percent, according to Sypult.

Most Methodist University players do not play four years. Out of the current 120 players, Methodist University has 13 seniors and eight juniors on the football team.

"Nationally, 68 percent of college football teams are made up of freshman and sophomores," said Sypult. "We are no different (than other universities). Retention is a problem for us as it is for the school."

Despite early morning meetings, punishing workouts, a huge time commitment and stereotypes, there is always a new batch of freshman recruited each year. If you ask them, they will tell you why they set their alarm clocks for 5:30 a.m. on Tuesday.

"It was always a dream of mine, since high school, to play college ball," says Hocker.

## The Weekly Sports Trivia Quiz

McClatchy-Tribune News Service  
(MCT)

### QUESTIONS:

1.) True or False: Green Bay Packers quarterback Brett Favre is the only player to win the NFL's MVP award three times.

2.) Who caught Brett Favre's first pass completion with the Green Bay Packers?

3.) True or False: Brett

Favre was a third-round draft pick by the Green Bay Packers.

4.) What is Brett Favre's middle name?

5.) Where did Brett Favre attend college?

### ANSWERS:

1.) True: Green Bay Packers quarterback Brett Favre won the NFL MVP from 1995 to

1997.

2.) Brett Favre caught Brett Favre's first completion with the Green Bay Packers (his first pass was deflected at the line of scrimmage, but Favre caught the ball himself and lost 7 yards against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers on Sept. 13, 1992.)

3.) False. Green Bay Packers quarterback Brett Favre was a second-round draft pick of the Atlanta Falcons in 1991. (The

Packers obtained Favre from the Atlanta Falcons in February of 1992, in exchange for a first-round pick, the 19th overall selection. The Falcons subsequently used that pick to select Southern Mississippi running back Tony Smith. Who's he?)

4.) Brett Favre's middle name is "Lorenzo."

5.) Brett Favre attended the University of Southern Mississippi, located in Hattiesburg,

Miss.

MAIN SOURCES: Author Jack Kreisler, publisher of Red-Letter Press Inc., Saddle River, N.J., and NFL.com.

### HOT TOPICS

### HOW ABOUT THAT:

Did you know that quarterback Brett Favre has led the

# MLS Needs A Healthy Beckham

McClatchy Newspapers  
(MCT)

David Beckham hasn't played since he injured his knee Aug. 29, which means Major League Soccer's most telegenic pitchman spent much of the past six weeks on crutches, out of commission and off the covers of supermarket tabloids.

But the Los Angeles Galaxy went on without him, and, in fact, pulled itself from the league cellar into playoff contention in Becks' absence.

With two weeks remaining in the regular season, L.A. is one of five teams vying for two remaining playoff spots. The others are Kansas City, Chicago, Colorado and Columbus.

There is a chance the final spot will come down to an Oct. 21 showdown between the Galaxy and the Chicago Fire. Beckham is expected to be back by then, and he'd be going up against the Fire's Mexican star Cuauhtemoc Blanco, adding much-needed sizzle as the league heads into the playoffs.

That the Galaxy is in the running at all at this point is remarkable, considering the team went two months without a victory and on Sept. 16 had the worst record in the league (4-13-5). Since then, L.A. managed to win four straight games.

Next up for the Galaxy are the New York Red Bulls on Thursday, and indications are Becks will return to the lineup for that game. The Bulls haven't won in five straight matches, and are vulnerable.

Galaxy president Alexi Lalas said the team's late-season run has added new life to the club.

"It's been exciting, not just for us but for our fans despite

what has been a uniquely challenging year to find a way to still be in the running for the playoffs," Lalas told Reuters. "It's wonderful but it shouldn't mask what has so far been a sub-par year."

Critics have said Beckham, who arrived in the United States on a bum ankle, should have been rested longer and that perhaps he was rushed into action because of his marketability and hefty salary. The former English captain, who stands to make as much as \$250 million with endorsements, played only 310 minutes in six games for the Galaxy.

"People have to understand that we are an emerging soccer nation and we were given an opportunity that we had to take advantage of for the good of the game," Lalas said. "David Beckham recognizes his responsibilities, not just for the Galaxy but for the good of the MLS and soccer in the U.S. It's easy to look back and second-guess but, with the perspective of where we are going, I think we made the right decision."

"Ideally, if he were to come here in July and recognizing that he wasn't 100 percent, we would have shut him down for the month and not played him at all. But we are living in anything but an ideal climate when it comes to the evolution of soccer in this country."

As for the rest of the MLS playoff picture, six teams are locks: D.C., New England, New York, Chivas USA, Houston and Dallas.

League infants Toronto and Real Salt Lake have already been eliminated.

The best thing that could happen to MLS right now would be for Beckham to get back on the field, nail one of those bending free kicks to beat the Fire on Oct. 21, and rip off his shirt in celebration as the glamorous Galaxy dances into the playoffs. Then, Tom Cruise (and the paparazzi) would start showing up at games again, and Becks could get MLS some air time on "SportsCenter."

That, after all, is what he is here for.

## AROUND THE WORLD

**Brazil:** Sao Paulo and Vasco da Gama, the two Brazilian teams remaining in the Copa Sudamericana, both lost their quarterfinal first-leg matches last week, putting them in jeopardy of elimination.

Sao Paulo lost 1-0 to Colombian club Millonarios and heads to Colombia for the final leg on Oct. 24. It was a shocking loss for Sao Paulo, which has an 11-

point lead in the Brazilian league and was considered a favorite to win the Copa Sudamericana title. They were missing injured goalkeeper Rogerio Ceni, and that hurt.

Vasco lost 2-0 to Mexican club America. The final leg is in Brazil. This tournament is the second-most important club competition in South America

after Copa Libertadores.

**Europe:** Qualifying for the 2008 European championship is winding down, and one of the unheralded heroes has been David Healy of Northern Ireland. The 28-year-old forward, who plays for Fulham in England, leads the qualifying tournament with 12 goals. He raised eyebrows with a hat trick against Spain, and has been playing well since.

Northern Ireland, on the bubble to make the cut, plays Sweden on Wednesday. Other matches that day are France vs. Lithuania, Turkey vs. Greece, Germany vs. Czech Republic, and England vs. Russia.

**USA:** Goalkeeper Hope Solo, who was suspended from the U.S. women's team after lashing out at coach Greg Ryan and criticizing teammate Briana Scurry, is back on the roster for the upcoming friendly matches against Mexico. Goalies Scurry

and Nicole Barnhart are also on the team.



Beckham waves to the crowd.  
Contributed Photo

## Sports Trivia Continued

Green Bay Packers to a 40-5 home record when the temperature at kickoff is 34 degrees or lower. Not bad for a guy who is from the warm climate of the Deep South.

### BIGGEST UPSET WINS:

According to Pregame.com, here are the biggest point spreads in which the favored team lost:

2007 ... Stanford ... +41 ...  
USC  
2007 ... Syracuse ... +39 ...  
Louisville

1985 ... UTEP ... +36 ... BYU  
1985 ... Oregon State ... +35 {  
... Washington  
... Temple ... +35 { ... Vir-  
ginia Tech

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Join us for Worship  
Wednesdays  
11 a.m.  
Hensdale Chapel  
Methodist University