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Taheri-Azar to plead not guilty

PIT ATTACKER ACCEPTS DEFENDER, PREPS FOR ARRAIGNMENT

BY SHANNAN BOWEN
INVESTIGATIVE TEAM EDITOR

HILLSBOROUGH — The UNC alumnus accused of injuring people to avenge deaths of Muslims is expected to enter a plea of not guilty at his Dec. 12 arraignment.

Mohammad Taheri-Azar withdrew a previous court statement at a pre-trial hearing Tuesday and told Orange County Superior Court Judge Carl Fox that he will keep his court-appointed attorney.

Fox told Taheri-Azar at the June hearing that he would have to be deemed competent by psychological evaluations if he wanted to represent himself.

James Williams, Taheri-Azar's public defender, said Tuesday that Taheri-Azar is psychologically competent, but that he still is being evaluated.

"At this point we are not raising questions of competency," Williams said, adding that Taheri-

Azar was not in a position to assess his mental state or the conclusions from his evaluation during the pre-trial hearing.

A date has not been set, but the trial could begin as early as April.

"His case is next scheduled for arraignment in December," Williams said. "At that time, I anticipate, assuming he is sufficiently mentally stable, that we will enter a plea of not guilty."

Taheri-Azar is charged with nine counts of attempted first-degree murder, five counts of assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill, inflicting serious injury, and four counts of assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill.

Taheri-Azar turned himself in to police just after the March 3 attack and admitted to driving a rented Jeep Cherokee through the Pit to avenge the deaths of Muslims. He is being held in lieu of \$5.5 million bail at Raleigh's Central Prison.

Orange County District Attorney Jim Woodall said the effort to obtain documents and evidence is essentially done, unless there is any evidence from the past few months that has yet to be collected.

"There's been a lot of correspondence in this case," said Woodall, referring to more than 30 letters Taheri-Azar has written to The Daily Tar Heel and police. "Trying to get a handle on that has been a little difficult."

Taheri-Azar last wrote the DTH in June. Woodall said Taheri-Azar also had written UNC Department of Public Safety a couple of months ago, but he wouldn't comment on the details of that correspondence.

In letters to the DTH, Taheri-Azar wrote that he would plead not guilty. But at his last court appearance, he stated he would plead guilty.

"This case has been in the public eye so many

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Mohammad Taheri-Azar sits in Orange County Superior Court on Tuesday during his pre-trial hearing. His next appearance is Dec. 12.

UNC loses track of utility bills

Leaders blame accounting system

BY GREG MARGOLIS
STAFF WRITER

A sluggish and outdated accounting system has been the source of confusion for campus recreation officials closing payment on last year's utility bills.

Marty Pomerantz, director of UNC campus recreation, said he was puzzled why the utility bills he received for the Rams Head Recreation Center for the 2005-06 fiscal year were only \$37,000 when the 2006-07 estimate is closer to \$250,000.

Ben Poulson, acting associate director of UNC Energy Services, said he blames the discrepancy on an outdated accounting system.

"My assumption was that just we weren't being charged," Pomerantz said.

"Then my next assumption was,

"I know somebody is paying."

But both of those assumptions proved to be wrong.

The bills showed that about \$37,000 was owed to UNC Energy Services for steam, chilled water and electricity.

At the beginning of the 2005-06 fiscal year, the estimated cost for these utility bills — upon which student activity fees are based — was closer to \$100,000.

For the current fiscal year, the cost is estimated to be \$250,000, Pomerantz said. The increase can be accounted for because the utilities will cover the entire fiscal year. Rams Head Center opened midway through the 2005-06 fiscal year.

At a student fee advisory subcommittee meeting Friday, Pomerantz asked for a \$2 increase in the Rams Head Recreation Center fee. Students questioned why the increase was needed given the low cost of the utility bill.

"You have to explain to the students why there's such a large discrepancy in the cost of utilities

SEE UTILITY BILL, PAGE 10

EXERCISING CHOICE



A flow yoga class is filled to capacity Monday night at the Student Recreation Center. Despite the new bells and whistles provided at the Rams Head Recreation Center, students and faculty still are flocking to the SRC. Officials plan on better promoting what Rams Head has to offer.

BY ELISABETH GILBERT
STAFF WRITER

The Rams Head Recreation Center is state of the art and just one year old.

The new South Campus facility includes cardiovascular and weight training facilities, three basketball courts, an indoor climbing wall, an indoor running track and lockers. It cost \$14.5 million to build.

At the moment though, it is being overshadowed by the Student Recreation Center, located on South Road. Last week the SRC drew in 6,891 visitors, while Rams Head received just 3,972.

"A lot of students probably don't even know that it exists," said Marty Pomerantz, director of campus recreation, in reference to Rams Head Recreation Center.

The facility, part of the Rams Head Center — which includes a dining hall and parking deck — is a vital part of plans to bring more traffic to South Campus, officials said.

"People who work out at the SRC are familiar with that facility and continue to use that facility," said Lauren Mangili, associate director

SEE RECREATION, PAGE 10

Teacher faces porn charges

BY TED STRONG
SENIOR WRITER

HILLSBOROUGH — The former teacher who officials say also was a sexual predator is back in jail in lieu of \$500,000 bail facing 20 new felony child pornography charges.

David Campbell Jones, a former Phillips Middle School teacher and football coach and Boy Scout Troop Leader, appeared in District Criminal Court in Hillsborough on Tuesday.

The charges stem from images the Orange County Sheriff's department found after seizing Jones' computer.

District Attorney Jim Woodall said that the charges are not representative of the number of illegal images found on the computer.

"The sheriff's department, in making it only 20 charges, is being very charitable," he said.

Previously on the David Jones case

David Campbell Jones, formerly of 113 Hampton Court, currently of Concord, and then a teacher at Phillips Middle School in Chapel Hill, was arrested in August on charges of soliciting a minor in Orange County and taking indecent liberties with a minor in Wake County. He was released on bail.

"He could be charged with a thousand felonies."

According to arrest warrants, the images in question show male and female minors ranging from approximately 5 to 14 years old engaging in numerous sex acts, sometimes with adults.

Each of the child pornography charges is second-degree exploita-

tion of a minor, a Class F felony.

Jones, 46, was charged with soliciting a minor in Orange County and taking indecent liberties with a child in Wake County in August.

The original charges came after police say Jones solicited a boy via e-mail and the boy's father reported the incident to police.

The sheriff's department arrested Jones after a four-day sting operation by the Cyber Crimes Unit.

After his arrest Jones was confined in lieu of \$1 million bail. Bail later was reduced to \$50,000, and Jones was able to leave confinement.

Other conditions also applied to his release, including that he not have contact with minors

SEE JONES, PAGE 10

UNC puts nix on 'Psycho T' shirts

BY KAYLA CARRICK
ASSISTANT CITY EDITOR

Tar Heel basketball fans hoping to sport one of the "Psycho T" shirts with starter Tyler Hansbrough's picture on it are out of luck.

The shirts on sale at Schoolkids Records were pulled from the shelves after local T-shirt company The Merch received a cease-and-desist letter from University staff.

"Carolina thought they were related to Carolina basketball enough for it to matter," said Chip Hoppin, a Merch partner.

The letter, which asked the company to stop selling the shirts, was from Larry Gallo, senior associate athletic director. It said Hansbrough had not authorized the use of his image.

Merch partners said they had no problem stopping sales.

"We called them and said, 'Hey, we'll stop printing them,'" partner

Patrick Cudahy said. "We want to be legitimate about what we do."

Steve Kirschner, associate athletic director for communications, said Hansbrough was dubbed "Psycho T" because of his intense weight room work outs last year.

Employees in the art department at The Merch came up with the design after hearing the nickname. Hoppin said the company printed them to support the team.

"We definitely did not mean to be in any disrespectful way for him," he said. "We were trying to give him as many props as possible."

NCAA rules state that a commercial business can't sell the likeness or image of an athlete.

"Nobody is allowed to," Kirschner said. "This isn't a new rule."

Gallo said the University can't sell individual players' images either.

"I want to emphasize, this company did nothing wrong," Gallo



A shirt with Tyler Hansbrough's face was pulled from shelves after a request from University staff.

said. "We appreciate it, but we have to ask them to stop printing it because it jeopardizes the student's ability to play."

Hoppin said he understood Gallo's reasons.

"I think what the University does

SEE PSYCHO T, PAGE 10

inside

TESTING PLEASE The ACT is seeing a spike in popularity and acceptance. PAGE 4

BOOKING IT BACK Former UNC student and best-seller returns to campus. PAGE 5

NOT UP TO SNUFF Officials say work is needed to fix N.C. infrastructure. PAGE 9

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HONORABLE STATS
Honor Court officials are pleased that they now have more scheduled cases than unscheduled pending matters despite a smaller staff.



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ALIVE AND KICKING
The Tar Heels knock off VCU 3-1 Tuesday night in a game that saw several key UNC players sit on the sidelines with injuries.

this day in history

SEPT. 20, 1988 ...
Mark Davis, a medical school employee, hands a UNC cashier 6,540 pennies as payment for his parking fines to protest UNC's "ridiculous and inconsistent" parking policies.

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