Today's weather
Partly sunny
Low 47° High 68°

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Friday, May 11, 2007
www.mustangdaily.com

Progress too close to call for two ASI presidential candidates, ASI officials declared a run-off vote between Brandon Souza and Matt Taylor, which will take place Wednesday.

Jennifer Hall and Emily Rancer
2007-08 Board of Directors
College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences
Adam Buttenbanch
Amanda Rankin
Peter Bjorklund
Mark Diener
Melissa Lema
College of Architecture and Environmental Design
Greg Wiley
Sean Christy
Elizabeth Lee
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Jessica Gibbons
Sarah Vernizzi
Martha Caldwell
Ivan Lee
College of Engineering
Lindsey Bauer
Nicole Stromsness
Tony Guntermann
Russell Fenton
Adrian Herrera
College of Liberal Arts
Angie Kramer
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Annie Lamontagne
Aaron Warshawsky
Aria Niazi
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Poly students, community show their artistic flair at Craft Center sale

IN SPOTLIGHT, 5

Sunday starter a leader on the hill for young Mustangs

IN SPORTS, 8

Up to three fires were burning Thursday along U.S. Highway 101 on the Cuesta Grade. The fires burned at least 75 acres and caused traffic backups well into San Luis Obispo as well as closure of the far right lane heading northbound.

Numerous fire engines and an air tanker worked to control the blazes, but as of press time, the fires' growth was slowed but not contained.

The fire was first reported at 3:15 p.m. and members pulled over to try to put it out themselves, according to the California Highway Patrol.

Root Beer pong on campus

At 11 a.m. students were playing root beer pong on Dexter Lawn. It was not an alternate reality, but instead a festival of root beer and drinking games to promote awareness of student drinking habits.

The scene was complete with every form of entertainment one might find at a backyard fraternity party: three root beer pong tables, an emcee, music and free root beer floats for everyone.

"We just wanted to provide a fun activity for all our students here," marketing senior Brandon Wadley said. "Drinking games are fun, but when you drink too much, things can get out of hand. But we're just showing people you can have fun with being sober.

Root Beer Fest, as it was called, was designed as a fun promotional event around the "Under Four" campaign seen on T-shirts and flyers all over Cal Poly. Wadley said that's the average number of drinks a Cal Poly student will consume in a given sitting.

"The average is just under four," he said. "It's a social norm campaign. If we promote that people are drinking less than what people are perceiving, then we hope to get people's perceptions down."

In addition to root beer pong, there was also a competition that involved some multitasking: Students were asked to keep a hula hoop around their waist while at the same time consuming an entire cup of root beer.

"It's all in the hips," nutrition

see Beer, page 2

see Elections, page 2
Students experiment more and writing a thesis. In the winter, entire final year doing their senior project, and getting a deeper experience than the average college senior. "Our process in general is long, complicated, and difficult and there are so many factors to consider," architecture senior Noah Ti said.

Ti said that the project begins in the fall with research, experiments and writing a thesis. In the winter, students experiment more and allow their project to take shape. Finally, in the spring, they actually build their project to whatever scale they need.

"My project is more theoretical than functional," Ti said, explaining that while the space could be complicated, and difficult and there are so any factors to consider," architecture senior Noah Ti said.

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House rejects 9-month withdrawal for troops, moves to guarantee funds only through July

David Espo
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The Democratic-controlled House defeated legislation Thursday to withdraw U.S. combat troops from Iraq within nine months, then pressed quickly to a fresh challenge of President Bush's handling of the unpopular war.

The vote on the nine-month withdrawal measure was 255-171.

On a day of complex maneuvering, Democrats said they would oppose legislation funding the war on an installment plan, and Bush said longer we wait the more strain we're under pressure fixim lawmakers in Congress walk away from our men Britain's economic prosperity. Pilloried for everything from his dandruff to his alleged ruthlessness, Brown has long waited for the chance to emerge from Blair's shadow. Blair won three straight terms as prime minister by banking on his common touch — a style that served him well as he returned to the northern England political club where he announced his campaign for Labour Party leader 13 years ago. Visibly emotional, he struggled to keep smiling and offered a response to critics. "Hand on heart, I did what I thought was right," Blair told cheering and often tearful supporters. "Believe one thing if nothing else: I did what I thought was right for our country."

State

AVALON (AP) — A wind-driven wildfire spread over 150 acres on rugged Santa Catalina Island on Thursday and was moving toward Avalon, the major city on the resort isle more than 20 miles off Southern California.

The fire was moving southeast toward Avalon, said Los Angeles County fire Capt. Ron Halton. The island's school and hospital were voluntarily evacuating, as were some residents who live near wildlands, said Dan Teckesoff, publisher of the Catalina Islander.

SACRAMENTO (AP) — The state Assembly on Thursday approved legislation that would allow farmers to grow hemp, narrowly overcoming objections that it violates federal drug laws and could put growers behind bars.

The bill by Assemblyman Mark Leno, D-San Francisco, would legalize the cultivation of industrial hemp, a biological relative of marijuana used to make clothing, paper, soap, cosmetics and food.

U.S. manufacturers currently import processed hemp to use in their products because it is illegal to grow in the United States.

National

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal revenue collections hit an all-time high in April, contributing to a further improvement in the budget deficit for the year.

Releasing its monthly budget report, the Treasury Department said Thursday that through the first seven months of this budget year, the deficit totals $86.8 billion, significantly below the $184.1 billion imbalance run up during the first seven months of the 2006 budget year.

WASHINGTON (AP) — Attorney General Alberto Gonzales confidently defended House Democrats' demands Thursday for details in the firings of U.S. attorneys, appearing even more likely to survive accusations that the dismissals were politically motivated.

Republican lawmakers rushed to Gonzales' defense as the attorney general denied any that the firings last year were improper.

The mostly muted five-hour hearing in front of the House Judiciary Committee was a sharp contrast to Gonzales' sometimes testy appearance three weeks ago when Senate Republicans questioned his competence to run the Justice Department.

International

LONDON (AP) — Tony Blair announced his resignation Thursday in a pregnant — almost apologetic — speech to the nation, thanking his comparison for his successes during more than a decade as prime minister, and seeking understanding for leading Britain into an unpopular war in Iraq.

Blair's June 27 departure means the mantle will likely pass to Gordon Brown, the rumpled architect of Britain's economic prosperity. Pilloried for everything from his dandruff to his alleged ruthlessness, Brown has long waited for the chance to emerge from Blair's shadow. Blair won three straight terms as prime minister by banking on his common touch — a style that served him well as he returned to the northern England political club where he announced his campaign for Labour Party leader 13 years ago. Visibly emotional, he struggled to keep smiling and offered a response to critics. "Hand on heart, I did what I thought was right," Blair told cheering and often tearful supporters. "Believe one thing if nothing else: I did what I thought was right for our country."
Poly Arab Music Ensemble to play solo for first time

Justin Fassino

The oud is an Arabic instrument that eventually became the European lute. It's a short, fretless, stringed device used in Arab music, and it will be one of many unfamiliar musical tools on display in the Cal Poly Arab Music Ensemble's first ever complete performance Saturday at 7 p.m.

Directed by first-year music professor Kenneth Habib, the ensemble will be treating its audience to Saturday at 7 p.m.

For his part, Habib has a formal education in Arabic music. As the grandson to Lebanese citizens, he grew up with the sound of the oud, among others, in his ears.

"Just as the years went by I took more of an interest in it," Habib said in regards to his passion for the sound. "It's not driven by harmony. It's a melodic music; it's not like chords."

In addition to the oud, the audience will be able to experience the riqq, a tambourine-like instrument; the darabukka, also called the goblet drum; and the stringed huruz, which shares similarities with the more recognizable guitar in that they both have frets and a long neck.

Those are just some of the traditional musical devices that will be in the show.

The performance itself is put together in a series of suites. Each suite is made up of several musical pieces that all relate to each other; at the end of each suite will be an Arabic folk dance number.

Additionally, students will also sing in muwashshah, a classical form of the Arabic language that dates all the way back to the middle ages. For the students involved in the production of the show, adjustments have been necessary. Habib said only three students have an Arab background, so most had to learn the Arabic vocals with no previous experience speaking the language. Another challenge lies in the differences between Western and Arabic instruments.

"In certain ways there are parallels," Habib said. But he was also quick to point out that in the Arab music tradition, the scale contains quarter notes, something that most Western music does not count. For example, it's possible to play E and E flat on a piano, but not possible to play the note E "half-flat."

"On behalf of the students, they have done a phenomenal job," Habib said.

The Arab Music Ensemble, which was formed this year when Habib arrived in San Luis Obispo, has played three times prior to Saturday's show.

In fall and winter quarters, they played a brief recital in conjunction with other branches of the music department. They also had the opportunity to play the second half of a show the Cal Poly Choir put on earlier this year. But Saturday night will be the first full featured performance from the group.

"One of the things (I hope people take away from this performance) is a deeper appreciation of this long-standing art music tradition," he said. "'Ahlan wa sahlan.' (That's 'welcome' in Arabic)."

Students playing musical instruments, like the Arabic oud pictured above, will take center stage at the Cal Poly Arab Music Ensemble's first ever complete performance in the H.P. Davidson Music Center, room 218 tomorrow night at 7 p.m.
Artwork like pottery and blown glass from students and local artists will be on sale today at the University Union Plaza from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The sale, which is sponsored by the Associated Students Inc. Craft Center, is designed to showcase the artistic talents of both students and locals.

“You can find anything from glass to handmade bags, handmade cards, ceramic things and framed photographs and pictures people have taken,” biology sophomore Nicole Balvanz said. Balvanz is also a craft center manager and ceramics teacher. “A lot of the stuff is made in the ASI Craft Center, but not everything.”

The event has been on campus for nearly 20 years and Balvanz said that anyone can have his or her crafts and arts on sale.

“It’s mostly (coming from) students, but it’s also open to non-students,” Balvanz said. “Some of (the vendors) come into the Craft Center and say that they want to sell their stuff.”

She noted that the Craft Center takes a small percentage of the sales to fund its operations, and artists receive the rest of money that they earn from the event.

“The Craft Center only keeps 15 percent of student work, and 25 percent of non-student work,” Balvanz said. “Those costs mainly go towards our staff. Otherwise, the artist gets all the revenue.”

Given that Mother’s Day is Sunday, Balvanz had a few suggestions on what items at the craft sale could make moms happy.

“T here’s a lot of jewelry, a lot of earrings, and ... cards if you wanted to go smaller ... if you want to go larger, there (are) vases and sets of plates and bowls.”

“T here’s a lot of jewelry, a lot of earrings, and there’s also a lot of cards if you wanted to go smaller,” she said. “But if you want to go larger, there (are) vases and sets of plates and bowls.”

Even with all this selection, Balvanz indicated that the price ranges for items sold at the event are friendly to many students’ budgets.

“It’s definitely cheaper because the students don’t want to pay so much. But we still want to sell it,” she said.

Students can buy items like pendants between $10 and $20. Depending on the size, ceramic art is priced between $10 and $50. But Balvanz said that very few items at the plaza are selling for more than $50.

However, these sales are adding up to significant revenue for the craft center.

“Our biggest one was last winter,” Balvanz said. “We made about $14,000 after three days. But the winter craft sales are usually much bigger than spring (sales) because it’s right before Christmas.”

Balvanz predicted that this sale could generate between $8,000 and $10,000 for the craft center.

“It’s a good atmosphere, so if you need any gifts for birthdays or Mother’s Day, feel free to come on by and support students,” she said.
How many people are in the world? How many languages? How many ethnic cultures and nations? Just how diverse is our planet? I can tell you that it’s more than you or I have thought.

I am just about to return from nine months abroad in Chengdu, China. Coming to China is like coming to another world. That sounds really cliché, but it’s pretty accurate. This is the Middle Kingdom. I had been used to life in the Beautiful Kingdom. That’s how to say “America” in Mandarin. I love telling people that I am a beautiful country person.

Life in China is fun and challenging. It took me a little while to adjust, but now I love this place. I can eat at the spiciest hot pot restaurant, where you have a pot of boiling oil in the middle of the table and you cook your own food. The oil is full of peppers and is well known throughout China as being very spicy. I always ask for the special Sichuan numbing peppers when I get tofu, fried green beans, or kung bao chicken.

Unlike some other foreigners, I also eat MSG. When I barter for goods, I can get good prices, not the foreigner prices. I zoom along on my bike every day, weaving through Chengdu traffic. Here, stop signs are rare suggestions, and the mixture of private cars, bikes, buses, taxis, rickshaws, and pedestrians on the streets often looks like frightening chaos. Chengdu has 12 million people. From the outside it can seem a little overwhelming, but I have found its harmonies.

I expected all of this out of a study abroad semester. Getting the opportunity to study throughout the rest of China was an added benefit for spring break. I went on a journey to Xinjiang province in the west of China. This province has a large Uygur population. The Uygur people are mostly Muslim, while I am used to seeing Buddhist temples in the rest of China, there are mosques here.

Most men wear traditional rounded Muslim hats. They speak their own language which presently uses an Arabic script. This word Xin-jiang feel more like the Middle East than China. The people there have better texture as well. Lamb meat is eaten at almost every meal. Even breakfast consists of rice paillof with a few lamb ribs, or baked ton dumplings. After traveling for a few days, I thought I was getting culture shock, again. In the other world I found yet another world.

One of the destinations on my journey was a small mountain town called Taghakun. If you put your finger on a map of the world so that it touches China, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Tajikistan, then Taghakun should be directly under your finger. It is the last town in China before crossing the border to Pakistan. This is a part of the world that I had never thought about before. I never even imagined what life is like for the people who live there. I was about to find out. I was traveling with an Australian named Josh and we hired a car to take us on a scenic journey to Taghakun. We were invited to her family home for lunch. They were Kyrgyz, another minority.

Our driver, who spoke Uygur with the rest of her family. We were invited to her family home for lunch. They were Kyrgyz, another minority.

Over lunch, I spoke English with them. I thought it was more than you or I have thought.

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write a letter

Mustang Daily reserves the right to edit letters for grammar, punctuation and length. Letters, comments, and cartoons are chosen from the views of the Mustang Daily. Please limit length to 250 words. Letters should include the writer’s full name, phone number, major and class standing. Letters must come from a Cal Poly e-mail address. Do not send letters as an attachment. Please send the text in the body of the e-mail.

By e-mail: mustangedailyopinions@gmail.com
By mail: Letters to the Editor, Building 26, Room 226, Cal Poly, SLO, CA 93407

Online ads

Mustang Daily is a free newspaper; however, the removal of more than one copy of the paper per day is subject to a cost of 50 cents per issue.

Dear Mustang Daily Staff:

Just gimme the playgrounds of yesteryear

I love swings. I love getting a running start, pumping my legs back and forth in a steady rhythm and leaning back as far as I can to catch a glimpse of the world upside down. As I zip right-side-up, this is inevitably followed by a head rush as all the blood drains back down from my head.

Throughout my many swinging sessions, I have taught more than a few children the back-and-forth motion that seems so second nature to me. The look on their faces once they start getting some air is classic, but also makes me sad. Why don’t these kids know how to swing?

Well, as a testament to our law-suit-loving culture, swings are becoming scarcer and scarcer in the playgrounds of today.

In fact, lots of the favorites from my childhood, and probably yours, are being taken out of playgrounds. Inflatable climbing structures and slides are being replaced by those dime-a-dozen plastic playgrounds with static-y slides and blister- bumpy rides. I am not above playing on these — I just miss old-school playgrounds. The National Program for Playground Safety advocates supplanting this as an important way to improve safety, but taking out certain structures. Parent supervision and teaching kids not to slide right after some one else, run in front of swings, etc. to take away most of the playground injuries.

Mass-producing playgrounds may not even solve safety issues. According to Newsweek, “some experts say that new, supposedly safer equipment is actually more dangerous because risk-loving kids will test themselves by, for instance, climbing across the top of a swing set. Other kids sit at home and get fat — and their parents sue McDonald’s.”

Of course, playgrounds represent the tip of the iceberg; there are so many things that have changed since we were kids. Suddenly, technology and food have taken over the generation of the generation that never thought about childhood obesity rates.

Children today are so much more in touch with technology — there are elementary and middle school students who have their own cell phones and computers. There’s nothing like seeing a 12-year-old text message. In the biological and social sense, kids are getting older earlier. They are reaching puberty earlier than ever. There are 8-year-old girls who are better acclimated than I am, although very few of them are at "Little Miss Sunshine" beauty queen status. For the parents of those few feet, of Celia Rivenbark’s newest book says it all: "Stop dressing your sixth-year-old like a dork."

Now, I don’t claim to have any answers. It’s understandable that parents need to find ways to catch up with these trends. I just want to hope that we all keep a hold of our favorite childhood activities to our kids, even if they seem old-fashioned to them.

To me, "play" will always mean fresh air and human interaction. And, of course, swings.

Gianna Magnoli is a journalism major, Mustang Daily staff writer and copy editor.

Send your letter, in 250 words or less, to mustangedailyopinions@gmail.com. Or submit it at mustangedaily.com.
Dressage

continued from page 8

ride, have 10 minutes to warm up and then you go ride your test," Brownlow said. "A rich person can just go buy a really expensive horse on their own horse," Brownlow said. "We've been growing and beating the pants off everyone. IDA does training, upper training and dressage. It takes a great deal of energy and commitment to get the job done," Brownlow said. 

When we host a show, we spend the day before training. Riding, building and breaking all the horses," Brownlow said. "Every piece of tack that will be used is cleaned and labeled so it doesn't get lost in the shuffle. The show day involves checking everyone in, signing paperwork and the horse dress. The parade of horses happens after the dressage.

The parade is simply riding each horse individually in the arena while notes on the horses are written. This is intended to give the riders a glimpse of the kind of horse they will be riding. Then all the tests are ridden and the awards ceremony happens afterward."

There is a meeting facility for the team on the Cal Poly campus so it travels to Coastal Equine, which is the exact competition-sized arena and the proper equipment required for the tests performed. For the tests performed, there are no team-designated horses, so Elise Torres, a horse master, must find and use approximately 20 privately-owned horses for all of the competitors to ride. "Many members have their own horses but quite a few do not," Brownlow said. She personally does not own a horse and named Carmen, that helped her get into the love of jumping and eventually dressage. The team is coached by Josie Chandler, an animal science student who volunteers her time to the team and has ridden up to the Grand Prix level.

The latest event for the team was last weekends last weekend at Centenary College in New Jersey. Cal Poly sent five competitors to the event.

Wildflower

continued from page 8

the Olympic course. I have literally grown up at Wildflower -- I even missed my junior prom in high school to race Wildflower.

I can remember seeing all the Cal Poly athletes and volunteers as a kid and thinking how awesome it would be to race for Cal Poly in college. My experience at Wildflower made me want to come to Cal Poly just to be on the triathlon team.

The bottom line is once you volunteer or race at Wildflower, you will never change forever.

You will accumulate a whole new batch of stories. I can tell you about you, but until you experience it for yourself, it is difficult to comprehend the gravity of this race.

Eager

continued from page 8

to me all the sports."

Cal Poly sophomore shortstop Brent Mondi said this year's young squad has benefited from Eager's experience.

"He (Eager) taught other guys on how to play the game," Mondi said. "On the field, he's there for the other guys."

Mustang junior right fielder Grant Deeme said the team would have a difficult time without Eager. "It would be tougher winning ball games without him," Demme said. "He's one of our older and more experienced guys that knows he'll be very consistent every time he goes out there." Even though Eager hopes to get drafted into pro ball, he still plans to finish his degree at Cal Poly. "My immediate goal is to graduate from Cal Poly. I'd also like to be a professional baseball player," Eager said.

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Like working with children and go buy a really expensive horse at local elementary schools, come by the SCS office in UC 217 or e-mail scsoutherngym@gmail.com.
Cal Poly ace pitcher always Eager to take the mound

It is unclear whether Mustang RHP Thomas Eager will leave for the professional ranks next year, but he is already drawing interest from all but one Major League Baseball team.

Isaiah Narcisco

COMMENTARY

Wildflower a singular experience

Evan Rudd

As a triathlete, I'm used to competing in relative obscurity. The majority of the population doesn't even know what a triathlon consists of. But for one day a year, at a very special race, all that changes.

That race, of course, is Wildflower. For one day a year I actually feel like a celebrity while I swim, bike and run across the legendary Lake San Antonio course. I turned in one of my best races ever to finish third in the Collegiate Club Competition.

But even more impressive than my individual finish was our team placing first after finishing second last year.

With more than 80 athletes sport­ ing the green and gold, we easily had the largest team at the race. And we definitely had the strongest fan base with more than 2,000 volunteers lining the course.

If you have never volunteered for Wildflower, do it before you gradu­ ate. It will be a wild experience you'll never forget.

Only at Wildflower will you see runners take off their beer bong. Not coincidentally, I've also seen people petting in relative obscurity.

Evan Rudd

C 'ollegiate Club Competition.

you'll never forget.

definitely had the sti­ x nigest fan ba­ se

anniversary o f the Woodstock of

like a celebrity while I swim, bike

through my legs, nearly tripping me.

ended up walking nearly the entire
time I raced the Olympic course, I

When he saw me and acci­ denully

tail, devil horns and was carrying a

people showed up at Wildflower over the years. The first

shoved his pitchfork between my

first, I've had some crazy experiences

That race, of course, is Wildflower.

As a triathlete. I'm used to com­ "Veterans Day is a day to remember their hero­

To fully understand my deep con­ nexion to this race, you have to understand why I entered it.

This year marked my eighth time competing at Wildflower. I did my first one as a junior in college, I competed in the Mountain Bike race. This was my fifth year racing

see Wildflower, page 7

Fridav, May 11, 2007

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SPORTS

MUSTANG DAILY

Check out mustangdaily.com to listen to a FREE podcast with Ryan Charlton and Tristan Aird discussing the Cal Poly men's basketball signings, weekend home series for softball and baseball and Big West Conference Championships for track and field.

To hear the 11:30-minute MP3, click on "Podcast" under Online Features.

Cal Poly sophomore right-hander Thomas Eager winds up for a pitch during the Mustangs' 10-8 Big West Conference win over visiting Cal State Northridge on April 7 at Baggett Stadium.

BUSY WEEKEND ON THE DIAMONDS

SOFTBALL

What: Pacific at Cal Poly
When: Friday, May 11
Where: Bob Janssen Field
Time: Noon and 2 p.m.
Baseball

What: UC Davis at Cal Poly
When: 6 p.m. today and Saturday, 1 p.m. Sunday
Need to Know: Cal Poly (24-23) will try to bounce back from being swept in a three-game series last weekend at Long Beach State. UC Davis (20-25) will officially join the Big West next year. All games will be broadcast on 1280 AM.

MUSTANG DAILY SPORTS

Cal Poly ace pitcher always Eager to take the mound

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C 'ollegiate Club Competition.

you'll never forget.

definitely had the sti­ x nigest fan ba­ se

anniversary o f the Woodstock of

like a celebrity while I swim, bike

through my legs, nearly tripping me.

ended up walking nearly the entire
time I raced the Olympic course, I

When he saw me and acci­ denully

tail, devil horns and was carrying a

people showed up at Wildflower over the years. The first

shoved his pitchfork between my

first, I've had some crazy experiences

That race, of course, is Wildflower.

As a triathlete. I'm used to com­ "Veterans Day is a day to remember their hero­

To fully understand my deep con­ nexion to this race, you have to understand why I entered it.

This year marked my eighth time competing at Wildflower. I did my first one as a junior in college, I competed in the Mountain Bike race. This was my fifth year racing

see Wildflower, page 7

Fridav, May 11, 2007

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SPORTS

MUSTANG DAILY

Check out mustangdaily.com to listen to a FREE podcast with Ryan Charlton and Tristan Aird discussing the Cal Poly men's basketball signings, weekend home series for softball and baseball and Big West Conference Championships for track and field.

To hear the 11:30-minute MP3, click on "Podcast" under Online Features.

Cal Poly sophomore right-hander Thomas Eager winds up for a pitch during the Mustangs' 10-8 Big West Conference win over visiting Cal State Northridge on April 7 at Baggett Stadium.

BUSY WEEKEND ON THE DIAMONDS

SOFTBALL

What: Pacific at Cal Poly
When: Friday, May 11
Where: Bob Janssen Field
Time: Noon and 2 p.m.
Baseball

What: UC Davis at Cal Poly
When: 6 p.m. today and Saturday, 1 p.m. Sunday
Need to Know: Cal Poly (24-23) will try to bounce back from being swept in a three-game series last weekend at Long Beach State. UC Davis (20-25) will officially join the Big West next year. All games will be broadcast on 1280 AM.