

Sports MONDAY

15-0: Perfection Attained as Gauchos Set School Record

BY STEVE WENDT
Staff Writer

If it wasn't already acknowledged, the #20 UCSB women's basketball team proved once and for all that it is the "feel good" team of the year.

The Gauchos capped an incredible undefeated Big West Conference regular season last Saturday night by decimating Cal State Fullerton in the Thunderdome 94-49. The win was Santa Barbara's school-record 18th straight win.

UCSB's (23-3 overall, 15-0 in the Big West) game was revving as high as its emotions Saturday, which was "Senior Night" for three current Gauchos: Sheila Frial, Melissa Corpus and Stephanie Shadwell.

"We wanted it to be a joyous occasion for our seniors," UCSB Head Coach Mark French said. "We needed to play well to create a great environment for Sheila, Stephanie and Weapon [Corpus' nickname] and that was a lot of the motivation to come out in the

game fast."

UCSB came out fast and furious indeed. The Gauchos dominated the Titans (4-22, 2-13) by shooting 53 percent from the field and forcing CSUF to cough up 20 turnovers in the first half. UCSB smothered Fullerton allowing only 13 points, none in the final 9:32 of the first half, and went to the locker room leading 45-19.

The Gauchos, many of whom have made reference to this team being more like "a family," honored their three seniors prior to the game with bouquets and boisterous ovations from the 3,008 in attendance. The lovefest also included flowers for three Titan seniors and gifts from UCSB to retiring scorekeeper Frank Swain.

"I was crying in the shoot-around today," said Frial, who finished the night with five points and a career-high eight rebounds. "It was very emotional knowing that was the last time I'd play here at the Thunderdome."

French's perspective on Frial's game was part proud

coach and part cardiologist.

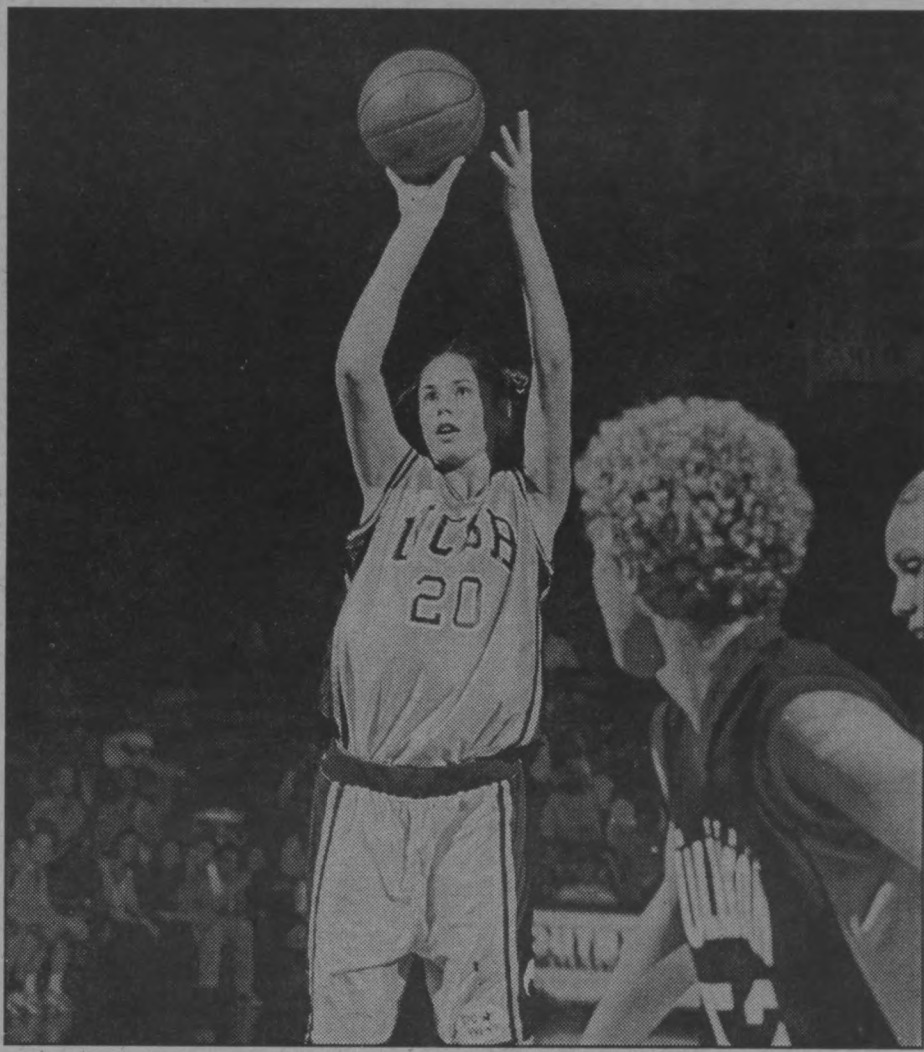
"Anyone who has a daughter that is short and wonders if they'll be able to be great at basketball, send them out to watch Sheila play," French said. "She is just all heart. She may be vertically challenged, but she is not aortically challenged in any manner."

Corpus was given the starting nod by French for the first time in her career at UCSB.

"I knew he'd turn it around and finally start me," joked Corpus, who hit a three-pointer, had one rebound and three assists. "I've definitely earned it and it was just coincidentally Senior Night."

The only senior honored who did not play was Stephanie Shadwell, who missed a majority of the season after back surgery. Shadwell was granted a medical redshirt and will decide if she will return next season later this year.

Sophomore Erin Buescher, who led all scorers with 19 points and surpassed the 500 point mark for the second straight season, ex-



JASON SCHOCK / DAILY NEXUS

ONE OF 18: Freshman Kayte Christensen knocks down a free throw for one of her 18 points during the Gauchos' 18th straight win — a school record.

pressed how much it will hurt the team to lose these valuable senior teammates.

"There is a kind of overwhelming sadness," Buescher said. "It's not like any-

one is dying or anything, but it is definitely sad. Last year we didn't have to go through losing any seniors. They'll be missed."

As much as the Gauchos

will miss these veterans, the future, as evident in the play of freshmen Lisa Hansen and Kayte Christensen vs.

See PERFECT, p.2A

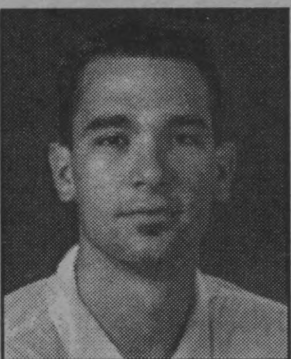
Clash With Titans Gives UCSB First Winning Record Since 1992

BY MATT HURST
Staff Writer

After playing side-by-side for much of their careers at UCSB, seniors B.J. Buntun and Josh Merrill had one last hurrah together in the UCSB men's basketball team's regular-season finale Saturday night.

The two seniors combined for 45 points in Santa Barbara's 80-75 win over Cal State Fullerton in Titan Gym, giving UCSB momentum heading into the Big West Tournament starting Thursday afternoon in Reno, Nev.

"B.J. and I have been around the block," Merrill said. "I know personally, and I'm sure it's true for B.J., I feel real comfortable out there. I feel like I'm in control, especially with the group of guys we have out on the floor. I think we're starting to realize what it takes to win."



Josh Merrill

first winning record since the 1992-93 season and giving UCSB its 14th win in its last 18 contests.

"This is the first time for me at the university, and it feels pretty good," Buntun said about the winning record. "I hope we've earned some respect."

Despite losing to the Gauchos for the second time this season, Fullerton (13-13, 7-9) won the fourth and final spot from the Western Division on Saturday night when Cal Poly dropped its game to UC Irvine who had previously lost 14 straight. The Titans were led by junior Jason Cunningham with 20 points and eight rebounds, while senior Ike Harmon chipped in 19 and eight.

"We're disappointed we lost these last two games," CSF Head Coach Bob Hawking said. "It's not the way we wanted to get into the tournament."

UCSB junior Erick Ashe, playing in the town in which he attended junior college (Fullerton JC) dropped in 15 points, dished out a team-high seven assists, and grabbed seven boards against his old teammates and friends. Ashe hit three of seven three-pointers,

See WIN, p.2A

Corpus Cracks Up, Inspires Team

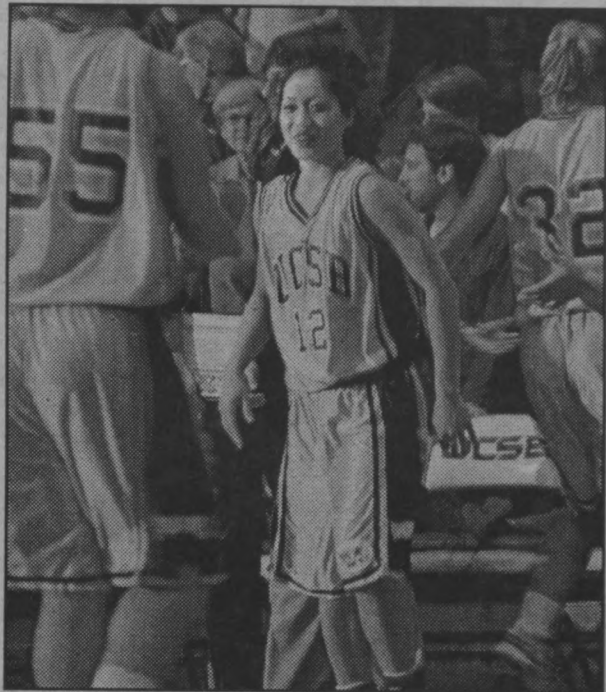
BY STEVE WENDT
Staff Writer

Following Senior Night last Saturday in the Thunderdome, UCSB senior guard Melissa Corpus told a crowded and emotional gathering of Gaucho parents and boosters, "I don't understand you; you people cheer me even when I screw up."

Apparently, Corpus doesn't know that the Gaucho fans are a lot like UCSB women's basketball coaches and team members: They're big on character.

UCSB Head Coach Mark French told reporters earlier in the season that if you didn't get excited about Corpus, "you aren't in touch with your humanity." Not exactly what most coaches would say about their 10th player off the bench who averages 1.3 points per game.

But Corpus means more to UCSB basketball more than any stat sheet can possibly encompass. Known to her team as "S' weapon," the "S" stands for secret, the



JASON SCHOCK / DAILY NEXUS

SECRET WEAPON: Junior Melissa Corpus has inspired the women's basketball team in her final year.

5'4" guard is called the funniest, most dedicated, bravest and most loyal Gaucho by most everyone of her teammates.

"She plays the game of basketball because she really loves it," French said. "I have

a deep admiration for her passion for the game and for being a Gaucho. Some players play for the scholarship or the notoriety, but she plays because she cares about

See CORPUS, p.2A

Sporting Events Calendar

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
No events scheduled	Baseball @ CSUN 2 p.m.	Women's basketball @ Big West Tournament in Reno, Nev. through Saturday	Men's basketball @ Big West Tournament in Reno, Nev. through Saturday. Golf @ Pacific Coast Tourney through Friday	Men's volleyball @ Hawai'i through Saturday 9 p.m. Women's gymnastics, UCSB Invitational 7 p.m. Baseball vs. Sacramento State 2 p.m.	Softball vs. Cal 1 p.m. Baseball vs. Sacramento State 1 p.m. Men's gymnastics, UCSB Invitational 7:30 p.m. Women's tennis vs. Pennsylvania 11 a.m. Women's water polo vs. Hawai'i 12 p.m.	Softball vs. St. Mary's 1 p.m. Baseball vs. Sacramento State 1 p.m. Women's tennis vs. Boston College 9 a.m. Men's tennis @ Oregon TBA

WIN

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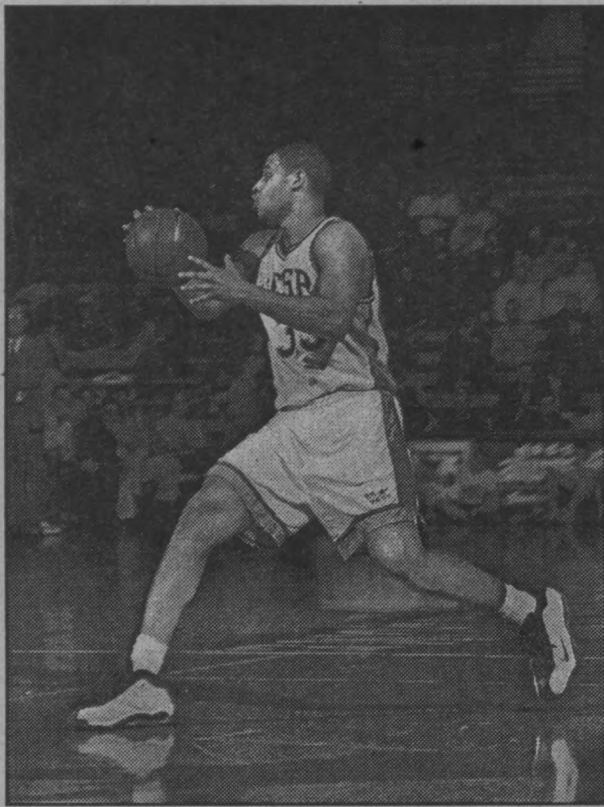
making him 12 of 22 from downtown in his last three games.

"We swang the ball really quick and it was just wide-open," Ashe said. "I was just taking them, and they were going down. My stroke has come back a bit. I used to play in this gym like every day, although these are new baskets."

The Gauchos were red-hot from the field, shooting 56 percent from the field for the game, and 61.5 percent in the second half. UCSB held a 41-26 lead at the break, mainly due to Fullerton's inconsistency from the field. The Titans shot eight of 34 from the floor in the first half, for a 23.5 percent clip.

"We talked about it at halftime — we knew that they would make a charge with what they had at stake," UCSB Head Coach Bob Williams said. "We knew that they would come out and play with a lot of heart and a lot of emotion. We knew that Coach Hawking would not let them die on it, and they didn't. They made some very good runs at us."

Next up for the Gauchos is the Big West Tournament



JASON SCHOCK / DAILY NEXUS

MR. CONSISTENCY: Gaucho senior B.J. Bunton once again played well, leading UCSB to an 80-75 victory.

in Reno on Thursday. Seeded number one in the Western Division, Santa Barbara will face the Big West's Eastern Division number four seed Utah State at noon.

"I think we just needed the momentum," Williams said about how important the win was. "We need to keep it rolling. Our guys

were loose but played really, really hard — and had fun playing hard. I was really pleased with that because I thought at times we were kind of running on empty a bit mentally the last couple of weeks. We weren't as juiced up as we'd like to be and weren't as mentally sharp as we'd like to be. I think tonight we showed that there is plenty left in the tanks."

PERFECT

Continued from p.1A

CSUF, is very bright.

Hansen and Christensen each scored in double digits with 10 and 18 points, respectively. Hansen set a new career high in points and also pulled down four boards. Christensen tied a

career high in scoring, grabbed seven rebounds and

was seven of 10 from the field. The Alturas, Calif., native earned high praise from her coach.

"Kayte showed flashes of, not only the future, but maybe of what things may come in games later this month," French said.



Sheila Frial

CORPUS

Continued from p.1A

the game."

That love of the game was strengthened last season when the former Archbishop Mitty prepster began to fall ill and was rushed to the emergency room. A kidney ailment that has yet to be definitively diagnosed had Corpus thinking of things other than hitting treys.

Through two biopsies and many uncertain times, Corpus said that a group of special people helped her through it all.

"[My teammates] have always been there for me," she said. "When I was sick, they constantly checked up on me and I felt part of the team. I couldn't ask for anything more."

Junior Tawnee Cooper, who is sidelined for the rest of the season with a knee injury, says she has a greater understanding of what it was

See CORPUS, p.3A

What Gauchos Are Saying About Melissa Corpus



"She's just somebody who has a lot of heart. She means so much to the program ... more than she knows."
--Jr. Tawnee Cooper



"She's always making up fake stories like ... when we're on an airplane, she'll tell the other passengers that she's the star ..."
--Soph. Rachel Rogers



"The funniest girl in the world. We always set her up to get in trouble, but usually it's deserved."
--Soph. Nicole Greathouse



"Very funny, but also someone you can talk to and trust. She's a hard worker and an inspiration."
--Jr. Stacy Clinesmith

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Pepperdine Waves Roll Over UCSB

BY MARVIN GAPULTOS
Staff Writer

The UCSB baseball team was washed away this past weekend when it took on the likes of baseball powerhouse Pepperdine University. The #12 Waves (13-1 overall) were more like tsunamis, however, winning both games in the two-game home-and-home series against the Gauchos (9-8).

In Friday's contest in Malibu, senior pitcher David Uris started on the mound for Santa Barbara and ran into trouble in the third inning. "The Gaucho hurler gave up six runs, thanks in large part to Pepperdine first baseman Jared Pitney. With the bases loaded, Pitney crushed a Uris pitch over the centerfield fence for a grand slam. The Waves led 6-0 after the third.

"[Uris] had one bad inning," UCSB Head Coach Bob Brontsema said of his

starter's performance. "He made some bad pitches in [the third]. One of the things we're running into right now is we're having trouble putting hitters away. We've been giving up two-strike hits and that hurts us."

Despite being down 7-0 after five innings, the Gauchos staged a small rally in the sixth when senior designated hitter Gene Lenzi knocked in two runs on a single to center field. Sophomore third baseman Dave Molitor scored on a Pepperdine throwing error to bring the score to 7-3. However, that would be the last run scored by UCSB, losing the game 9-3.

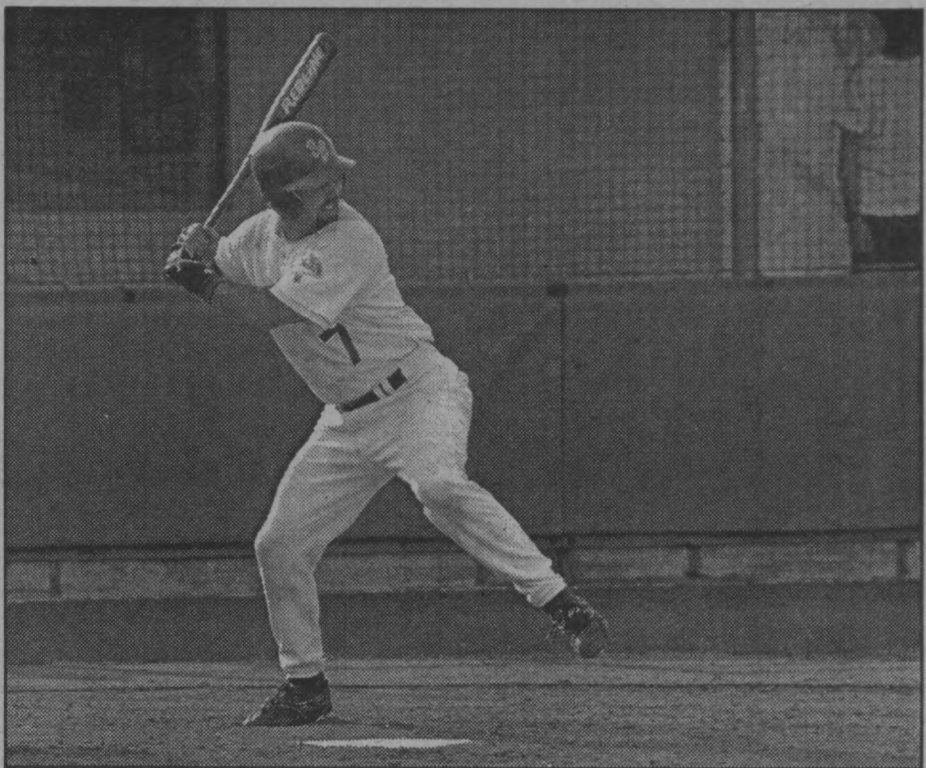
Uris pitched for 6.3 innings and allowed eight runs on eight hits. The right-hander picked up his third loss of the season. Senior left fielder Ryan Baderian, senior first baseman Bryan LaCour, and junior catcher Bill Duplissee all had two hits apiece in the Gaucho loss.

Santa Barbara hoped to redeem Friday's loss by returning home to Caesar Uyesaka Stadium on Saturday. However, the Waves had other ideas, drowning UCSB with 21 hits in a 14-1 victory.

"Much of what you saw today, we saw yesterday as well," Brontsema said. "They have a team ERA of something like 2.60, and that gets it done. We didn't get it done today."

The lone run for the Gauchos came off of the bat of sophomore second baseman Chad Peshke, who led off the first for UCSB with a solo shot to left field. Unfortunately, Peshke's homer was the only spark for the Santa Barbara offense.

Junior righty Gabe Neboyia got the nod on the hill for the Gauchos, but picked up his third loss of the year. Wave batters touched Neboyia for seven runs on eleven hits after the Bishop, Calif., native worked four



BASEBALL GENES: Senior Gene Lenzi, along with his Gaucho teammates, were swept by Pepperdine in two games this past weekend.

innings.

"They are by far the best team we have played so far," Neboyia said. "I was struggling a lot with my pitch selection and they were just good hitters."

Pepperdine was led by humor and her unbending assertion that absolutely nothing is her fault.

About her 19 missed shots in her four years: "I was definitely fouled," Corpus claims. "I don't like to make excuses, but I was fouled every time. It's the Corpus Rules — the opposite of the Jordan Rules. But I am a Jordan-like threat."

third baseman G.J. Raymundo, who was 4-6 from the plate and drove in three runs. Pitney was 3-6 with one RBI, and catcher Dane Sardinha went 2-6 from the dish with two ribbies and one home run.

"They just plain kicked our asses," said LaCour, who leads the Gauchos in hitting at .403. "They out-pitched us and they out-hit us. The good thing is that they beat us and we didn't beat ourselves."



Melissa Corpus

CORPUS

Continued from p.2A

like for Corpus not to be hoopin' last year.

"What she had was so much more serious than what I have," Cooper said. "But the way she handled it is something that I really look up to her for and admire. She's so selfless; she

has a heart of gold."

Corpus admits that she won't take anything for granted now that she's in the waning days of her career at UCSB. She said that when picking up her mother, Joy, who hadn't been to a UCSB game since Melissa's freshman year, at the airport before Senior Night, Corpus was already misting up.

"[Senior guard Sheila

Frial] and I have already been getting sentimental," Corpus said. "It's just been random stuff, too, like the last drive to Fullerton or eating at the same Olive Garden in Irvine."

Before this begins to get too sappy, we mustn't forget that which endears Corpus to everyone on the team — her good natured sense of

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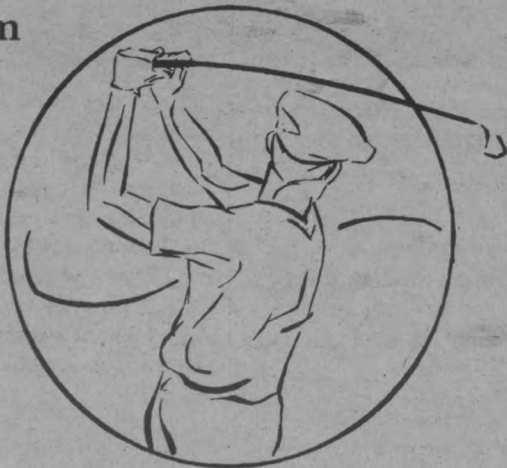
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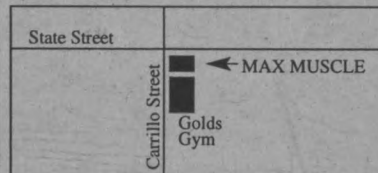
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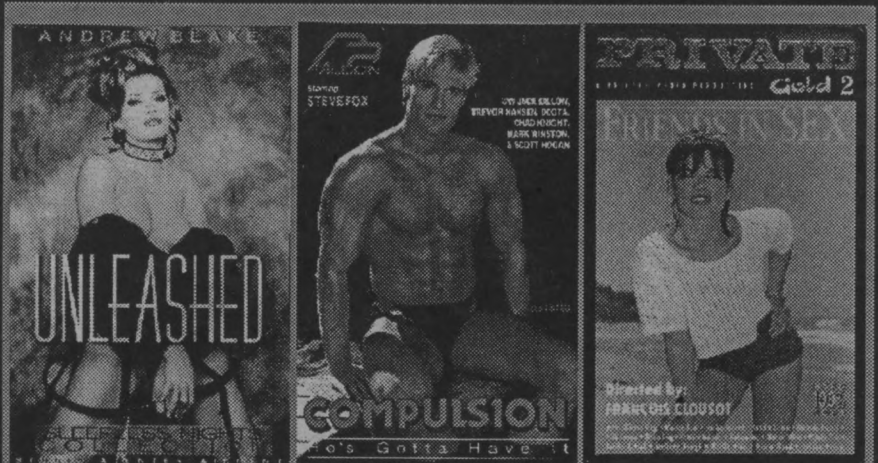
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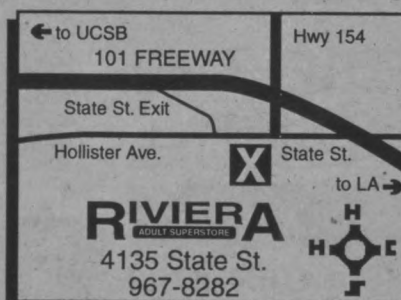
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