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- Corrections
- City Guide

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- Dave Barry
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- Horoscopes
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- Contests
- Today's Front Page

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- Yellow Pages

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UM FOOTBALL

Williams enters jail, faces new charges

Charged with violating probation, star recruit Willie Williams turns himself in and will be jailed until at least Friday. Meanwhile, his status at UM remains uncertain.

BY SUSAN MILLER DEGNAN
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With his future at the University of Miami in limbo, Carol City High linebacker Willie Williams surrendered Tuesday morning at Broward County Jail on a charge of violating probation. He will be held in custody until he appears in Broward County Circuit Court for a bond hearing at 1:30 p.m. Friday.

"Willie is optimistic, and I keep reassuring him that everything will be OK -- but that I can't make any promises," said Miami defense attorney Paul Lazarus, who accompanied Williams to the jail along with Fort Lauderdale defense attorney Bradford Cohen. "He's in jail at least until Friday. It's up to Judge [Michael G.] Kaplan whether or not he will get out. We're going to try to convince him, but that's the best we can do."

Williams, who Lazarus said was not handcuffed and surrendered quietly "with little fanfare," had two separate criminal charges filed against him earlier Tuesday by Gainesville State Attorney Bill Cervone.

The newest charges -- one a misdemeanor for criminal mischief and the other a felony for obstructing extinguishment -- were related to Williams' allegedly discharging fire extinguishers during his recruiting trip to Florida from Jan. 30 to Feb. 1.

"A warrant for his arrest on the felony charge is in the process of being issued by the courts in Gainesville," said state attorney's office investigator Spencer Mann. He said the misdemeanor charge could be upgraded to a felony if it is determined the hotel damage is costly enough.

"A lot may depend on his incarceration down there on the violation