Voodoo doll curses newsmroom workers

My job relies solely on the powers of a little red doll. Most people who have worked with me can attest to the fact that I am fairly calm; in a stress-ful environment, I can normally keep my cool. This extremely useful characteristic isn’t something I was born with, though, and it’s not something I learned on the job.

I keep my cool because of Gaston, my small, red voodoo doll. Given to me as a gift from a fellow slave-laborer, the 10-inch cotton doll has become my co-computer in the workplace. It’s smooth, bright red and it’s not even something I would get very excited about. Occasionally, a reporter would poke the “lose mind” part of the doll, and he would promptly stab “alcoholism.” I figured this was a fairly smart move on my part, if this problem-ridden reporter was always being over, she’d eventually be forced to drop the Mustang Daily class and we’d never have to deal with her again.

Then came the fatal mistake. I had forgotten to light many m y v o d d o candles, so the room was particularly blinding. In my confusion, I accidentally stuck the face of the perfectly nice news editor, Karin, on Gaston instead of the face of another annoying reporter. And I happened to poke the “lose mind” phrase.

All hell broke loose. The next day began as most hellish days do. We actually had stories coming in for all of our sections, including news. It didn’t catch my attention that one of our important news stories was being written by Inga. In fact, this crucial bit of information slipped my mind until an hour before deadline when Karin was frantically calling me. I was able to figure out why her story hadn’t been written by me.

She tried calling once – no answer. Twice – no answer. Three more times – no answer until finally on the seventh try, Inga answered her phone. To say she was drunk

Reality TV fanatic tells all

Josh Sousa had become my obsession. It was all about the scoop – I had to get to the end of the 24-year-old by 11 a.m. before the show was over. It was all about the key word.

Polly civil engineering senior first or it would all be over.

There was just something about the way he stole America’s hearts with his orange top and smiley face boxes. Or maybe it was his ear-to-ear smile and the fact that he often went shirtless on national television that did it for me. At any rate, I joined the plethora of Josh fans who tuned in each night to CBS’ “Big Brother” to watch “one of our own” swing around the giant fishbowl of reality television, all for the sake of $500,000.

Although I agreed Josh possessed boyish good looks and charm, getting to know him wasn’t about slapping him my phone number or playing footsie under the table. I was determined I could win him over with my reporter handshake and hard-hitting questions. The only problem was that nobody could get that to him while he lived in the “Big Brother” compound. I knew this mission would require perseverance, and only my harsh determination would get me through to Josh.

It was down to the wire while the last episode of “Big Brother” approached, and I still hadn’t figured out how I could possibly get a quote from Josh. Sure, I had talked to his sister, his best friend from high school, his roommate, his professors, his former manager at Taco Bell, but no sound bite from Josh to make my “Big Brother” coverage shine.

I have a drinking problem. But, I’m usually pretty capable of handling it. I just try not to drink when I have anything important to do the next day. However, there was one time (OK, actually more than one time, but one time that especially) was particularly important to me when my drinking problem interfered with my job.

It was fall quarter, right around homecoming. I was the one reporter who needed to write the one news story for that issue. Not that hard, right? I was a pretty skilled writer. This, it wasn’t that hard of a story to write: a basic preview of Homecoming weekend. I’d done all my interviews – all I had to do was write the story. So, that Wednesday night, I went out. I went out and had some fun. The usual stops were at Madison’s for 2 for 1 and Mother’s Tavern for disco night. Besides, I was even meeting up with my editor. She could do it, then so could I.

The night goes well. I’m dancing up a storm and maintaining my fun level with the occasional shot of drink. But I’m also drinking lots of water because I need to. It’s something in the way my stomach digests alcohol, but I haven’t quite figured it out. But I guess I didn’t drink enough water that night.

The next day begins. I wake up and I’m feeling slightly worse than just OK. I wasn’t hungry for breakfast and I couldn’t shake that grumpy feeling. I go to class and I begin to feel worse. But nothing yet – yet being the key word.

I head on over to the newswroom to write my story. As I relay my night to my other editor, I make an announcement, “I’m so hung over.” Those words triggered something in my stomach because not only was I 15 minutes late, I politely excused myself to make a trip to the bathroom. I had to run. Fast.

Unfortunately, I couldn’t go home. I had a story to write. My editors needed me. I had to pull it together and crank out something that could be published.

So I make it back to the newswroom, and after taking a series of deep breaths, I focus on the task at hand. “Write, Trudy, write,” I tell myself. After a quick pep talk and lots of water, I manage to get my lead out. OK, one sentence down, only about 100 more to go.
Searching for the elusive mayor

It may surprise many people to know that Mustang Daily is actually a real life class. We meet weekly in a classroom like everyone else, and are graded on a traditional three-hour lab. However, since we are in the Geschke Center, our lab is held every other week, and the luxury of spending time per- form ing traditional lab work is replaced by activities such as analyzing soil samples or calculating the physics of exploding cylindrical objects. We are required to read and write an entire well-written, well-reported article in three hours. Predictably, this lab period has been known over the years to push people to the very edge of their sanity. This was definitely one of those times.

It was almost 100 degrees that day. It wasn't just hot; it was sweltering by the time my lab period began. My assignment was to report on an ordi­ nance that was to be discussed at the next City Council Monday night. It sounded simple enough, even though I knew that in order to build the story, I would require comments from an assortment of high-ranking government officials including, but not limited to the mayor, the mayor's wife, the mayor's secretary, the mayor's dog, the police chief, the postmaster general, the postmaster general's under's, best friend's cousin, Los Capi, George W. Bush and anyone else with ear. I did make an effort to keep claims to be knowable on the subject of ordinances. Armed with a phone book and a desk fan, I began my work.

Me: "Hello, this is Kat DeBakker with Mustang Daily and I would like to ask you a few questions on the ordi­ nance to be discussed at tomorrow's City Council meeting."

Government Official #1 (indignantly): "Tell me what this is about first, will you? I will be in a meeting in the next six days."

Me: "Hello, this is Kat DeBakker with Mustang Daily; and I would like to ask you a few questions on the ordi­ nance to be discussed at tomorrow's City Council meeting."

Government Official #2: "No comment. Why don't you call Government Official #3?"

Me: "Hello, this is Kat DeBakker with Mustang Daily..."

Government Official #3, Vice-secretary: "Can you call him back in two years?"

Two hours later, I realized that not only were there no numbers left in the phone book to call, but the time I had left to actually write the story was dis- appearing at an alarming rate. One woman told me that the mayor, who teaches a class on campus, would be arriving shortly and I may be able to catch him before his next class, which meant there were three minutes.

Bolting out the door, I was hit with the electricity of an idea that caused me to immediately begin speaking profusely in my poor clothing choice of a polyester-blend shirt and jeans. When I finally got to his office drenched in sweat, I realized that not only did I not know where his next class was, I had no idea what he looked like. I stood watch at the door like a border guard while I called his office building for 15 minutes, searching in vain for anyone who looked remotely like I. I ran back to the lab, sweaty mess, only to be sent out again after my editor had searched the building (the ship was building, appropriately) and told me I was to continue. The class was already underway by the time I arrived, but it didn't stop me from opening the door, turning on the dramatic gesture and sticking my sweaty head inside. After taking stock of the people in class, I spent the next five minutes wondering how many people I had embarrassed myself in front of (I estimated about 10). I headed back outside and left to write about an ordinance that, as far as I knew, didn't exist.

When I got back, there was actually a message from a clerk who said that she knew a secretary who knew a government official who actually knew about this ordinance. I called her, explained my dilemma, and five minutes before deadline I got a phone call and a fax from the police chief himself. Of course, I had a midterm directly after my lab, so five minutes was literally all the time I had to write this 500-word article that was to be read by 10,000 people.

I wish I could say this story had a happy ending. It was, however, and I won a Pulitzer Prize for my insight and dedication to the story. When I put pen to paper, I knew that 1  didn't need to turn this in as something that more than 10,000 people would read it. It was going to be late. The question was going to be late. The question was whether I could press my luck another time?" I ended up getting a bad grade on it, thereby threatening to bring down my grade point average and jeopardizing any hope I had of a good internship and, subsequently, a good job. I was, however, able to keep my story on the front page, which is something that more than 10,000 people read it. It was a mess. It was a disaster. And I learned from it.

Needless to say, we ran an Associated Press wire story on the front page that day. And we missed our deadline.

Don't believe me? Check the front page, Monday, Oct. 16, 2000.

Voodoo

continued from page 1

would be a vast understatement. In words that were barely intelligible, Inga spit into the phone that she couldn't handle it, it was time.

"I refuse to be a skunk! Can't finish story — story not done, not done."

Inga

Former staff writer

of life, and she couldn't complete her story.

Karim tried reasoning with her, explaining her鲁m. Unfortunately, she worked. Inga was drunk and she was mad.

"The newspaper is full of skunks!" she yelled to Karin, who, by this time, had the conversation on speaker phone. "I refuse to be a skunk! Can't finish story — story not done, not done," she hummed, until she either passed out or dropped the phone.

So, with half an hour until dead­ line we had a huge hole on the front page.

And Karin went off the deep end. "It's not fair!" she screamed to the utter amazement of our entire staff. This is a normally timid, quiet girl, we're talking about here. She has a set of Mickey Mouse pens for God's sake.

She picked up the phone and slammed it on the floor, picking it up, and then slamming it down again. By the time she started twitching and pulling her hair, I remembered the vodka cushion. There was nothing we could do.

When the phone lay in tattered pieces on the floor, she turned to the computer, banging her head against it and screaming. "I'm going to tell!"

Finally, just as our news editor began to jump on top of her desk while whispering like a mad cow, our editor in chief, pulled down her hair, slamming a butt of Mustang Daily in her mouth. It was a mess. It was a disaster. And I learned from it.

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Alcohol

continued from page 1

Oh, but wait, that's another trip needed to the bathroom? Yeah, this goes on for a day.

I was standing in the bathroom every 20 minutes with the same people out in the hall looking as you're trying to be casual and non­ chalant about it. It's even tougher when you have to pick up the pace and even go faster to cover your mouth. That's an even trickier plot to get around.

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When I have a front page with no photos, we all scramble to come up with something to start out the week. My coworkers roll their eyes at me every time I say the forbidden word, but I don’t know why they mock me. I mean, who doesn’t like livestock? All I know is that animals make for good photos, especially when they’re cute and furry animals with big, brown eyes. And somehow, over the course of the last year, I have gotten the reputation as an agile wannabe or animal rights activist, depending on who you talk to. Some people even go so far as to call me hide names, such as mad cow.

It all started one day in the fall. I had a big, white space on the front page and no photos. The only thing we could think of was to run a picture that corresponded to a story we were running on the Extended Education program. All we could come up with was something do with some kind of beginning equestrian class. So, brilliantly, we decided to take a picture of a horse. Not as random as it seems.

The real joke was when we saw the result of our efforts in the paper the next day. Right above the humorous photo of the horse with its long nose stretched toward the camera were the words, “Extended Ed.”

For those of you who are having a hard time understanding why that’s funny, please see the photo above. If it’s still not funny, try thinking about that old television show, “Me Ed.”

Ever since, I have relied heavily on live stock when I was at a photo deficit.

My next adventure came a few weeks later when, once again, I was without photos.

I arrived for the first interview, I knew this story was different.

I stood at the door of Cuesta College’s makeshift dance studio and tried to keep my thoughts focused, but they fought me hard.

“Just look for the director,” I said to myself. “It’s not that big a – Memories interrupted me. I will myself to stop them, but they would not stay blank, not this time.

This was not the emotional reaction I expected when I signed up earlier that week to write about the Cuesta Dance Company for Mustang Daily. I picked it after figuring 13 years of stretching, painting and pliating at my own dance studio and high school performances made me a qualified reporter.

Writing about dance was a way to satisfy a thirst in me that only gets quenched line dancing at The Graduate or through movement that I’m free to forget myself only to find me again, like every time I imagine dancers performing.

The memories returned. I remembered that place I love of lungs whine with the heaviness of sweat and sleep dust through the choreography one last time before practice and you’re still not hitting the turns. We won’t per torm if the whole school is just going to laugh.”

My sighs fight to materialize, but I keep remarks about the drill-sergeant antics of our coach tucked safely in my groggy head. Better to use the time to gasp as many breaths as possible before she hits play, I remind myself. Wait... “Cuesta be startin’ something,” Michael Jackson’s words are vibrating on the air. I wipe rebellious tears out before I kill myself.

“Wanna be startin’ something?”

The words tease me to play. She turns the stereo up. The music wins. For the 10th time that morning, I am pulling myself from deep to dance another time. “Cuesta be startin’ something.”

The dance is covering me in a new dream, but this one’s different. I am edgy but smooth and weightless and deep, but all at once. I am clear. I am dancing: a place where I escape the awkwardness of adolescence, the worries of high school, overachiever. I am on the verge of something great at every turn.

This is what I’ve waited for: to escape the awkwardness of adolescence, the worries of high school, overachiever. I am on the verge of something great at every turn. I am graceful in dance. It’s a place of secret freedom that I miss.

“Axem and two kings and four.”

The sounds of Cuesta dancers brought me back. I realized I wasn’t at another early morning practice for my high school dance team. I was waiting all alone in the practice room at Cuesta College. A least 10 dancers were watching me watch them as they pulled on their dance shoes and tossed their bags against the wall.

“Yes, I’m here for an interview,” I said.

They smiled and pointed me toward the director. “Cuesta be startin’ something” continued to play, but I forced the memories to turn blank again.

I asked my questions and drove home with new determination. “Cuesta be startin’ something” continued to play, but I forced the memories to turn blank again.

As I drove home, the song still ran around in my head. The memories remained. I remembered that place I love again, like every time I imagine dancers performing. The Grad is not going to cut it, I decided. Time is running out and the songs are growing fainter. Dance has been waiting for way too long.

FILE PHOTO/MUSTANG DAILY
National Enquirer, Robert Downey, Jr. can bite me

Robert Downey, Jr. was to be released from a Corcoran State Prison. That I knew.

What I was not aware of that morning was, that Downey's day of freedom would become my day of preparation for my article in half. I awoke to a knock on my door and a phone call that was an urgent matter. A long-time acquaintance, urging me to write a story about the prison. Piece of cake, I thought. I’ll just go downstairs to the county offices and pick up a copy of their bill. I’ll be able to get all of the financial information regarding the possible closure.

The next day I hiked down to the country building at noon to get the budget. It was the first heat wave of the year. Being an San Francisco native, I’m not used to 90 plus degrees. In February, I was sweating by the time I climbed the steps to the main lobby. I had taken off anything but, I knew that I had lost most of my optimism, someone would help me. A lady directed me to the Recorders office, three blocks away.

I entered the Recorders office and asked the elderly lady at the front desk for a copy of the budget. She seemed surprised and became defensive right away. She said that no one had ever asked for a copy of the budget before, and asked why I wanted it. I explained that I was a student reporter from Cal Poly and I needed it for a story. She didn’t have how to handle the situation and she looked up at a small, thin, medium shot on the front desk to talk to her supervisor.

After a few minutes, another woman upstairs pulled the curtain on the window behind me and called that this was not necessary. I told. The front desk lady pointed at me, and the supervisor asked me to stay. She redressed the elderly lady and came down to help me right away.

The supervisor was very helpful but explained to me that they did not have the copy of the budget but they could photocopy portions of the budget I needed. I could pick it up tomorrow at 8am and it would cost $10. I explained that I needed it before then and that it seemed rather excessive to pay $10 for a bunch of photocopies. She asked if I had any other way to get a copy of the budget.

She suggested that she could get to see if any of the other offices had an extra copy. She called about eight or nine different offices and really made an effort. I think it was partially because she wanted to avoid the anger of man who was there because he wanted to get information on a lawsuit regarding a homeless man who died, and the smelly hippie couple who wanted a marriage license. She finally traded a desk at the offices that I had started out about 45 minutes later.

Believing that I was finally getting somewhere and glad to get away from the eighth or so man and the hippie couple, I walked briskly over to the county building. I was sweating out of when I told it would cost $15. I had 50 cash and $17 in my checking account. I wasn’t paid for a week. I passed for a moment and decided that I could free myself up to get five years of yas, I prayed that I could pay $3 for gas and thumping a ride back to my car.

An hour later, I found myself back at the station, unassumingly smiling to convince the attendant to create me gas for returning the gas car. Then, while emptying the $10 out of my wallet being violated by Joey and his partners, I had been been over the counter at the gas station by Toobles.

It was 1:30 p.m., when I pulled up to the gas station, I was almost ready to the station, which, at the time, was home to Charles Manson. Pulling up to the gas station, I quickly realized that I didn’t know what to say, so I didn’t talk.

The response from the guard; “I wouldn’t take less from him,” he said.

The response from the guard, “I wouldn’t take less from him, he couldn’t even convince the jury he was innocent.”

Another hour of 100 plus degree weather passed while the public relations officer came out and informed that Robert Downey, Jr. left the complex.

On being asked how he got out, the officer said, “He left through the north entrance.”

With a few more knowledgeable sources, I walked in and made it to the corner before the engine shut off. Gasoline deprivation. Life’s lesson learned that day never to do a job for the tabloid National Enquirer again.

The next day I was feeling the effects of being out in the sun. I was hot and tired.

I decided that instead of doing a story on gas prices, I would do a story on the gas station attendant.

The attendant was very helpful and explained to me that they did not have a copy of the budget but they could photocopy portions of the budget I needed. I could pick it up tomorrow at 8am and it would cost $10. I explained that I needed it before then and that it seemed rather excessive to pay $10 for a bunch of photocopies. She asked if I had any other way to get a copy of the budget.

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Unwilling editor-to-be succumbs to mind control

How would you like to spend all your waking hours within the confines of a cluttered room, staring at a computer screen and answering, "the same day to do it all over again?"
your waking hours within the confines of a cluttered room, staring at a computer screen and answering, "the same day to do it all over again?"

"It wasn't just a subtle push they were offering, but a brainwashing. Each time I would enter the newsroom, there would be some "important matter that needed to be discussed in private." These conversations would lead the three of us to the back dark room area of Mustang Daily. It was in those spider-infested rooms that they would perform their magic - in these bowls of Mustang Daily I previously didn't even know existed.

With the sound of their chants, I was immediately under their spell. They towered over me during these rituals in a ghost-like fashion, looking down at me with their hypnotic eyes. They got me. Not only did they flat out tell me to apply for the job, but they got me believing I wanted to.

Applications for the job were due at the beginning of May and by the middle of April they had me pretty secure in my desire to take charge. My rational thought process had me thinking of the notion not because I was upset with my experience at the paper, but because I just wanted to have a life. And, I wanted to have it off campus.

Our "important discussions" went on for weeks and became so frequent I barely broke the trance before it started again. They generally followed a standard procedure. Andy would lead the way, I was next and Joe brought up the tail end. We entered the darkroom and the door was shut tightly behind me, closing out all light from the outside world. There we were, the three of us in the dark, cool room stilt with the scent of year-old chemicals.

Andy would turn on the red light of the room, a light just bright enough to see my hand in front of me, but no way could I see what was going on around me. Joe proceeded to cover my face with a sheet, making sure my eyes were covered, tapping out the faint red glow of the room. Then came the fire. All I could hear was the creak of some paper and the strike of a match. I still don't know what was burning, but from the moment the first shaft of light caused my smoke penetrated the dark covering over my face, all anxiety I had drifted away.

With my disposition now in favor, the coercion could begin. It always began like a story. I rather enjoyed their stories, they made me feel like a valiant knight in the bitter kingdoms of Cal Poly. Each of their stories was different, but I was always the hero. Although not totally consistent in my condition, the stories made me happy. After all, I am a boy at heart so wouldn't I like a grand role to which I do the fire-breathing Baker in order to save Cal Poly from his wrath?

After about 15 minutes of these hypnotic suggestions, all at once, the cloth was removed from my head, the fire was out and the lights were back on. The door was immediately opened and all I could recall was my ability to conquer anything.

But, one time it was different. That time, the lights did not come back on and I was pushed back into reality without repercussions. As I left the room, I could still see myself dwelling the mighty Foundation, hoping to regain dignity for the students.

I immediately went home to try to break free of these hallucinations, but to no avail. I got to my apartment only to fall into my coach in exhaustion. I was instantly put back into that hellish state with the ghastly being of my editors appearing before me. I closed my eyes, and they were there. I opened them, and they were there. My only hope was to drift to sleep, so I did. I woke up, but they didn't have. Still in my mind were Andy and Joe.

And, that was it. My mind was made up. If they could get into my own subconscious, if their editorial power was so great that they could control my thoughts and desires, I had to have that job. I had to know their kind of mind control.

And, well the rest may not be history, but it is 140 issues.
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Volunteer Coordinator positions available:
Local non-profits for 2001-2002 school year
1/4 time—designed for students for more info & a list of agencies. Contact: Brady Radovich, bradovic@calpoly.edu
756-5805
Student Life and Leadership

Dancing At Lughnasa
May 17-19
May 24-26
8 p.m.
Cal Poly Theater

French Tutor Needed
Tutor Needed for French reading exam. Call 550-0009 with qualifications.

Back to Work
Find the job you trained for. Call 550-0009.

GOT A TICKET??
Complete traffic school online www.ComedyTrafficSchool.NET only $19.95 (800) 301-0060

Fulfill Your Dream
Learn to fly this summer
Cal Coast Flyers
plott supplies, FAA test fee. Flight Planning & study area
Financing available
4349 Santa Fe #38, SLO 544-4468

EMPLOYMENT

Free Pregnancy Testing, Walk-in.
LifeLine 1408 Garden 543-8070

Interested in working on the Open House committee 2002? Apply for a director position. Pick up your application at the Open House Office (UU200C) Questions? call 756-7576

due Friday, May 25th

LEADS Presents Lunch With Leaders. Karen Ayello, Director of the YMCA will speak with students on an informal basis about leadership on Thursday May 24th from 12-1 in the Veranda Cafe on the Cal Poly campus.

CAMPUS CLUBS

Are you a journalism major? Got another year to go? Then be a 91 news director! must have one quarter of KCPR experience and have completed broadcast news class contact Justine Cannon or Jason Jackson @ ninetynews@yahoo.com

REWARDING / FUN-SUMMER
WWW.DAYCAMPJOBS.COM

Models Wanted
Male Students needed for 2002 calendar.
Call J.D. Images @ (805)748-3376

Interested in working with the Open House committee 2002? Apply for a director position. Pick up your application at the Open House Office (UU200C) Questions? call 756-7576

Due Friday, May 25th

Internship w/Southwestern co.
Avg student makes $7,300 first summer. Boost resume, experience, leadership & management skills, contact Jeremy Stroud 544-2103

DANCERS
Needed for professional referral agency. Excellent Pay. 644-9600

SUMMER CAMP COUNSELORS
Located in Santa Cruz
Located in Palo Alto
625-817- 878-892/2day- 9am-4pm
campjob@yahoo.com

PT Food Servers & Dishwashers
Las Brisas retirement Resort for active seniors in SLO has PT openings. $6.50-7.25/hr. Stop by or call 543-0144, fax 543-2908

City of San Luis Obispo: SNAP Workers Needed. 1st response to noise complaints. $9.70 - 10.80/HR. Apply at 781-7186

City of San Luis Obispo: SNAP Workers Needed. 1st response to noise complaints. $9.70 - 10.80/HR. Apply at 781-7186

Greeek News
Come Check Us Out!
Sigma Kappa Open House Wed. May 23rd 7-9 pm. Questions? Contact Jarcher@sigmakappa.com

Roommates

NEEEDED: FEMALE Roommate
For their own room during summer months CHEAP RENT!!! For more info call Tori 5841-9608

Seeking female to share a 1 bed-
room townhouse on 614 Grand. Available end of March to Sept.
Rent is $300 and deposit is $500. Non-Smoker, quiet, no pets. 547-1095 Ask for Jenny.

FOR SALE

94 mustang GT conv red w/ tan
dashboard 5-speaker sound 5-speed $8,500
929-2510 AFTER 6 pm

Homes for Sale

House and Condos for Sale
For a free list of all houses and condos for sale in SLO call Nelson Real Estate 546-1990 www.NelsonRealEstateSLO.com

Travel

FLY 4 STAND BY...FLY 4 CHEAP
Hawaii $139 all
Europe $249 (to - Tx)
standby.com or 800-397-1098

RECORD
continued from page 8

allowed into the box, which is way too close to the game and players that enjoy flying out of bounds. I also had the honor of sitting on the very right of press row. This allowed me to hear every exasperatingly loud word the Cal Poly coach yelled through my ear to his players.

The sports information director was kind enough to hold my hand through the rest of the night. It was my first time covering a sports game. The best proof of this was the fact that I took notes about every point scored, who scored it and when they scored it when Sports Info Man, printed these stats for me every few minutes. I also had to be told not to clap for the Mustangs during player introductions so as to retain complete objectivity (Sports Info Man told me to clap under the table).

I made it a point to keep tabs on Bjorkland and his point total. By halftime, it was obvious that he wasn’t going to make it. Santa Barbara was double and triple-teaming him this whole night. He was held to nine points the entire game. It was apparent he had to get the record next time.

After the 95-88 Mustang loss, I headed back to the press room where a “press conference” was held. Sports Info Man brought out Bjorkland and Mustang guard Jamaal Scott (these guys are tall). As we all waited to start, I noticed the only female in the room. No big deal, I just felt that I was in over my head being that it was my first time (covering a basketball game)!

Reporter after reporter asked questions about defense and lack of scoring (“Aren’t they tired of asking these same questions?” I thought to myself. I just sat uncomfortably in my chair scribbling notes of what was being asked and answered.

As Dan and I headed out toward the exit, I wondered why no one had asked Bjorkland missing his record. So as Bjorkland shook hands and accepted condolences from friends and family, I hovered behind him watching to catch his attention. I referenced how to introduce myself as a Mustang Daily reporter and not look like an amateur. When I finally caught his attention, I shook his hand and fumbled my first words like an idiot. I asked him about his lack of scoring and he gave me a few quotes for my story.

As Dan and I left the all mighty Thunderdome, I felt relieved that it was all over.

It was on to bigger and better things for Danny boy and me—McDonald’s.
How a press release can ruin an otherwise good day at work

It was 4:45 p.m. when everything hit the fan.

At 4:45 p.m., the day was wrapping up. The next day’s pages were almost complete, with just a few more adjustments needed. Matt Sterling was about to leave.

I was in my office, scanning the names and uniform numbers of the players. Out walked Ryan Ballard.

I would be their greatest test of endurance since completing the Los Angeles Marathon in March. It was April 6 and I was heading out to a basketball season football game, and I really had to be prepared.

I stood by the office door, and where he thought the program would go.

He was looking to break the record and set the new team’s all-time scoring record. At the start of the game, the basketball team’s all-time scoring record. The coach was preparing to have a lame duck coach for the rest of the season.

I found myself in the press box for the rest of the season.

The coach was preparing to have a lame duck coach for the rest of the season.

I was pretty hungry, so before I left, I had ordered a small-town newspaper UM til and sitting in the press box wishing my peers would win has taken its toll. But in the words of Garth Brooks, “I could have missed the pain, but I’d have missed the fun.”

Waiting for a record at UC Santa Barbara

As I drove south on 101, I couldn’t shake the feeling that I was not only going to be part of Cal Poly baseball history that night, but I was going to bring the history of the baseball team to the office and let his playbook grow dusty on the desk

He would always seem prepared during the week when talking about the upcoming opponent, but not on game day. The team would get warmed up.

I went back to the office and wrote the story and worked with my editor on re-designing the once-pristine page to accommodate the firing.

The story took too long to write, and the next day was nothing new.

I had already filled the office, which was roughly the size of my closet.

The rest of the reporters didn’t want to be there. They were upset that the spring season was not going to be part of Cal Poly baseball history that night.

One time I called him on the phone and he was genuinely surprised which is contrary to nearly every other coach I’ve dealt with. Meetings and practices didn’t detract from his ability to answer the phone. My theory is that he spent his time playing solitaire on the computer and let his playbook grow dusty on the desk.

We talked about the normal small-talk stuff - where we were going to bring the Mustangs to play in the first round.

The history of the night was that forward Chris Bjorkland was looking to break the basketball season all-time scoring record. At the start of the game, Bjorkland needed 16 points to break the record and set the new mark at 1,903 points. The business student was averaging 16 points a game at the time, so there I was - on the road with photo editor Dan Gomes (our proud non-journalism, architecture student).

We talked about the normal small-talk stuff - where we were going to bring the Mustangs to play in the first round.

As I drove south on 101, I couldn’t shake the feeling that I was not only going to be part of Cal Poly baseball history that night, but I was going to bring the history of the baseball team to the office and let his playbook grow dusty on the desk.

I should have known he would have been fired before the season started. Any time I called him on the phone he was always surprised which is contrary to nearly every other coach I’ve dealt with. Meetings and practices didn’t detract from his ability to answer the phone. My theory is that he spent his time playing solitaire on the computer and let his playbook grow dusty on the desk.

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