

## ILLINI OF THE WEEK

### Gary Miller

Two first-place finishes at the SEMO Relays in Cape Girardeau, Mo.



# RISING ABOVE THE REST

PHOTO BY WESLEY FANE

BY KEVIN OLSEN  
STAFF WRITER

**T**wo weeks into the outdoor season, and already Gary Miller is making a name for himself on the track and field team.

Miller is coming off two event victories last weekend at the SEMO Relays in Cape Girardeau, Mo., and head coach Wayne Angel feels Miller can be one of the guys he can count on to bring the Illini back to elite status.

The transfer from Barton County Community College in Great Bend, Kan., won the 400-meter hurdles in his first time ever competing in the event with a time of 53.34 seconds. He was also a part of the victorious 4x400 relay team that hit a NCAA regional qualifying mark with a time of 3 minutes, 9.65 seconds.

"This weekend was a warm day, a good track, a good crowd and it all came together," Miller said.

With usual running mate Gakologelwang Masheto, who placed fourth at nationals last year in the 400 meters, sidelined with a stress fracture in his foot, the team of Miller, Brandon Gray, Dan Jones and Yawusa Kinda picked up the slack in the absence of the All-American. For Miller, the qualifying performance was truly a

#### Illini of the Week honorable mention

##### Angelena Mexicano - Softball

In the softball team's home opener against Eastern Illinois last Wednesday, the senior shortstop hit her team-leading 12th home run of the season to bring her career total to 39. She went 4-for-6 on the day and had seven RBIs to lead Illinois to a doubleheader sweep against the Panthers. Mexicano added another RBI and three runs last Friday at Penn State, when she went 3-for-4 from the plate.

##### Nick Chmielewski, Lee Zerrusen, Wes Braun and Mike Stankiewicz - Baseball

The four Illini pitchers teamed up to carry a no-hit bid into the ninth inning last Wednesday against Saint Louis. Chmielewski started and got the win, while Zerrusen struck out three batters.

team effort.

"Our freshman Dan Jones was phenomenal," Miller said. "He caught the second place, got the first place guy and handed it to me and I extended the lead, and

I gave it to Ya and he brought it home."

The junior thinks the relay team can get its time down to 3:07 before Masheto returns from injury. But the exciting part of the sea-

See MILLER, Page 4B

## Four football players vying for safety spots

BY DANIEL JOHNSON  
STAFF WRITER

One of the first issues Illinois will have to address this spring will be its secondary.

Although the Illini will be returning their primary cornerbacks from last year, their three primary safeties, Justin Harrison, Justin Sanders and Kevin Mitchell, have graduated.

**More online:** To hear a live drop of the Illini football team's spring practice and other updates, log on to [www.DailyIllini.com](http://www.DailyIllini.com)

57 tackles on the season, one interception and eight passes defended.

The question now is how will Ron Zook and co-defensive coordinator Curt Mallory replace the trio that received the majority

of playing time last year.

"We just want to come in and fill the void, you can't replace those guys, as far as what they did," sophomore Bo Flowers said. "What we can do is make the secondary unit solid, make ourselves better and play the best we can."

As of now, the four players vying for the vacated safety spots are Flowers, Nate Bussey, Travon Bellamy and Garrett Edwards, all sophomores.

"I think Travon Bellamy is going to give us a guy that understands the defense well; he's ready, and he's very, very hungry," Zook said. "Nate Bussey is a guy that we played as a freshman and is showing signs of being able to do great things. Bo Flowers continues to improve; Garrett Edwards was really coming on strong last year until he hurt his knee."

Given the competition that has been present throughout spring practice, it would be hard to determine a starting duo now, and

See FOOTBALL, Page 4B



Illinois' Bo Flowers, 24, goes in for a tackle during Tuesday afternoon's practice. Both Flowers and Nate Bussey, not pictured, are vying for the safety positions on next year's team.

BRAD VEST THE DAILY ILLINI

## Softball team hopes to learn from losses, will face Bradley

BY RICH MAYOR  
STAFF WRITER

The Illini softball team had a less-than-stellar weekend, but the players won't allow it to dampen their spirits as an in-state rival awaits.

Illinois will take its battle-tested squad to Peoria, Ill., on Wednesday for a doubleheader against Bradley (11-15). The Braves, despite their poor record, are 2-0 against Big Ten opponents this season, including a 4-0 shut-out of No. 14 Northwestern.

**More on-air:** To hear about the softball game, tune in to **WPGU 107.1-FM** at 5 p.m.

The team won't allow itself to be fooled by records, though.

"They're a good softball team, and they're well-coached," head coach Terri Sullivan said. "General fans can say our record is .500, but they may not know the schedule we're playing. Things on paper don't matter much to us — like underdogs and favorites. You really just have to come to play."

The Illini shutout Bradley 5-0 at Eichelberger Field when the two teams met last season, but

See SOFTBALL, Page 4B

## Women's golf team finishes in 3rd place at Indiana Invitational; Mory leads Illini

BY KYLE DILLER  
STAFF WRITER

The Illinois women's golf team finished in third place at the Indiana Invitational on Tuesday, with senior Stephanie Mory leading the team.

After playing 36 holes on Mon-

day, Illinois sat in fourth place. However, the Illini finished strong on Tuesday to jump up one spot in the last 18 holes with a score of 898. In the process, Illinois also beat four top-50 teams, including No. 28 Texas (4th), No. 49 UNLV (5th), No. 44 Oregon (6th) and No.

50 Indiana (8th).

"I think this is a huge step for the team, realizing what their true potential is," head coach Renee Slone said. "I think all the hard work both on the physical side

See GOLF, Page 4B

#### Top 10 Team Finishes

Finish	School	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Final
1	Purdue (No. 6)	279	282	291	852 (-12)
2	Ohio State	295	300	299	894 (+30)
3	<b>ILLINOIS</b>	294	307	297	898 (+34)
4	Texas	302	300	297	899 (+35)
5	UNLV	299	291	310	900 (+36)
6	Oregon	306	304	295	905 (+41)
7	Michigan	308	300	303	911 (+47)
8	Indiana	300	302	310	912 (+48)
9	N'western	298	308	313	919 (+55)
10	Iowa	308	311	305	924 (+60)