

Track named for legendary coach



UP photo by Aaron Saenz

Legendary Lamar University track coach visited campus, Feb. 26. The track at the Ty Terrell Complex has been named in his honor.

Aaron Saenz
UP staff writer

Lamar University's athletic track has officially been named the Sonny Jolly Track at the Ty Terrell Track Complex.

Jolly is the legendary coach who led the Cardinals to nine straight Southland Conference outdoor track and field championships, resulting in nine conference Coach of the Year awards. He led LU to a total of 22 conference championships across cross country, indoor and outdoor track.

He coached 40 All-Americans and one NCAA national champion, as well as sending athletes to the 1984 Olympic Games. Jolly is also in the Cardinal Hall of Honor.

Jolly attended Beaumont's South

Park High School and competed for Lamar Tech, as the university was then called.

Even now, Jolly occasionally visits the track to see the team who are coached by Trey Clark, who competed under Jolly.

Jolly said when he sees his name on the track, he doesn't reminisce about moments, but instead thinks of the people that created those moments.

"It makes me think of all the great athletes that ran for me," he said. "They're the reason that my name is up there. I couldn't have enjoyed any more — it was the greatest thing."

When he wasn't coaching, Jolly was teaching. He said this love for

See **JOLLY**, page 2

Students urged to take stand against hazing

Maria Rodriguez
UP contributor

Lamar University is following federal law and implementing the new Stop Campus Hazing Act. The law was passed in December 2024 and aims to prevent hazing on college campuses.

A campus release states the goal is to educate students about the dangers of hazing.

Dean of Students Elizabeth De La Rosa describes hazing as someone being forced or pressured to do something they may not want to do.

"It's under the guise or the idea that, 'Oh, you do it to be one of the team or you do it to be one of the group, or to fit in,'" De La Rosa said.

There are different levels and severities of hazing.

"Some things are more severe than others and could cause physical or bodily harm," De La Rosa said. "The idea is the act of making someone do something that they're not willing to do."

The severity of the situation plays a factor in determining penalties, De La Rosa said. Penalties can range from warning to expulsion.

"When a hazing incident is reported, we do a full thorough investigation," De La Rosa said. "You have to identify the people involved, the knowledge, who had knowledge of it and those types of things."

If a student suspects there is a hazing incident that needs to be reported, there are several different ways to file a report, De La Rosa said.

"There is an incident report form on the website that

See **HAZING**, page 2

Museum SOARs



Text and photos by Maddie Sims, UP editor



MWH hosts butterfly festival on grounds

The McFaddin-Ward House held its third annual SOAR Celebration, March 2, on the museum's grounds. Activities included butterfly-themed bike rides, costumes, arts-and-crafts activities, live music performances by "Fire & Rain" and "Crossroads Band," food trucks, a local artist Butterfly Garden display, and a demonstration from the Houston Museum of Natural Science Bug Cart. Bug Cart demonstrator Melissa Hudnall said there was a good turnout. "I love a good, busy day like this," she said. "(The kids) start scared and then they learn a little bit, and have an appreciation for the bug, whether or not they end up touching it." For more on events at The McFaddin-Ward House, visit mcfaddin-ward.org.

CoFaC fundraiser set for March 22

Rayna Christy
UP contributor

The College of Fine Arts and Communication and the Friends of the Arts will host its 49th annual Le Grand Bal, March 22, from 6:30 p.m. to midnight in the Setzer Student Center. This year's theme is "We Are Family".

"We've got some wonderful honorees, Rob Clark and Jerry Thacker," Golden Wright, dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication, said. "They're amazing individuals that continuously give back to Lamar University, especially the art department. Michael Kennaugh is a Lamar graduate. He's our artist honoree. I think

those honorees couldn't be more deserved."

Alongside spotlighting honorees, live music and student performances, guests can participate in a silent art auction held in the Setzer Center for the first time.

"Patrons will be able to look and bid on artwork from students and community members," Emily Lewis-Zazzaro, administrative coordinator for the department of art and design, said.

Artwork is donated by students and local artists.

Wright said students are involved from start to finish, whether it is with the auction, performances, or helping behind the scenes.



"They help with setup," he said. "They perform at the event. They're promoting their own artwork. They tear down at the end there, they'll help set up the auction and when people purchase the auction items, they help with taking those paintings,

See **COFAC**, page 4

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“Spring is nature’s way of saying, ‘Let’s party.’”

— Robin Williams

NOTICE

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HAZING from page 1

report or concern report. You can go through our student Code of Conduct website and do it there. If you’re not sure how to find that, you could come directly to our office, here at the (Setzer Student Center) and talk to us.”

While students may fear that reporting their friends for hazing will destroy the friendship, it is important that any concern is reported, De La Rosa said. Reports are kept confidential as much as possible.

sible.

“It’s more important to us to make sure that we’re keeping people safe,” De La Rosa said. “That’s the conversation I like to have with students. Your friends might be mad at you for turning them in, but they’re going to be glad you did if you saved their life, right? That’s really extreme — sometimes we have to think like that.”

Hazing victims do not have to deal with the situation alone, De La Rosa said.

“We do have a variety of resources available, depending on the situation and what came

to be,” she said. “We have our health center; we have our counseling center — we have those resources. We have support systems in place, with academic coaching if it affects their schooling and their classwork.”

The Stop Campus Hazing Act is new, and students may not be aware of its existence. De La Rosa said Lamar has come up with ways to educate students regarding the act.

“You probably saw that we had sent out a campus announcement with the Stop Hazing Act,” De La Rosa said.

“We also have to provide training throughout the year.”

Additionally, all student organizations are required to go through training during the fall semester where they are informed about the risks of hazing, De La Rosa said.

Every student should understand that hazing is dangerous to prevent serious situations, De La Rosa said, adding she would rather have a false report and investigate it than have an issue that results in a student suffering.

The effort to reach students on campus will continue, De La

Rosa said. Social media and LU Hub will be utilized to share information and events that focus on hazing.

“Whenever we have things happening on campus, we probably will do some tabling events and whatnot to educate our students on the expectations, and how to exist on a campus that’s safe and inviting for everyone,” she said. “So that we can hold ourselves and each other accountable.”

For more information, visit lamar.edu/students/student-affairs/conduct-and-care-services/policies/hazing.

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JOLLY from page 1

“I believe in athletics and education,” he said. “I taught. And when I had a chance to get out of teaching, I didn’t. I wanted to teach and coach at the same time.”

Jolly said he also pushed that belief onto his athletes. He wanted excellence on the track and in the classroom.

“A lot of my athletes did very well for me,” he said. “We’ve got an orthopedic surgeon, a dentist, lawyers and superintendents. I’m proud of them because I believe in the

student-athlete.”

Jolly said his athletes are what helped Lamar become a track and field powerhouse.

“I was lucky enough to have those athletes and win a bunch of championships,” he said. “I couldn’t have done it without all the boys and girls that ran.”

The athletic complex is named for Ty Terrell, LU’s head track coach from 1956 to ‘68. Terrell led the Cardinals to a Lone Star Conference championship in 1963.

Unfortunately, Terrell’s

coaching career had a tragic end. On April 28, 1968, a plane carrying Terrell and five LU athletes crashed a mile from the Beaumont Municipal Airport’s runway, killing everyone on board.

Jolly said that the most surreal part of having the track named for him is to be able to see his name next to his coach, Ty Terrell, knowing it’ll be like that forever.

“I have to pinch myself every now and then,” he said. “I must be dreaming.”

SCRABBLES by Dalia Osman

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Ambassador 'Shares the Love'

Caraline Otte
UP staff writer

Jayleeann Roth does it all — she's a member of LU's Dance Team and a full-time dance department student. To top it off, she's a content creator and saleswoman.

But Roth just sees it all as what she needs to accomplish her goals.

"I worked so hard while I was in high school to gain opportunities like this," she said.

The Pearland junior is a campus ambassador and sales associate for LoveHandle, a multimillion-dollar phone-grip accessory company based out of Houston.

"LoveHandle's slogan is 'Share the Love,'" she said. "And that's my biggest aim in working with this company — to share the love."

The LoveHandle triples as an adhesive phone grip, a kickstand and a mount that sticks to anything magnetic which sets it apart from other products.

"The bottom also pulls out to become a kickstand both ways," Roth said. "If you're watching TV, Tik Tok or scrolling through Instagram or Facebook, you can prop your phone up."

The ambassador position and sales associate job are two different jobs, Roth said.

"With the ambassador program, I'm not actually paid, but I'm getting free product," she said. "With the sales associate side, we go to the World Trade Center in Dallas and then we also go to the AmericasMart Atlanta Market."

The LoveHandle ambassador program is application-based and chooses college students to

promote the product on social media.

"Each month I'll get a box in the mail with product to hand out to friends, family, my team and people within the department," Roth said. "Outreach is the most important thing. I'm giving people free samples so they can see the product, and then once they have one, their friend sees it, and they say, 'Oh my gosh, I need that.' And the cycle continues from there."

Roth posts her content mainly through Instagram stories, Tik Tok and Facebook.

"Everything is really natural with the ambassador program," she said. "So, anytime I'm doing something with the product, I'll just snap a photo and upload it."

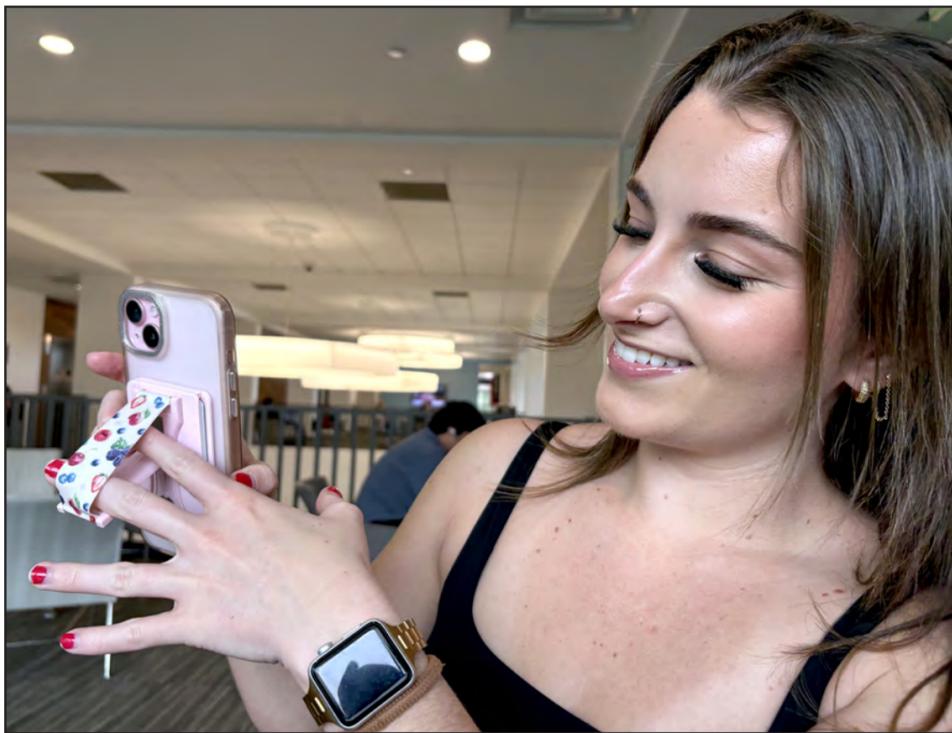
Roth said she keeps up with her content posts, work trips and school schedule by adopting organizational habits.

"It is quite a lot to juggle at once but continuing to stay positive and diligent while working through all of these things is very important," she said. "I own a written planner, and I also have an online calendar just to keep everything in line."

Roth is contract-based with LoveHandle. This means she works specifically on sales trips during school breaks rather than every day in an office.

"For the trips, we are on our feet all day from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.," she said. "We have a huge booth there that we set up with all the new products and walls filled with LoveHandles. We try to get people's attention, show them the product and we'll put a free sample on their phone."

LoveHandle is only available in small stores or online, Roth



UP photo by Caraline Otte

Jayleeann Roth, a member of LU's dance team, is also a brand ambassador for LoveHandles, a phone accessory company, which offers opportunities for travel.

said.

"We're not in any big box stores, and that's why we do these trade shows," she said. "Say Lovehandle put the product in Target, then we would no longer have the mom-and-pop shops, boutiques and hospital gift shops buying from us. No one is going to want to buy the product, because what's that advantage? Someone could easily say, 'Oh, I can just go to Walmart and buy that right?' That's what's really neat about LoveHandle."

Keeping the product exclusive keeps its appeal, Roth said. "If the LoveHandle were

available so easily at any store, it would become tired, like other phone accessories that have phased out with the trends," she said. "The exclusivity of the LoveHandle is what makes it so desirable."

Roth said she discovered LoveHandle in high school through a friend.

"Back in 2021, I had met someone through the dance world and she had introduced me to her friend, who happened to be the LoveHandle CEO's daughter," Roth said. "She noticed the back of my phone and saw a phone accessory that wasn't a LoveHandle. Right then

and there, she popped off my old phone accessory and put a LoveHandle on the back of my phone case."

Roth said she wants to continue in pursuit of her goals.

"Continuing to work with LoveHandle has been a really big thought for after college, just to get back on my feet after I graduate," she said. "But overall, it's really just a privilege getting to do all of this. Not many people have these opportunities."

LoveHandles are available at lovehandle.com. Roth is offering a 10% discount with the code JAY10.



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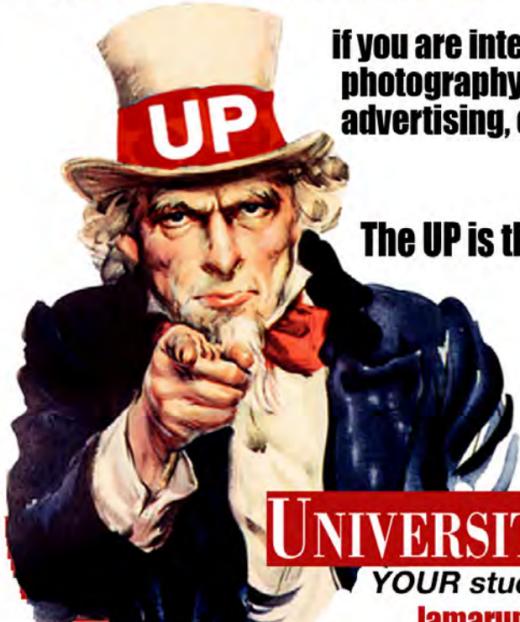



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Beaumont native shares film experiences

Maddie Sims
UP editor

Beaumont native and film director Kate Cokinos talked with Lamar University students, Feb. 25, in the Communication Building.

Growing up, Cokinos said she spent a lot of time at local theaters such as the Gaylynn, Gateway Cinema, Liberty Theater and Jefferson Theater.

“I just loved movies,” Cokinos said. “My dad had a Super 8 camera and he loved to film home movies. So, I grew up with a camera, you know, with my dad with a camera and showing movies that he would film of the family.”

Cokinos attended Texas A&M University in 1986 where she created the art film society. She then moved to Houston and started working with the Southwest Alternate Media Project, a nonprofit media arts organization which compiles documentaries and feature films.

“That’s where I got my first overall idea of movies, what movies can be,” she said. “It’s not all Hollywood films. To see these personal films done all in one location, you know, a community of people getting together, making a film, a

great story.”

After meeting Texas film director Richard Linklater, Cokinos moved to Austin to help with his production, “Slacker,” and took over the Austin Film Society from 1990 to 1995. The society showed films and worked on locations. Cokinos worked on “Return of the Texas Chainsaw Massacre” and was the assistant location manager on “What’s Eating Gilbert Grape.”

“I did a bunch of short films, and then I did my first feature, ‘Portrait of a Girl as a Young Cat,’ she said. “I filmed it in Austin and Beaumont in 1997 and it came out in 2000. Then I got married and moved to Brooklyn, started a family, and just started writing scripts.

“I wrote and directed a film called ‘I Dream Too Much’ that we filmed in Saugerties, where I lived in 2014.”

Cokinos plans to shoot her next movie, “The Do-Right,” adapted from the book by Lisa Sandli, in Southeast Texas.

“It’s kind of a crime mystery nove set in 1973 in Beaumont,” she said. “That’s why I’m back down (here) doing location scouting, meeting with people who could poten-

tially work on crew and do casting here. So, super excited.”

As a film director, Cokinos said she has to be as prepared as possible before walking out onto a film set.

“You can allow for things to happen without being stressed out about it,” she said. “I love rehearsing with actors.

“They have the script, but I like for them to take over the character and work with them on how to make it their own.”

Cokinos’s husband is her director of photography and also her editor which leads to the couple being efficient when they are filming.

“We move pretty fast because he knows what he needs, what he’s going to need, what footage he needs in the editing room, so that really cuts down on a lot of production time,” she said.

Cokinos writes her own scripts and directing them means she has flexibility when she works with her actors.

“I just love when you’re taking the script and fusing it in through the actors on location,” she said. “I just find it to be this incredible challenge that I just love. It’s invigorating.



UP photo by Maddie Sims

Filmmaker Kate Cokinos visited the Lamar campus to talk with students about her craft, Feb. 25.

“I’m just really excited to be back in Beaumont, and I’m just excited to film here.”

Cokinos plans to start filming “The Do-Right” in spring 2026.

COFAC from page 1

drawings and sculptures when the patrons come back to pay for them.”

Lewis-Zazzaro said students are able to network with members of the community and gain experience selling artwork by participating in the event.

“I think there’s a number of reasons to have the students involved,” Wright said. “The students benefit, but I think that the patrons and donors also really appreciate being able to see those talented individuals that we’re investing time, money and ef-

fort into.”

This event is the college’s biggest fundraiser, and has provided students with scholarships, helped send students to conferences and paid for guest artists, among other uses through the years, Wright said.

“Each of the departments get a certain amount of money,” Wright said. “They get to decide how they want to use that money in order to help their students. Certain funds (in higher education) you can only use in certain ways. These funds, we can use

any way that we want in order for student success.”

Wright said that there are still tables and chairs available for purchase.

For tickets and more, visit lamar.edu/fine-arts-communication/fine-arts-communication/le-grand-bal.



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UP photo by Aaron Saenz

Festival draws crowds

Mardi Gras of Southeast Texas hosted its annual celebration at Doggett Ford Park, Feb. 28-March 2. The event featured a plaza area and food court featuring festival themed Mardi Gras food such as king cakes, funnel cakes, gumbo and boudin balls.

The plaza included inflatable castles, face

painting and balloon twisting. Multiple live bands performed and there was also an arts crafts novelties section around the venue.

Of course, no Mardi Gras festival would be complete without parades throughout the weekend, where people could catch beads thrown from a variety of colorful floats.



UP photo by Carlos Vilorio



UP photo by Carlos Vilorio



UP photo by Carlos Vilorio



UP photo by Aaron Saenz

Venue hosts monthly book swap, social

Savanna Peveto-Kreatschman
UP contributor

Looking for new books to read and a way to get rid of your old ones, all while drinking custom teas with like-minded souls?

Beaumont's Down to Earth and Gemini Moon hosts a monthly book swap where patrons can eat cookies, drink tea and browse for new reads.

The building is shared by Down to Earth, an apothecary filled with holistic and handmade items, owned by Vanlam Nguyen, and Gemini Moon, a metaphysical shop managed by medium and

clairtangent, Kat Rowles, and intuitive tarot specialist, Rachel "Rae" Hellums.

Hellums, who is also Down to Earth marketing director, said the idea behind the book swap came from Nguyen.

"She is a huge book nerd, and when I came to her about doing a book event, she came up with the idea of doing a book swap where we basically recycle books," Hellums said. "And because Down to Earth is all about going green, we wanted to have the same idea for giving books a forever home, or at least, you know, recycling without hurting per se."

The book swap is a great



UP photo by Savanna Peveto-Kreatschman

Participants mingle during the February book swap on Calder Avenue.

way to repurpose old books and find one's next read, but it is also a way to connect with

other people. There is no cost to the event.

"I really enjoyed it," Leigh,

a book swap regular, said. "The atmosphere was nice, and it was fun to talk to fellow book lovers. I hope it continues happening and grows bigger as more people find out about it."

The venue also hosts a weekly "Spill the Tea Tuesday" event where patrons can try different flavors of the teas mixed at Down to Earth while socializing.

The next book swap is scheduled for March 8.

Down to Earth and Gemini Moon is located at 1455 Calder Ave. For more, visit Down to Earth Beaumont or Gemini Moon on Facebook and Instagram.



UP photo by Waylon C. Brooks

Standup comedian Mickey Housley performed, Feb. 18, in the Setzer Student Center.

CAB, Housley bring stand-up comedy to campus, Feb. 18

Waylon C. Brooks,
UP contributor

The Cardinal Activities Board hosted standup comedian Mickey Housley, Feb. 18, on the second floor of the Setzer Student Center. CAB supplied pancakes for the attendees.

The night started with Sandrell Ross, Housley's wife, reciting some of her inspirational poetry. Ross then gave a short standup routine of her own before introducing her husband.

Housley's set began with jokes about the Super Bowl, but his main focus was on crowd work, responding to comments from the audience.

"As you can see, I like to interact with the audience," Hous-

ley said after the show. "I thought the audience was really receptive and very open."

Housley has been performing since 2009.

"I ended up seeing a show at a karaoke bar where one of the guys did stand up and he got like two laughs, but it was enough for me to be, like, I think I want to try that," Housley said.

Housley has performed in 45 states and at notable venues such as The Chicago Theatre and the Apollo Theatre in New York. He has also done shows in Canada, but said he would like to perform in other countries.

"I speak Spanish a bit, so all of the Latin speaking countries, I would love to go there," Hous-

ley said.

Throughout the show, Housley gathered the names of the attendees, and with Ross in the background beatboxing, he ended the performance with a rap that included the names of the audience.

"We were just at the shows, and we figured, with all the interaction that we do and getting audience names, we'll do a rap at the end," Housley said. "I can't even pinpoint the first time I did it, but it's something we just started doing, and it's been a big hit at the end of our shows."

Housley's book, "Chronicles of a Stand-up Guy: a Peek into the Daily Grind of a Comedian," is available for purchase on Amazon.

THE DISHMAN ART MUSEUM PRESENTS EVITA TEZENO

© Evita Tezeno, "Under the Lavender Sky," 2022
Collection of the Artist

© Evita Tezeno, "True Sistahs," 2024
Courtesy of the artist and Luis De Jesus Los Angeles



PIECE OF MY HEART

Evita Tezeno is a native of Port Arthur who graduated from Lamar University in 1984 with a BS degree in Graphic Design. She uses hand-painted papers and found objects to create folk art style collages inspired by her South Texas roots, family, and personal experiences.

JANUARY 18 - MARCH 8, 2025

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LU forward Akasha Davis battles for the rebound against four McNeese State defenders, March 1, at the Neches Federal Credit Union Arena at the Montagne Center.

UP photos by Brian Quijada

Davis tops LU's all-time rebound list

Brian Quijada
UP sports editor

Lamar forward Akasha Davis became Lamar's all-time leading rebounder on Senior Day as she and four other seniors, T'Aaliyah Miner, Taliah Hill, Cameron Dill, and Justice Ross, led the Lady Cardinals to a 69-60 win over rival McNeese State, March 1, at the Neches Federal Credit Union Arena at the Montagne Center.

The Lady Cardinals got off to a good start in the first quarter after the Cowgirls scored the first three points. LU guard Jacei Denely ended the quarter with six points as LU finished ahead, 18-14.

The Cowgirls offense came out strong after the break, tying the game at 22 in the first five minutes of the second quarter. The Lady Cards responded with six unanswered points

to finish the half up 32-26.

LU came into the second half hot, going on a 7-3 run in the first three minutes of the third quarter to build a 50-42 lead going into the final stanza.

The Lady Cards sealed the win in the fourth quarter, leading by as many as 11 points, not allowing the Cowgirls to get any closer than six points the rest of the game.

"At the end of the day we found a way to win," LU head coach Aqua Franklin said. "That's the most important side of the 'W.'

"McNeese did a great job of exploiting us on the one-on-one matchups. We gotta do a better job of keeping people in front of us. But overall, (I'm) just really happy for our team to finish out such a great year at home and protect our home court. We only had one loss in conference play here, but really proud of our team for finding a way."



Seniors Cameron Dill, left, Justice Ross, T'Aaliyah Miner, Taliah Hill, and Akasha Davis are celebrated before the game, March 1, at the Neches Federal Credit Union Arena at the Montagne Center.

Senior Davis finished the game with a game-high 17 points and 11 rebounds for her 12th double-double of the season.

"It's been a privilege and honor to coach her," Franklin said. "What an awesome kid, what a great human she is. I think that we got a special kid

who will always be a Cardinal, and I think one day we'll see her name up in the rafters, because of how special she was for us for four years. I'm just really proud of her. Obviously, I'm happy that we have more basketball to play with her."

Joining Davis in double-digit scoring were Jacei Denley with 16, Sabria Dean with 14, and T'Aaliyah Miner who also scored a double-double with 13 points and 10 rebounds.

With the win, Lamar clinched the second seed in the upcoming Southland Conference tournament. LU are now 21-7 overall, and 16-3 in SLC play.

The Lady Cardinals conclude the regular season against Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, March 5, before heading to the Southland Conference tournament, beginning March 12 in Lake Charles, La.

Racing in the land of OZ: F1 revs up

Maria Rodriguez
UP contributor

After 98 days, the pinnacle of motorsport is set to return as Formula 1 opens the 2025 season in Melbourne, Australia on March 16.

In yet another hectic 24-race season, we are greeted with changes in the line-ups as six drivers are rookies on the grid. Along with drivers switching teams, 2025 is set to be an exciting season.

Lewis Hamilton was the biggest shock for the 2025 season before the 2024 season even started. On Feb. 1, 2024, it was announced that he would be leaving Mercedes after 11 years despite a contract renewal. Hamilton decided to make his childhood dream of driving for the prancing horse of Ferrari come true.

The news sent shockwaves across the world, most importantly to Carlos Sainz who discovered he was racing his last season in red. From red to blue, Sainz joined with Atlasian Williams Racing. The hopes are high for Williams with the addition of Sainz after turbulent seasons.

The six rookies will aim to prove themselves this season. Mercedes filled Hamilton's

empty seat with the young promise of Kimi Antonelli.

The American team, Haas, signed the sought-out Oliver Bearman. Bearman is notable for filling in for Ferrari and Haas last season in races. Gabriel Bortoleto is living his dreams and carrying the pride of his home country Brazil. After emerging as the champion in his rookie season in Formula 2, Bortoleto is set to race with Kick Sauber this season.

Melbourne will be a homecoming for Australian driver Jack Doohan, who will compete in his first full season with Alpine, although there is much speculation about how long he will be with the team. Alpine signed Franco Colapinto as a reserve driver and continuous rumors surround Doohan being replaced by the Argentine.

Red Bull Racing announced during the offseason that Sergio Perez would depart the team despite a contract through the 2026 season. Red Bull was quick to sign Liam Lawson. This choice was met with backlash as veteran driver Yuki Tsunoda, who may have expected to move up to partner team leader and world champion Max Verstappen, will race another season with



UP graphic by Maria Rodriguez

Red Bull's junior team Racing Bulls.

Lawson previously raced with Racing Bulls as he replaced Daniel Ricciardo midway through last season. His move allowed for another rookie on the grid, as Isack Hadjar is the newest Racing Bull driver, adding to the complicated Red Bull dynamic.

In the past, championships have often been decided by just a few points. This season's

battle may come down to the wire as F1 gears up for changes in point distributions. This season will be the first since 2019 in which a point is not awarded to the driver who finishes with the fastest lap in a race.

Tensions are high as the battle for the championship starts. Will Verstappen win his fifth consecutive championship? Will McLaren's Lando Norris pose a challenge again

for Verstappen? Or will Lewis Hamilton win his sought-out eighth championship?

F1 has a long season ahead as the final race is not until Dec. 7. Let's hope the race for the title comes down to the last day — or lap.

F1 streams on F1TV and ESPN throughout the season. The opening race in Melbourne will air live at 11 p.m. CST, March 15 allowing for the time difference.

Grudge match boils over

Lamar fall to McNeese in intense Battle of the Border contest

Brian Quijada
UP sports editor

Tempers flared throughout the second half of the Battle of the Border matchup against McNeese State, March 1. Things got even more heated once the whistle blew on the Cardinals' two-point loss when McNeese's Quadir Copeland went to the half-court to step on the LU logo. But the Cardinals defended their nest, gathering around and forcing Copeland back.

Once everything seemed to have settled, Copeland made a finger gun gesture, shooting at the LU logo which infuriated the LU players. McNeese head coach Will Wade had to restrain Copeland, and LUPD stepped in to stop the situation escalating.

"What we're not going to do is allow anybody to come in our building and disrespect our LU," Cardinal head coach Alvin Brooks said after the 66-68 loss. "I told them that from the very beginning, I don't care who it is, nobody comes in our building and does that. I told them that before the game. So, what you saw was at first they were talking to us on the bench. And then you saw one of the (McNeese) guys go and try to just step on our LU. That's kind of when the issue started."

"So, I fully support my guys and their efforts to support and respect our university. But that helps our guys understand we're capable of beating this team."

As if the traditional rivalry was not enough, the game started with the teams in the top two spots in the Southland Conference.

The Cardinals got off to a hot start, going on an 8-2 run in the first six minutes of the game against the Cowboys who has already wrapped up the regular-season title. LU led early until the



UP photo by Brian Quijada

The Cardinals get chippy with the Cowboys after a foul on LU guard Ja'Sean Jackson, March 1, at the Neches Federal Credit Union Arena.

eighteenth minute when the Cowboys tied the game at 18.

That didn't stop the Cardinals, as LU guard Alexis Marmolejos scored two three-pointers to take the lead back to 26-22. The Cards kept fighting and ended the first half leading 35-31.

"I thought we played hard and competitive in the first half," Brooks said. "I thought the first 10-12 minutes of the second half, we kind of put ourselves in a hole. We couldn't make a shot and defensively we came a little lax, and that's when McNeese made a run, and they got up 11 or so on us."

LU scored the first three points of the half, but the Cow-

boys went on a 13-0 run to take a six-point lead. McNeese's lead grew to 11 and the Cards could not get closer than eight until Marmolejos' scored a three pointer with four minutes to play to give the momentum back to the Cardinals.

As tensions grew and both teams chirped bad temperedly at each other, the Cards kept scratching and clawing at the Cowboys defense, scoring the next seven points to tie the game at 59 on an Adam Hamilton dunk. Lamar kept it a one possession game until two McNeese free throws at the final seconds of the game gave them a five-point lead. Marmolejos' buzzer-beating

three from half court was mere consolation.

"Once we started playing with a little bit more pace on the offensive end in the second half, the ball started going in the basket, then we picked it back up," Brooks said. "And the little skirmish that ensued late in the second half, I'd say motivated my guys to kind of play a little bit harder and protect home court. And so we came all the way back, tied it up, and had a chance to win it."

Lamar ended the night shooting 22-of-61 from the field with nine three-pointers. LU also shot 13-of-15 attempts at the free throw line. The Cardinals led the

game in second chance points with 16 but turned the ball over 11 times.

LU guard Ja'Sean Jackson finished the game with 19 points and five assists. Joining him in double figures were Marmolejos with 18 and Hamilton with 12 and eight rebounds.

As of press time, Lamar were 18-12 overall and 13-6 in SLC play in second place in the conference standings, with only their final game against Nicholls State, March 3, to play.

The Southland Conference tournament begins March 10 in Lake Charles, La. LU's seed will be determined after the final regular season game.

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