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Graduates: Two degrees are better than one

There is a growing trend in higher education of students opting for two degrees, sometimes in seemingly unrelated disciplines.

Margo Harakas

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. - Amos Legrand Jr. is a man of ambition. In December, just 3 years after entering the University of Miami, he will snare a double trophy, a bachelor's degree in political science and a bachelor's in geogra-

phy.
"I think an extra degree gives you a broader education and makes you more marketable," says Legrand, 21, who hopes to get a job with the federal government or in education.

Legrand has made the most of his limited time at the university, packing 18 hours into each of his last three semesters and tacking on summer classes, as well. But in a competitive job market, he expects the effort to pay off.

"I think it shows you're able to handle more work than you have to, and that you can take on a lot of things at once and be successful at them," he says.

Legrand reflects a growing trend in higher education, of students opting not just for a single degree, or a major and a minor, but two degrees, sometimes in seemingly unrelated disciplines

Sue Levitt, a 38-year-old single mother of four and a junior at Nova Southeastern University in Davie, Fla., is pursuing a dual major in biology and prelaw. "It gives me an option to go to medical school or law school," she says, looking farther down the road.

Levitt lives in Okeechobee, Fla., and commutes two hours each way to the Davie campus. She's taking 18 credits,

with all her classes packed into two days.
"My day starts at 4 in the morning and I don't get home till midnight," she says. On scholarship, she's managed so far to

maintain a 3.7 grade point average. It's high achievers such as these, say the experts, who are maximizing their education with dual degrees. No one is tracking the trend nationally, but admissions officers note the upswing.

Albert Matheny, at the University of Florida in Gainesville, says, "It's becoming fashionable. It's like accessorizing your college experience." Of the 11,000 students in the College of Arts and Sciences, about 7 percent (or 750) are on the dual degree track, says Matheny, director of the college's advisory center. That's "probably a 100 percent increase in just four years," he says. "Part of the reason is that the quality of the freshman class at the University of Florida is getting really, really high. We have smart kids who want to break out of the box. I had a student the other day doing a triple major and it made sense.

Helping to fuel the trend are the Advanced Placement, International Bac-calaureate and dual enrollment programs offered in high schools. A high school student taking advantage of these programs can enter college with 30 hours of class time completed, the equivalent

See GRADUATES page 3

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UNIVERSITY ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY

N.C. State will operate under the Adverse Weather Policy Friday. Classes and businesses will resume at 10 a.m., but the policy will remain in effect all day. Under the policy, students are responsible for assignments and classes but cannot be penalized for missed attendance.

WEATHER

pened.



have been no different.

See WHITE page 3

Sunny High 44, Low 22

a lawyer in the future. Originally from

South Carolina, he attends NCSU as a

Park Scholar. The Park Scholarship is a

merit-based award that emphasizes

scholarship, leadership and service. Grad-

uating from the School of Science and

Math in Hartsville, S.C., White intend-

ed to come to NCSU and blend into the

But blending is not exactly what hap

As a kid, he was always involved in or-

ganizations in his church, in his com-

munity and on his school campus like the student council. His college years

White does not know how he got into

being so involved. He said he notices that

he performs better with "a lot of stuff on

his] plate." He admitted that keeping

his grades up and all of the extra curric



Tomorrow Sunny High 47, Low 30

N.C. State students woke up Thursday to a scene of crystal trees and frost covered grounds. Under the surface of the night's blanket of ice, however, were downed power lines, treacherous roads and fallen trees that left many in the Triangle without electricity, telephone service or a way out.

Meteorologists estimated that over a half-inch of ice covered the area Thursday morning after a midday winter storm Wednesday and a night of freezing tempera-

NCSU began operating under the Adverse Weather Policy late Wednesday afternoon before cancelling classes after 6 p.m. As conditions worsened, all classes on Thursday were eventually can

The closing came at a crucial time for university students, faculty and staff with final exams set to begin on Monday. Professors and students alike were left scrambling to reschedule tests, presentations, papers and exam

Across the Triangle, immediate concerns were downed power lines, impassible roads and fall-

According to a report by WRAL on Thursday, Duke Power reported that over half of its customers were without power by Thursday afternoon. Duke has

more than 2.1 million customers in North Carolina and South Car-olina. CP&L reported that 421,000 people were without power, 357,000 in the Triangle alone. N.C. Electric Cooperative also reported 421,000 customers without power, with 25,000 from across the Triangle.

Fallen trees and icy roads also put the Department of Transportation on Special Alert. According to the DOT Web site, by Thursday afternoon most inter-states and primary roads were passable but many reported icy patches. The main concern was secondary roads that continued to be hazardous. The largest prob-lems reported were debris such as fallen branches and power

lines.

The DOT urged all citizens to avoid travel if possible.

The best estimates for electricity range from hours to days, but most companies report that they hope to have all area electricity restored by Friday afternoon.
- News Staff Report





Student excels inside and outside the classroom

Wilson White, a Park Scholar, maintains one of the highest GPAs in his major and class.

Nicole Small

Guest Reporter

[Editor's Note: This article is part of a biweekly series highlighting N.C. State stu dents and their involvement in service.]

Talk about an overachiever.

He has been involved with numerous organizations and honors on campus throughout his four years at N.C. State: peer mentoring program, student senate, African American Symposium, Black Students Board, Society of African American Culture, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, (as a national executive officer), Park Scholars, Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, Academic Achievement Award, Kodak Young Leaders Award and AMANDLA (an association for young African-American males).

And he does all of this while maintaining one of the highest grade point averages in his major and class.

He's not shy, but he will shyly smile and evade answering questions about his grades. He does not want to be recognized solely for his grades and accomplishments.

'I'd rather people get to know me for who I am, not my grades," he said. "Everyone seems to only know me for

Some people may consider his grade point average as enough to constitute success, at least at the college level. Not him. To Wilson White, his GPA is just step in a staircase

White is 21, a senior in computer and electrical engineering, and hopes to be

The university's 'Park' family

At any one time, there are approximately 200 Park Scholars on campus

In 1996 the Park Foundation of Ithaca, N.Y., donated a large grant to N.C. State. And with this donation an inaugural class of 25 Park Scholars was es-

Named in honor of Roy H. Park, a native of Dobson, N.C., an NCSU alumnus and former Technician editor, the scholarship now offers 60 scholarships to deserving high school seniors each year.

The four-year scholarship is merit based and covers tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, personal/miscellaneous expenses and transportation for four years, granted the scholar maintains high academic standards and commitment to the program's overall goals. Each Park Scholar also receives a one-time stipend for a personal computer. In addition, two-thirds of

See PARK page 3



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U.S. asserts evidence of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction

said Iraq will report to the United Nations this weekend that Iraq is free of the chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.

Warren P. Strobel and Jonathan S. Landay Knight Ridder Newspapers

WASHINGTON — The White House said Thursday that President Bush has evidence that Iraq retains hidden caches of weapons of mass destruction, dramatically raising the stakes in the U.S. confrontation with Saddam Hussein and suggesting that Bush is preparing for war

Top aides to Saddam have said Iraq will report to the United Nations this weekend that Iraq is free of the chemical, biological and nuclear weapons and missiles that it was barred from possessing after the 1991 Persian Gulf War. But White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said Bush had a "solid basis" for U.S. claims that Saddam is hiding such arms from have generally reported cooperation from Iraqi officials in the early stages of their work.

'The Iraqi government has proved time and time again to de-ceive, to mislead and to lie," Fleischer said. He did not offer evidence for the assertion that Iraq is misleading the inspectors.

But a senior U.S. official said this week that, once Iraq makes a report that the Bush administration expects to be false, the United States will push for more aggressive U.N. weapons inspections designed to prove its case. That effort will be backed by more American intelligence-sharing with the U.N. inspections teams, this official and others said. First, U.S. experts plan to take several days or more to pore over what is expected to be a voluminous Iraqi report, looking for misstatements

If the United States concludes that Iraq is failing to comply with a U.N. disarmament resolution that passed last month, it could ask the U.N. Security Council to approve military action against

Senior defense officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that the United States could start an air campaign against Iraq even though an invasion force has not yet been sent from the United States. The ground force could be dispatched as the air strikes progressed, they said. Armor, ammunition and other hardware has been constantly moving to the region, said one senior defense official. "People are easy to move," the official said. Such an approach would be a major departure from the U.S. strategy in the war that ended the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait in 1991.

In Operation Desert Storm, the U.S.-led military coalition launched its opening air cam-paign only once it had built up a 500,000-strong ground force in Saudi Arabia. The defense officials said that a continual buildup of some 10,000 troops, armor and other equipment in Kuwait has created a strong enough U.S. force to protect the country against Iraqi retaliation for an air cam-

A second senior defense official said U.S. air forces would be greatly strengthened in mid-December, when there would be at least four aircraft carriers in position to launch strikes against Iraq. The Bush administration's plan for now is to let the inspections continue while ratcheting up the military pressure.

A British intelligence dossier made public in September said Iraq already was preparing to conceal evidence from renewed inspections. Iraq was continuing to produce chemical and biological veapons, had developed mobile laboratories for germ weapons production and was trying to acquire technology for making nuclear weapons, said the report, which was released by the government of Prime Minister Tony Blair, a key Bush ally.

The CIA has reported similar conclusions. The senior administration official said the U.S. government had more recent evidence that Iraq had attempted to deceive and manipulate the inspectors since the inspections re-

A U.S. intelligence official, asked about the claim, confirmed some evidence of what officials believe to be Iraqi noncooperation, although he suggested it was not a major transgression. "I wouldn't steer you away from the notion that there may be some indications that they're not being entirely cooperative," said the official, who also requested anonymity.

A defense official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said "the Iraqi denial and deception of the past continues." He said the United States had detected Iraqi efforts to hide parts of their illicit weapons programs. None of these officials would be more specific, citing the sensitivity of intelli-

A White House spokesman, also

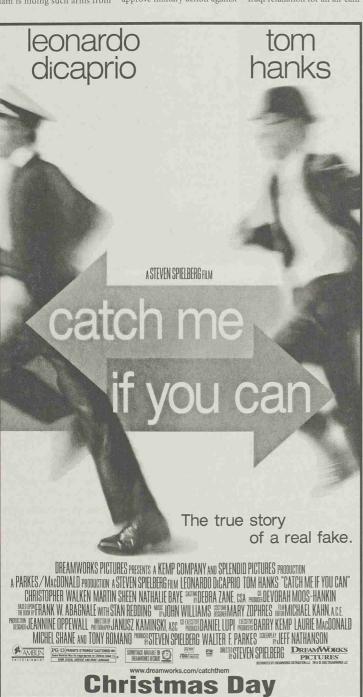
anonymity, cited what he called two troubling incidents so far. In one, inspectors discovered that missile-related equipment that had been tagged by a previous inspection team was missing. In another, the Iraqis led inspectors to an artillery shell filled with poisonous mustard gas. In the latter incident, however, Iraq already had divulged the existence of the artillery shell. Previous inspection teams had not destroyed it. Iraq is required under the U.N. resolution to report by Sunday on what weapons of mass destruction it possesses. A series of similar declarations that Iraq made throughout the 1990s were proved to be filled with misstatements and omissions. Top aides to Saddam, including Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz, said this week that Iraq would declare itself free of such weapons, but would acknowledge having materials that are "dual use" for military or civilian purposes. The same technologies used in making germ weapons are common in veterinary research, for example.

Former weapons inspector David Albright said the Iraqi leader appeared to have concluded that a new war with the United States was inescapable and there was no point in declaring the location of his weapons stocks. "The resolution was a chance for Saddam to come clean," Albright said. "I think Saddam has concluded that war's inevitable." Top U.S. officials said Bush planned to escalate the pressure on Saddam after Sunday's declaration by quickening the pace of military deployments to the Persian Gulf. U.S. envoys have been telling allies of the United States that Bush is likely to go to war and asking for their support, said administration officials, who requested anonymity.

Deputy Defense Secretary Paul

Turkey and NATO headquarters in Brussels, Belgium, while Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage is undertaking a similar mission to Asia. The White House is sending other top officials across the globe in coming days, including Deputy National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley, Undersecretary of Defense Douglas Feith and Undersecretaries of State Marc Grossman and John Bolton. It remains unclear when Bush will take public his case that Iraq is still hiding weapons of mass destruction. U.S. officials have said they want

to document an extensive pattern of violations by Saddam. The U.N. inspection team, known as the U.N. Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission, is required to present its own report to the Security Council in late January. Bush's top national security advisers, who met Thursday to discuss the U.S. response to an Iraqi weapons declaration they expect to be false, are divided over approach Washington should pursue. Vice President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld have led one group of officials in arguing that the United States is authorized to use military force based on nothing more than an untruthful declaration, according to U.S. officials and private analysts close to the administration. But Cheney and Rumsfeld appear to have lost that argument for now, officials said. Secretary of State Colin Powell has resisted their arguments and stresses the need for international backing. France and Britain interpret the U.N. resolution to say that Iraq faces "serious consequences" if it both provides a false declaration and impedes the inspectors' work.



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Aries
March 21- April 19

Today is a 7. Show that you have good manners and know how to be respect-ful. A person who wants to order you around may have some good ideas. Be nice, and soon you can go play with your



April 20-May 20

Today is a 7. It might be smart to spend a little more than you'd planned on spending. You saved up so you'd have it when you needed it, and that could be



Today is a 6. You can get your meaning across, even if the other side doesn't back up what you're saving, you'll even



Cancer
June 22-July 22

Today is a 7. Are you being lazy if you ask for help? Probably not. You wouldn't admit that you couldn't do it all by yourself unless you really couldn't Meanwhile, to keep costs down, make a trade with a friend for what you need



Leo
July 23-Aug. 22

Today is a 7. You're starting to feel over-whelmed, but you can outrun that feeling for another day. By then, you'll have found the help you need.



Today is a 7. Think you could check your-self out early, just for the fun of it? Take a break tonight, because it's gonna be



Sept. 23-Oct 22

played. Explain that to sideline critics

Today is a 6. You might have to make a mess before you can get the results you're after, but that's how the game is



Scorpio
Oct.23-Nov.21

Today is a 7. As you seek the answer to one question, you may stumble over the answer to another. So don't get tun-



Sagittarius Nov 20 C

Today is a 7. A silly argument could waste valuable time. To win at this game, you and your partner need to reach a ick compromise and remember



Capricorn
Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Today is an 8. You're not completely in the clear yet, but you should feel more in control of the situation. Because, of course, you are.



Aquarius
Jan, 20-Feb, 18

Today is a 6. Don't take anything for granted. Somebody who's usually there for you could be delayed. And don't ignore a person who's nagging you



Pisces Feb. 19-March 20

Today is a 7. Friends are a source of emotional support and good advice. You can share your feelings with these people and relax, sometimes without saying a word. Sound good? Set it up.

continued from page

ular activities can be over-whelming and stressful. He always wants to stop his extra activities and work because it bombards him all at once.

White looks exhausted as he says that he runs 24 hours of the day on "prayer and no sleep." He gets around four hours of sleep a night from about 4 to 8 a.m.

You've gotta study, but you've

gotta party too," said White. White's drive stems from his parents, Randolph and Wilhelmenia Wilson White. Both still in South Carolina, his father works for a lumber company, and his mother is a custodian at a local school. The drive his parents provide is what keeps him going and

"If they're proud, I don't care about anything else," he said. Proud of him is something that they definitely are.

His mother, who thought he was going to be a girl, said, "[White's] worked hard all his life ever since day one. I know he can be anything he wants.

However, no matter how proud his parents are of him, there are still going to be "hataz," or people trying to bring him down because they are jealous or upset with his achievements in life because they are not at his level, said White.

Obviously, White doesn't like "hataz," but in a way, he appreciates them.

He said, "they make me perform better."

Not to say that all "hataz" are black, but White feels that blackon-black jealousy is upsetting and

With him being black, they are the ones with the most impact on him. He does not understand why seeing a black person performing well and achieving should make another black person, or anyone, for that matter, jealous.

"It makes me upset," he said. He thinks they should be encouraged to do the same with

White's older sister, Tarsha Guillory, who wanted him to be a girl, admitted that watching White grow and be who he is encourages her to do well in life. Seeing what he has been "able to achieve in his short amount of time on Earth" is encouraging, she said.

Adriane Bowens, one of his White's past mentees from African American Symposium, agreed. She said White "always motivates me" and "never puts me down. He [even] sets goals for

White enjoys his involvement at NCSU because other people benefit from what he and his organizations do, and that is what makes him happy. However, even vith all that he is involved in and all of his honors, he does not consider himself successful. White defines success as "when my parents don't have to work."

This may be true, but his moth-

er is proud of his grades and everything he does no matter

"I feel great [to hear people talk about his grades because] I know I had a hand in that."

White explains that having a high GPA now does not mean he an stop whatever he is doing. He realizes that he must continue to work hard at everything he does.

He also does not want to be known as the "smart guy" solely because of his grades. He thinks that people cannot "equate intelligence with GPA" because it is "no measure of intelligence." He goes on to explain that having a

"4.0 GPA can equal stupidity"

He has learned many things from people with lower GPAs and has had many dumb conversations with people with higher GPAs. White said that grades mean nothing, but it is all about "who you are, what you do and why you do what you do."

As he sings "I'm Real" by Jen-nifer Lopez, and smiles his signature smile, White said that he wants people to know him for being "real." But when he finishes singing and gets serious for a sec ond, he said, "I'm going to be me. Accept me for me and respect me for me. I will never assimilate. You're [either] going to accept me for me or not, but you're going to know who I am."

So, who is Wilson White?

He is that guy you can always spot on campus with a bright smile on his face giving almost eryone he encounters a hug. He is that guy in the purple and gold that may be seen stepping in the Brickyard with his "bruhz" of

Omega Psi Phi fraternity. He is that guy that will do almost anything to help other people out, no matter how much work he has to do (just take a look at his planner). He is that guy in the suit at the career fair That guy in jeans, a T-shirt and Timber lands in the Atrium who seems to know everybody

He is that mentor from the African-American Symposium. He is the one you can count on. He is that guy from the library.

And, yes, that guy from the par-

He is a humble guy from a humble background who wants to make something of him self. He is a friend. And according to his mother, Bowens and Guillory, White is a "silly," "natural-born clown" who "will be all he can be.

PARK

ued from page 1

the scholarships are awarded to North Carolina residents; the remaining one-third is awarded to out-of-state residents. The Park Scholarship program

distinguishes itself from other programs through its academic enrichment activities.

The Park Scholars are challenged to make a difference in the world in a way that enriches and complements the disciplinary education they receive in their chosen field of study," stated the Park

Scholars' Web site.

"The program's magnificent resources also offer a compelling challenge: to have a palpable impact on the human condition through the leaders it prepares while making an important difference in the quality of the undergraduate culture at N.C. State."

The Scholars are encouraged to attend an annual retreat, a leadership seminar and a "Learning Laboratory I" during their freshman year at NCSU. After their first year, the Scholars are urged to participate in "Learning Laboratory II," a symposium, Service

Raleigh and mentoring.

Although the program is still young, with the first class graduating in 2000, the Scholars have already formed a Park Scholar Alumni Society.

Many current Scholars agree that once you become a Park Scholar, you become part of a family of sorts. Through professional development, service projects and academic enhancement programs, the Scholars are able to meet new people who have similar goals and aspirations for their future. - News Staff Report

GRADUATE

continued from page 1

of one year.

'That gives you flexibility," says John Barnhill, of Florida State University in Tallahassee. "Instead of taking freshman English or freshman math, these students can jump into more advanced courses in those areas, or begin their majors earlier."

Among FSU's fall enrollees are 2,830 students with Advanced Placement scores, up 22 percent from last year, and 154 students with International Baccalaureate diplomas, a 15 percent increase. Some students use the added credits to fast-forward through college, graduating in three years. Others, says Barnhill, decide, "I can spend the normal four years in college and get an extra degree." That's the case with Barnhill's daughter, Jennifer, who entered FSU with 39 credits. Her plan was to major in multinational business and minor in Spanish.

'I talked to a teacher at FSU who said why don't you major in Spanish as well, so I decided I'd do both," says Jennifer, who is one hour short of being a junior. She's now considering seeking yet a third bachelor's, in management information systems.

Certainly for the majority, the motivation is sheer economics. But some, drawn to the arts, see the dual major as a way to prolong at least a little longer a passion they or their parents view as impractical. They'll couple art with business, or theater with ed-

ucation, thinking the fall-back degree will provide a living until they hit it big on Broadway or at the MoMA. Other overachievers, with an eye on grad school, wonder, as Rita Duetsch of the University of Miami puts it, "Does it look more rigorous (on the transcript) to present a double ma-

Two years ago, UM had 1,131 students declaring double majors. Last year the figure was 1,239. That's out of an undergraduate population of 9,418. Depending on the university and the particular program, the number of additional credits needed for a second degree may not be that

If you choose your classes carefully, and substitute your majors for electives, "you can do things like this," says Legrand.

Carmen Sosa, an adviser in liberal arts at Nova, says that in some cases as few as 18 additional credits may be needed. "You need for one degree, and 138 for the second if you use your electives to fill the other requirements.

Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton has witnessed a doubling of dual majors in the past few years, 232 last year compared to 106 four years before. Among them is junior Michelle Williams, who is pairing criminal justice with political science.

"A lot of the courses you need to satisfy criminal justice are the same for political science," notes Williams, 22.

Like Legrand and Levitt, Williams didn't come to college with credits earned in high

school. Carrying 17 hours and working 11 hours a week, she may have to go an extra semester, but she doesn't care. "I decided to do both because I thought it would give me a good background for the career I want to go into, which is law," she says.

While the better students are

most apt to take on the challenge, even for them the extra load is not a breeze. Levitt, a former Tampa policewoman, concedes that without the support of her mother, her oldest daughter and her ex-husband, she could not possibly pursue her dream.

"It's a lot of hard work. I'm studying all the time," she says. "Those two days I'm on campus, I go to five classes. In between

classes, I go to the library." Legrand, who keeps his focus in these final weeks by envision ing the graduation celebration his family is planning, realizes had his academic appetite been less voracious, "I could be coasting

Instead, he finds himself consumed with two senior seminars. "They're very difficult. There's a lot of reading, like 100 pages a night, and a lot of papers to write," he says. "But in the end, it's all worth it."

Successfully pulling off the academic combo, says Williams, "re quires a lot of commitment and sacrifices." As well as organizational skills. "I have a study timetable, and a daily schedule. I find that to be helpful. If I were not organized, I know I'd be a lot

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Michael Mehaffie - Campus Crusade for Christ

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he undersigned faculty and staff of NC State University wish you the very best during this Christmas season, especially that you will come to know Jesus Christ in a personal way. If we can be of any help to you, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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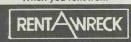
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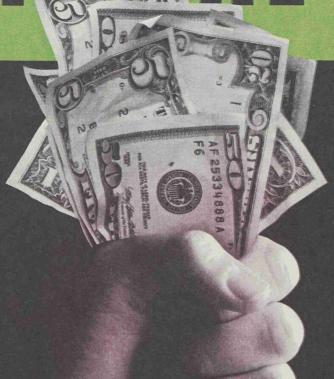
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Winterland wonders: What about classes?

Iced roads, power outages, downed trees
— it's no surprise that the university would cancel classes on Thursday and delay opening on Friday. But, when the decision is meant to protect the safety of those traveling, news of this must come at a time when it can be effective. In the case of the announcement of Thursday's closing, the university should have made a decision sooner.

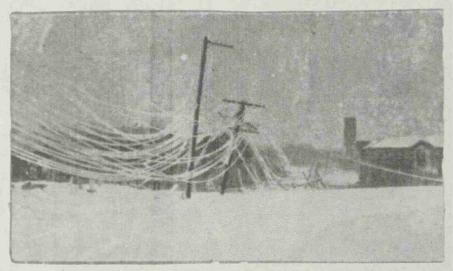
This week is important to many students. Typically known as "Dead Week," the week before exams is a time to complete final projects, presentations and attend classes for exam reviews and even new information before finals. The university is aware of the importance of this week and is probably delaying making a decision because canceling classes will inconvenience students who have papers due and final assignments — as well as professors and staff members

Wednesday afternoon brought the an nouncement of adverse weather policy operation for that evening, but students were not aware of Thursday's delays until that morning. Initially, classes were canceled through 10 a.m., and the decision to shut down N.C. State for the entire day was not made until an hour - at 9 a.m. This announcement did little good for those who have to commute from far distances, and with such major power outages 300,000 left without power in the Triangle alone - last-minute announce ments made over the home page and email do little good. Students feel the pressure to attend classes if school is open because of both attendance policies and the valuable information and review ses sions that can be held on the last day be

The university's reasons for wanting to wait on a decision are understandable, however, when the point of the action is to ensure the safety on traveling students, an announcement must be made sooner. Weather forecasts were predicting a bad storm, and although we did not expect it to cause the worst power outage since Hurricane Hugo in 1989, school officials knew icy conditions were a possibility.

Even Clemson University, a school in South Carolina where forecasters were predicting similar conditions, made an an nouncement Wednesday night to delay Thursday classes. The area did not re ceive nearly the damage NCSU did, but school officials were correct in making a decision in advance that would be in the best interest of students and others traveling to campus.

Fortunately, the university announced Thursday afternoon about today's delayed opening, hopefully learning from the controversy of Thursday's closing announcements, where NCSU certainly waited too long.



Snow covers power lines on Hillsbrough Street in 1920. Winston Hall is on the right. Photo courtesy Agromeck

Christmas questions



Michele DeCamp

It is the last day of class, and I cannot help but feel a little nostalgic. Another semester of classes has ended, to be followed by three hours of tests, take-home exams and for some lucky students, graduation. I am writing this column in between

papers, but I do not want to complain about my workload, because I know that it is probably very similar to what most of you are facing right now. But there is one thing that I did want to address before I conclude my first semester as a Technician columnist ... Christmas.

It is a holiday that is shoved in our faces around July, but I have the feeling that most of us have put aside yuletide wishes for term papers and all-nighters. I don't have a Christmas tree, I have not bought any gifts yet and I try to ignore the fact that the holidays have already begun as I serve my time as a college retail employee. I help sell Tom Clancy and Nicholas Sparks to poor unsuspecting holiday book buy ers every day, but I just cannot even think about the biggest day of the year.

I imagine that part of my problem is that when I do think about Christmas I will have to address the little blinking light going off in the back of my brain. So I decided to finish off the year with a confession of sorts, and perhaps through these grainy lines I will be able to come to terms with the drastic turn that my religious beliefs have taken.

My problem is that I do not believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Somewhere amidst Sunday school, conformation and my Catholic wedding, I stopped believing that a man once walked the Earth that was any different than you and I, and in some ways I feel guilty for taking part in a holiday that revolves around the birth of said person.

So now you are probably thinking: who cares? It's not like my religious beliefs really matter to anyone besides my family, but I see myself in a situation that I think is similar to many of the people that celebrate Christmas. Many of us celebrate it because we have for our entire lives. What would the year be without Christmas? No presents, no ancient Rudolph specials and no Santa. Even people who are not Christians in the United States still celebrate Christmas, because it is as much a part of our culture as baseball games and hot dogs. Hallmark puts out the ornaments in July, Belk has garland hanging from their ceiling in October and after Thanksgiving everything sparkles red and green.

I remember how weird it was for some kids to not be able to take part in elementary school Christmas parties because they had different religious beliefs. "Why can't Johnny stay and have cookies?" all the children would ask as some forlorn-looking student was forced to go the library while everyone else ate way too much sugar and received cheap, plastic gifts with their names written on them in paint pens. Is it a bad thing that so many people celebrate Christmas on autopilot while others do not? Absolutely not. But when you really think about what the holiday means then sometimes it is difficult to buy into the spirit of the season.

So I feel a little hypocritical as I prepare to celebrate a holiday that does not quite mean as much as it used to for me. I'm not sure what the answer is to my problem. I do not foresee a change in my

beliefs, since it took 21 years for me to get this point where I can actually pinpoint where all these doubts came from, out I am not sure what to do about Christmas, because there is a lot I love about the holiday.

I enjoy going back home to visit my families and watching their faces as I give them gifts that I hope will make them smile. I adore looking at a pine tree decorated with multicolored lights and sitting on the couch with my husband and watching "Miracle on 34th Street." I love remembering what it was like to be a child and hear "Santa" on the roof, jingling around in shoes very similar to the ones that my father had been wearing during dinner. All of those things are a part of my fondest memories, and I guess I want someone to tell me that it is OK that they are associated with a holiday whose ori-

gins I do not agree with.

I'm not looking for that reassurance from my fellow students, but I wanted to explain something about my beliefs, just as other columnists have talked about their political ideas. I am agnostic, so I believe in nothing and give everyone the right to believe in anything they want. I am the ultimate neutral person. Someday, I may change my beliefs, but for right now, I am pretty resigned to the fact that Christmas is a holiday that I will define for my own purposes, because any day that gives me an excuse to not go to work and spend time with my family is a holiday that I want to celebrate.

Michele wishes everyone a happy winter break, and she welcomes all comments. She plans to respond between finishing term papers and exams due this week. E-mail her at mlhagema@unity.ncsu.edu.

less is more

Kevin McAbee The holiday season is upon us, and that can only mean one thing: gifts. We will buy

them, wrap them, receive them, return them to the stores and eventually forget about them. This time of year is about giving. We want to demonstrate love, friendship and/or generosity with the physical manifestation of a DVD, necktie or scented candle. However, it is in this time of giving that most people forget about the concept of less being more

Certainly buying your girlfriend a bot-tle of lotion from Bed, Bath and Beyond does not say "I love you" quite like a pair of diamond earrings. Applying the "less is more" mantra in that situation just means you are cheap. Nevertheless, the power of other "downsizing" actions can reap tremendous benefits. Actions such as buying fewer thoughtless trinket gifts, using less ornate wrapping paper and cooking less elaborate spreads of food are indirect presents to the one entity that seems to always be forgotten over the holiday season: our planet.

The spirit of giving seems to always spill over and become the spirit of excess. Gift after gift pours out of the stores and onto the streets destined for immediate passage to the landfill. Though we have all received the not-so-great ones: think the orange and turquoise sweater buried in the closet or that d-ned singing fish. That means someone is buy ing this stuff. And with each crappy or useless present comes a box, wrapping paper, a tag and a bow. A few simple actions can quickly add up if all gift-givers combine efforts.

After all the excitement and gift exchange has taken place at the McAbec house on Christmas morning, the one constant is the enormous pile of trash found in the middle of the room. There are usually enough boxes, bows, tags, plastic packaging and wrapping paper to fill two jumbo garbage bags. Multiply this action by millions of families across the nation (assuming other families operate like mine) and you have a very substantial drain of natural resources.

The amount of trash Americans make on a daily basis is staggering enough without adding wrapping paper to the problem. Why not wrap presents in decorated, re-usable boxes or bags? My mother has recently switched to these They not only have prevented tremendous amounts of trash but saved her many hours of wrapping boxes that will only get ripped open in 3 seconds flat.

See MCABEE page 7

Postal elves mean hell on earth, good pranks toward men



McNeely

Ah, Thanksgiving: a time to spend with family, stuff stomachs, watch football and take naps. Yes, Thanksgiving is truly a time to relax and be with friends and family. Then morning the comes and instantly that Curri-

er-and-Ives picture of tranquillity is transformed into a frantic frenzy of packages, boxes and bags. Shopping malls and department stores open at ungodly hours, and the mass hordes of consumers head out in search

has begun. We all know what Christmas is all about: the birth of Jesus Christ. We all have seen "A Charlie Brown Christmas," where Linus recites the Christmas Story as recorded in the Gospel of Luke. We all have seen "How The Grinch Stole Christmas" and Dr. Seuss' revelation that Christmas comes without ribbons and tags. Yet everyone is so swept up in the commercialism of the season and having everything just perfect that Christmas has become one of the most stressful times of the year.

Malls have become pressure cookers of emotion waiting to explode. People are too serious about the holidays nowa-

days. They work so hard to make everything perfect that they don't stop and think about what the season is about: bringing out the best in humanity. Don't you think it would be fun to spread some holiday cheer by playing "reindeer

games," i.e. harmless pranks? I love to watch people in shopping malls during the holidays. It is hilarious to watch people so determined to get the deals and the hottest toys of the season that they will go to any lengths to ac complish holiday chores. Parking lots are especially fun. We have all seen people drive around in circles looking for a parking place because they did not get up at the crack of dawn to get an extra 15 percent off their total purchase at Wal-Mart or Gap. Just as they give up all hope, someones walk out of a store and heads for their car. Sweet victory! Someone is leaving!

But wait ... no, they are just putting their packages in their trunk and heading back for some more holiday shopping fun. Noooo!

Here's some holiday fun you can play on unsuspecting parkers. Walk out in the parking lot with empty bags and wait until you get a desperate shopper stalk ing you. Walk up to a random car and hide behind it until the poor sap just gets confused and continues his quest for a parking spot. Have you ever seen parents fight over the last Barbie or Elmo doll? Wouldn't it be fun to take the most coveted doll of the commercial shopping

season, put it on a fishing line and cast it out in the middle of a toy store and see how many parents fight over it? Then you can reel it in and watch the parents come chasing after it. HA, what joyous holiday fun!

And let's not forget those wonderful, courteous, hard-working cashiers who wake up in the middle of the night to open the stores extra super-duper early to get a jump on the season. They also are in need of stress-relieving holiday

Next time you go down to the mall to buy that sweater for your sweetie or the mother-in-law some nose-hair tweezers, pay for your purchases with pennies. When you get up to the counter, pull out a big jar of pennies and start counting out the total one penny at a time. When you get done counting out your change, wish the cashier and the people in line behind you, in a loud and boisterous voice, Merry Christmas! And to you Jewish folks, "Happy Hanukkah!" As long as you are polite, people won't mind a bit.

But the point is lighten up. Buying presents and throwing money away is not the way to celebrate Christmas. It is a time to get together with family and friends and share a cup of good cheer in the spirit of love. And you do not have to be Christian to celebrate Christmas. Whether you are Jewish, Muslim or anything in between, the entire month of

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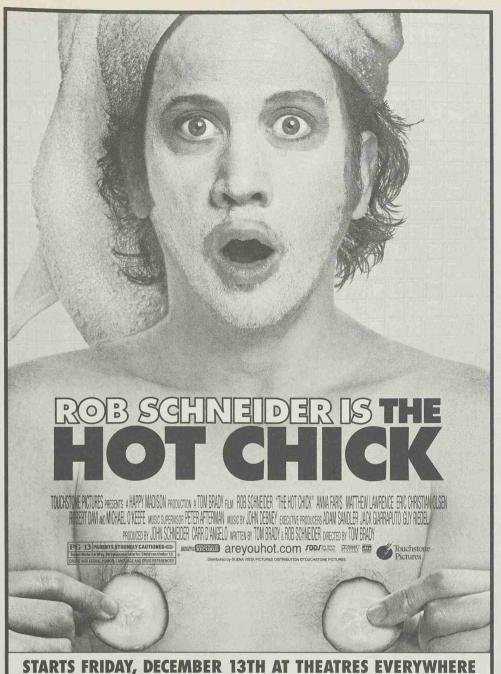
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MCABEE

continued from page 6

Sure, some of the joy in Christmas is the frenzy of ripping paper and digging into a present, but this should be left for the children. How many adults out there honestly care how well the present is wrapped?

There are many alternatives that can lessen the trash load over the holidays. Wrap gifts in newspaper that can be recycled, buy products that have less packaging and do not buy disposable products such as one-use batteries.

No doubt plenty of readers are scoffing at my scrooge-like, tree-hugging lamentation. Why should we care about this over the holidays, or care at all? Making changes like this are not convenient, sometimes more expensive and require more thought than just going through the normal routines of the holidays.

The point is that our actions will catch up with us. According to recycle.com, I have thrown away over 33,000 pounds of garbage in my 22 years on the

planet (based on averages). That is for one single person (contrary to opinions of the voices in my head). Now imagine the amount of trash that the entire country has thrown away in that same time span. Even things such as unused gifts, uneaten food and wasted electricity add to the problem.

The holidays are a wasteful time for a wasteful society. If we can all chip in somehow to lessen the burden the planet is taking for us, we will all be better off. Imagine how much trash will have accumulated by the time your grand-children are born. Where will it

We are a lucky society that is able to enjoy even more amenities than we need. Let us not cheapen this by being continually wasteful.

Nothing irritates Kevin more than buying only one item at the grocery store and then having it handed to him in a plastic bag. Tell Kevin he is wasting his time trying to save the planet at ktmcabee@unity.ncsu.edu.

MCNEELY

continued from page 6

December is a giant excuse to eat, drink and be merry with whomever you choose. Even during wartime, soldiers on opposite sides of conflict will come together and share some Christmas cheer together, even though the next morning they have to get up and kill each other.

Forget the Scotch tape and the wrapping paper for a while and call your long-lost brother or cousin up and invite them to Christmas dinner. Or bring a plate of warm turkey and dressing to that homeless man who sits

on the corner. Above all, chill out. Nothing has to be perfect; sometimes the best and most memorable Christmases are the most spontaneous and unplanned occasions. So next time you feel yourself getting an anxiety attack because the relatives are getting snotty, take a deep breath and chug a mug of eggnog and plaster a smile on your face. It'll all be over on Jan. 1.

Ben's holiday season doesn't begin until after exams. E-mail him at bmmcneel@unity.ncsu.edu if you want to take his exams for him so he can go shopping.

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BASKETBALL

continued from page 10

two opponents - Coppin State and Northwestern.

Next Tuesday, State faces another tough opponent in Gonzaga (3-2). The Zags have become the model for mid-major basketball success, becoming a staple in the Sweet Sixteen the last few years

Gonzaga's two losses on the year have come in close games against ranked opponents. The Zags lost by one point to No. 11 Indiana and then dropped a game against No. 18 Kentucky the next day by just eight points

Gonzaga is led by a sharpshooting point guard, junior Blake Stepp. Stepp is averaging 19.2 points a game and also dishing out 4.4 assists a contest. Sophmore forward Ronny Turiaf is second on the team with 19.0 points a game. Gonzaga also has inside presence with junior forward Cory Violette, who weighs in at 255 pounds. He is the team's third leading scorer (12.2 points a game) and leading rebounder (8.0 per game).

State will round out the month of December with games against North Carolina A&T, Fairleigh Dickinson, Wofford and Massachusetts before beginning its conference schedule with a home game against Virginia on Janu-

All these games will be key in preparing for an ACC conference schedule that is looking tougher than anticipated.

GATOR

continued from page 10

a BCS bid, but a 44-13 loss to USC in which the Trojans out gained Notre Dame by over 500 yards, seemed to seal a BCS bid for USC and derail the Irish.

Defense has been the focal point of Notre Dame this season. The defense and special teams scored all the touchdowns in the first two games before the offense got on track in the third game of the season against Michigan. Defensive backs Vontez Duff and Shane Walton are two leaders of the stingy Notre Dame defense.

Duff, a junior, is the only Notre Dame player in history to return an interception, a kickoff and a punt for a touchdown in the same season.

Walton earned All-America honors as a senior and is sixth na-

tionally with seven interceptions. He is also a finalist for the Bronco Nagurski National Defensive Player of the Year Award.

The offense, led by quarterback Carlyle Holiday, has been inconsistent at best this season. The offense has performed at times this season, including a 34-24 win over Florida State, but the season concluded with a dismal 109 yards total offense against USC. But still, a State-Notre Dame matchup would be one of the most attractive bowl games of all.

"We would have two highly ranked teams, and the television ratings would be very good," said Catlett. "And you've have the ultimate test, a great offense vs. a great defense, which would be very exciting.

On the other hand, West Virginia (9-3, 6-1 Big East) is one of the hottest teams in the country after finishing the season on a four-game winning streak, including a 24-17 win over No. 18 Pittsburgh to claim second place in the Big East.

The No. 16 Mountaineers have one of the best running attacks in the nation, led by running backs Avon Cobourne and Quincy Wilson.

Cobourne is ranked sixth nationally with 1,593 yards and has 15 rushing touchdowns

As the second part of the one-two punch, Wilson has rushed for 863 yards and has six touch downs, making them one of the best running back tandems in the

Although a Gator Bowl against the Mountaineers may be just as competitive and exciting for State as a game against Notre Dame, the Gator Bowl would choose the Irish if they're available because of the fan base and the national appeal it would bring.

WRESTLING

continued from page 10

wrestlers that abound in Division I, Garren stands taller and might appear to weigh less when placed next to his opponents. He uses his different build to his advantage. So far, his unconventional body size has paid off huge dividends.

In high school, Garren realized that his calling was for wrestling. He had been wrestling since he was in elementary school in New Jersey. As always, he was influenced by some of the older boys there that he looked up to.

"I played football and baseball in high school," said Garren. "I think more than that, wrestling chose me. I wasn't really big enough to play football and I just had a natural knack for wrestling, so I just went with it. Then schools started calling wanting to pay for my college, I though that I might as well take a swing

He might have realized his calling quickly in high school, but it took a year for him to realize how good he could be. Garren had won his regional tournament but couldn't wrestle in the state tournament because he had broken his collarbone.

'Guys that I had beaten placed high in that tournament," said Garren. "So I knew that I could be right there too. I just took it to the next level."

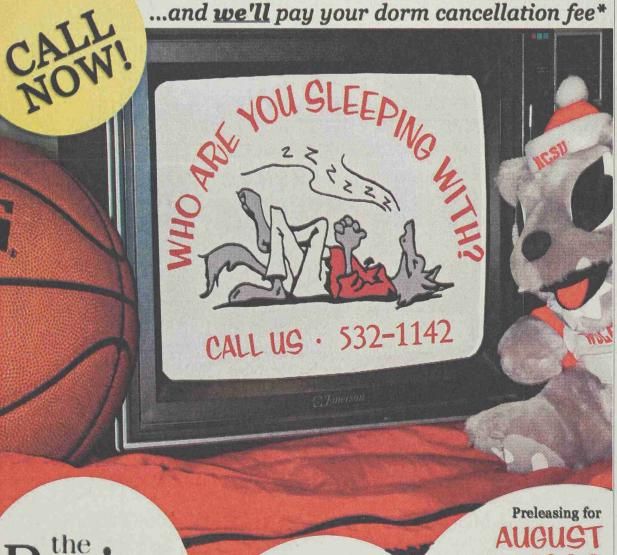
With his junior year just underway at State, Garren has plenty of time to turn some heads. He'll be wrestling 165 or 157 for the Pack for the rest of this season. With him back in the lineup, there are four ACC champions wrestling for State.

Garren, with one championship under his belt already, will be looking to get his second two years after he had won his first ACC championship. He'll be one of the Pack wrestlers who are going to the Las Vegas Invitational this weekend. He'll also probably expect himself to come back with another notch in the win column.

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The Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

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Wolfpack

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= TECHNICIAN

Tougher games loom for Pack

N.C. State will play several critical nonconference games in December.

Austin Johnson

For the N.C. State men's basketball team, things are starting to heat up.

While most of the campus will be studying for exams, State will be facing some of its toughest out-of-conference opposition in South Carolina Sunday and No. 25 Gonzaga on Dec. 17

The Wolfpack (3-0) played its best game of the season in a 74-49 thumping of Northwestern on Wednesday night. State forced 21 turnovers that led to 28 points in the victory. The Pack's press was especially effective in forcing turnovers that created easy scoring opportunities.

"We focused on our defense and getting opportunities to make easy plays," said the Pack's Julius Hodge after the victory. "We knew coming into this game that people didn't think very highly of us, so we wanted to come in and play a very good game.

State will need that kind of defensive effort if it expects to get through the next few weeks unscathed

The Gamecocks (4-0) will be bringing in a team that just missed becoming the NIT champions last year, falling in the final game to Memphis. Coach Dave Odom is in a sim

ilar position to State head coach Herb Sendek in that he lost his two starting guards — Jamel Bradley and Aaron Lucas to graduation. New players for both teams have stepped up and filled the void.

"I know South Carolina is a very good basketball team," said Sendek. "They finished the season last year as good as almost any team in the Southeastern Conference. At the end of the year, they were playing very, very well.

Of course, it's this year that concerns Sendek. And for State, sophomore guard Julius Hodge has risen to the challenge of becoming the team leader on and off the court. Hodge is the leading the team in scoring, assists

Junior forward Marcus Melvin and sophomore center Josh Powell have also been key contributors this year. Melvin is second in scoring, averaging 16.3 points and 5.7 rebounds a game while shooting a ridiculous 64 percent (9-14) from behind the arc. Powell is averaging 12.3 points a game and is the team's leading rebounder.

But a South Carolina team led by senior guard Chuck Edison and sophomore forward Carlos Powell will offer State its biggest challenge to this point. Edison and Powell are leading the team, averaging 18 and 17.5 points per game, respectively. The two players are also the Gamecock's leading rebounders.



Josh Powell and the Pack will face stiffened competition over the holidays. Staff photo by Carl Hudson

"I know just about everybody in the media has their frontcourt among the very best in the country," said Sendek. "They have a terrific senior point

guard. We're going to have to be at our very best to remain competitive on Sunday.

Fans can also expect a more up-tempo game from Odom's

team on Sunday. The Gamecocks are averaging over 70 points per game, nearly 20 more than the averages of State's last

See BASKETBALL page 8

Garren rebounds from injury to grapple

N.C. State wrestler Scotty Garren returns from an injury suffered nearly 20 months ago.

Jay Kohler

When the Wolfpack wrestling season began again this year, head Coach Bob Guzzo had to deal with the departure of two ACC Champion wrestlers. Pierre Pryor and Jason Gore were gone. The Pack needed to find a way to fill the void that these wrestlers left. Fortunately for Guzzo, the wrestling team had such a person who could step in and take over.

That person had spent the past 20 months on the sidelines for the Pack with an injury suffered after an outstanding freshman season, in which he won the ACC title in his weight class. That wrestler was Scotty Garren.

"He's got a very uncanny knack for wrestling," said Guzzo. "He's got an un believable awareness. He's very, very difficult to wrestle. Now he's going into his junior year. He had some injury problems the past year and prior to that, of course, maturity played a role.

"He's been a conference champion for us, then was injured and then red-shirted. So I think it's time for him to step up, and I think you'll start to see him get some national recognition. He's a very intelligent wrestler."

During his sophomore season, Gar-

ren had his leg twisted in a match. Garren says that he heard and felt something in his knee just give out. Instead of leaving the mat and losing team points, Garren continued and won the match. Afterwards, he would find out that he had injured his knee pretty badly, including injuries to his ACL and PCL.

"It's a long road," said Garren about the rehabilitation. "It's more on your mind than anything else. Your body, because you're young, you heal. Your mind, more than anything else when you're your out for so long, you've got to keep things in focus. There was a lot of help a long the way, especially with people's encouragement."

Garren's mind was definitely prepared for his first matches since his sophomore year as the team traveled north for the Navy Invitational. At the meet, the Pack placed fourth overall. One player for State, however, was able to win his weight class. Who was it? None other than Garren himself.

"We expect some big things from him," said Guzzo. "This was his first tournament in a year and a half. He's a unique individual and it's difficult for people to come back from an injury like he did and then he needed another operation. So he's been out of action for quite a period of time, first tournament he goes into, a national-caliber tournament, he wins. I think that says a lot.

Unlike typical short and stocky

See WRESTLING page 8

Gator Bowl opponent still a mystery

N.C State will play either West Virginia or Notre Dame, depending on the outcome of Washington State vs. UCLA.

Ryan Reynolds

N.C State's opponent in the Toyota Gator Bowl will most likely be decided by one game between two schools on the opposite side of the United States.

With the Big Ten's announcement that the Bowl Championship Series committee has guaranteed Iowa (11-1) an at-large spot in one of the four BCS bowls, the picture appears clear. If Washington State claims the Pac-10 conference title by beating UCLA, then Notre Dame (10-2) would be the Wolfpack's opponent in the Gator Bowl.

'If Washington State wins, the BCS would take Iowa," said Richard Catlett, president of the Gator Bowl. "So that ould give us Notre Dame because USC being ranked fourth [in the BCS standings] is an automatic at-large team."

When Southern California moved into the top four of the BCS rankings, the Trojans guaranteed themselves a spot in a BCS game. Thus, if Washington State wins the Pac-10's automatic berth by beating UCLA, Iowa and USC will fill both at-large BCS slots — leaving no room for the Irish.

If Washington State loses to UCLA, however, USC will win the Pac-10 championship, which would open up a BCS at-large bid that would likely go to the Fighting Irish.

If that happens, State would play the West Virginia Mountaineers on New Years Day, who finished the Big East in econd place with a 24-17 win over Pittsburgh last week.

"We're going to be in great shape ei-ther way," said Catlett. "We really don't have a preference. Our television network is NBC and they'd obviously be excited about [having Notre Dame].

No. 13 Notre Dame would be the more attractive opponent for N.C. State to play



Notre Dame will face N.C. State if UCLA falls this weekend. KRT photo by George Bridge

in the Gator Bowl. The Irish have a large fan base, and any game with Notre Dame creates a lot of exposure for both teams Notre Dame was been the surprise

team of the year after starting 8-0 before losing to Boston College The Irish still seemed destined to earn

See GATOR page 8

Place

Cincinnati at East Carolina Army at Navy Virginia Tech at Miami Toledo at Marshall Washington State at UCLA Arkansas vs. Georgia Oklahoma vs. Colorado San Diego State at Hawaii Montana at McNeese State Fordham at Villanova



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