

FIDLAR's latest attempt falls flat

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Tufts Alum Jonathan Mugar sees increasing success with The Basketball Tournament see **SPORTS** / BACK PAGE

FX's 'The Bastard Executioner' offers impressive cinematography, inconsistent plotlines see **ARTS AND LIVING** / PAGE 3

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Tufts Climate Action students penalized amid changes to judicial process

by **Noah Habeeb**
Staff Writer

Returning members of Tufts Climate Action (TCA) who participated in last semester's sit-in protest in Ballou Hall from April 22 to April 24 were placed on probation over the summer recess.

Students were notified individually of the disciplinary action on May 15, a week after final exams ended. They were told that they had received varying levels of probation for disobeying policies listed on the "Gatherings, Demonstrations, Protests and Disturbances" section of the University Code of Conduct, according to TCA member Grace Cooper, who was placed on Probation II.

At least six students received Probation II following the sit-in, Cooper, a sophomore, said.

The punishment came as a surprise to the TCA student activists, since Tufts Labor Coalition (TLC) student protesters didn't receive any punishment when they did a sit-in in Ballou Hall last year for 33 hours, according to former TLC President Lior Appel-Kraut, a junior.

According to Dean of Student Affairs Mary Pat McMahon, this discrepancy

in disciplinary action is due to the fact that TCA occupied the private office of University President Anthony Monaco, while TLC conducted its sit-in in the public Coolidge Room.

"There wasn't an occupation of a space that was a private office, and that for us is a major distinction," McMahon said in relation to the TLC case.

Additionally, TCA, unlike TLC, is not a TCU-recognized student group and can therefore not be subject to disciplinary action as an organization; only individual students can be penalized.

As the Daily reported in an April 26 article, Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Students John Barker told TCA members about possible non-permanent record sanctions for seniors during the sit-in.

McMahon also previously told the Daily that TCA students were informed about disciplinary procedures. In a letter to protesters on April 24, Dean McMahon and Judicial Affairs Administrator Mickey Toogood warned protesters that "refusal to leave will be grounds for individual disciplinary action."

Still, protesters said they did not know what the extent of the punishment would be at the time.

"They kept saying, 'By being here there is the possibility that you will be punished.'... It was very vague the entire time," sophomore Emma Youcha said.

Some of the confusion surrounding the punishment is due to changes in the student judicial process for the 2015-2016 academic year. According to Toogood, the changes eliminate Disciplinary Probation I and II. He added that the new format for sanctions begins with a warning and escalates as a reprimand, disciplinary probation, formal censure, suspension, indefinite suspension and expulsion.

Despite these changes to the system, TCA protesters given Disciplinary Probation II will maintain that punishment throughout this academic year and will not be in good standing with the university, according to a letter TCA students received from the university.

"There are very few automatic triggers in the system, and the reason for that is that what probation does ... is take a student out of good standing," Toogood said. "So being out of good standing can affect certain things that a student can or can't do."

see **PROBATION**, page 2

Medford city government candidates speak at Tufts

by **Sarah Zheng**
Executive News Editor

Over 300 community members from Medford gathered in Cohen Auditorium to hear from the city's candidates for mayor, City Council and the School Committee on Wednesday evening.

The "Meet Your Candidates" event was organized by Jay Campbell, a Medford resident and the broker of Jay Campbell Realty, and Tufts Votes. Tufts Votes, according to Ben Kaplan, the organization's director, is a non-partisan student coalition that aims to promote civic engagement in the Tufts community. It is also a part of the Tisch College of Public Service and Citizenship.

At the Wednesday event, each of the 10 School Committee candidates and the 14 City Council candidates were allotted three minutes each to speak, and both mayoral candidates were given five minutes, according to Campbell. According to Kaplan, there are seven open spots on both the City Council and School Committee.

Kaplan, a junior, kicked off the event by emphasizing the importance of Tufts' relationship to Medford and the benefits of student civic engagement.

"I firmly believe that it is the responsibility of each individual Tufts student to actively seek out ways to contribute to the community in a positive and productive way," Kaplan said.

Campbell said that he hoped the event would continue every two years in order to give candidates and residents an opportunity to get to know each other.

"We want people to be really engaged," Campbell said.

The 10 School Committee candidates, who include both newcomers to the political scene, as well as School Committee veterans, introduced themselves first. These candidates were: John Amirault, Frank Capone, Ann Marie Cugno, Erin DiBenedetto, Kathleen Kretz, Christopher Murphy, Paulette Van der Kloot and Jane Wright.

In his short speech, Amirault noted that he is first-time candidate, a lifelong Medford resident and a current history teacher.

"One common theme that seems to echo [when I talk to Medford residents]

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Somerville ordinance overrules FERPA, requires students to report addresses to university

by **Safiya Nanji**
News Editor

Tufts students living off-campus must provide their local addresses to the university on Student Information Services (SIS) in compliance with a City of Somerville ordinance that went into effect on Sept. 1.

The Ordinance Regulating University Accountability, passed by the Somerville Board of Aldermen in January, requires Tufts to report various details about students — including students' status, expected graduation date and their local address — to the city, Director of Community Relations Barbara Rubel wrote via Director of Public Relations Kim Thurler. No students will be identified in the information reported to the city from the university.

According to Rubel, the limited information provided by the school to city code enforcers means that students cannot invoke the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), through which individuals can

claim certain privacy rights about their education records.

"The City of Somerville has the power to enforce all local laws and ordinances," Rubel said. "We expect that city officials would direct concerns about over-occupancy to the property landlord, who could then take steps with the occupants."

This ordinance was passed to enforce a long-standing zoning ordinance that prevents more than four unrelated adults from sharing an apartment, the Daily reported on March 3.

City officials noted that health and safety is their primary concern in passing this ordinance, Dean of Student Affairs Mary Pat McMahon told the Daily in an email via Thurler.

"For reasons of health and safety, it's very important that students live in housing that complies with local ordinances," McMahon said.

Students subscribed to the City of Medford's mailing list have also been receiving emails about city-wide property inspections.

According to a July 30 email sent by Captain Barry Clemente to subscribers of the City of Medford mailing list, a city-wide property inspection program is being conducted by Vision Government Solutions of Northborough, Mass., as required by the Medford Department of Revenue. The firm was hired to comply with city zoning ordinances.

Somerville and Medford's request for student information is consistent with what the City of Boston has requested universities to provide in past years, Rubel said. Both Tufts and Harvard were requested to comply with this request.

The university and student leaders have taken steps over the last year to prepare students for the zoning ordinance, McMahon said.

"The Office of Residential Life and Learning [ResLife], the Community Relations Office and the Sophomore Class Council provided infor-

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N

NEWS

Medford and Somerville crack down on illegal student housing

HOUSING

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mation to sophomores looking for apartments off-campus at open meetings last fall, [and] that information included discussion of zoning regulations," McMahon said. "There will again be an off-campus housing fair for sophomores during Parents' Weekend."

Students currently living in illegal housing situations should seek appropriately zoned housing, according to McMahon.

Director of ResLife Yolanda King said

her office will do its best to help students in these situations, but there are no guarantees that they will be able to be placed in on-campus housing.

"Last year a small number of students requested to live on campus due to issues with their off-campus housing and the Residential Life office was able to find housing for those individuals," King said. "We will always do our best to help, but we cannot guarantee that we will be able to provide such housing."

Senior Albert Wang said a few of his friends

had undergone off-campus inspections and had to find new housing options during their junior year.

"I lived off campus my junior year with three other people in Medford," Wang said. "It wasn't until about a month or two in that we realized that the law in Medford stated that the ordinance said you could only live with two other housemates."

Wang said he wishes Tufts or the landlord had told him about the law before he had signed his lease.

Tufts Climate Action students receive probation for April protests

PROBATION

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Students who left Ballou Hall earlier in the April protest received Probation I, while students who stayed longer received Probation II, according to Cooper.

Cooper received Probation II, but has challenged the disciplinary decision and will have a hearing in October. She said she's confused as to why she received Probation II, despite having left earlier than some protesters who only received Probation I.

"We are really questioning how they chose who got what," TCA protester Emma Youcha, a sophomore, said.

Students who are not in good standing may not be able to participate in varsity sports programs or hold office in student organizations, according to the Student Judicial Process handbook. Standing with the university can also affect students' roles in Greek organizations, in Residential Life staff and as peer advisors.

Some members of TCA are concerned about campus employment opportunities. Cooper says that administrators told her that her job with the Academic Resource Center (ARC) could be affected should the ARC see fit.

"It's up to the ARC," Cooper said.

TCA protesters said they were told the punishment would not affect financial aid,

though according to The Bulletin there are some scholarship funds that require students to remain in good standing with the university. In addition, parents are notified of disciplinary probation.

TCA member Elizabeth Cultrara, a sophomore, said she is confused by the terms of probation.

"What am I actually not allowed to do?" Cultrara asked. "It was never laid out."

Cultrara also reported that probation appears on unofficial transcripts that can be accessed through Student Information Services (SIS), potentially making it difficult to apply for jobs or internships that require transcripts.

Youcha is worried that the decision could jeopardize her ability to study abroad, since students who are not in good standing with the university may not study abroad or apply to study abroad through a Tufts program. According to the Student Handbook, students who choose to study abroad through a non-Tufts program while they are not in good standing might not have their credits accepted for transfer. However, her one-year probation term ends before her junior year, so she still may be able to apply and study abroad in the spring semester.

"That's part of why I took the deci-

sion in May," Youcha said, referring to her choice not to challenge the punishment after Cultrara and other group members asked for hearings but failed to overturn the initial dean's decision.

Youcha believes that the punishment was meant in part to discourage activism on campus.

"It feels like we're being targeted for activism to stop further actions from our group, and to dissuade other groups from trying anything because of the severity of the punishment that they're doling out," Youcha said.

Cooper agreed with Youcha's sentiment.

"I feel like the purpose of this disciplinary action is to stifle activism and make sure some of the core members of our group don't do any escalated actions," she said.

Cultrara admitted that TCA did breach some of the university policies on "Gatherings, Demonstrations, Protests and Disturbances," but said the punishment did not fit the violations.

"We did break rules and I'm owning up to that," Cultrara said. "[But] we think that the disciplinary sanctions they put on us were too severe."

Kim Thurler, the executive director of public relations for Tufts University, did not respond to the Daily's request for comment.

Medford candidates speak to residents at Tufts

MEDFORD

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is the need, the desire, the willingness to engage in positive changes," he said.

Van der Kloot, who said in her speech that she has been on the committee for 26 years, said that she brings common sense leadership and vision to her role there.

"I've seen my kids go through the system," she said. "I've seen your kids go through the system."

The 14 City Council candidates spoke afterwards, including: Richard Caraviello, Mark Crowley, Christopher D'Aveta, Frederick Dello Russo, Leonore Eforo, John Falco Jr., Adam Knight, Breanna Lungo-Koehn, Michael Marks, Neal McSweeney, William O'Keefe Jr., Neil Osborne, Michael Ruggiero and George Scarpelli.

Eforo said that her campaign was entirely self-funded in order to highlight what she sees as the problematic connection between money and politics.

Her campaign has focused on helping local businesses, defining campaign spending limits, the expansion of the City Hall plaza and the preservation and expansion of existing green space in Medford, she said.

City Council candidate Osborne, a practicing attorney, also spoke.

"I'm smiling today because our city is at

a crossroads," Osborne said. "We're going to get new leadership in the mayor's office, [and] whoever is chosen, they must work with city, [with the] council. They must work with the leaders that you choose."

Finally, mayoral candidates Stephanie Muccini Burke and Robert Penta took to the stage to introduce themselves and their platforms.

For Medford voters, the 2015 mayoral election is different from those in years past because this year's contest will be the first in decades that current Mayor Michael J. McGlynn has not participated in. McGlynn, the longest-serving mayor in Massachusetts, decided not to seek reelection earlier this year, according to an April 14 Boston Globe article. According to a statement issued by McGlynn's office, he is currently serving his 28th year as mayor; McGlynn was sworn into office in January 1988.

Burke, a former city councilor and director of budget and personnel for Medford, said she would bring a much-needed fresh perspective to the city.

"I will be a mayor for everyone in our community," Burke said.

Penta, who, according to his website, has spent decades as an elected Medford official, said that he wants to move the city forward.

"The price of doing the same old thing is much higher than the price of change," he said.

Medford resident Joanne Hamilton said she went to the event to hear from and learn about the candidates.

In particular, Hamilton said she wanted to hear from the School Committee candidates and the two mayoral candidates about issues surrounding the Medford school system and Medford Square.

"I'd like to know how people might revitalize Medford Square," Hamilton said. "The squares in other cities are where people congregate, and there's a sense of community there."

In his speech, Kaplan said he hoped the event would continue to facilitate the cultivation of lasting relationships between Tufts, Medford and Somerville.

"We want to help foster these close relationships with Tufts in the political sphere and beyond because we are far better [when we work] together than when we [do] not," he said.

"I thought it was successful," Campbell said of the event. "The whole reason why I started this is because I truly believe that the voters, the residents deserve the right to meet their candidates. I believe that the candidates deserve the right to meet the residents."

ALBUM REVIEW ★☆☆☆☆

FIDLAR takes serious step back with sophomore release 'Too'

by Ascher Kulich
Assistant Arts Editor

Things looked pretty good for Los Angeles band FIDLAR when its first album hit No. 5 on Billboard Magazine's Top Heatseekers chart. Unfortunately, FIDLAR's second album, released Sept. 4, likely won't be as successful.

FIDLAR is a skate punk band led by Elvis Keuhn on guitar and vocals, Max Keuhn on drums, Zac Carper on guitar and vocals and Brandon Schwarzel on bass. The group is very interconnected — Elvis and Max are brothers, and Schwarzel is their half-cousin — and deeply immersed in West Coast skate and surf culture. Carper is the son of a famous surfboard designer, and the Keuhn brothers are the sons of Greg Keuhn, keyboardist in notable Long Beach punk group T.S.O.L.

FIDLAR is the latest band to make serious waves in the California-punk genre, one defined by high energy songs and amateurish lyrics. The group is signed to Mom + Pop Music, a label based out of New York that features a number of diverse, up-and-coming musical acts such as Cloud Nothings, Courtney Barnett, Flume and Neon Indian. On its newest album, "Too," the group's first release after its debut full-length album, "FIDLAR" (2013), the band members continue to ravage chords and croon about their lack of sobriety.



DIGBOSTON VIA FLICKR CREATIVE COMMONS

FIDLAR's latest album "Too" is as disappointing as it is shallow.

"Too" is unmemorable and mediocre to the degree that the band's future doesn't look particularly enticing. It's a shame, really, as FIDLAR had flares of brilliance on its debut album. Some tracks on "FIDLAR," especially "Cheap Beer," packed a serious punch without drowning in cliché — and there are plenty of clichés that come with beer-chugging culture. It is difficult to find staying power with such limiting subject matter, and, unfortunately, FIDLAR's "Too" loses momentum very quickly.

The third track on "Too," titled "West Coast," aims to be a summery punk anthem — something that Wavves, another West Coast rock group, has built its repertoire on. Instead, it falls flat. "West Coast" is, technically speaking, very safe; the chords are simple, the lyrics are simple and the final product is a track overflowing with lame immaturity. "Overdose" is FIDLAR doing its best impression of Slint's "Spiderland" (1991), a classic math rock/post-rock album that brought the band of angsty teenage

boys to a place of full introspection, but it doesn't quite pull it off. "Stupid Decisions" describes the FIDLAR band members' experiences looking back at their immature choices, and is ultimately a lazy track without much conviction. "Yeah, I made some / Stupid decisions / And we can't take them back / And now I'm home and I'm all alone / Wanna hit the road and make some / Stupid decisions / And I don't want them back," Keuhn sings. FIDLAR, it seems, can barely keep its good behavior in check for a few lines of vocals, and wailing guitar chords and uninspired drumming can't save the song from its repetitive message.

FIDLAR's "Too" has a few good moments — one of them being the groovy track entitled "Why Generation" — but they are few and far between in a collection of serious misses. The band's songs are already featured in video game and TV soundtracks. Their tracks are fitting for the made-up worlds of video games; while FIDLAR can make good music in small doses, most of its songs carry an inherent phoniness, as if it's all just "make-believe. Unfortunately for FIDLAR fans, "Too" is not the fitting end to a long summer of music that one might have hoped for. FIDLAR needs a new inspiration to carry its music forward, or else push its technical skill to new boundaries, as its relevance in the West Coast punk scene appears to be fading.

TV REVIEW ★★☆☆☆

'The Bastard Executioner' boasts unique premise, fumbles on execution

by Merilla Michael
Assistant Arts Editor

To describe FX's new show, "The Bastard Executioner," as "gory" would be an understatement. Kurt Sutter, known for creating "Sons of Anarchy" (2008 – 2014), doesn't hold back in his new television series. The various bloody medieval-era torture mechanisms featured in the title sequence are unsettling enough, but the first episode of the two-part season premiere continually provides similarly horrific sequences of images. If that type of imagery makes you slightly queasy, this show is definitely not for you.

"The Bastard Executioner," which airs on Tuesdays at 10 p.m., takes place in Wales at the start of the 14th century, right as King Edward II is rising to power. Ever since the predominant religion became Roman Catholicism, the Welsh have been resisting his rule. As tension grows between the Welsh and the English, the latter govern with increasing brutality. Initially, the show focuses on two main storylines: that of Wilkin Brattle (Lee Jones), a peasant living in the countryside, and the Baron and Baroness Ventris (Brian F. O'Byrne and Flora Spencer-Longhurst, respectively), the former of which is a cruel member of the nobility. The premiere opens with news of a ridiculous tax hike reaching the village where Brattle and his pregnant wife Annora (Katey Sagal) live. Brattle and a few of his friends decide to kill the tax collector and the English knights that accompany him. The attack is successful, but word reaches Baron Ventris, who is not willing to let

this betrayal go unpunished. After some surreal divine experiences — and even some witchcraft — the title of the show is explained at the conclusion of the premiere's second half.

"The Bastard Executioner" is, so far, essentially what you would get if you combined the goriest parts of "Game of Thrones" (2011 – present) with the emphatic masculinity of "300" (2007). The male characters are focused on vengeance, power and combat, while the female characters are either killed or given insignificant roles. While this is perhaps to be expected in a show of this kind, some meaningful dialogue would be nice.

The series hasn't quite found its groove when it comes to humor. There are some one-liners that are clearly meant to function as comic relief, but they are not always successful. The episode in general feels a bit disjointed; the separate story lines, though independent, play out in the same time and place and should feel more consistent and connected than they do. "The Bastard Executioner" is able to form some feeling of connection later in the premiere, but it starts off a little rocky.

A two-part opener is unusual for a series premiere, but the format actually helps "The Bastard Executioner" find its footing, as the first part is a little off-pace. Another strength of the show is its subtle use of camera angles and lighting. While these nuances are less effective in outdoor scenes — the gorgeous Welsh landscape is often the set of a fight scene, during which viewers are primarily focused on spurting blood and severed limbs — the camerawork for the indoor scenes makes

use of interesting angles. At one point, Brattle wakes up from a dream in which he is contacted by a divine entity. As he sits up in his bed, clearly affected by this experience, the camera moves horizontally. The sun pours in through a nearby window and temporarily blinds the camera, mimicking the light surrounding the divine entity from Brattle's dream.

The acting quality varies among the cast members. There is something oddly overdramatic about Jones' acting, which may be the result of intentional choice or poor exe-

cution. The cast as a whole is fairly strong, though much of the acting consists of battle cries. The second part of the premiere suggests that the show may move toward a more even balance of drama and violence.

This gory new FX historical-fiction drama is not for the faint of heart, and hasn't quite been able to execute its premise as cleanly as it could. It is supported by an intriguing plot and a fairly strong cast, however, so it is worth watching — if you can handle it.



VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Kurt Sutter, creator of "The Bastard Executioner," speaks about his show at the 2011 San Diego Comic-Con International.

COMMON READING PROGRAM / 2015

Eboo Patel

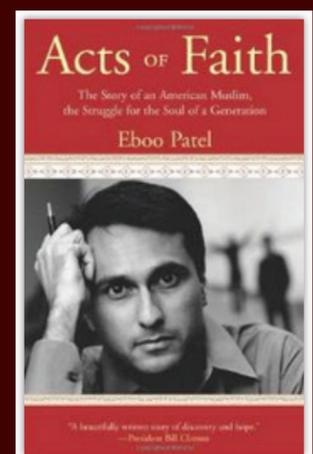
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Radical Diversity, and
Active Citizenship:
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in the 21st Century

Author Lecture
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7:30 pm
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Eboo Patel
Founder and President, *Interfaith Youth Core*

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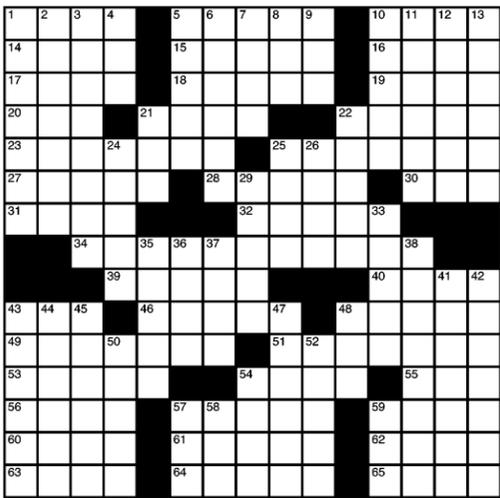
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Tufts

COMICS

CROSSWORD

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 - 10 *Waterloo
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 - 15 Electrical component
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 - 17 9-Down sensors
 - 18 Midwestern tribe
 - 19 Show appreciation, in a way
 - 20 "You shall hear more ___ morning": "Measure for Measure"
 - 21 Shows a preference
 - 22 Amethyst source
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 - 25 Struggling engine sound
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 - 31 *Data transfer
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 - 34 Annoyed moviegoer's shout ... or what's needed to make sense of the answers to starred clues
 - 39 Onetime Silly String maker
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 - 56 Actress Russell
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 - 29 Was loquacious
 - 33 Classic military text by Carl von Clausewitz
 - 35 Legislative VIPs
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 - 42 Statistical matrix, e.g.
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 - 44 L'Oréal competitor
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 - 50 Wield power
 - 52 Endangered Sumatran
 - 54 Mythical troublemaker
 - 57 Compact Cadillac sedan
 - 58 Dustup
 - 59 Hook relative



By Jeffrey Wechsler 9/18/15

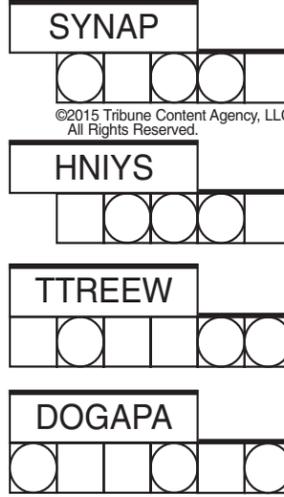
Wednesday's Solution



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JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



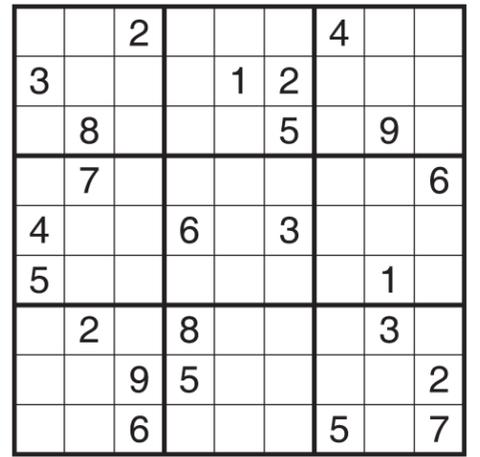
Yesterday's Jumbles: RIVER FINCH PURSUE REVERT
 Answer: One ghost didn't fit in with the rest because he was a — FREE SPIRIT



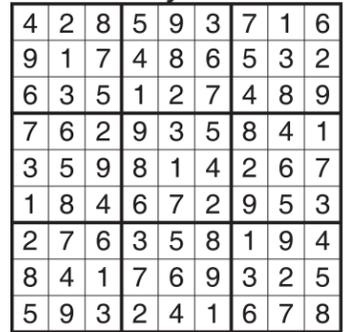
AFTER A TIGER ESCAPED FROM THE ZOO, THERE WOULD BE THIS UNTIL THERE WAS THIS.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

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S SPORTS

Mugar believes TBT is only at infancy stage

MUGAR

continued from back page

Rappaport put together an all-star team for Grantland. It included guards Jason Williams and Mike Bibby, who had had the most successful NBA careers of any players in the tournament. In true TBT fashion, the powerhouse Team Grantland fell to underdogs in the early rounds.

Away from the gameplay, TBT became a topic of conversation in NBA locker rooms and message boards. Bonner's teammates on the Spurs weighed in on who he should recruit to his squad, while rumors of NBA legends like Rasheed Wallace joining a team generated considerable internet chatter.

No longer relegated to the web alone, TBT's later rounds were broadcasted by ESPN, which saw an opportunity to show live sports during the doldrums of summer. In another close championship game, Overseas Elite defeated Team 23, 67-65.

Fans had their share of individual stories to follow. There was DJ Kennedy, who at the age of 25 had already chased his dream in the NBA D-League, Germany,

Israel and Russia with just a two-game NBA stint to show for it. Kennedy shared the backcourt with Myck Kobongo, a former McDonald's High School All-American who went undrafted by the NBA in 2013 and spent the past two years scraping a living in the D-League. In two years in the D-League, he earned a total of roughly \$50,000. In seven games in TBT, he netted \$107,000. Rounding out the team's top players were Errick McCollum II, a player so overlooked in high school that he ended up at Goshen College in the NAIA. Even after proving himself as a dominant scorer in Greece and China, he continued to be overlooked by American fans — until he started zooming past defenders in TBT.

What made the Overseas Elite remarkable, however, was how similar it was to other TBT teams. Former local heroes once again wound up in the sports section of their hometown newspapers. Tournament stars began getting invitations to join NBA Summer League teams. The once-forgotten athlete, the trope of countless sports movies, popped up all over the place, making each game a battle between

players clawing for a huge payout and their chance to finally play on center stage.

So how did a former Div. III walk-on go from producing beloved comedy shows to getting a sporting event on ESPN? And how did he do so with limited connections to the NBA and fewer eager sponsors?

If you look at Mugar, the answers make sense. College athletics usually introduce former high school stars to a world where they are no longer the best on the team at what they do, and the entertainment industry is littered with talented and hardworking people who have fallen short. Whether he was on the court defending players bigger, stronger and faster than he was or trying to get zany comedies a large television audience, Mugar has never appeared afraid of failure or of falling short.

The Basketball Tournament is not just the result of passion for basketball and good entertainment; it is an event for the underdogs, those who take on the role that Mugar has long cherished. It was that way in the beginning. There was no prior

proof that it would work, and there was no precedent to follow.

Mugar's faith in the tournament has grown since its inception. He cites the three teams from the Drew League — the legendary pro-am league from Los Angeles — as further proof of TBT's inclusion in summer ball lore. His short-term vision includes bigger names, more televised games and a larger fan base.

Get Mugar talking about where TBT can go, however, and it becomes clear that he sees no limit to its potential. He envisions payouts rivaling an NBA team's salary cap, rosters rolling out to great fanfare and questions of cities' basketball supremacy being answered on the court.

"I believe that in 2025, the TBT champion will be able to play with any team from the NBA in a real, competitive game," Mugar said. "I believe our format in 10 years from now will be the number one way to find the best basketball team in the world."

Sensing the interviewer's awe on the other end of the phone, Mugar lets out a friendly laugh.

"How's that for bold?"

Returning players and first-years show promise early on

VOLLEYBALL

continued from back page

ing a double-header on Sept. 12. The day before, the Jumbos had upset No. 12 UMass Boston 3-1, but dropped both in the double-header on Sept. 12, unable to capture a set against both Christopher Newport and St. Benedict.

The invitational allowed the Jumbos to continue to work toward their season-long goals.

"One of our big goals for this season is

constant improvement," senior co-captain Esme Nulan said. "This goal applies to both individuals and the team as a whole."

The weekend was filled with strong performances from many of the Jumbos' returning players, as well as from some of the newer team members.

Kuppe put up an impressive performance at the invitational, leading the Jumbos in kills across all three games — with 33 in total — while Berger was one of the defensive stars of the weekend with 51

digs in the three games.

"This weekend was a great opportunity for us to be challenged, to learn and to help us see where we can improve," Nulan said. "We are meshing really well as a team and we are getting to play against really great teams that challenge us to work hard and [to] work smart."

This week was certainly a testament to the Jumbos' tenacity and heart as a team, as their victory against Roger Williams puts them at 3-2 for the sea-

son heading into the NESCAC opener today against Williams, which is currently ranked No. 2 in New England.

Although the Jumbos are coming into today's game ranked fourth in New England, their goal remains to constantly improve in search of the playoffs and potentially the NESCAC championship.

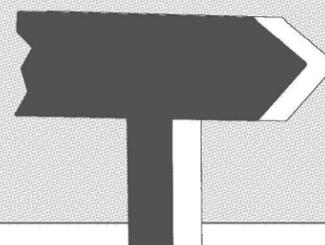
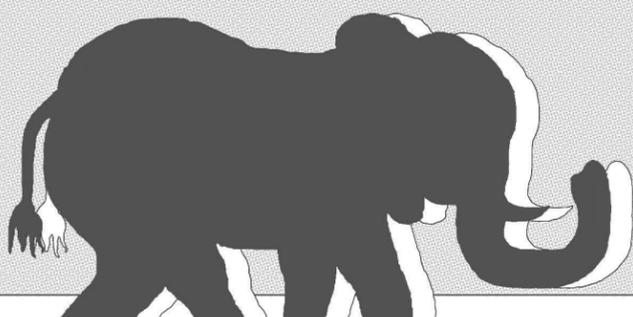
"I hope that we can play to our full potential and enjoy every moment of this season," Berger said. "If we do those two things, success will come."

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Alum's tournament goes from unique idea to mainstream audiences

by **Ross Dember**
Sports Editor

On Feb. 28, 2014, Zach Lowe's NBA column in Grantland, the destination of the best analysis and insight for the sport of basketball, introduced the casual fan to the newest sporting event: The Basketball Tournament (or TBT for short) — an open basketball tournament in which anyone can gather their buddies, acquire enough fans through social media and compete for the \$500,000, winner-takes-all prize.

"You launch it, you announce it, you tell people it's coming. But at the end of the day, we can't put people in the tournament," CEO and Founder Jonathan Mugar said. "It was scary. When we first launched after that Zach Lowe article, there was only one team that signed up. It was called 'Jane and the Dudes,' and I don't think they had ever played basketball before above the junior varsity level."

Better players, however, did sign up eventually. Cornell's 2010 Sweet 16 Cinderella team reunited to become the first team with enough fans to qualify for the tournament. Alumni from colleges, high schools and even childhood cul-de-sacs began submitting teams. Ardent basketball fans started to see the names of former college stars, fringe NBA players and streetball legends popping up.

On June 28, 2014, a team of Notre Dame alumni upset Team Barstool, a squad organized by the famous sports-blog site, 72-68 in the championship game. The match was streamed to a national audience on ESPN3 and covered by most of the big names in sports media; Mugar had his proof of concept.

The only way to explain how TBT could breach the professional sports landscape is to start with Mugar. Mugar arrived at Tufts in the mid-'90s, a local kid from Belmont Hill who had hopes of playing baseball and basketball for the Jumbos. There was just one problem: Mugar was not recruited for either team. On top of that, splitting his time between

the two squads was not helping him make up for the talent gap.

"It was a challenge to be a four-year varsity athlete in two sports, but [basketball coach Bob] Sheldon and [baseball coach John] Casey were open to it," Mugar said. "I was definitely a worse athlete for it because I was not able to focus on one sport ... It wasn't the most efficient way of doing things, but I loved competing, and I loved representing both teams."

For Sheldon, Mugar at first seemed like he would have a non-contributing role on the court; just finding him a position was a challenge.

"He was a defensive ace that couldn't really stop anybody," Sheldon said. "But he couldn't really score, so we had to give him a label."

Despite this, Mugar found himself to be an important asset. He earned a spot in the rotation as a role player who cared little for individual stats and cherished the small facets of the game.

"He just did everything. He loved the game, he played both ends, he played hard, he knew the game and he was smart," Sheldon continued. "[His hard work] forced me to play him."

Tufts athletics was a testing ground for Mugar. He might have been fighting for playing time against teammates who had been handpicked out of high school, but that was part of what he enjoyed.

"I found myself surrounded by kids who were way better than me, [but] I loved the challenge of trying to play up to that level everyday in practice," Mugar said. "Doing that over a certain time made me a much better player."

Mugar graduated in 1998 with a degree in English and earned his Master's in Education the following year. He has kept in touch with the athletic program; he currently sits on its Board of Overseers and helps fundraise for all of Tufts' sports teams. Two years ago, when Sheldon wanted alumni to talk to his seniors about life after college and what it meant to represent the Jumbos for one last year, he brought in three former players. Two

of them had put up impressive stat lines during their playing days and were a couple of the best athletes he had coached. The other was Mugar.

"Along with his stick-to-it-iveness, Jon's loyal," Sheldon said. "He just loves Tufts and has carried that with him after he graduated."

Following his graduation from Tufts, Mugar headed out west to Los Angeles in hopes of breaking into the television industry. After toiling away as an unpaid intern, Mugar, true to form, worked his way up. By 2007, he was a producer of "Tim and Eric Awesome Show, Great Job!" (2007 – 2010), working with comedy giants such as Bob Odenkirk and John C. Reilly. As "Tim and Eric" grew in popularity, Mugar joined another critically acclaimed show, "Comedy Bang! Bang!," as a producer.

After building an impressive resume, Mugar decided to pursue an entirely new endeavor. He still had a passion for basketball. Sheldon had seen players with twice his talent succumb to the demands of being a college athlete, yet Mugar stuck to it. And the love of the game runs in his family: his brother, Peter, currently serves as the head coach at Framingham State University.

At first, the idea was simple: people love March Madness, so why not put it in a professional setting? However, convincing sponsors the idea would work was a problem. There was nothing like it out there, and there was no guarantee that fans would buy in.

Today, most of the disruptors of the sporting industry have tried to change the way the game is played. Daryl Morey figured teams should shoot more 3-pointers and fewer long 2-pointers. Chip Kelly decided a football team's offense should wait a teenager's attention span in between plays. Billy Beane made advanced math so cool in baseball that Brad Pitt played him in a movie.

Yet Mugar is more Bill Veeck than Bill James. By flipping the relationship

between the fans and the athletes and giving the fans a bigger relationship with the on-court experience, he not only created a unique fan interaction, but also a business model that has already gained success. For as long as professional sports have existed, the team structure has been dominated by wealthy individuals, leaving fans with little to no power to decide their teams' business decisions.

Mugar found an alternative.

What truly adds character to TBT, however, is what drove Mugar's athletic career. TBT is a perpetual generator of underdog stories by providing undersized, less-talented teams with a chance to upset the NBA-caliber athletes that have long been picked ahead of them.

"I've always loved underdog stories ... for me, the best part of watching March [Madness] is when the underdog team surprises people," Mugar said. "That's what this format is really about."

TBT has also provided comeback stories for players trying to save and revive their careers. This was most apparent in 2014 when Dahntay Jones, the star of Team Barstool and a former Duke standout, impressed NBA front offices and got himself back into the league.

"We were lucky that first year with Dahntay Jones [because] he played in the championship game, and a year later he is with the [Los Angeles] Clippers," Mugar said. "Seventy percent of the players in TBT said they could play with people in the NBA. We give them a chance to see that."

TBT returned this summer with lofty goals. If 2014 was supposed to prove that people would watch, 2015 had to provide evidence that it could grow.

With an even larger sense of legitimacy, the tournament grew to 97 teams and doubled its payout to \$1,000,000 to draw in even bigger names. Former NBA champion Brian Scalabrine, San Antonio Spur Matt Bonner and actor Michael

see **MUGAR**, page 7

VOLLEYBALL

Jumbos claim victory against Roger Williams Hawks before NESCAC opener

by **Eddie Samuels**
Contributing Writer

Tufts moved to a 3-2 record after its road win at Roger Williams on Wednesday. The victory saw strong performances from several Tufts players. Senior Maddie Kuppe recorded 13 kills, while first-year Angela Yu led the Jumbos in both assists (20) and digs (13).

Other impressive performers included sophomore McKenzie Humann, who notched five kills with just one error in nine attempts, and first-year MacKenzie Bright, who tallied five kills and one error in 13 attempts.

The first set was a scary one for the Jumbos, as they battled neck and neck against the Hawks, with neither team leading by more than two points throughout the entire set until sophomore Anique Barch finished off the Hawks 25-23.

The second game went the Jumbos'

way from the start, as the team pulled out to an early 7-1 lead that it carried all the way to a 25-18 victory.

Much like the first game, the third set was a close one. This time, however, Tufts came out on top when sophomore Alex Garrett scored a kill to make it match point, which the team converted on its first attempt to close out the game 27-25.

"One of my favorite things about this team is that it has so much heart," Nulan said. "We all love to play and compete, so practices and games are always fun because we always give everything we've got and never want to give up."

The previous weekend saw Tufts compete in the Beacon Invitational with losses to unranked St. Benedict and No. 3 Christopher Newport, but a win over No. 12 Eastern.

"Everyone worked very hard," senior co-captain Carolina Berger said. "I was particularly impressed with our rookies,

as they stepped onto the court with complete confidence, even though it was their first collegiate game."

This past weekend was a busy one

for the women's volleyball team, as the team three matches over two days, includ-

see **VOLLEYBALL**, page 7



Tufts junior outside hitter Mary Maccabee hits the ball past two Springfield College blockers on Wednesday, Sept. 9.

EVAN SAYLES / THE TUFTS DAILY