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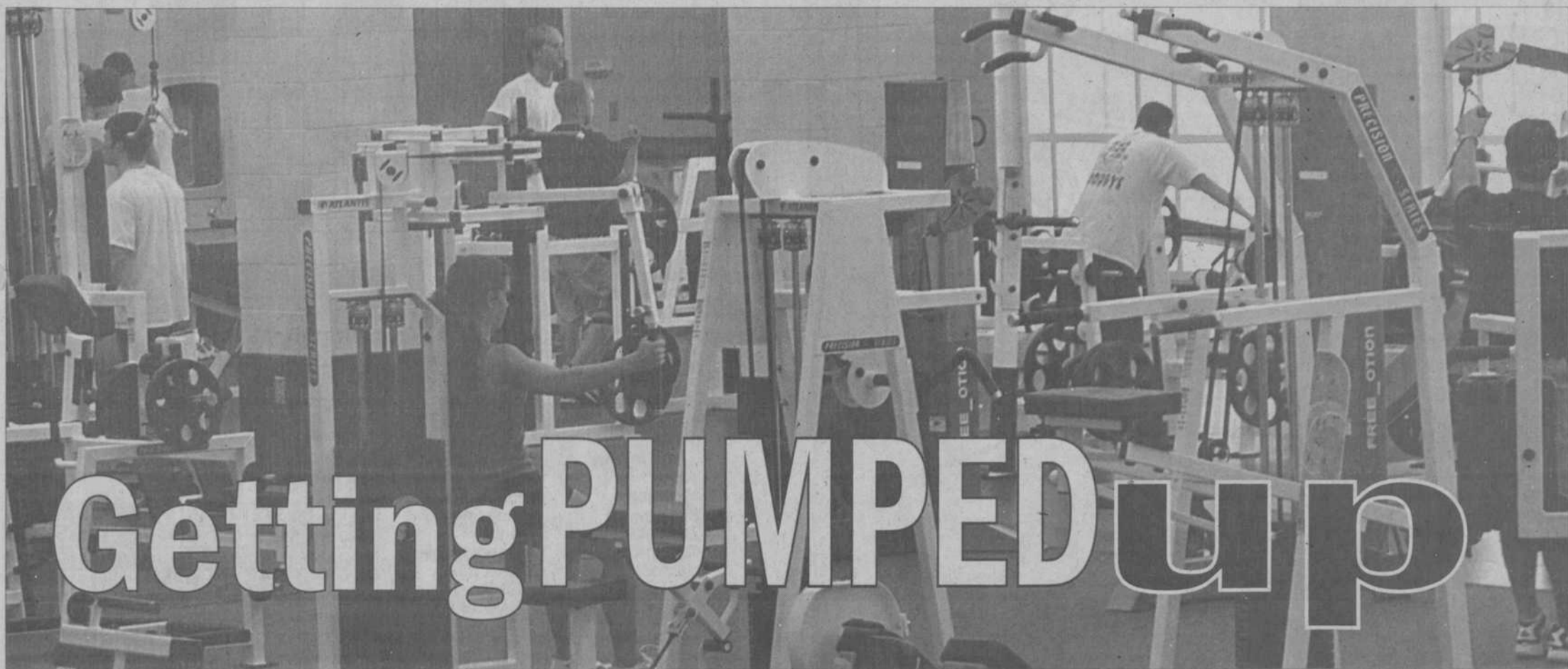
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THE MIX

THEY SAID IT

CONFUCIUS: "Only the wisest and stupidest of men never change."



Getting PUMPED UP

PHOTO BY MORGAN FORD/THE GAMECOCK

USC students use the exercise machines at the Strom Thurmond Wellness and Fitness Center. Society's increased emphasis on physical fitness has encouraged many to get in shape.

Working for a toned, healthy body has never been so trendy

BY TRINA RAHMAN
THE GAMECOCK

The desire to be in shape is ingrained in our minds by both the media and the annual health reports that insist that a significant portion of Americans are overweight.

During the college years, people have the ability to be in our best possible condition, as they reach their physical peak in their mid-20s.

Television, music and magazines advocate the perfect, taut tummy for girls and six-pack abs for guys. But is society's emphasis on body image being taken to an extreme?

College students work off stress when hitting the gym. We

study as we work out, talk with a friend as we burning up the treadmill or catch up with an acquaintance on the weight room floor.

Some people are very focused and intense while they workout. They love "getting in the zone." Others enjoy the company of a friend.

The biggest excuse for not working out among USC students is not being able to find the time amid a busy class schedule or quality couch time.

Despite taking six classes and working 25 to 30 hours a week at two jobs, fourth-year hotel and retail management student Keri O'Connell finds that time — she works out four days a week doing elliptical training or running, and she then lifts free weights during her 45-minute workout.

"I used to play basket ball, do cardio and cheer in high school. I see a lot of girls in shape around campus. I am very disciplined and I feel that the media motivates people to workout, but it

can be taken too far," she said.

Fourth-year fashion merchandising student Cassie Kleinlein agreed. "It's like in the first season of 'Friends' — everyone was normal, and the next season everyone is stick thin," she remarked. Kleinlein does not feel pressured by the media, but she does have outside motivation — she is getting married.

Kleinlein and her friend, third-year management and marketing student Katrina Sorensen are both in Delta Zeta, but they said that they do not feel pressure from their sorority to be thin. Cassie likes to bring along a copy of Self or Cosmo to read as she works out.

She thinks these magazines portray women's bodies realistically, as do J.C. Penney's catalogues. When asked which celebrity has a realistic body image, she said, "I think Kelly Clarkson looks healthy."

As a popular artist, Clarkson endures pressure from the music industry ideal that you must be

buff and toned in order to sell CDs. What seems unattainable for many remains most coveted — a lean and toned body.

When asked if there is more pressure on girls or guys to stay in shape, second-year business students Scott Kay and Chuck Skeen said society places more pressure on girls. But Harry Ezell III, a third-year math and computer science student, feels that males are under more scrutiny.

Second-year English student Janey McDow is a woman who is comfortable with her body.

"I don't use working out as a way to chisel myself into an ideal image. When I first came to the Strom Thurmond Fitness Center, I was a little shy about asking how to use the weight machines," she said.

McDow said she enjoys coming

to the gym in the mid-morning, when she can work out in peace. She remains very conscious about nutrition and maintains a healthful approach to what she puts into her body.

"The media motivates people to work out, but it can be taken too far."

KERI O'CONNELL
FOURTH-YEAR HOTEL AND RETAIL MANAGEMENT STUDENT

"I used to work in Greenville, and a friend turned me on to Earthfare," she said. "And I like Rising High a lot."

Many of those students who participated in high-school sports also have the discipline needed to stay in shape. They have already fostered healthy body images, steering clear of the temptations of being on their own.

Jessica Chambers, a third-year exercise science student, was involved in soccer, softball, and basketball in high school. She thinks group sports help improve women's body images at a time when insecurity can settle in. Being involved in group sports, either on the high school or college level,

can improve those valuable time-management skills as well.

The New Product Development group compiles studies for food manufacturers and sellers. Its annual "Eating Patterns in America" study tracks how many Americans are overweight based on body-mass index, reflecting society's emphasis on staying healthy.

The percentage of overweight Americans has consistently grown from year to year. Between 1998 and 2002, the percentage rose from 50 percent to 56 percent. This year, the statistic dropped to 55 percent.

The decrease remains very small, but it may mean that Americans are paying more attention to what they are eating and how they are exercising.

As USC students can attest, staying fit takes commitment. But the personal rewards far outweigh the necessary sacrifices.

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THEATER REVIEW

'Star Crossed' showcases skill, potential

"STAR CROSSED LOVERS"
USC Dance Department
★★★ out of ★★★★★

BY CAITLIN COKER
THE GAMECOCK

The USC Dance Department is a forgotten section of the College of Liberal Arts, tucked away in the basement of the Blatt P.E. Center. For years, this department has wished to expand their program and offer a dance major — they have yet to realize this wish.

Equipped with only two classrooms and a racquetball-court-turned-office, USC faculty and students still manage to perform an entertaining dance concert each semester.

This semester's dance showcase was "Star Crossed Lovers," and the program also featured "Maurice Ravel's Spanish Rhapsody." The performance was divided into two acts: the 30-minute "Spanish Rhapsody,"

choreographed by Mirram Barbosa, and the hour long "Star Crossed Lovers," choreographed by Susan Anderson.

Unfortunately, nothing binds these two acts together; they clash conceptually and stylistically. The "Spanish Rhapsody" is more intensive and symbolically enriched, while "Star Crossed Lovers" is simpler and entertainment driven.

Perhaps, in the future, Barbosa's piece will receive a separate venue, or at least correspond with Anderson's work. Their styles are too opposite to slap together in the same program.

"Spanish Rhapsody" is a sensual piece, asserting the power of womanhood. Projected images of gorges, lakes, and deserts on the upstage screen suggest femininity as a supernatural force — like that of the Goddess, a pagan deity associated with nature. The amazing physical strength inherent in Barbosa's style of

modern dance is also a beacon of the power of womanhood. The Flamenco-like movements, inspired by the Spanish flair in "Spanish Rhapsody," exude sensuality.

The dance students exhibit gorgeous technique and natural musicality — from the slow, undulating beginning to the fast, high-spirited conclusion. Although they occasionally lost their focus and unity, they would use the next moment in the music to create a delightful synergy within the group. These dancers are no professionals, but their commitment to the movement and focus suggest vast potential.

"Star Crossed Lovers" translates the musical West Side Story into a ballet, a dance that tells a story. The choreography is surprisingly diverse. The act opens with the female Latinos and Americanos executing jazz hops in jazz sneakers.

Sneakers are later traded in for character shoes during the social dance scene. The female dancers then don pointe shoes for the remainder of the act. This mix of contemporary and classical styles makes an interesting show, but it remains a risk, with positive and negative effects.

The lead dancers had no difficulty with the different styles of dance, but some scenes demand more versatility in the choral dancers than some actually have. All too often the ballerinas stiffened when they should have loosened their hips or torso, as evidenced in the school dance scene. If someone screams "Mambo," hips should automatically start rolling, and torsos should be moving freely.

In contrast, the dancers were very comfortable and confident with the ballet choreography. In "The Dream Sequence," a disco ball lowered to envelop the

entire theater in glowing dots. Several female dancers, en pointe, entered the stage to perform graceful dancing filled with immaculate body lines. They shined in this piece, overflowing with elegance and sentimentality.

A highlight in the show was the performance of Ashley Revel, playing Maria opposite Norbert Nirewicz. Revel glittered on stage, fluttering her eyelashes while effortlessly performing the movements.

A difficulty in morphing a musical into a ballet is attempting to express the story lines and emotions with movements instead of words. Many of the dancers were not actors and failed to communicate to the audience. On the other hand, Revel put on the best performance possible, especially considering the difficult ending that involved more acting than dancing.

It is unfortunate that Cynthia Flach, a member of the dance faculty, did not contribute to "Star Crossed Lovers." Her musical theater expertise could have enhanced the acting and the jazz and social dancing.

Dance faculty performed most of the lead roles and solos in the show: Serguei Chtyrkov and Barbosa were the lead dancers in "Spanish Rhapsody"; Norbert Nirewicz, a guest artist, and Chtyrkov were the male leads in "Star Crossed Lovers."

The dance concert should have showcased the students instead of the already accomplished faculty members and guest artist. Despite their shortcomings, these dancers have skill. And where they lacked skill in "Star Crossed Lovers," they exhibited their obvious potential.

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The leaves, they are a-changin'

As autumn sets in, area trees shed their green foliage for new hues

BY CARRIE GIVENS
THE GAMECOCK

The weather has dipped below 90 degrees, and the leaves have already begun to fall. This can only mean one thing — the sprites are out.

According to folklore, sprites, or fairies, have one important duty: Their job is to transform the colors of trees' leaves, thus signaling the beginning of autumn. Haven't you seen the Tinkerbell-esque creatures flying around the horseshoe carrying paint cans? OK, so you missed them too.

Very soon, a change will be taking place outside. By late October and early November, the trees will no longer have green leaves. The green will transform to golden yellow, scarlet, and fiery orange. And no, the sprites will not be responsible.

The changing color results from a chemical process that is set in motion during the transition from summer to winter. In fall, the shorter period of daylight and cooler temperatures cause the leaves to slow their food production. This results in a breakdown of chlorophyll and a change of leaf color.

The shade of the leaves varies with each tree. In fact, a tree under direct sunlight could have bright red leaves, while that same species of tree in the shade could have dull red leaves. As Jameson Tinsley, a first-year history student, said, "Some of them are pretty, and then some are just

brown." Many people enjoy watching the leaves change color. Field Cantey, a first-year pre-med student, said he enjoys driving to Hendersonville, N.C., to see the leaves change.

Megan Womack, a first-year pre-pharmacy student from Forest City, N.C., said "the best place to see leaves is the mountains of North Carolina. You can't beat the cool air, campfires and panoramic views. Not that I'm biased or anything."

However, you do not have to drive to the mountains of North Carolina to witness the vibrant colors of fall. John Nelson, chief curator of USC's A.C. Moore Herbarium, said "most people don't think of the Midlands as a place to see extravagant fall colors because of the lack of concentrated trees."

But that does not mean that you cannot see these colors in Columbia or on campus. Nelson recommended visiting Senate Street and the State House grounds "to see the Ginkgo tree whose leaves turn a lemony-gold, or along Wheat Street in Shandon to see the Hickory tree whose leaves turn a brilliant yellow." He added that no one should miss "the Black Gum, which turns a vibrant scarlet."

Another place to see brilliant fall colors is the Congaree Swamp National Monument, located in

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PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE GAMECOCK

Ashley Revel and Serguei Chtyrkov star as characters separated by rival social groups in "Star Crossed Lovers."