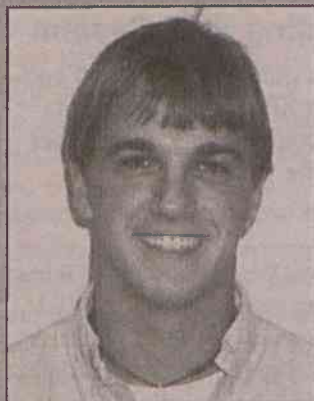
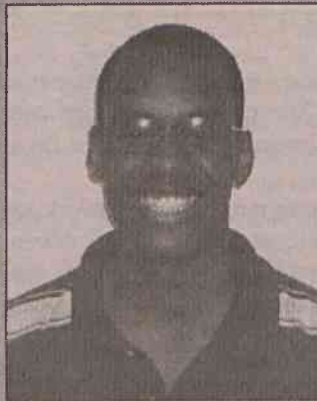


SGA announces winners of freshman elections



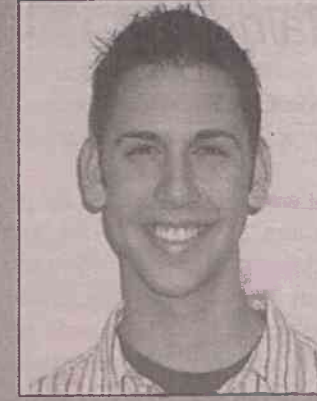
Stephen A. Dahlem Jr.
President



Michael Bumbry
Vice President



Ashley Codianni
Treasurer



Brian Carroll
Secretary

FRESHMAN CLASS SENATORS:

Jen Budd, Ann Fitzgerald, Clifton Johnson, LeBron Saulter and LaToya Smalls

Panelists optimistic for NCAA reform

Colin Donohue

Editor-in-Chief

National Collegiate Athletics Association President Myles Brand and five of his distinguished peers voiced their deepening concern about the integrity of intercollegiate athletics during a panel discussion last Thursday in McCrary Theatre.

The panel, led by William Friday, president emeritus of the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, included Kay Yow, Len Elmore, Thomas Hearn and Danny Morrison. While the panelists recognized the ever-growing importance of reform, they tempered their comments with streaks of optimism about the direction of college athletics.

"I'm optimistic," Brand said, "but I'm not blindly and naively optimistic. It will not be easy, and it will never be perfect."

In an attempt to reform the landscape of intercollegiate athletics, the Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics — chaired by Friday — was formed and has released two reports, the most recent in 2001. Its primary goals were to quell academic transgressions, eliminate financial inequities and prevent excessive commercialization.

The 2001 report led to the calculated formation of the "one-plus-three" model that called for a coalition of university presidents and chancellors to expedite academic change. The panel found academic standards for college athletics to be of greatest concern.

"We have to take a look at the execution," said Elmore, a former basketball standout at the University of Maryland. "I think the rhetoric is in the right direction. We need to make young students know there are expectations of them off the field. (There needs to be) an advocacy of what's right ... what's good about education."

Hearn, president of Wake Forest University, mentioned that college sports are quickly gaining a reputation among high school athletes as being a developmental league, serving only to catalyze their move to the professional ranks.

"There's a major cultural war going on in this country," Hearn said. "There used to be a clear expectation that sports was good for young people, and college was the summation."

"Professional sports are a different culture. It's about money. Kids are looking at college as the first step into the business world."

Rather than relying on unrepre-

sentative SAT scores, Brand said the NCAA has decided to focus more on high school course work by increasing the number of required core courses from 13 to 16.

Brand also mentioned that under the new guidelines, universities will become more accountable for the success of the athletes in the classroom.

"We're starting a system of incentives and disincentives," Brand said. "If an athlete does not succeed, we'll warn (an institution) at first. If that doesn't work, we'll take some scholarships. If that doesn't work, we'll take out the 2x4 and talk about post-season play."

Elmore expressed discontent with the subjective focus on high school classes.

"To put the onus totally on core courses is a mistake," Elmore said. "The curriculums are failing kids, particularly disadvantaged kids. The direction we're going in is strong, but we need objective standards."

Elmore also added that academic fraud does exist in high schools, and teachers of prized athletes may hesitate to fail them.

"I'd hate to see us bring someone in (to a university) with high hopes and promises and jettison



Jeff Heyer / Photo Editor

Wake Forest President Thomas Hearn and Elon Basketball Coach Ernie Nestor at last Thursday's discussion on college athletic reform.

them out because they can't comply," he said.

According to the panel, the over-commercialization of college athletics has permeated the psyches of young athletes and caused them to place secondary importance on education.

"Commercialization gets a bad name because of its excess," said Morrison, commissioner of the Southern Conference. "It's vital at our level. Commercialization is not necessarily inherently bad, unless it's excessive."

Elmore, a television analyst for ESPN, said he believes the move away from commercialization will continue at a slow pace.

"Whenever that carrot is dangled in front of you, you're going to chase it," Elmore said. "It's still about the almighty dollar. The dollar is calling the shot, as opposed to principles calling the shot."

Hearn said he has a positive outlook for the state of college sports, and steadily, it will continue to improve.

"It's hard to imagine anything that gives us more passion, energy and entertainment than college sports," Hearn said. "It's important that we protect (intercollegiate athletics) integrity."

Contact Colin Donohue at pendulum@elon.edu or 278-7247.