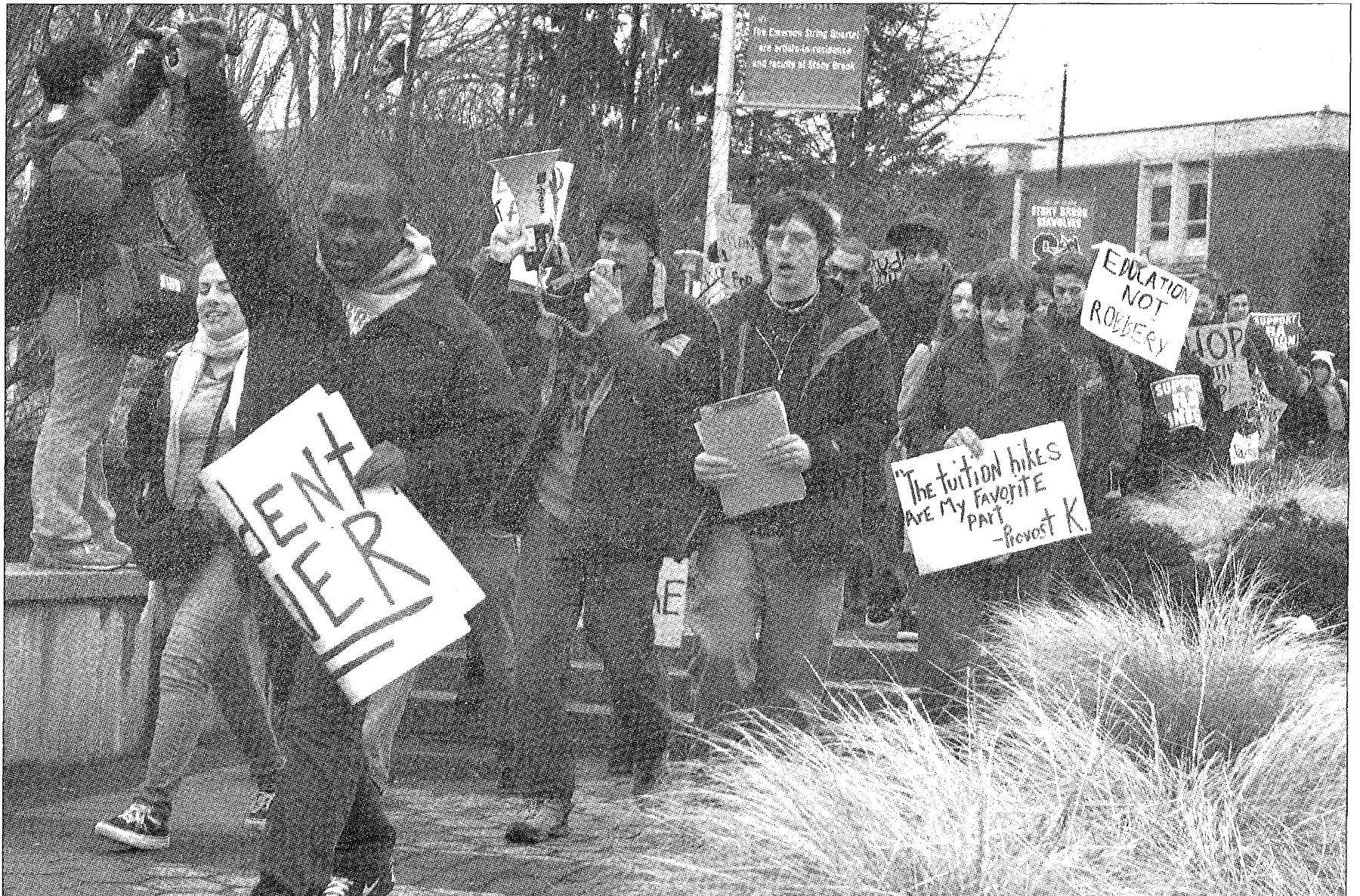


THE STATESMAN

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"Unified, Organized and Pissed Off" Students Rally Against Budget Cuts and Tuition Hikes



KENNETH HO / THE STATESMAN

Students marched through campus to a bus waiting to take them to the CEWIT building to interrupt a SUNY Research and Innovation Symposium where Chancellor Nancy Zimpher and President Samuel L. Stanley Jr. were in attendance.

By ERIKA KARP
Assistant News Editor

Riled up students congregated together outside the Student Activities Center and the CEWIT buildings Wednesday, waving neon colored signs rallying against budget cuts, tuition hikes and a myriad of other issues the SUNY system is facing.

Senior Mike Carley and about 20 other students recognized the problems SUNY is facing and planned the protest. Members from the Social Justice Alliance, College Democrats and Free Thinkers also participated.

Nick Eaton, dubbed "Chief Rebel Rouser" by some protestors, addressed the growing crowd of 50 or so students.

"We are unified, organized and

pissed off," he said.

According to Dan Melucci, associate vice president for Strategy, Planning and Analysis, the university is facing a budget gap more than \$30 million for the year starting August 2010, if there is not adequate state tax support, union concessions or tuition increases.

"We'd all opt for more tax support but in this fiscal

environment that is probably unrealistic," he said. "The unions don't seem willing to budge off a 5 percent raise in the last year of their contract. That only leaves tuition increases. We'd like to do that in as rational a way as possible."

In January, Gov. David A. Paterson proposed The Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act, which would

allow SUNY schools to determine their own tuition. SUNY Chancellor Nancy Zimpher and President Samuel Stanley support the act.

Kevin Young, a Ph. D. history student, believes that the act should be discussed in the SUNY community and in an open and

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Stalemate: Why nothing gets done

Many people argue and bicker about where they stand politically. Democrat or republican is a common answer.

A growing trend in America is that many citizens

are beyond fed up with both parties, and now identify themselves as independents or "unaffiliated." It is clear that many Americans are...

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Niyaz performs sold-out show at SBU

Thumb through any mainstream newspaper or tune into any news program these days and within minutes you'll probably come across a story connected to a major topic:

the controversy of affairs in the Middle East.

You'll be hard pressed to avoid hearing news of airline security threats...

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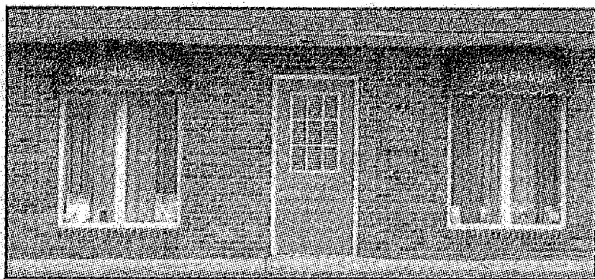
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who we are

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The grant has been designed to engage young leaders to work on and off college campuses to limit where and how tobacco products are promoted, advertised and sold, and to advance local and statewide policy advocacy approach to creating communities that support and reinforce tobacco-free norms.

Colleges For Change Programs focus efforts specifically on those aspects of the community and college environment that most influence tobacco use among young adults.

what does that mean?

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- ~Develop and implement policies that completely ban the distribution of free tobacco products on campus and at community events.
- ~Educate the colleges and local community about the impact of tobacco industry sponsorship and promotion.

2. SMOKE-FREE MULTI-UNIT DWELLINGS:

- ~Work with management of college off-campus housing to enact smokefree policies.
- ~Educate target audiences about the impact of secondhand smoke and benefits of living in smoke-free housing.

3. OUTDOOR TOBACCO-FREE POLICIES:

- ~Advocate with school and municipal offices and adopt binding policies, ordinances, etc. prohibiting tobacco on campus, local beaches, parks, and playgrounds.

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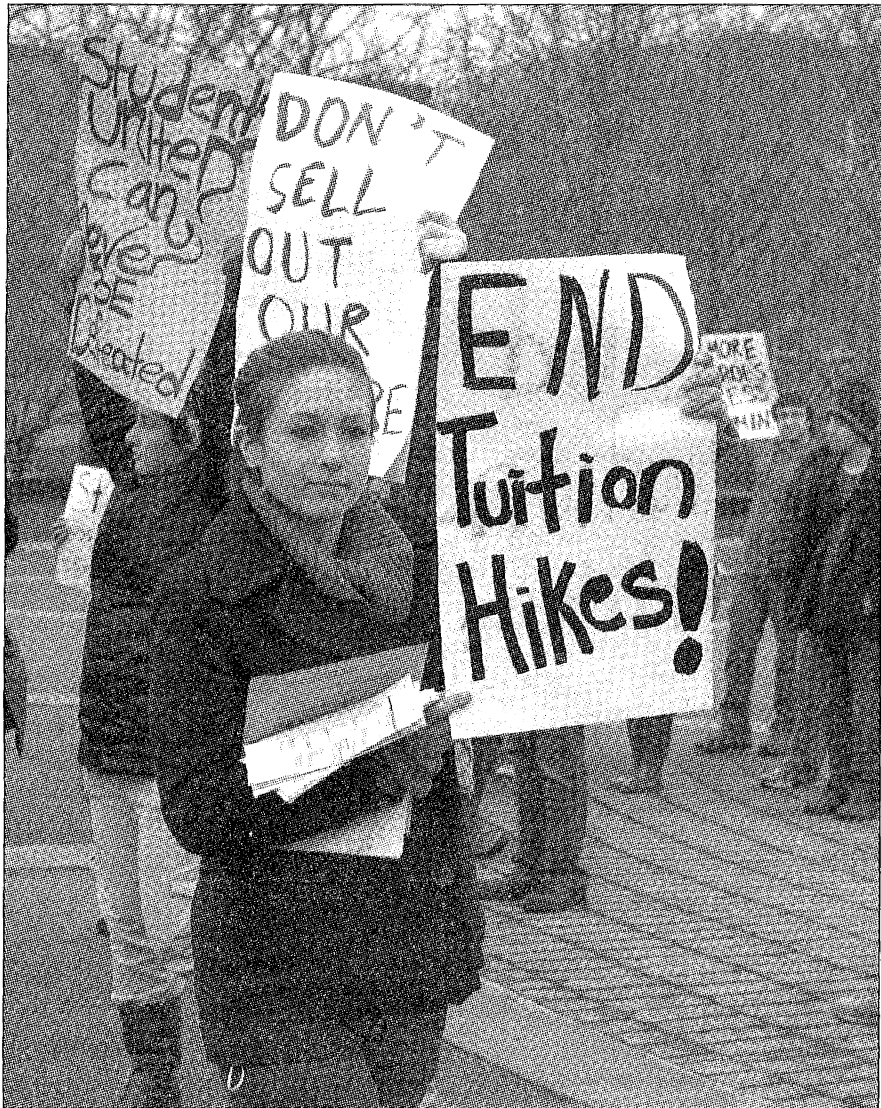
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Colleges for Change, Program Coordinator

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NEWS

Students Rally Against Budget Cuts and Tuition Hikes



From RALLY on 1

honest debate.

"The burden of sustaining SUNY should not be on the students," he said with a megaphone in his hand. "The state has that responsibility."

Jeffrey Akita, former president of the Undergraduate Student Government, preached to the students and initiated them to chant, "We must act now!"

"We must take back what is rightfully ours," he bellowed.

Following the speeches, the group marched down the academic mall to the administration building and boarded a bus to the Center of Excellence in Wireless and Information Technology, or CEWIT, building, where Zimpher and Stanley were meeting for a SUNY Research and Innovation Symposium.

After a brief discussion between campus police and Jim McAsey, organizing director for

the Research Assistant Union, the two busloads of students formed a picket line behind police barriers, or what one student referred to as a "free speech cage," and awaited Stanley to give him a letter expressing their concerns.

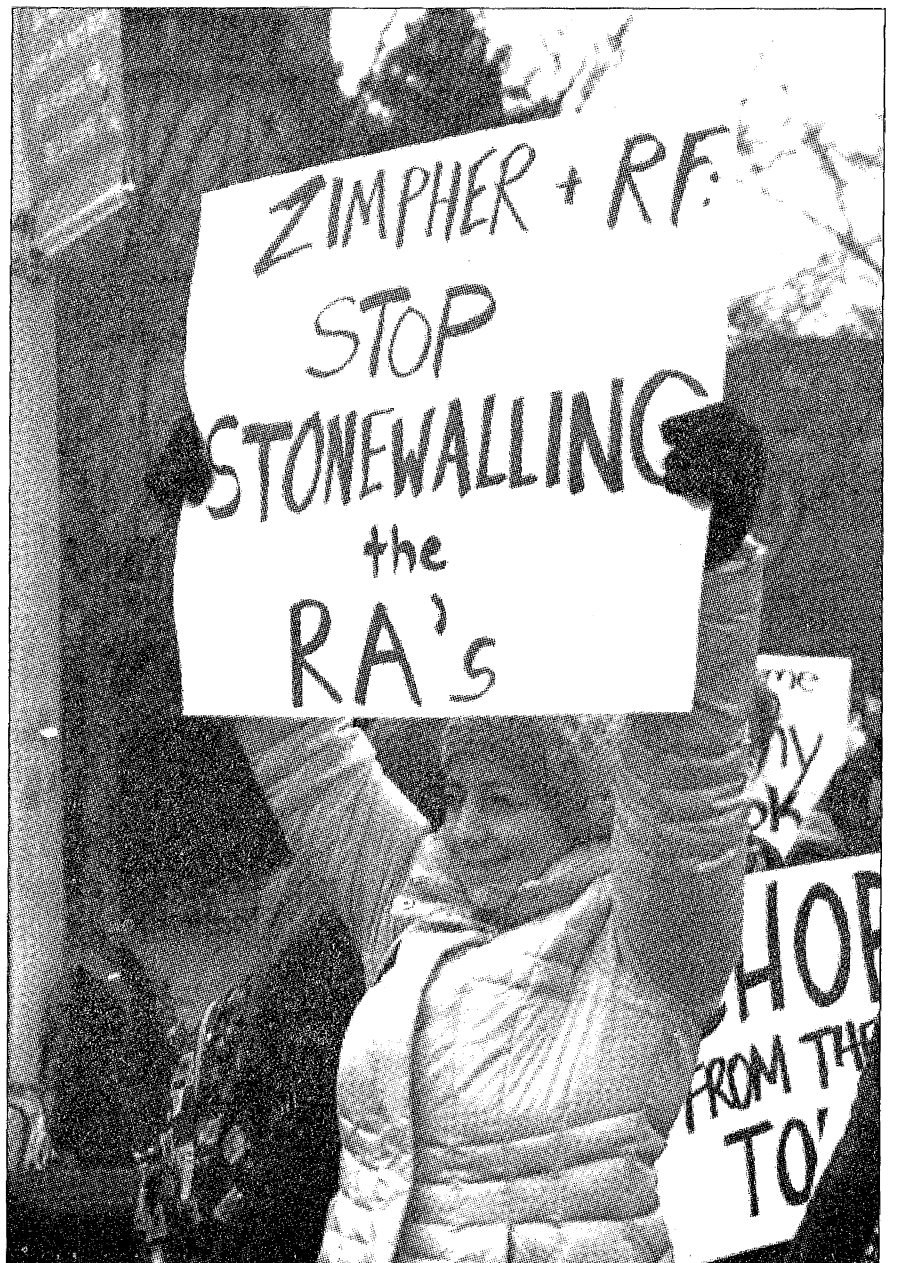
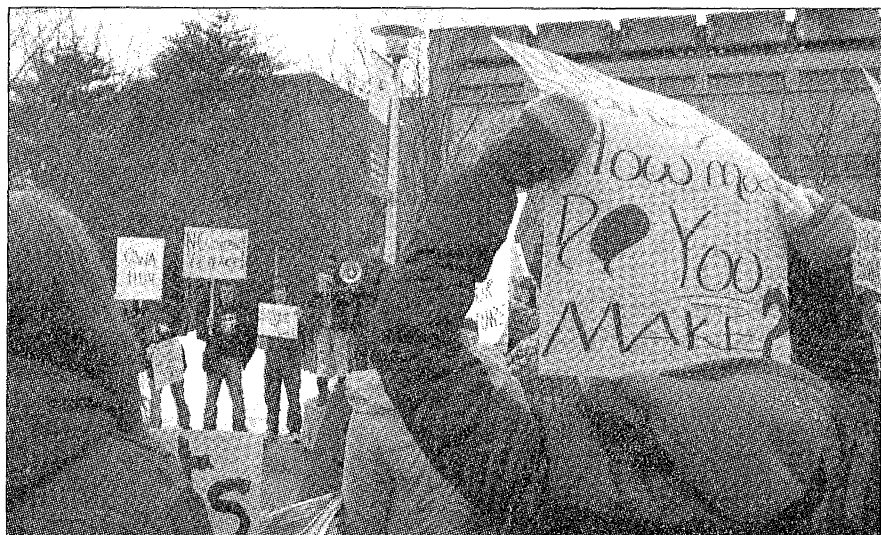
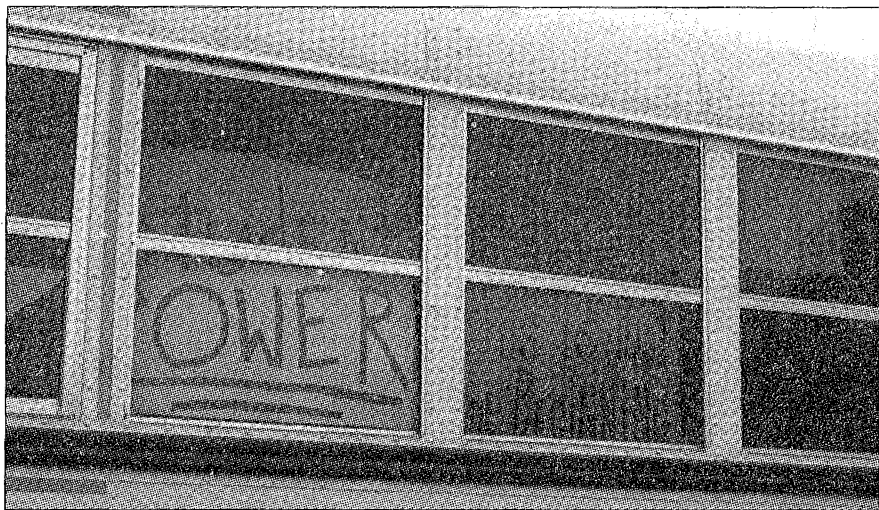
Members of the Research Assistant Union were also present, expressing their opposition against the Research Foundation, who they are bargaining with for a fair contract.

"SUNY is a victim of cuts because it allows it to be," a student read aloud on the crowded bus.

Students involved with the rally, seemed pleased with the turnout and those who boarded the bus to get back to campus in time for their 2:20 classes seemed to think that their voices were heard.

"The administration is coming out as a voice, accepting budget cuts as an inevitable solution," Carley said. "They should be a voice for us."

Jennifer Long contributed reporting to this story.



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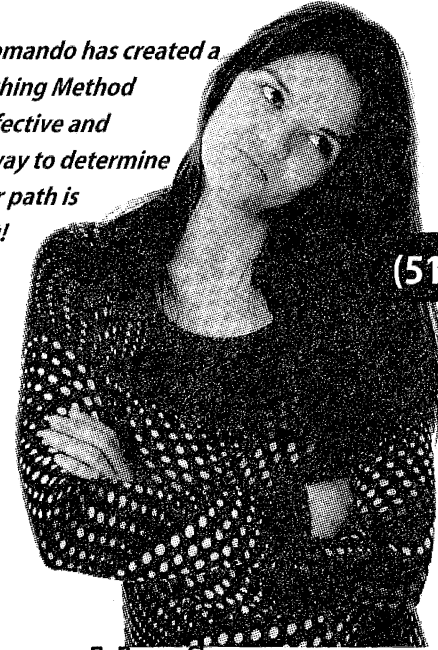
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SPORTS SPORTS SPORTS SPORTS SPORTS

Women Take On Binghamton Bearcats

From WOMEN on 8

But almost a month prior, the Seawolves traveled up to Binghamton and found themselves on the wrong end of a 74-58 decision. After holding a double-digit lead early on, the Seawolves let the Bearcats shoot themselves back into the game, allowing the home team to hit 54 percent of their attempts.

Binghamton's hot shooting, paired with Stony Brook's cold streak towards the end of the first half, led to a comfortable Bearcat lead. Senior forward Crystal Rushin's (Valley Stream, N.Y.) career-best 14 points were not enough to pull the road team within striking distance, and the Seawolves picked up the loss.

Now, the teams face off Friday for the tiebreaker and a chance to advance in the conference tournament.

Seeded fourth, the Seawolves are three slots

higher than they were predicted to finish once the season started.

Exceeding expectations has given the squad a little more reassurance heading into postseason play.

"No one thought we would be where we are, so that gives us motivation," said junior guard Misha Horsey (Wyncote, Penn.), "And our last win gave us enough momentum and confidence to do well in the tourney."

Last time out, the Seawolves routed the UMBC Retrievers at Pritchard Gymnasium, sending their seniors off on a good note with a comfortable 59-48 win.

"I think we're going into the tourney with more confidence than we've had in the past," said Jeter, "I'm confident that the team is ready for war on Friday."

The battle should be a good one, since the Bearcats will still have vivid memories of the beat down they got at

the hands of Stony Brook last time they met.

But the Seawolves are pumped up also, knowing that they have a legitimate chance of advancing.

"We can beat Binghamton again and I'm excited to play them," said senior forward Joia Daniels (Silver Springs, Md.), whose collegiate career will end with the next Seawolves' loss. "It's a bitter sweet feeling," she said about partaking in her final conference tournament. "I'm a little sad because it's my last one, but it makes it that much more important."

With their cups brimming with confidence, the Seawolves are ready to turn even more heads with a win in the conference tournament.

The ultimate goal is winning the whole shebang and getting an automatic bid to the NCAA tourney, but the first step is defeating Binghamton on Friday night. Tip off is slated for approximately 8:15 p.m.

Men Battle Great Danes

From MEN on 8

the lead for good. The Seawolves went on to win, 67-61. Freshman Marcus Rouse scored a game-high 17 points, while Brenton added 14. Dallis Joyner contributed a double-double with 10 points and 10 rebounds.

Still, Coach Pikiell appeared unconcerned with the difficult past.

"Every game was a tough game," he said. "Albany is a good team. We've got to play defense and play with energy."

Stony Brook is also coming off a 77-55 loss to New Hampshire, a chink in the mighty armor of a team that beat every America East team at least once during the regular season, losing just three times. Dougher and El-Amin combined for just 1-for-5 from three-point land, a 20 percent showing from a pairing that has hit a sizzling 46 percent from three in conference play.

Meanwhile, the Wildcats were on fire, hitting big shots and pinning the Seawolves back defensively.

Coach Pikiell said that while he would never want to lose, Sunday's game was a good time.

"They needed the game, and obviously we didn't," he said. "It was good for us to have a film session where we didn't play well. It was good for us to get hungry and understand that if you don't play hard, and don't rebound, and don't play defense, you can get beat by anybody."

But Pikiell said the Seawolves have put the loss out of their minds.

"We've put it to bed," he said. "The tournament is a whole new season."

Pikiell made it clear that the team will be focused on playing good team basketball this weekend, positioning the team for the long-term rather than preparing for the short term.

"I'm preparing our team for the tournament," he

said. "Not so much for Albany, or not so much for a player. We've got to pressure the ball, we've got to rebound, we've got to do the things that we've got to do no matter who we play."

The Seawolves will be looking to the duo of Brenton and Joyner to stop the likes of 6-foot-5-inch, 230-pound Albany forward Will Harris, who had a team-high 17 points last time out, and 6-foot-8-inch, 220-pound forward Scott McRae, who had 16.

El-Amin, who is 77 points shy of 1,000 heading into Saturday's game, will be tasked with scoring the bulk of Stony Brook's points.

Dougher will be supporting him from beyond the three-point line as he has done all year. The pair will be charged with stopping Albany's Tim Ambrose, who scored 12 points in the teams' last meeting.

The game is scheduled to tip-off at noon. Fans can also catch the game live on AmericaEast.tv.

OPINION

the stony brook
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WHO WE ARE

The Stony Brook Statesman was founded as "The Socolian" in 1957 at Oyster Bay, the original site of Stony Brook University. In 1975, The Statesman was incorporated as a not-for-profit, student run organization. Its editorial board, writing, and photography staff are student volunteers while its business staff are professionals.

The Statesman is published twice weekly on Mondays and Thursdays throughout the fall and spring semesters.

Disclaimer: Views expressed in columns or in the Letters and Opinions section are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Statesman.

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Stalemate: Why Nothing Ever Gets Done

By **ROBERT J. WRANOVICS**
Contributing Writer

Many people argue and bicker about where they stand politically. Democrat or republican is a common answer.

A growing trend in America is that many citizens are beyond fed up with both parties, and now identify themselves as independents or "unaffiliated."

It is clear that many Americans are out of touch with the current political climate in America. An opinion piece printed in the Stony Brook Press on Feb. 24 written by Brent Neenan, claims that one party should hold all of the power and intentionally not engage or compromise with the other.

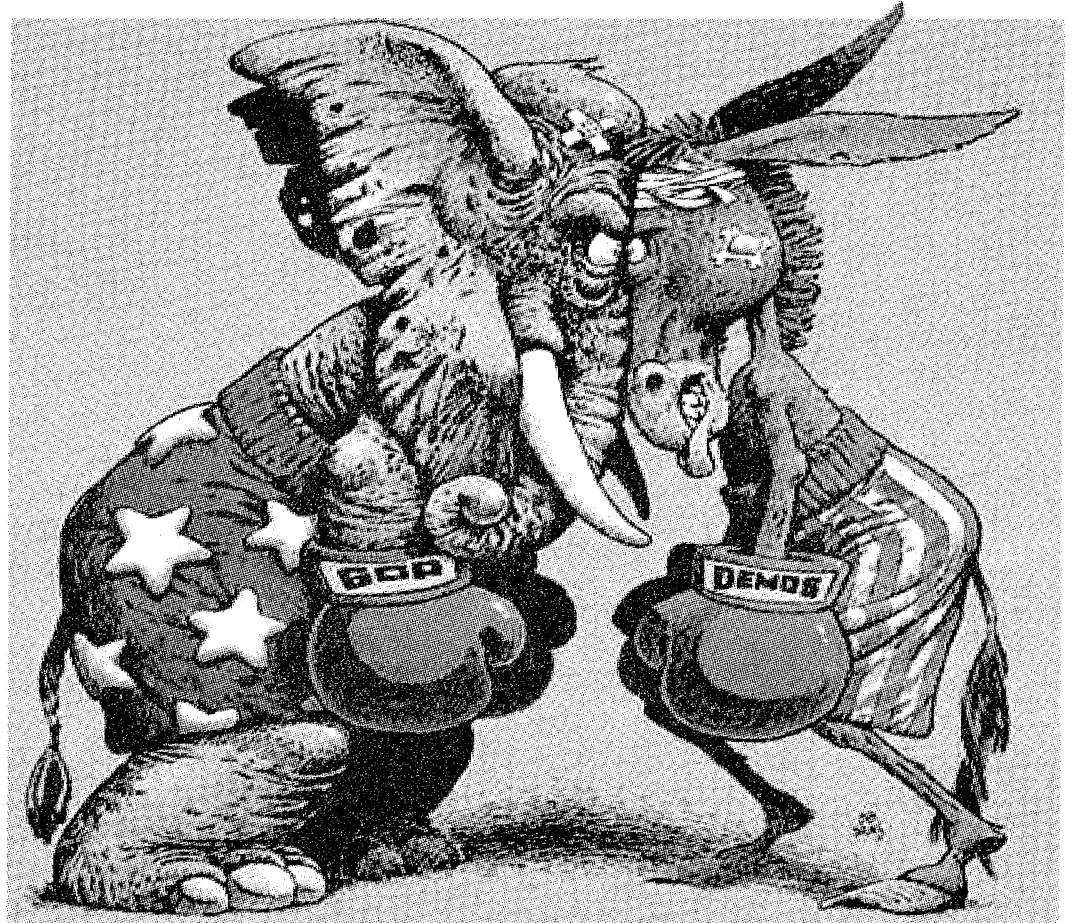
I'm just a writer, but doesn't that sound like a dictatorship? Does he not realize that the framework of our system was created to promote not smother compromise and debate?

Our country is labeled a Democratic Republic, not a Parliamentary Democracy. Neenan however seems to believe that we should be more like a Parliament and not a Congress. Traditionally, the parliamentary system has included strong party divisions and has major parties refusing to acknowledge the intentions of the others.

The executive branch was designed under a system that includes checks and balances. When the White House disagrees on something with another branch there is debate until a solution is reached.

This idea extends to Congress as well, that debate and conversation leads to a better outcome. This is a fundamental ideal of the American system. However, true progress only occurs if the parties are willing to stop squabbling with each other and begin listening to what the people want.

George Washington worried about political parties becoming too influential in American politics. It can be argued that he was correct. Parties alienate people and distract the population from getting what they truly need. They begin to put the parties' desires and agendas first over their constituents. Many years later, it turns out Washington



www.current.com

was right, and political parties grow more out of touch with the American people each passing day.

We elect them to represent us not argue constantly about their personal pet projects and agendas.

While Neenan believes that the current broken system should go unchecked, I strongly disagree. For example, many Americans don't want the current version of the health care bill, we all believe that everyone should have health care but a lot of Americans oppose the way that the current administration and Congress is proceeding with health care.

This is evident if we look at Massachusetts. A state that has historically voted democrats into office put a republican into office when Sen. Ted Kennedy passed away. This offset the supermajority in place and forced more debate on the topic.

Neenan seems to believe a party should simply strongarm its agenda through Congress and ignore any opposition. They feel that we shouldn't sit down and talk about

things to create a better bill.

According to Neenan's article the conversation between parties leads to a "watered down" bill. This same article states that anyone who believes the government should have a common purpose in mind is a "fascist."

He seems to miss the point that Americans generally are fed up with the government and the way they always get locked in a stalemate. This health care bill proposed by the democrats omits a lot of the things that republicans feel are important, instead of deadlocking, they should scrap it, talk it over, and decide on something both the parties and their constituents can feel a part of.

Here's a wake up call: not only did George Washington oppose a government where the power all resided in one party, he believed the opposite, that the people should have the majority of power in government. We are realizing today how destructive our system has become.

When there is no cooperation about a topic, it means that one

party simply has to have more senators and in a sense creates a dictatorship that can streamline any bill to whatever they please despite the concern of the opposition.

Americans didn't want parties to be this influential 300 years ago and still don't want it currently. Democrats and republicans are both guilty of falling into this mindset. Republicans were guilty of being too influential in leading us into the Iraq War, and democrats are guilty with health care. What is so hard about listening to the people you're representing?

It is important for us to continue to be the best country that we can be, this includes listening to the people and giving the people what they want. Though conflicts may arise, it is good to keep an open mind and more importantly accomplish things.

A person who cannot appreciate and understand what his political opponents want is in no position to be in Congress. This definition just happens to include a lot of our current senators.

Guidelines for Opinion Submission



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SPORTS

Tommy Brenton Comes Up Short In Fan's Choice Poll

By **JASON VAN HOVEN**
Staff Writer

His late-game basket against Vermont last week may have secured Stony Brook's first ever America East regular-season title, but it wasn't enough to secure sophomore Tommy Brenton (Columbia, Md.) the 2010 America East Fan's Choice Player of the Year award.

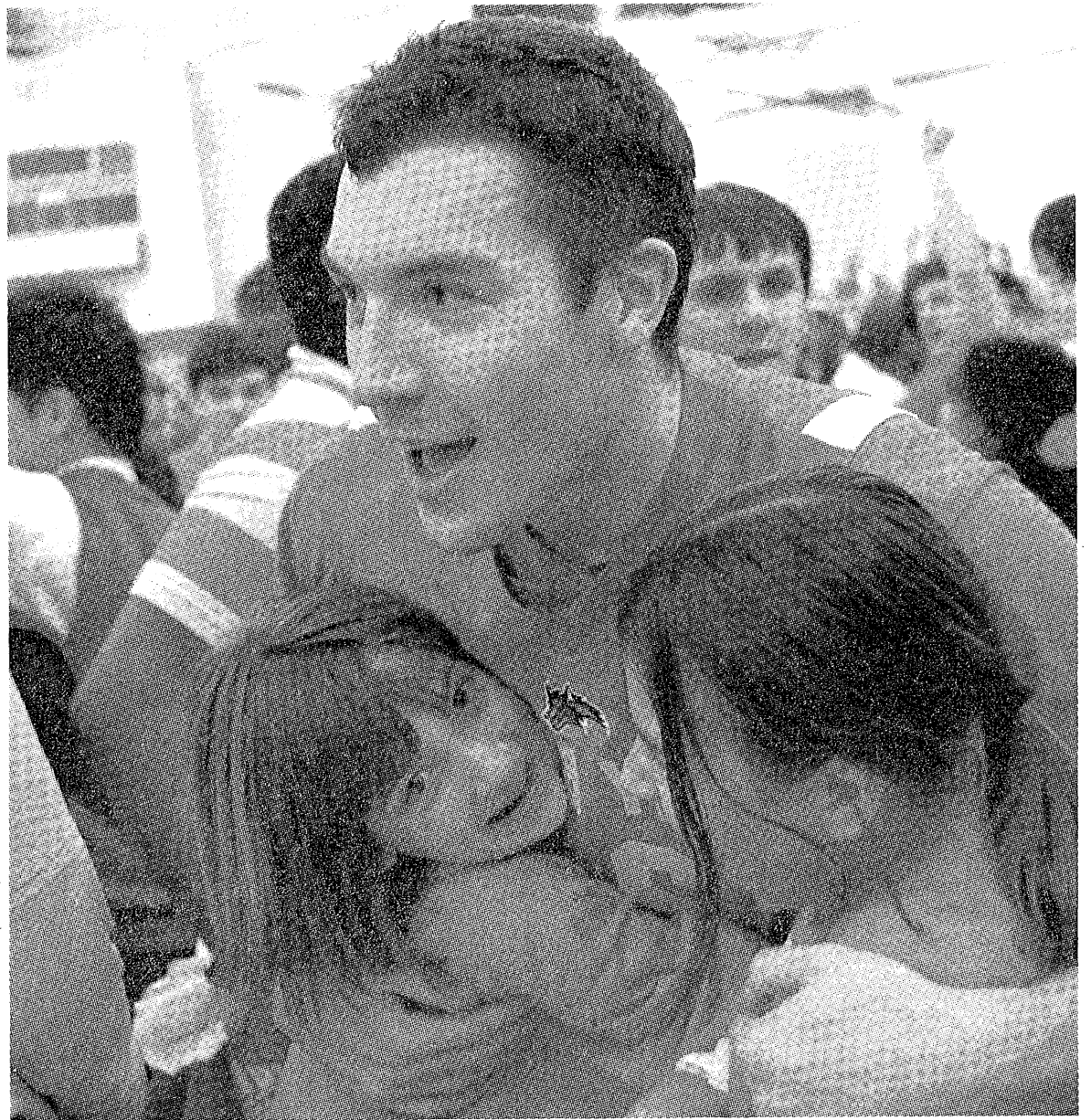
Brenton, who lead the America East in rebounding (9.6 per game), lost out to two-time America East Kevin Roberson Player of the Year Marqus Blakely of Vermont by less than one percent of the 3,500 total votes.

Blakely not only finished

behind Brenton in America East rebounding (9.1 per game), but also finished the season second in scoring (17.4 per game), fourth in assists (3.7 per game) and first in both steals (2.6 per game) and blocks (1.9 per game).

Although he came up short this time, the budding 6-foot-5-inch guard, whom coach Steve Pikiell has noted for his all-around play, still has two years left not only to sway the fans, but also to help the Seawolves capture another title.

"He's very unselfish, very unselfish," Pikiell said after the clincher against Vermont. "So, I'm pleased that we have him for another couple of years."



KENNETH HO / THE STATESMAN

Forward Tommy Brenton hugs young fans after the Seawolves clinch the America East title.

ARTS

Middle Eastern Group, Niyaz, Perform Sold-Out Show in Wang Center Theater

By NADER NOURAEI
Contributing Writer

Thumb through any mainstream newspaper or tune into any news program these days and within minutes you'll probably come across a story connected to a major topic: the controversy of affairs in the Middle East.

You'll be hard pressed to avoid hearing news of airline security threats, bombings and casualties on the battlefield – and it's often argued that certain nations get a nastier image than they deserve because of this. Many believe this is partially responsible for a lack of exposure of Eastern culture to the West – particularly of music.

Although it would be a terrible mistake to lump the countries of that region into one category and consider them to be the same, there are definitely some cultural aspects that overlap among

those nations. These common threads give insight into the epic ancient history of the Middle East, filled with conquests, discoveries, innovations, and legends whose stories have survived incredible lengths of time.

One of the most natural ways for these stories to be communicated is through art – both visual and literary – but especially music.

Fortunately, these stories are far from forgotten today, not just because of film adaptations and textbooks, but because of the material produced by some music groups – groups like Niyaz.

It's difficult to categorize Niyaz by labeling them with any one genre, which is by no means a bad thing. If any one word could describe the band, it might be something like fusion. Because this idea pervades almost every aspect of their music.

Debuting as an Iranian music trio with their self-titled 2005 album, they've been dedicated to

combining modern trance electronica with folk music from across the Middle East. In 2008 their second album, "Nine Heavens," explored this theme of artful blending even further by directly incorporating ancient religious, literary, and linguistic aspects into their sound, while employing instruments that originated from different areas.

They've been on tour recently, and on Feb. 25 at 8 p.m. they gave a sold-out performance at the Wang Center Theater. Simply put, the concert was extraordinary.

Niyaz demonstrates the remarkable ability to fully captivate the senses. Whether it's because of the quiet wonder of their visual effects, or the hypnotic rhythm of their sound, the audience member becomes strongly engaged with the performance.

There was an impressive lineup of artists: native Iranians and Niyaz cofounders Azam Ali (vocals) and her husband Loga Ramin Torkian (electric GuitarViol and lute), Jordanian Naser Musa (oud), Canadian-raised Gupreet Chana (drums) and American Jess Stroup (computer-based DAW and guitar)—an ensemble whose diversity in background nicely mirrors the variety of origins in their music.

Torkian's controlled Persian bowing on his electric GuitarViol (a bowed guitar inspired by a 14th century instrument) produced a delicately haunting sound that wove beautifully into the quietly passionate oud strumming of the humble Musa, who also performed vocals.



www.wangcenter.com

The Middle Eastern group Niyaz was co-founded by native Iranians, Azam Ali and her husband, Loga Ramin Torkian.



www.wangcenter.com

Niyaz's album, "Nine Heavens," was released in 2008 under Six Degrees Records.

Stroup provided electronic and digital effects that established a powerful ambience, as well as contributing beats and melodies with not only software and reverb but also with his guitar. And while the endlessly energetic Chana punctuated the melodies of his colleagues with strong beats on his doumbek and other regional drums (as well as being endearingly titled "the star of the show" by the others more than once throughout the night), it was Ali's vocals that breathtakingly carried the sound of the band.

Demonstrating both a natural charm and a beautifully distinct voice, Azam Ali strongly connects with her audience. Be it in the long, delicate opening of the old God-praising folk song "Allahi Allah," or the upbeat fluctuations of the traditional Turkish poem set to music, "Beni Beni," her vocals seemed to

gorgeously express a certain longing, which is pleasantly echoed in the band's name (niyaz means "yearning" in both Farsi, the language of Iran, and Urdu, a major language of northern India and Pakistan).

Despite their blending of medieval Persian poetry and folk songs with modern electronica music, their music is hardly anachronistic—it's more of a sophisticated union of timeless works of literature with musical styles from various regions of the world, somehow harmonized to produce music with such gracefulness and fluidity that just sounds right.

You don't have to speak Farsi, or, as Jesse Stroup said during their friendly chat with the audience after the concert, even understand whatever Ali is singing to appreciate their work. Their music is moving and beautiful enough to stand on its own as a universally

appealing body of art.

After the show, Ali said the goal of Niyaz is to create something that transcends boundaries, to marry the differences of various cultures that share deep roots and to carry these ties to other parts of the world. Several members of the audience stated how moved they were by the performance, exemplifying the truthfulness of Ali's words. Undeniably, their music had a profound impact.

It's hard to say exactly what will happen in the near future regarding relations between the West and the East; it's good to be realistic, but it also helps to consider the positive.

With artists like Niyaz around, you're reminded that there are individuals on the other side who hope for the best, too, and that different cultures may not be as distant from yours as you think.

Arts at the Brook

MUSIC:

Garnet Rogers will perform Sunday at 2 p.m. for The University Cafe's Sunday Street Acoustic Series.

The Staller Center 2010 Gala concert will feature performances from John Pizzarelli and Christine Ebersole for a night of swing, big band and Broadway on Saturday March 6. The

concert will begin at 8 p.m. on the Staller Center's main stage.

The music department's Contemporary Chamber Players are performing a concert Wednesday, March 10 in the Staller Center recital hall at 8 p.m.

ART GALLERIES:

The artwork of MFA student Nina will be on display in the Lawrence Alloway Art Gallery, on the first floor of the Melville Library from March 2 to March 19.

MOVIES:

The university's "Red Hot After Hours" is hosting "Double Feature Oscar

Movie Night" on Friday March 5. "The Hurt Locker" is playing at 7 p.m. in the Union Auditorium, and "The Blind Side" is showing at 9 p.m.

"Mid-August Rush" is playing Friday, March 5 at 7:15 p.m. in the Staller Center. "Coco Before Chanel" is playing Friday, March 5 at 9 p.m. The film,

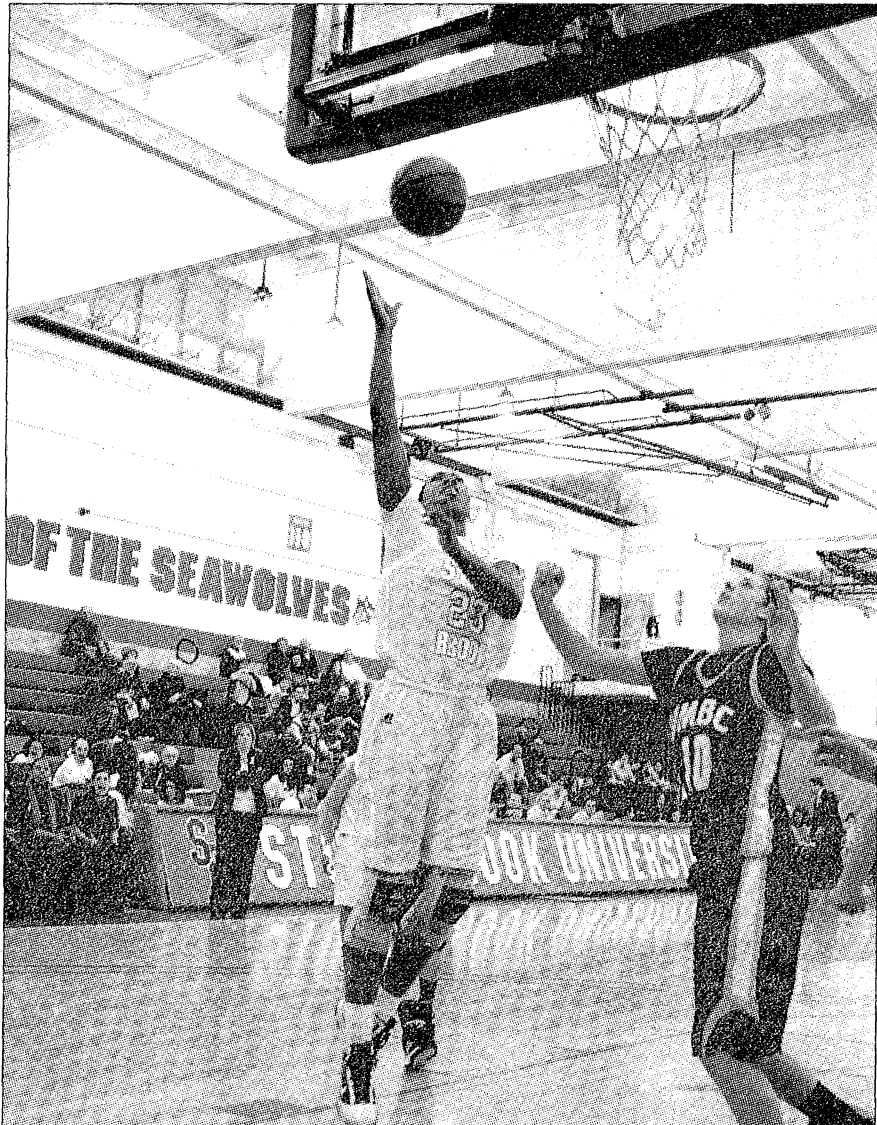
which features English subtitles, chronicles the story of the famous French fashion designer, Coco Chanel, from her humble beginnings as an orphan to her rise as a leading iconic fashion figure.

The Tabler Center for Arts, Culture, and Humanities is hosting a Oscar party Sunday March 7 from 6 p.m. until 11 p.m.

SPORTS

Seawolves Hoops Head To Conference Tourney

Women Face Binghamton



KENNETH HO / THE STATESMAN

Senior Crystal Rushin will try to extend her career with a win Friday

BY SARAH KAZADI
Sports Editor

It's time for the conference tournament. The brackets have been made and the nine teams in the America East are heading to Hartford, Conn., all hoping to win the tourney and punch their tickets to the NCAA's Big Dance. Stony Brook University's women's basketball team is seeded fourth, their highest standing since coming in second, in 2006. The

Seawolves, will take on the fifth-seeded Binghamton Bearcats Friday night.

The last time the two teams met, the game was less of a contest and more of a Seawolves clinic, with the team clicking on both ends of the ball.

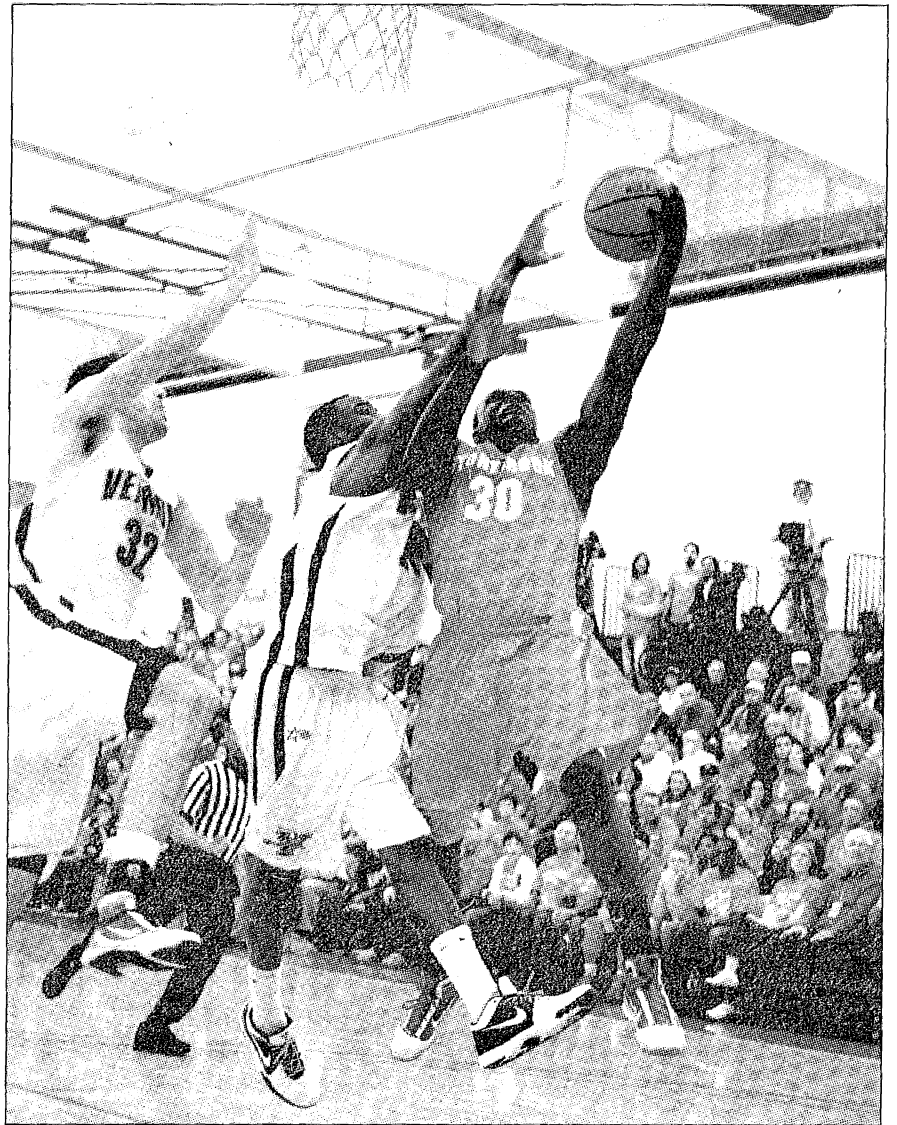
On the defensive end, the Seawolves forced Binghamton into 22 turnovers and tied a season-high 13 steals. Sophomore guard Tamiel Murray (Teaneck, NJ.) pulled down a career-high 11 boards,

helping Stony Brook to a 47-33 rebounding edge. On the offensive end, junior forward Kirsten Jeter (Elmont, NY.) helped the home team stretch a 30-23 halftime lead to a 74-60 victory by dropping a solid 17 points, 13 of them in the last 20 minutes.

The win helped the Seawolves stay in the middle of the pack in conference standings, giving them their fifth conference win.

See **WOMEN** on 4

Men Take On Albany



KENNETH HO / THE STATESMAN

Junior guard Chris Martin's strong play will be key to a Seawolves win.

BY SAM KILB
Assistant Sports Editor

"Bring 'em on."

That was men's basketball Head Coach Steve Pikiell's message to those who suggested that #8 Albany (7-24, 2-14) would be happy to play the tournament's #1 Stony Brook (21-8, 13-3), preferring the Seawolves to a matchup with #2 Vermont.

"Talkers and doers," he said. "I'm excited, our team is excited."

But a brief look at Stony Brook's history with the Great Danes, and one could see where they might be coming from.

The Seawolves' last meeting with Albany (Feb. 19) required a last-second jumper from senior Muhammad El-Amin, who hit from 18 feet with 1.8 seconds to go in the game to put Stony Brook ahead by the final score, 68-66. El-Amin led the team with 19 points, and Bryan Dougher contributed 11. Tommy Brenton grabbed 12 rebounds, but Albany

collected more rebounds, the last team to do so, 38-31.

This came after the Seawolves had a rough go against Albany in the first round at Pritchard Gymnasium on Jan. 24.

Stony Brook trailed the Great Danes late until a rare Brenton three-pointer put the Seawolves ahead with 4:07 left. Albany battled back to tie the score at 58, but Dougher hit a three with 1:08 left to give Stony Brook

See **MEN** on 4

New Statesman Blog For Full Tournament Coverage

statesmansports.wordpress.com

The Statesman's sports department is as excited as you are about this weekend's America East postseason championship tournament.

So we're going all-out, providing you with news and analysis on multiple platforms to make sure you know what's really going on in Hartford.

We've started a blog--StatesmanSports.wordpress.com--on which we will post

game recaps, photos and video highlights from Stony Brook's push for a bid to the national championship tournament.

Our content will stretch beyond what you normally see in the paper to full, multimedia content.

Of course, you can still pick up a copy of the Statesman on Monday to see how the team did--but you will see it first at

StatesmanSports.wordpress.com.

After the tournament, the site will be the best place to check for updates on all Stony Brook sports.

So add us to your favorites and check back often to get all the latest from Hartford.

The women's team takes on Binghamton on Friday, then the men face Albany on Saturday.

Go Seawolves!