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# The Miami Herald

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**IN MY OPINION**

**Dan Le Batard**  
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## Thrills, terror in Heat's journey

It somehow keeps building. All of it. The terror, the interest, the stakes. This seems impossible, given where we started three years ago. It feels like jumping up in the air and never coming down, just continuing to elevate, with your stomach feeling exhilaration/nausea as the Earth keeps getting smaller and smaller below.

The Miami Heat have somehow made three straight interminable NBA regular seasons hypnotizing. You know how hard that it is to do for one regular season? They've captivated us by losing big, and winning big, and it was important that it be done in that order the first two years. Because now the upside-down-right-side-up story arc keeps spinning and climbing and hurtling through the clouds . . . to this dizzying place where you can feel the I-can-touch-the-sky joy while also being forced to take inventory of just how far there is to fall.

Miami had to lose the first year to create doubt here and hope for the rest of basketball's fans . . . and to make last year's championship somehow feel like a surprise (Oklahoma City was actually favored in The Finals) . . . and to bring us to this uncertain place in the clouds where there is a very thin atmospheric gap between feeling like a dynasty controlling a basketball era and feeling like a failure crushed by these delirious heights.

Six more victories, and it'll be bliss. Two losses in the next three games, and

• TURN TO LE BATARD, 7A



Heat's LeBron James has mostly ignored pestering from Pacers' Lance Stephenson, 1D



<b>Game 5 @MIA</b> 8:30 p.m. Thursday TV: TNT	<b>Game 6 @IND</b> 8:30 p.m. Saturday TV: TNT	<b>*Game 7 @MIA</b> 8:30 p.m. Monday TV: TNT <small>*if necessary</small>
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KEY LARGO

PHOTO COURTESY ERIC DOUGLAS

**UP CLOSE AT LAST:** Gabe Spataro, 80, now legally blind, makes his first underwater visit to the statue of Christ that he arranged to be brought to the Keys a half-century ago.

## A dive into the past

BY CAMMY CLARK  
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It was a reunion 51 years in the making. When Korean War veteran Gabe Spataro was relearning how to scuba dive, he told his instructors a riveting tale about his wheeler-dealer role in an effort half a century ago to bring the now-famous "Christ of the Deep" underwater statue to the United States from Italy.

Spataro, 80 and legally blind from macular degeneration, described his wine-tasting trip to Europe, his father's connection with an Italian steamship line, his coordination of the Underwater Society of America's third national convention and his dilemma: how to get the 1,100-pound bronze statue of Jesus up one floor to the Grand Ballroom of the Palmer House in Chicago without paying the house union to do the work.

"It was a wacky story," said Jim Elliott, president and founder of the Chicago-based nonprofit group Diveheart, which teaches children, adults and veterans with disabilities how to dive.

So wacky, Elliott said, that he didn't believe it until Spataro produced 1962 photographs of

• TURN TO STATUE, 2A

In a testament to tenacity, Gabe Spataro got a statue of Christ to Florida, and sees it at last in its watery home



JERRY WILKINSON COLLECTION

IN 1962: Gabe Spataro with the statue when, after a great deal of finagling, it arrived from Italy at Navy Pier in Chicago.

## Drone attack kills a Taliban leader

■ A \$5 million bounty was on Waliur Rehman Mehsud's head when he was taken out, but his death has raised questions about whether the Obama administration is following its own rules.

BY TOM HUSSAIN AND JONATHAN S. LANDAY  
McClatchy Foreign Staff

ISLAMABAD — Missiles from a CIA drone killed a Pakistani Taliban leader Wednesday who was carrying a \$5 million U.S. bounty on his head, Pakistani security officials said, an indication that the Obama administration and the Pakistani military still are cooperating on the top-secret U.S. targeted-killing program.



MEHSUD

The strike against Waliur Rehman Mehsud was the first in Pakistan since President Barack Obama outlined tighter rules for the controversial targeted-killing program in a speech last week, and some experts questioned whether the criteria used to target Mehsud conformed to the president's pledges of greater accountability and transparency.

In Washington, White House spokesman Jay Carney declined to confirm a U.S. hand in Mehsud's death. But he contended that Mehsud "has participated in cross-border attacks in Afghanistan against U.S. and NATO personnel and horrific attacks against Pakistani civilians and soldiers."

Carney noted that Mehsud also was wanted in connection with a Dec. 30, 2009, suicide bombing at a CIA base in Khost, Afghanistan, that killed seven Americans working for the CIA and a

• TURN TO DRONE, 7A

### RAYMOND HERISSE CASE

## A day of odd twists in probe of Beach shooting

■ Miami Beach police said crucial evidence in the shooting of Raymond Herisse was destroyed. That startling revelation was later denied.

BY JULIE K. BROWN  
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The investigation into the shooting of a motorist and four bystanders by police on Memorial Day weekend two years ago took an unexpected detour

on Wednesday. In one eight-hour interlude: • Miami Beach P.D. told The Miami Herald in an email that a key piece of evidence — tapes containing radio chatter between officers on the street and police

dispatchers — had been destroyed as a matter of routine housekeeping. The department cited state law stipulating that such records can lawfully be disposed of after 30 days.

It was a startling revelation. The dispatches, which would indicate what Miami Beach and Hialeah officers saw, heard and did before

➔ **MiamiHerald.com/miami-beach**  
Read more about the shooting

they fired 16 shots at an erratic motorist during Urban Beach Week 2011, killing him and wounding four tourists, are crucial to determining whether police acted properly.

• Informed that the city had said the records were destroyed, the attorney for the dead motorist expressed outrage. "Those recordings of police transmissions represent the unedited truth of what happened, and that's all we're asking. The family wants to know

• TURN TO TAPES, 2A

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