

St. Andrews athletics will discontinue tennis programs in 2008/09

From: Staff Reports

LAURINBURG, N.C.—St. Andrews Presbyterian College will discontinue men's and women's tennis following the 2007-08 athletics season, announced Dr. Brian Mand, Director of Athletics.

"We will discontinue the tennis programs at the conclusion of the spring season partially due to a lack of on-campus facilities," said Mand. "This will allow us to concentrate our resources on the other 18 intercollegiate athletics programs and our growing number of student-athletes." St. Andrews athletics has grown tremendously both in terms of number of sports and overall number of athletes. Over the past five years, the department has added seven new sports women's lacrosse, women's golf, wrestling, men's and women's track & field, and men's and women's swimming. This growth has brought the total number of student-athletes participating in athletics at St. Andrews to almost 300.

The continual reevaluation of the program was heightened after the head tennis coach position became vacant this past summer, and the search for the appropriate candidate to lead both programs was unsuccessful. The Knights tennis teams will play out their upcoming 2008 Conference Carolinas schedule. Elizabeth Hernandez, Interim Head Tennis Coach, will continue to direct the team. "The players on both the men's and women's teams have made a potentially difficult role for me an enjoyable experience. I have much respect for the members of our tennis teams and look forward to seeing their continued accomplishments in the workforce and in the classroom," said Hernandez.

The decision to discontinue the tennis programs will not affect the department's coaching staff and only a limited number of student-athletes. All members of both squads have been notified of the college's decision. Hernandez will continue to work in her full-time role as Associate Athletics Director and Director of NCAA compliance.

Currently, there are 14 players in the tennis program, with four being seniors. In addition, four tennis players are dual sport athletes competing on other Knights teams. Of the remaining six underclassmen, three receive tennis scholarships and will have the option to stay at SAPC and continue to receive scholarship aid until the completion of their eligibility or be released to transfer to another institution to continue playing tennis.

Since joining the NCAA D-II ranks, the St. Andrews tennis teams have practiced and played all home matches at the Scotland Country Tennis Complex – located about two miles from campus – that is shared with the Laurinburg community and Scotland High School.

Paul Baldasare, President of the College said, "We will continue to hold a keen interest in bringing tennis back to our campus. As our resources allow and as our donors respond, we are hopeful that this sport will return after we are able to build up-to-date tennis facilities."

EDITORIALS

Hating Christ at Christmas

By: Matthew Peak

The Christmas season has come upon us again and each year, there is the expected mad rush to department stores and traveling across states for holiday visits. Retailers count their profits, hosts count the number of chairs they will need and people take Alka-seltzer to deal with the credit card debts.

Something else happens as well. The country's left step out and directly challenge the religious nature of Christmas in public and in schools. Instead of saying "Merry Christmas," people are called to task and asked to say "Happy Holiday." Snowmen and Santa are welcomed, but a babe in a manger is not. The left claims that Christian symbols of the holiday produce in atheists, Jews, Muslims and others a feeling of being "excluded," and a victim of public discrimination.

There is something deeper going on here. Why would the name of Jesus Christ, with Christ being the root of the word Christmas, and a babe in a manger leave such an offensive taste in the mouths of organizations like the ACLU? Looking at the traditional biblical quote for the season is taken from the King James Version of the Bible; it does not seem that any sort of threat could be conjured.

"Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you a baby is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:10-14).

As harmless as this passage is, atheists and pagans come out in droves and say, "We are offended, we are being excluded." They want Christmas to become just a Winter Holiday. This is not about equality or diversity or some lofty goal to ensure that no one feels excluded. Such a sterile answer would be easy to deal with.

This is about Christ Himself.

One of the most audacious claims that Jesus made was that He was God in the flesh.

"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. Then took they up stones to cast at him" (John 8:56-58).

When Jesus was talking to His disciples, one of them made a simple request.

Philip said, "Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (John 14:8-9).

If I were to walk around and say, "If you've seen me, you've seen the Father," people would know that I was claiming to be God in the flesh and would rightly lock me up in a mental health institute.

This is why other religions are heartily welcomed and embraced. They are safe belief systems. Mohammed was a mere human. In pagan religions, gods are ultimately a spiritual creation by mere humans. In atheism, there simply is no deity at all, there are only humans. In Christianity, though, there is one God and

that God came into this world and became a human and that idea is anathema to people.

If God was capable of becoming a human, suffering and dying for us and then resurrecting, it would mean that He was capable of interfering in the affairs of humans. It would mean that He rules this world as its creator and Lord and King. The very thought that humans do not rule themselves pricks the pride and enflames defiance.

To see baby Jesus in a manger is more than just seeing a really special person who is going to grow up and do some really great tasks for people. To see the babe in the manger is to come face to face with God, who is not only affecting our world, but is intimately close to each and every person. His infinite authority over our finite lives is the very thing that people want to flee from when they want to snuff out Christ from Christmas.

The fact cannot be changed that God has come into our world to show us Himself face to face. For those who love Him, this is exciting. For those who loath Him, there is historical revision, theological redefinition, postmodernist ambiguity and outright rejection of belief.

This Christmas, I will do more than just open presents, decorate trees and sing carols. I will celebrate the incredible fact that my Creator cared enough for me to show Himself face to face and allows me to talk to Him as one talks to a friend.

For those who do not want to look upon the face of God, I feel for them. It will be a lonely Christmas.

Blithe Spirit

A review by: Alicia Toke

Blithe Spirit by Noel Coward was a recent production here at St. Andrews. It was performed by the Highland Players on November 15-18. The performers were: Nathaniel Jones, Andrew Maginn, Greta Friesen, Laura McDowell, Emily Thigpin, Marie Hamilton, and Jen Rash.

Blithe Spirit is a play about a writer who is researching psychics for his new book. The psychic performs a séance with the writer, his wife, and his two friends. Little does the writer know, that his dead wife was summoned and comes back to haunt him and his second wife.

Noel Coward's, *Blithe Spirit* was a hilarious play to watch, with the actors performing

each role perfectly. The characters were played so that each one of them was believable. The audience could truly connect with the characters, and that is impart to the wonderful acting abilities of the Highland Players. I can not wait for the next play that will be coming in January.



Blithe Spirit Photo courtesy of Rooney Coffman