

Students to run, kick, pitch 'for the kids'

By Megan Rogers
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Some students will make a throwback to elementary school recess this weekend at the first Kickin' For The Kids Kickball Tournament.

Interfraternity Council/Panhellenic Dance Marathon enthusiasts can get limber before Sunday's THON 5K and raise money as well as the THON special interest group Ohana-sponsored event.

The tournament will be held 1 p.m. this Saturday at the Orchard fields, said T.C. Cawley, executive director for Ohana.

Teams must have a minimum of nine players and a maximum of 14, he said.

Participation cost is \$45 and all proceeds go to THON, Ohana Fundraising Director Brad Fisher said — something he said was reason enough for people to come out.

Jamie Cox, Ohana outreach director, said the tournament isn't just a return to the elementary school games everyone loves — it's also an homage to the kids they're trying to support.

"There are kids that don't get to play kickball like we used to when we were younger, so we can play

for them," Cox (senior-management) said.

Cawley (senior-accounting) said he hopes to fill a 32-team bracket. So far, about 10 teams have signed up.

The format of the tournament will be similar to the World Cup's layout, he said — there will be eight groups of four teams and the winner of each pool will move on to the next round.

Interested teams can sign up from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. until this Friday in the HUB-Robeson Center, Cawley said.

"It's not going to be extremely competitive and it's a great way to

get out and raise money," Cawley said.

Crazy uniforms are encouraged, Cawley said — they're a great way to prepare for the creativity displayed at the THON 5K.

Cawley said he expects a good turnout, especially since people are eager to fundraise for THON as the fundraising window just opened at the beginning of the month.

The event will be held rain or shine, Fisher said.

Originally, the group was working to plan a flag football event.

But, Fisher (senior-management information systems) said a

kickball event will appeal to the inner kid in college students.

To e-mail reporter: mer5200@psu.edu

If you go

What: Kickin' It For The Kids Kickball Tournament
When: 1 p.m. Saturday
Where: Orchard Field
Details: Pre-registration is required and can be done from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. until Friday in the HUB-Robeson Center

La Niña expected to bring dry weather

By Eddie Lau
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Central Pennsylvania is expected to have a drier and milder winter than the past year, thanks to "the little girl."

The La Niña weather pattern is likely to continue and may strengthen over the next four to six months, according to a report issued Monday by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), a specialized agency of the United Nations. La Niña could potentially bring abnormal conditions to separate areas of the world, from floods to droughts to below or above normal temperatures.

La Niña, or "the little girl" in Spanish, is a weather phenomenon that is characterized by unusually cool ocean temperatures in the central and eastern tropical Pacific. Its counterpart, El Niño, is characterized by unusually warm ocean temperatures.

Some Penn State researchers have been following the abnormal weather patterns.

"Typically, La Niña winters bring much of Pennsylvania near to above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation, which can be translated into a drier and milder winter than last year," said Paul Knight, Penn State's Weather World host and senior lecturer in meteorology.

Knight said the winter of 2008 was a weak to moderate example of La Niña, which is not the case for this year.

"All indications are that this La Niña will be quite strong so that episodes of frigid air are more likely at the beginning and end of the winter season," Knight said.

The current La Niña developed quickly during June and July 2010, following the dissipation of the 2009-2010 El Niño in April, according to the report. Since August, the event has been classified as moderate to strong.

"If this La Niña follows the class pattern, there should be fewer days with snow cover, but more storms with a mixture of snow, ice and rain, rather than all snow like last year," Knight said.

Despite the freezing rain and other wintry conditions that are expected this coming winter, Mark Whitfield, director of State College's public works department, said the borough will be ready to respond.

"We put together a snow emergency plan every year that outlines any anticipated storms — ice, snow and freezing rain," Whitfield said. "It doesn't matter what the winter brings us — we have a plan for each of those events."

Whitfield said the department will start to send out crews if the police call them with specifically designated slippery areas.

Almost all forecast models predict that La Niña will continue and possibly gain strength over the next four to six months, the report said. It could be seen into the first quarter of 2011.

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MONKEYING AROUND



Chloe Elmer/Collegian

Josh Hibit (senior-agricultural science) hangs from a tree during his HORT 201 (Applied Arboriculture) class on Wednesday morning behind the HUB-Robeson Center.

Unplanned events take toll on EMS

By Colleen Boyle
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Unplanned student events can cause huge financial losses for local emergency medical services organizations, according to a Centre Region Council of Governments (COG) report presented Wednesday to the organization's Public Safety Committee.

The report measured gaps in service payments for events like football weekends and State Patty's Day. Steven Bair, who drafted the report, said the data showed that institutions like Penn State are usually responsible for covering the costs of an event, such as the extra police needed at football games.

"Those people are making sure that if they need extra people that they're helping pay for that," he said. "They're stepping up to the plate and chipping in to cover the cost."

But Bair said the researchers also looked at the costs incurred on weekends like State Patty's Day, where students gather in disorganized, "flash mob-type" events. On weekends such as these, police have to work extra hours to ensure the safety of those involved. Many of those who are transported to the hospital on high activity weekends are non-student visitors, putting a financial burden on local taxpayers, Bair said.

"The loser across the board is the emergency medical service," he said. "They're not going through your wallet to get your identification. A lot of times they do not have a good means to send you a bill."

Doris Guanowsky, senior associate director of University Health Services (UHS), said the university's Office of the Bursar tries to get students to pay charges incurred from ambulance services. For those who do not pay charges, the university can withhold certain documentation, such as transcripts.

But when non-students do not pay their charges, UHS turns to a collection agency for assistance, and even then they are still not reimbursed for some bills.

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