Gambling success with addiction

Justin Fivella
MUSTANG DAILY

It's the mental discipline that separates the inexperienced from the experienced in the game of poker, twins Devin and Taylor Biehn said. A player must be able to stay composed and focused for long periods of time as well as be disciplined enough to not make impulsive decisions even when their account takes a turn for the worse.

"You have to learn to control your emotions and overcome them," said Chris Correa, an agriculture business freshman. "I quit playing for a while, the pressure and the stress from playing takes a lot of control."

Experienced players like the Biehns also have learned to use what is known as "the snowball effect" to their advantage. "This snowball effect means that it takes more money to make more money," Taylor Biehn said.

The twins explained that experienced players can harness the temptation to gamble their money as the winnings increase, an aspect of the snowball effect many novices can't control.

Some possess the mental toughness new players need to be successful in poker, page 2

Calif. bill proposes 2-year halt on death penalty

Carly Maris
THE CALIFORNIA AGGIE (UC-Davis)

DAVIS, Calif. — The California Moratorium Bill, currently on the desk of the State's Assembly Committee on Appropriations, is attempting to halt the death penalty in California for two years if successful pushed through the Legislature.

The bill passed the first hearing with the Assembly Committee on Public Safety on Jan. 16, with a 4-2 vote. Additionally, the bill is enjoying support from state organizations, law enforcement, prosecutors and judges who all claim the death penalty system needs reform.

The temporary standstill of Assembly Bill 1121 asks the state of California to give the death penalty a two-year break in order to re-examine the functions and effectiveness of the permanent punishment.

Stefanie Faucher, program director of Death Penalty Focus, an organization which advocates against state executions, lauded the California Moratorium Bill, citing that she believes there are flaws in the current system.

"We believe that a temporary halt on executions is something we all can agree on," Faucher said. "We need to make sure we're getting the right people."

There are currently 645 inmates on death row in California. Opponents of the California Moratorium Bill assert that technological advances, as well as the see Bill, page 2

Winds whip Southern Calif., fan fires, cut power

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS REPORT

LOS ANGELES — Fierce Santa Ana winds whipping through Southern California on Monday fanned brush and house fires, knocked out power to thousands of utility customers and littered roads with debris.

The northeast winds came out of the desert interior and down through mountain passes and canyons toward the coast, sending firefighters chasing outbreaks of fire, and topping big rigs onto their sides along highways.

An early morning fire destroyed a home and damaged five others in Tujunga, a foothill area of northeast Los Angeles, and a blaze in suburban La Canada Flintridge forced evacuation of 15 homes before it was contained.

By Monday night a wildfire pushed by 30 mph winds spread over about 100 acres of brush near Highland in the foothills of the San Bernardino National Forest, 65 miles east of Los Angeles, said Forest Services spokesman Norma Bailey. The blaze did not immediately threaten any structures. About 300 firefighters aided by air tankers and helicopters were fighting the blaze.

High winds arrived Sunday across a broad swath of Southern California from the coast northwest of Los Angeles to counties east and see Winds, page 2

The explosion in online poker popularity has brought fame, fortune and addiction to many college students.
Poker
continued from page 1

Poker, but for others the odds are simply too great.

"Most of the Web sites show that only 15 percent of players are winners," Corrma said.

With the odds of winning not in their favor, many students have had their hopes of luck, but eventually decide that poker isn't their forte.

"I'm probably done with poker, I don't have the discipline and I was gambling, not playing poker," economics junior Jeff Bosdell said. "People putting money into poker isn't the smartest idea; if you're a gambler it's not a good investment."

The rewards can be high in the world of online poker, but the time and commitment needed to become successful can affect education as well.

"I spend more time doing this (playing poker) than school," Devin Biehn said. The dedication to poker excellence has also led students to schedule their studying around the game.

"It (poker) forces me to cram the night before and the day of the test as opposed to studying in advance," Taylor Biehn said. But, "I'm probably done with poker, I don't have the discipline and I was gambling, not playing poker," Davis said. "They still want us to get our education through, a career as a poker player really isn't what they want for us."

Many of the successful players have grown accustomed to the sleepless nights, the falling grades, the hours of disciplinary training to endure the stress of poker and the constant temptation to gamble. But is success just addiction?

Just like drugs or alcohol, gambling and poker can consume a student to the point of addiction.

"Addiction is always about refor­

Winds
continued from page 1

south. The winds, with gusts near 70 mph in some areas, were created by high pressure off the coast of Southern California, the National Weather Service said.

"Red flag" warnings were posted for many areas into Tuesday afternoon because of the combination of wind and low humidity levels which dry out vegetation and increase fire danger.

The La Canada Flintridge blaze, in which a firefighter suffered a minor eye injury, was ignit­

Bill
continued from page 1

numerous" checks and balances within the sys­

Comcast Newsroom

vietnam's about reinforcement.

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WHO SAID THAT?

Historically, the claim of consensus has been the first refuge of scoundrels; it is a way to avoid debate by claiming that the matter is already settled.
— Michael Crichton

Use your imagination not to scare yourself to death but to inspire yourself to life.
— Adele Brookman

Wordly Wise

Incommunicado:
Without the means or right to communicate.

BREAKING NEWS
UPDATED AT THE SPEED OF COLLEGE LIFE
www.mustangdaily.net

Name: Jaime Heard • Year: senior
Hometown: Lafayette, LA • Major: food science

Favorites
Cocktail: Southern Comfort and Diet Coke
Song: "Cherrybomb" by John Mellencamp. It reminds me of being a little and it puts me in the best mood.
Band: Pearl Jam
Pastime: Cruising in my car: "Molly the Malibu."
Time of day: Sometime around 4 p.m., when the world looks best.

If You Could ...
— travel anywhere, where would you go and why?
Back to Venezuela where I used to live because I haven’t been there in a while.
— meet anybody, who and why?
Eddie Vedder because he is the man.
— have any super power, which one would you have?
The ability to read people’s minds because you would never have to wonder.

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On campus Interviews
Thursday, Feb 9th, 2006

*connectedthinking
In this image, I combined my love for landscape photography with my passion for capturing people in unparalleled moments to express a visual story. Since transplanting myself to Morro Bay five months ago, I have found endless photographic opportunities. While some of the photographs I have taken are a result of being in the right place at the right time, others, such as the one seen here, have required a certain sincere dedication to the subject.

If you have ever voyaged out of San Luis Obispo and headed up U.S. Highway 1 into Morro Bay, chances are you may have seen a white van with the words, "more said in fewer strokes," written across it. The feble man behind the wheel calls himself "Brother Frog.

A truly unique character indeed, his lifestyle is one many would roll their eyes at. He spends his nights sleeping in a sailboat and his days selling artwork out of his van. He has no family, only an arthritis-stricken dog named Shiloh.

In the last few months, I have developed a substantial interest in Brother Frog. I feel the way he chooses to live out his days can be an inspiration to us all. Lifestyles are subjective and I have a genuine respect for those who, despite society's molding tactics, travel the unbeaten path and do what truly makes them happy.

One day, after witnessing this man's routine for several weeks, I decided to approach him. I explained that I was a photojournalist and was interested in putting together a photo-story on him. As an artist himself he had no objection and soon after I was shadowing him in his daily routine, capturing images for my piece "WIDE angle." Out of the numerous photographs I have taken, the image you see here is the single shot I chose to tell his story. It was taken one winter night as he prepared to lift Shiloh into a paddleboat that would take them just offshore to the sailboat he calls home.

Through my vision, this image defines his choices in life. We viewers get the privilege to glimpse into his world, and for once, "Brother Frog" has become the painting.
BUSH: TYRANT, PRESIDENT OR IDIOT

Call me crazy, but I have never been trusting of politicians. Like many, I find that politicians — Democrats and Republicans alike — often say one thing and, yet, more often do quite another. I suppose the old saying applies: "Actions speak louder than words." So why is it then, that when the president's actions speak of government activities that are at variance to our established notions of democracy, that many Americans act as if they are deaf? Miriam Webster defines a tyrant as "an absolute ruler unrestrained by law or constitution; an usurper of sovereignty," and a president as "an appointed governor of a subordinate political unit," and a stuffy bag as well. I sure know you.

With these definitions in mind, let us now focus on Mr. Bush. Before we begin, keep in mind that if we are to preserve the democratic process — the source of all sovereign power and authority. All authority bestowed upon our elected officials is derived from the people of the nation. In a nutshell, our government works for "the people", and a douche bag as ... a tyrant as "an absolute ruler unrestrained by law or constitution; an usurper of sovereignty," period. Yes, the president's role in our democracy is limited by our power of the people. Before we begin, keep in mind that in America, we — the American people — do not apply to him. Tyrant, president or something else? How might the power of the people be checked and balanced itself? Do Bush's actions speak more of a "signing statement." The "statement" Bush makes: Whatever the decisions of Congress, Bush, realizing that his veto power is his greatest weapon, can do as he pleases. Like many, I find that politicians — Democrats and Republicans alike — often say one thing and, yet, more often do quite another. I suppose the old saying applies: "Actions speak louder than words." So why is it then, that when the president's actions speak of government activities that are at variance to our established notions of democracy, that many Americans act as if they are deaf? Miriam Webster defines a tyrant as "an absolute ruler unrestrained by law or constitution; an usurper of sovereignty," and a president as "an appointed governor of a subordinate political unit," and a stuffy bag as well. I sure know you.

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they have a better understanding that I don't need to stay in school to help out the university and get my degree.

Understanding the APR

What precisely is an APR and what does it mean for college athletes? In short, it means instituting formulaic standards. It lays in sharp contrast to the NCAA Web site with the purpose of defining new terminology and covering the basics of the APR, a quick recapitulation of his "APR 101."

The Academic Progress Rate is the new NCAA enforcement of academic progress. It lays in stark contrast to the NCAA's previous graduation assessment. Whereas the former system was based on graduation rates during a six-year window, the APR will provide a real-time illustration of every school's academic performance in each sport.

The APR system is based on two factors: eligibility and retention. The players on a given roster receive at most two points per term; one for being academically eligible and the other for remaining in the university.

Add up the total points for a team and you end up with a deci­mal number; multiply that by 1,000 and you get an APR score. The base score used by the NCAA is 925, equal to about a 50 percent gradua­tion rate.

Cal Poly has three teams under the 925 base; in other terms, we're in rough shape. But the terms are still exceptions to the rule. In other words, while a team may fall below the 925 standard, that doesn't mean sanctions will be assessed.

Teams with a small roster can fall under the "confidence boundary" exception. Because these smaller teams have a smaller sample space, the NCAA chose to give a margin of error with these teams to make them eligible.

The example used by Brown on the NCAA Web site is a team with 10 athletes and an APR of 920. The "confidence boundary" would allow the team 900-940 and, because the higher end of the boundary is above 925, the team is granted temporary reprieve. However, when the NCAA moves to a four-year sample space to assess penalties, this option might not be available.

What this means for Cal Poly's men's tennis team is the likelihood of temporary amnesty.

Cal Poly's men's basketball team also qualifies for the "confidence boundary" exception, but it isn't likely to post an upper-end score above 925.

Unlike other teams at Cal Poly, the baseball team's APR will be calculated slightly differently. The team had multiple players leave for the Major League Baseball draft last spring. Those early departures will fall under the NCAA's recent decision to count such early exits differently if the player left school also being academically eligible.

The most scholarships the NCAA can take away is 10 percent of the team's total scholarship limit. Such a penalty is called a "contem­porary penalty." This is the category that applies to Cal Poly's men's basketball team.

The more drastic type of penalty is the "historically based" punish­ment. The price for this sort of punishment is much more severe and is based on a four-year rolling average APR.

Historically based penalties include the loss of scholarships, postseason bans and restricted membership in the more severe cases when academic performance fails to improve over time.

The package is sure to headline major sports news outlets in late February when the official APR reports are released for the two-year time frame which penal­ties will be based on.

While controversy looms over how to count athletes who transfer and what penalties should be assessed and based on information from "x" number of years, there has been much positive feedback already.

"I think it's a good idea and I think it will work," Cal Poly athletic director Alfonse Conde said. "It's not perfect, certainly it's not per­fect, but one thing that I have observed at Cal Poly, which Cal Poly generally recruits academical­ly oriented student athletes anyway, but even if Cal Poly is changing the focus of who you recruit and how you deal with students while they're here. Our coaches have been wonderful at keeping gradua­tion as the ultimate goal for all of our student athletes and that has always been a focus here."
Men’s basketball whistled for NCAA sanctions

The men’s basketball team is expected to lose two scholarships next season due to an Academic Progress Rate below NCAA standards.

Frank Stranzl • Mustang Daily

A penalty was initially declared academically ineligible and eventually left the team, as well as the school. After the Gray fallout, Fernando Sampson announced he would not return to the team for the 2005-06 season and Lew Finnegan revealed his intentions to transfer soon after.

"I understand why the NCAA made the changes," Bromley said. "I do, however, feel it should be up to each institution to decide how they want to handle the graduation rates, but the NCAA has taken that out of our hands and put the pressure back on the student athlete."

Under previous NCAA guidelines, Finnegan’s departure would not have counted against Cal Poly. However, the latest academic reform package, which passed in April, 2004, holds schools accountable for transfers.

In August, 2005, the Division I NCAA Board of Directors announced an adjustment to the Academic Progress Rate to allow more leeway for athletes leaving school early to play professionally.

The unanimous decision will also apply to circumstances such as "considered to be beyond the point of control of the student-athlete or the team/institution," according to a press release by the NCAA.

Transfers, however, are not included in the NCAA’s classification of "beyond the point of control," for a team or school. While the press release noted that the NCAA is looking into future adjustments to account for transfers, Finnegan will still count against Cal Poly for next year’s statistics.

Situations such as transferring should be accounted for on a case-by-case basis, Bromley said. For example, Finnegan transferred to Bentley College in Waltham, Mass. in order to be closer to his hometown of Lexington, Mass. Finnegan’s situation is out of Cal Poly’s control, Bromley said.

Another issue to be addressed, Bromley said, is why two scholarships will be taken away rather than one. According to the reform package, its maximum loss of scholarships is 10 percent of the team’s scholarship allotment.

"Ten percent of the scholarships at the Division I level in men’s basketball is really 1.3," Bromley said. "Well, I don’t know how 1.3 gets rounded up to two. I’m not a mathematician, but I’ve never figured that out."

Throughout the program will incur the scholarship loss next year.

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Bromley is confident in the academic environment provided to his and all Cal Poly student-athletes.

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While he wasn’t about to point fingers, Bromley said it’s "because of guys like Kameron Gray, because of Fernando Sampson; those guys didn’t graduate, they quit going to class, for whatever reasons. They have their own reasons, and when this was implemented those young men weren’t recruited under me for those circumstances."

While Gray and Sampson were two of the factors leading to the program’s sanctions, Bromley said the reform package was "grandfathered in."

"If (the reform package) was in place before those young men, they shouldn’t be able to affect our program because they weren’t recruited under those kinds of restrictions," Bromley said. "Halfway through their career they put this rule in. Well, maybe we don’t recruit those young guys or maybe we don’t even have them.

NCAA Division I Academic Progress Rate

The following chart represents a breakdown of the overall and by-sport APR averages for noted subgroups. It is provided to permit institutional administrators to compare rates with various subgroups by sport. Data for one academic year.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall APR</th>
<th>Institution Specific Rate</th>
<th>Percentile Rank</th>
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<tr>
<td>Overall APR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wrestling</td>
<td>936</td>
<td>955</td>
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</tbody>
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Note: APRs include African American, Hispanic American, and Native American subgroups.

All Division I

Overall APR: Basketball 925, 886, 10th-20th
Overall APR: Football 926, 875+, 10th-20th
Overall APR: Soccer 952, 930, 20th-30th
Overall APR: Tennis 957, 872+, 1st-10th
Overall APR: Track 948, 934, 30th-40th
Overall APR: Wrestling 936, 955, 60th-70th

Overall APR: Basketball 958, 975, 50th-60th
Overall APR: Soccer 972, 1000, 80th-90th
Overall APR: Softball 966, 969, 40th-50th
Overall APR: Tennis 967, 1000, 70th-80th
Overall APR: Track 965, 958, 30th-40th
Overall APR: Volleyball 966, 920+, 10th-20th

Overall APR: Basketball 958, 975, 50th-60th
Overall APR: Soccer 972, 1000, 80th-90th
Overall APR: Softball 966, 969, 40th-50th
Overall APR: Tennis 967, 1000, 70th-80th
Overall APR: Track 965, 958, 30th-40th
Overall APR: Volleyball 966, 920+, 10th-20th

Note: APRs include African American, Hispanic American, and Native American subgroups.