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Meet Interim President Dwayne Smith

By Jaylen Carr
Sports Editor

As of June 1, the current Chief Executive Officer of Housatonic Community College, Dwayne Smith, will become the interim university president.

The university was notified through email by Patrick Dilger, the Director of Integrated Communications and Marketing, on March 31, stating that Smith would become the new interim president of the university. Smith found out from Terrence Cheng, the president of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) system.

"I was asked by Terrence Cheng, the president of the system, and I was excited about the possibility," Smith said. "We are doing great work here at Housatonic and the Bridgeport region, so it wasn't something I sought out. But certainly, it is a tremendous opportunity for me to continue my vision for higher education."

Smith said he was

pleased and ecstatic to be selected for the position.

President Joe Bertolino said once he told the university about his departure, he began to discuss with Cheng about having an interim president until a national search to find the 13th university president.

"I was hoping that we can have someone who is familiar with Southern and familiar with our core values," Bertolino said. "The first person that came to mind was Dwayne Smith."

Bertolino said Smith believes in our social justice mission and has experience in leadership positions. "I floated the suggestion to President Cheng, and President Cheng then had a conversation with him to gauge his interest."

Smith has spent almost 40 years of leadership at different institutions serving as the interim president of Harris-Stowe State University, a historically black college and university (HBCU) in St. Louis.

"He led an HBCU, and I think that it certainly brings a perspective to a campus that aspires to be a social justice institution," Bertolino said.

When the news broke that Smith would be the interim president, Bertolino said he was delighted.

"It's nice to pass the baton to someone that you respect and you know will do well for the students and for the institution," Bertolino said. "I was relieved because it makes my transition a little easier as well."

Bertolino said it was a lot of smiles and laughs when he met Smith for the first time.

"It is not just a professional relationship, but we have developed a friendship," Bertolino said. "He is easy to talk to; he is easy to get along with."

The relationships that Smith has built-in Bridgeport will help Southern because the university's goal has been to become a more significant presence in Bridgeport, Bertolino said.

Smith said he wants the university to know that he is collaborative in his approach and accessible.

"I'm student-centered," Smith said. "The number one priority is to move students through the academic pipeline with the ultimate goal of having them to reach their highest promise."

Smith said ensuring every student can have the excess to seek a post-secondary education has always been essential because of his family background.

Due to discriminatory laws in the South, Smith said the elders in his family, particularly his mother, did not have the opportunity to get an education.

"Everyone can have an education; they have a right to a post-secondary education with the right mindset, and the right type of support has really been my mantra, and that has been embedded into me in various types of positions."

Students on campus reacted to the news of Smith becoming the

interim president.

"I found out that Dr. Smith was going to be the interim president when it was announced on Instagram and social media, and email," History and political science major Kyle Thaxton, a junior, said. "We had always been speculating before because we were just curious. We didn't know if it would be from the inside, so internally from Southern, or if it would be someone externally."

Student Government President Thaxton said he is excited to meet Smith and likes his higher education experience.

"Seeing a person of color be able to ascend to that leadership at Southern with our social justice message, I'm happy that our leadership is going to be diverse," Thaxton said. "I'm happy that we are going to have a strong, experienced leader."

Public health major Angela Corsino, a junior, said she heard about Smith becoming the interim president from

Bertolino's Instagram.

"I am not from the area, so I'm not sure who Dr. Smith is. I figured if President Joe had a hand in picking him out, I'm sure he's a great guy and great for the job," Corsino said.

Public health major Grace Jaworowski, a senior, said she read about the Smith's news through Instagram and thought it was excellent that the university found someone qualified for the job.

"I didn't hear about it. I don't know who he is," Biology major Tamana Phinn, a junior, said. "I'm wondering what his values are and what he is going to do for Southern."

Bertolino said his last day is June 30, and Smith will visit the university in the coming weeks.

Smith said he is excited about the new professional and personal opportunities.

"I'm very passionate about higher education," Smith said. "I'm still ecstatic and enthused about the possibility of serving yet another institution."

Blood drive open due to blood shortage

By Jaylen Carr
Sports Editor

With the help of some volunteers and staff, the American Red Cross came to the university to host a blood drive with hopes of helping with the blood shortage.

"Blood is still needed, and there is still a great demand for blood," Ricardo Curry II, the account manager of the American Red Cross, said. "There is still a shortage in the state of Connecticut. A lot of people don't realize when you give blood; you're actually helping to save people's lives."

Curry said donating blood will even help keep someone alive. "People have leukemia, sickle cell, cancer, car crashes, and women are delivering babies, surgeries, so when a hospital has a need for

blood, they put a request out to the general organizations like the American Red Cross."

The volunteers that help at the blood drives are retirees and sometimes students who help check people in at the sign-in tables, Curry said.

"It's not about me; it's about blessing others," Curry said. "It is about being part of an organization that helps those who need it, and blood is something that is constantly needed."

Pat Pattonelli, the collection team supervisor for 20 years, said the organization runs 12-18 blood drives in Connecticut daily.

"Our job is to collect enough blood products for our hospital to provide for our patients," Pattonelli said. "You can donate by calling the 1-800 Red Cross number; you can download the app and make an

appointment that way."

The process starts with a "mini" physical, and then you get to donate 1 pint of blood, Pattonelli said.

"When you donate a 1 pint of whole blood, we actually break that down into three separate products which all have retention periods and retention methods and destinations," Pattonelli said. "When you donate 1 pint of blood, you actually help three different people."

Red blood cells are suitable for 42 days and, while refrigerated, it goes to trauma units and the emergency room, Pattonelli said.

The entire process takes up to an hour, Pattonelli said. The blood drive was inside Engleman Hall, Room B121, from 11 a.m.- 4 p.m. on April 6.

Curry said he had built relationships with the institutions in the New Haven

region, which he covers. He goes to universities like Yale University and the University of New Haven.

"Part of our job is to develop relationships with pillars in the communities, not only the hospitals but the actual educational compacity," Curry said. "We have partnered with universities so that people can understand our mission."

Curry said schools are a great place to create a culture of showing the importance of giving blood. "The university has a greater outreach initiative, and we try to join with those initiatives to let people know what we do."

The American Red Cross not only does blood drives, but Curry also said they also host an event called 'One Red Cross,' which partners with schools and organizations to help with CPR training and AED.

AED, or "automated external defibrillator," is used to help those experiencing sudden cardiac arrest," according to the American Red Cross website.

Students came throughout the blood drive to donate blood by scheduling appointments through the Blood Donor app.

Nursing major Sydney French, a senior, said, "I decided to come to the blood drive because I know how much we are in need of blood and how much just one person donating blood can help others."

It is crucial to come to a blood drive because there is a shortage, and many people need blood, French said.

Gianna Mendes, a graduate student studying school counseling, said, "I know there's still a blood shortage going on since COVID. I wanted to donate blood in

my community, but I saw it was at Southern, and it is just too convenient to say no."

Mendes said that people should donate blood due to the shortage and expirations of blood.

"I've had missed opportunity in the past four years," Theatre major Vanessa Flores, a senior, said. "This is my second time donating blood."

Flores said donating blood is important because not many people currently donate it.

Curry said he emails students to help notify them about the blood drive details.

"We actually capture blood here from students, and their willingness to donate is, of course, appreciated, and then its process," Curry said. Then it's given back to the hospitals to support those suffering."

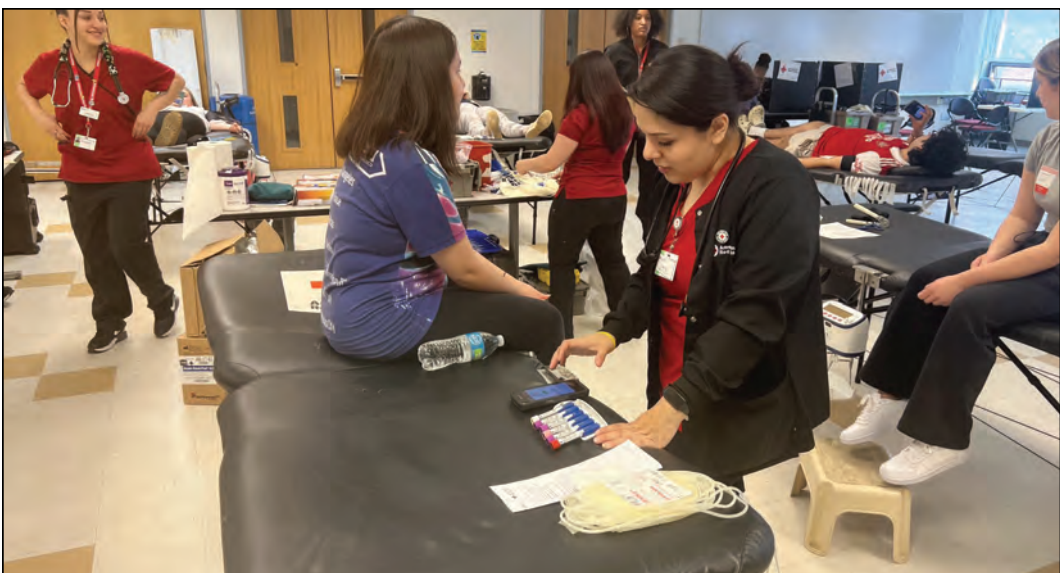


PHOTO | JAYLEN CARR

Theatre major, Vanessa Flores, a senior waiting to get her blood drawn at the blood drive.



PHOTO | JAYLEN CARR

Seating area on the left with students waiting to get their physical examination which is on the right.

Students make soap at 'Scent Bash' event

By Luke Molwitz
Photographer

On April 6, students had the chance to create their own soap and essential oils at Program Council's "Scent Bash" event.

Not many people showed up so each person was able to make more than one soap.

Different colors and glitters were available for the students to pick out. They were put into the mold to dry.



Molding tray of soap being made.



Soap being cut.



Psychology major Alexandria DePaul, a senior, with her soap.



Communication major Chelsea Safo, a freshman, and Trudy Annor, a freshman with their home-made soap.

E-sports holds Mario Kart Tournament

By Sarah Shelton
Photo Editor

Three, two, one, GO!

On April 4, Esports and Rec-Fit held a Mario Kart Tournament for students in the Adanti Student Center theater.

Each round two students competed against each other and the winner continued on the bracket.

Jacob Stephens won the entire game, coming in first every race he competed in.



Music major Lincoln Carroll interacting with the other students.



Student playing on a GameCube controller.



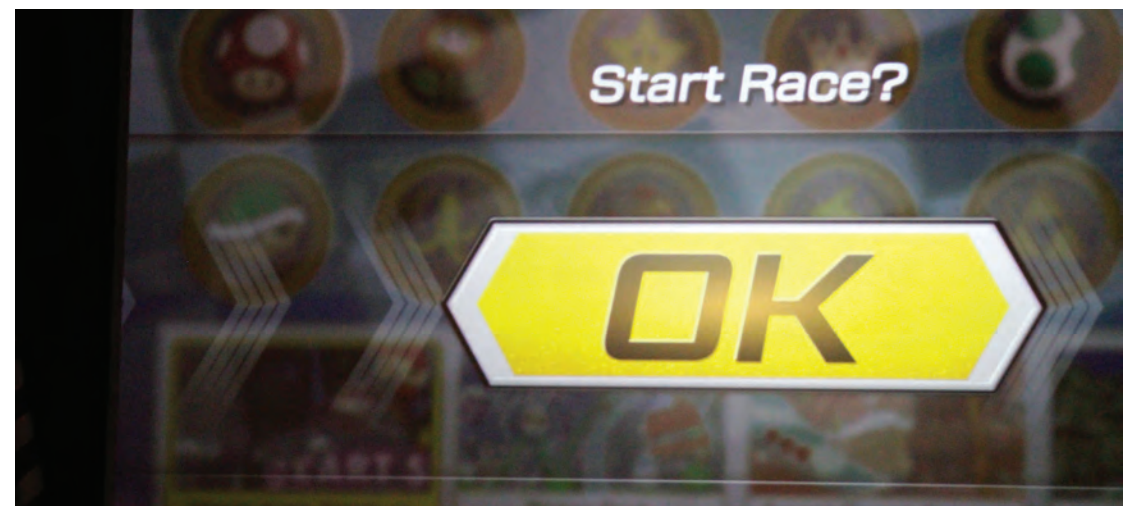
Psychology major Jacob Adorno, a senior, competing in a race.



Students competing against each other head-to-head.



Music major Lincoln Carroll handing his controller to Jacob Stephens.



Screen in the Adanti Student Center before the first race.

The Outing Club is ready for the warm weather

By Sofia Rositani
Editor-in-chief

Spring is here which means more students will be outdoors soaking in the sun and warm weather. With this there is a new student organization on campus, "The Outing Club." "I've always loved hiking, going outside, doing all sorts of activities, and I know Outing club is something that's pretty big at other schools," President, Connor Skarzynski, a junior said.

Skarzynski said they were approved by the Student Government Association and have written their constitution; they also have Instagram and Owl Connect where they will be posting more about upcoming events.

"A lot of the Spring for me I've been doing a lot of trails running and kind of exploring the area's try to find good places to take a

group on a hike," Skarzynski said.

On April 2, they had their first group hike. They ended up going to West Rock and plan on more hikes in the future.

"We start off doing hikes but as soon as we have funding then we can start doing the kayaks or something else. Starting out with no money whatsoever there's not much you can do. So, I think the hiking and the volunteering work is probably going to be the first step," secretary, Brooke Keeney, a junior said.

They are considering doing fundraising such as a bake sale to raise money for their programs and events. They also plan on working with other organizations for events.

"Been, while creating bonds with other members through shared experiences. The outing club will also participate in volunteer work and



PHOTO | SARAH SHELTON

Members of The Outing Club McAllister Milne, Nicholas Cage Zerras, Connor Skarzynski and Brooke Keeney in the Adanti Student Center.

fundraising events to give back to the community that provides and maintains nature. SCOC will complete 2 service events per semester, included in the outings," the SCSU Outing Club Owl Connect stated.

Skarzynski said he would like to work with

organizations like Habitat for Humanity and his honor society Zeta Delta Epsilon.

"The idea started last Fall, around August, I have been working on it since December. Three months, it's very exciting to finally get going," Skarzynski said.

With this they also want

to make a change with their organization so while they do these events, they will also be cleaning up the area too.

"Around New Haven sometimes you're hiking up West Rock, you will see cans and everything around so doing stuff like that I

understand is not like one if the most pressing issues but any way we can help I figured as a positive way to make change," Skarzynski said.

Skarzynski said he felt very relieved and excited when he found out that SGA approved the organization.

"It was a very long process in December, at the end of the first semester going into the workshop and then proposing my club. And then it was difficult because we're nearing the end of our season in February and it was still snowing out, cold out. I gave my presentation to SGA, and I got unanimous approval, which was cool. That's very exciting to see and ever since that, we got the Owl Connect page up and running. Once we got fully approved and we were able to operate fully," Skarzynski said.

Review- AgustD teases upcoming album with a single

By Sofia Rositani
Editor-in-chief

AgustD, or Min Yoongi is back with a fire, or bultaoleune, track before the release of his new album titled "D-Day."

The song "People Pt. 2 (feat. IU)" is a song about solitude during COVID-19 and how he felt during the quarantine. This song is very impactful and is a sequel to his song "People" in his prior album "D-2."

The album will be released April 21, with his tour beginning April 26, in Belmont Park.

This music video comes after another BTS member, Park Jimin, became number one on Billboard.

"While the original

"People" saw Suga reflecting on himself and meditating on how others judge and change, Part 2 longs for connection with others," according to Billboard.

This song has an R&B sound to it and even if you cannot understand the lyrics, you can hear the longingness through their voices. AgustD has also gotten so much better with his vocals because through this BTS break he has been training a lot recently.

"Since its debut, BTS' musical appeal has reached globally largely through the septet's extended metaphors and imagery, translating into accessible storytelling alongside boundary-pushing compositions and

choreography," according to Billboard. "Suga's range of material is vast, after producing on essentially every BTS album, not to mention scoring high-profile collaborations with everyone from Halsey and Juice WRLD to Epik High and Japan's OMI. But now, he's emphasizing the topics that move him personally — and ensuring he's properly heard."

I have the utmost respect for AgustD and his work because everything he releases; he puts his heart and soul into. He will not release something he is not proud of, and you can tell that in his work.

"They're all music made by the person

called Min Yoongi. So, I don't actually have a very different mindset for each moniker — but I would say that the purposes could be somewhat different. Ultimately, the goal of releasing this music is for as many people to listen to my music as possible. So, "People Pt.2" was made thinking about how people will receive AgustD's music, which is why we also featured IU. It's kind of a trial to release this music under the name AgustD. I'm actually a little bit worried," Min said in an interview with Billboard.

This is the last album we will hear from AgustD for a while after this because following this he will most

likely go into his military service. He is not the next member, J-Hope will be the next member to leave for the military.

"This album doesn't really finalize everything in its message either. So, there might be a possibility there could be a "Part 3" later on. For now, we're just trying to say, "Let's not hate each other. Let's find a way," Min said in an interview with Billboard.

He is 30 years old now and he has a new outlook on life compared to his album, so he wants his music to mirror his life.

"So, the documentary started as I just wanted to capture and show this process. It started with

the purpose of showing SUGA as a producer and songwriter, but it kind of ended up having the worldview of an album-making process. I tried to show the normal, individual side of me as much as possible, but as I am a Korean idol, or K-idol, a lot of scenes were edited out; there were more of those natural scenes and some very good scenes that couldn't make it in the final version. The documentary and "People Pt.2" try to reveal the natural side of the human Min Yoongi. I just wanted to show that I am this humane person. I am just a human," Min said in an interview with Billboard.

Opinion- Debate between cats and dogs is settled

By Ali Fernand
Features Editor

I have decided that I am doing what everyone else is afraid to do: I am settling the debate between cats and dogs. This has been a rivalry since humans have kept them as pets. Dog lovers tend to hate cats, though cat lovers tend to be more neutral.

Personally, I would like to make a case as a centrist on these issues. There is no need to put two animals who bring happiness to the world against each other. Cats and dogs both do so much for the people who own them. Both pets have benefits and downsides when it comes to what an owner needs in their life.

My whole life, I have grown up with both cats and dogs. My friendships with my pets are different for cats and dogs. My dogs are always more loyal to me. I have had a golden retriever, golden lab and collie mix, black lab and German Shepherd mix, and a Boston terrier. All these dogs are clear about their love for me. I did not have to work for it, I could just come home, and they were jumping at my feet. Though

I most definitely have preferred my bigger dogs. My Boston terrier makes a bad case for dogs. She is almost 2 years old and still bites me and rips my socks off. She will then tear around the house for me to get my sock back.

The three other dogs that I have had have been wonderful. I had them when I was young, and they were all very kid friendly. A lot of the time, they could tell if I was feeling upset. If I were crying, they would sit with me and offer some company. Even though they cannot talk, the comfort that a dog brings their owner does not need words. The love of a dog is unconditional.

The love of a cat, however, is extremely conditional. That is what makes it rewarding. I currently have three cats, all of them have been in my home since I was a kid. Their love was not easy to get. I had to practice a lot of patience and respect their boundaries. Cats are clear with their boundaries as they will let you know when you are being annoying. I was very annoying to my cats, but as soon as I let them come

to me on their terms, I saw more success. This is the part that is difficult for people who do not like cats.

Getting a cat to love you is hard. They also tend to not like more than 1-2 people. If you practice patience and learn about your cat's personality, I promise you will see success. I would always pick up my cats to sit with me on the couch for them

to immediately run away. They are more likely to be receptive to you, letting them come join you on their own terms. Cats are very stubborn, and you need to respect that if you want their affection.

As soon as you can understand what a relationship with a cat looks like, it is easily one of the most rewarding things in life. The cat's trust makes

for the best snuggles, happy purrs, and good photos. Some will take longer than others, but after earning my cats' trust, I feel like I have a dog in a cat's body.

Also, I feel that dogs and cats do not even have competition between each other. My dogs and cats have always got along. More so than my cats, I have a good relationship with each other. My cats

loved to go up to my dogs and brush their faces. One of my dogs would get a little scared because she thought their purring was growling. Despite being 5 times bigger than the cats, she would let them walk all over her. However, my dogs would always end up snuggling with my cats. I will continue to call for cat and dog solidarity, as I have seen its success and adorableness.

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Lacrosse team falls to Adelphi 17-7 at home, Rowe scores three goals

By Jaylen Carr
Sports Editor

The women's lacrosse team lost against their NE10 rival, Adelphi University, 17-7, which drops the Owls to a 3-4 conference record.

"We're playing scared, and we're playing intimidated. It takes some time to get out of the mindset," Head Coach Kevin Siedlecki said. "They are a better team than us, I'm not going to pretend that we are better than them, but they aren't that much better."

Siedlecki said the team played strong for 30 minutes but not 60 minutes. "We made some mistakes that are just so uncharacteristic, things I

haven't seen all season."

Drop balls and bad passes were the many areas that contributed to the 10-point loss, Siedlecki said.

Attack Karlie Rowe, a graduate student, said, "I think it was just a good learning experience for us. It shows that we can't come out flat in any quarter against these types of teams.

We have to play all 60 minutes of the game, and that is something we are obviously working on."

After the 21-11 win against Franklin Pierce on April 1, it was tough losing this game, Rowe said. "We are going to see more of these types of teams in the future, so we just got to learn from it and keep it going."

Adelphi is the second-rank team in the NE10 Southwest Division, with a 7-3 record, which Siedlecki knew would present some challenges to the team. Overall, the Owls dropped to a 7-4 season record.

"We have to recognize that it is just another team of college girls who play lacrosse after class just like we do," Siedlecki said. "Whatever the name across the front of the jersey is, we can't let that get in our heads."

Late in the first quarter, the goalkeeper Caelan Connors, a graduate student, walked off the field limping and missed the first 5 minutes of the second quarter due to her injury.

"I turned around

because my back was turned to the girl who had the ball. When she threw the ball, I reacted, and I didn't have enough time," Connors said. "I folded because it is a natural instinct."

Connors could still save the ball from going in but got assistance from the head athletic trainer, Chris Leary, once the first quarter ended.

"He put a pad on my leg so then if I got hit again, which I did twice in the same spot, I wouldn't hurt as much," Connors said. "It was a big help."

Despite the injury, Connors had 20 saves which tied for fifth all-time in program history.

The Owls scored three goals in the first half, while Adelphi scored nine. The Owls were scoreless in the first quarter and scored their first score until the 12:53 mark in the second quarter.

Adelphi was able to get scoring from eight different players on the team. The Owls struggled through the first half getting points because of Adelphi's defense.

Attack Bayleigh Takacs, a graduate student, set four records in Saturday's matchup against Franklin Pierce, scoring a goal in the first half. Rowe also helped the team offensively by scoring a goal in the first half.

Takacs, one of the team captains, said during the game that the team

was playing scared, according to Siedlecki.

"They are definitely the better team," Siedlecki said. "We are not there yet. I'm not going to pretend that I thought we should've kicked their butts, but we definitely could've hung in there a little better. It is all mental."

Connors said the team played well in the first quarter, but the team has to have confidence for four quarters.

"We have to just get out of heads sometimes," Connors said. "They had a really good offense, so our defense played really well with them."

Siedlecki said the team has to realize that they are a good team. "It is a lot of good teams in our league."

The team will work on throwing and catching under pressure, Rowe said.

"We don't see many zone defenses," Siedlecki said. "Adelphi has been running the same zone for years."

Siedlecki said they ran one of their best plays to beat zone defense, but the team did not run the play properly until the final 10 seconds of the game.

The Owls suffered their first loss since playing Pace University on March 21. They play three of the next four games on the road against some of their NE10 rivals.



Midfielder Liney White, a senior looks to get the ball during the game.

PHOTO | SCSUOWLS.COM

Lacrosse team loses 15-11 versus SNHU

By Matt Cain
Contributor

The Owls lost an intense and competitive game to NE10 matchup rival Southern New Hampshire, SNHU 15-11.

The Owls season so far has been a work in progress, this game put them at 7-5 for the year and 3-5 in conference play. Even though the Owls suffered another loss, they played a great game.

Midfielder Brianna Shaw, a junior scored two goals in the game. She would be accompanied by, attack Bayleigh Takacs, a graduate student and attack Karlie Rowe, a graduate student.

Takacs along with her three goals, also had two assists. She assisted Rowe on two of her game-high five goals. With the game not going in the direction the Owls wanted, they had to stick to the game plan and keep competing.

Both teams would rack up on penalties in the first half. This, however, is something that the Owls couldn't control in the first half.

SNHU would lead the first quarter playing physically and scoring four unanswered goals. The Owls fought back in the second scoring on back-to-back attempts.

The end result wasn't what they wanted but, there are a lot of positives that came out of the game.



Attack Savannah Feinberg, a junior carries the ball against SNHU player.

PHOTO | LUKE MOLWITZ

"We have to adjust on the fly, when something doesn't go our way, especially when it's uncontrollable," Rowe said.

With the game being dictated in a different way than planned, the owls adjusted on the fly as said, they would come out of the half narrowing the lead down to just two goals. Rowe played a big factor in the comeback.

She was one of the key scorers in the second half. SNHU is a top-25 team in the conference, they are usually known for their defensive ability and ways to cause turnovers.

The Owls would get a turnover in every quarter of the game. Takacs, would get face guarded, even though she had a great game.

With her being face guarded, that would eventually be a turnover. Takacs being face

guarded, made it harder for her to score. So, she then impacted the game in a different way. She racked up two assists in the third quarter.

"I stayed composed, we immediately change our offensive scheme, and that caused me to set more pics and get my teammates involved," Takacs said.

The game was close, and the Owls fought hard, the head Coach Kevin Siedlecki was nothing less than proud. Going into the game, the Owls had a good chance of winning.

For more of this story, visit our website at thesouthernnews.org

Column: On the NBA

By Jaylen Carr
Sports Editor



The NBA postseason starts this week with much anticipation from the players, coaches and fans. The play-in tournament begins this week; the playoffs start on Saturday, April 15.

I'm intrigued by the exciting matchups we may see in the first round of the playoffs. The surprising team in the NBA this season has been the Sacramento Kings, and they have won their first Pacific Division title since 2003 and clinched a playoff berth for the first time since 2006.

The Kings are led by the point guard, De'Aaron Fox, and center Domantas Sabonis. According to ESPN, Sabonis has been the most underrated all season, averaging 19.2 points per game, 12.4 rebounds per game, and 7.3 assists per game. For Sabonis, a center to average over five assists a game is unheard of, but he is the most skilled big man in the NBA, excluding Nikola Jokic from the Denver Nuggets.

The culture changed in Sacramento, when they hired Mike Brown as their head coach in May 2022. Brown has coached great players like LeBron James as the head coach of the Cleveland Cavaliers and Stephen Curry as an assistant coach of the Golden State Warriors.

Brown coached the worst team ever to make the NBA Finals, the 2007 Cavaliers. Of course, having LeBron James helps, but coaching matters, especially in the playoffs. Brown should win the NBA Coach of the Year Award this year because he has helped a team of young players play like savvy veterans.

According to Greta Serrin of the KCRA News (television news station in Sacramento), "Mike has consistently demonstrated his ability to lead winning teams throughout his long and successful coaching career," Sacramento Kings General Manager Monte McNair said.

The Kings, in my opinion, probably won't make it to the NBA Finals, but they probably make it past the first round, which is a significant accomplishment for a team that hasn't been relevant since 2006.

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The Kings, in my opinion, probably won't make it to the NBA Finals, but they probably make it past the first round, which is a significant accomplishment for a team that hasn't been relevant since 2006.

For more of this column, visit our website at thesouthernnews.org



Attack Bayleigh Takacs, a graduate student looks for an open team.

PHOTO | LUKE MOLWITZ