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August 2, 2007

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Patrick Reusse: Busy sports news days get put in perspective

Various teams from a Hispanic baseball league for adults had been spotted playing Sunday afternoon games at Bassett Creek Park. This was mentioned to the boss in the Star Tribune's sports department. It was deemed worthy of a story to be accompanied by photos.

By Patrick Reusse, Star Tribune

Last update: August 02, 2007 – 12:06 AM

Various teams from a Hispanic baseball league for adults had been spotted playing Sunday afternoon games at Bassett Creek Park. This was mentioned to the boss in the Star Tribune's sports department. It was deemed worthy of a story to be accompanied by photos.

"We don't have anything major to compete with it for space on Tuesday," the boss said. "Why don't we run it then?"

Liz Flores from the newspaper's photo staff spent a couple of hours at the dusty ball field in Crystal and came up with some great shots of the action between the Charros and the Cervceros.

We were ready to have the big play on the sports cover on Tuesday. And then came Monday -- first with the reports that the Timberwolves were close to trading Kevin Garnett to Boston, then that NFL coaching legend Bill Walsh had died, and finally that the Twins had traded veteran second baseman Luis Castillo to the Mets for a pair of minor leaguers of questionable prospect status.

The story on the rivals from Liga Hispana fought its way into Tuesday's sports section on page C6, accompanied by one of Flores' photos.

Then came Tuesday's news cycle and more huge headlines for the sports section. Joe Christensen, one of our baseball writers, came up with the best Twins story of this season: Johan Santana, the game's best pitcher, ripping General Manager Terry Ryan and ownership for choosing to subtract Castillo and add nothing to the team at the trading deadline.

Any other morning, that story gets the big splash on our sports page and a couple of sidebars to go with it. On Wednesday morning, it was competing for page C1 space with Tuesday afternoon's official confirmation that Minnesota's most monumental trade since Fran Tarkenton came back from the New York Giants in 1972 had been completed.

Garnett had gone to Boston for five players and two No. 1 draft choices. And he had

added to the dramatics of the situation by pointing to Wolves owner Glen Taylor -- not basketball boss Kevin McHale -- as the man behind the trade.

There still were options for a sports columnist for Thursday's edition. The Twins had four consecutive victories and two consecutive nights of dissension in the clubhouse. Suddenly, the much-praised Ryan was taking more heat from his players and the sporting public than was the Timberwolves' much-maligned McHale.

So checking in on the suddenly sassy Twins was an option, as was meeting three of the Wolves' new young players from the Garnett trade for a 7 p.m. news conference.

Al Jefferson, Ryan Gomes and Sebastian Telfair were going to be there. Taylor and McHale also were scheduled to appear in public for the first time since trading the only superstar in franchise history.

With some input from colleagues, it was decided to go with one of the new Wolves as a column subject.

It appeared the local TV stations all made the same decision: the Wolves news conference over the Twins for the lead tape on their sports segments.

The cameras were all in place in the back of the room when I walked past the location of the news conference at 6 p.m. When I returned a half-hour later, the camera people were pulling out plugs, wrapping cords and hustling hither and yon.

"What gives?" I asked.

"Didn't you hear?" one of these fellows said. "The 35W bridge by the university collapsed. It's bad. Real bad."

The camera people and TV reporters were gone in a couple of minutes. I packed up, went to the parking ramp behind Target Center and exited to go ... where?

I wound up crossing the Hennepin Ave. Bridge, took a right on Main Street and headed down the cobblestone street. There were a few people still sitting in the sidewalk areas in front of cafes. But mostly there were folks in running clothes, and on bikes, and even pushing baby strollers headed toward the end of the road ... where Main Street dead-ends maybe 150 yards from the I-35W bridge.

We saw the smoke, saw the bridge and its downward angle, moved off the street to make room for the emergency vehicles.

Several young men in Twins jerseys were standing in a field, as close to the bridge as the police tape would allow.

"There were 10 of us going to the Twins game in two cars," Matt Ryan of Little Canada

said. "We were a couple of minutes from the bridge. Then, traffic basically stopped. We couldn't figure it out. Someone in the car next to us said, 'The bridge collapsed.' So we took the next exit and came down here. I can't believe it."

Tim Gagne from Roseville, the grandson of Verne, was in the group. "I woke up this morning and saw what Santana had said and I was so mad at the Twins," he said. "I was just cussin'. And now you see this -- hear how bad it might be -- and I feel kind of silly for being that upset."

"Johan's mad. Garnett gets traded. It doesn't mean as much as we think, does it?"

His friend Scott Walsh from St. Paul said: "Doesn't mean a thing."

Wolves owner Taylor would agree. He postponed the news conference and also revealed that his granddaughter had been on the bridge when it collapsed. "She called," Taylor said, meaning she was safe.

Patrick Reusse can be heard weekdays on AM-1500 KSTP at 6:45 and 7:45 a.m. and 4:40 p.m. preusse@startribune.com

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washingtonpost.com

'We're Going to Win for Them': Hokies Return, Lifting School's Spirit

By Adam Kilgore
Washington Post Staff Writer
Thursday, August 2, 2007; E01

BLACKSBURG, Va., Aug. 1 -- Nearly the entire Virginia Tech student body, clad in orange and maroon T-shirts, trudged toward Lane Stadium on the morning of April 17, eyes still raw from grieving after the previous day's tragedy. They descended for a convocation they hoped would be an initial step in turning mourning to healing.

Two students surveyed the scene, which, in a way, felt familiar. "It looks like we're going to a football game," one said to the other.

"Except if this was a football game," he responded, "we wouldn't be able to hear each other."

The cacophony of a fall Saturday would have seemed normal at Virginia Tech, where the campus and community share a fervor for the [Hokies](#) football team. But normalcy was a distant hope, the football season still a summer away.

As Virginia Tech begins preseason practice Thursday, players, students and community members believe the team will help restore some normalcy and further unify the shaken campus, still recovering after a student killed 32 students and faculty members and himself in the worst school shooting in U.S. history. The Hokies football team will follow the example set by such teams as the [New York Yankees](#) after the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, and the [New Orleans Saints](#) after Hurricane Katrina.

Anticipation for the football season began almost immediately after the tragedy, with those affected searching for something to cling to. Shortly after the convocation, quarterback [Sean Glennon](#), who is from [Centreville](#), contemplated the football team's possible role.

"I hope we'll have an impact like other sports teams have had in recent years," he said. "The Yankees during 9/11 and the New Orleans Saints during Katrina let people escape from tragedy. I hope we can do the same thing."

In fall 2001, the Yankees helped the city come together and cheer. Some debated the merits of playing baseball, wondering if it would diminish the magnitude of events.

But as the Yankees advanced through the playoffs and into the World Series, the importance of the games became obvious. The games gave New York a sense of comfort, even though the Yankees lost to the [Arizona Diamondbacks](#) in seven games.

"It made me realize the power of sports and what impact we could have as athletes," Yankees pitcher

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[Andy Pettitte](#) said. "For a few hours a day, nobody in New York was thinking about 9/11. We were able to take people's minds off what happened and it brought people together when they needed to be together."

Because of extensive damage to the Superdome, the Saints played most of their home games in 2005 in [Baton Rouge](#), but drew vocal fan support at every road game. Last season, the Saints returned to the Superdome and put together a 10-6 regular season before advancing to the [NFC championship game](#).

The Hokies likely will begin the season as a top 10 team in the national polls and are favored by many to win the [Atlantic Coast Conference](#). Some have wondered if dealing with the scope of the tragedy will hurt the team's performance and serve as a distraction.

"It wasn't a burden," Pettitte said. "There was an energy and a buzz in the park that was indescribable. It was almost magical. I would say only good things came out of it for us."

Said shortstop [Derek Jeter](#): "Those were special games. People needed a distraction. We viewed it like an opportunity. We realized we could help in our own way."

Mirroring the support the Yankees and Saints experienced in those respective seasons, sympathetic fans from every corner of the country will now have two teams to root for: their usual favorite school and Virginia Tech. Coach [Frank Beamer](#) decided the first thing he would tell the Hokies when they met as a team for the first time since April was how much attention Virginia Tech would draw this season.

"Probably the most people ever are going to be pulling for Virginia Tech," Beamer said.

The shooting certainly have done nothing to dampen the community's enthusiasm for its football team. Defensive tackle Carlton Powell has a friend who leads an orientation group for freshmen. Powell assumed the most-broached topic with new students would be the tragedy. Instead, the most common inquiry was how to secure football season tickets.

"Everyone in [Blacksburg](#) is using football as a way to get back into the groove and get things back the way they used to be," tackle Duane Brown said. "It's a lot of pressure, but it's not unwanted pressure."

Back in April, as students prepared to pack into the convocation, a line formed outside [Cassell Coliseum](#). It snaked for a mile in two directions as backup running back Kenny Lewis Jr. and two of his teammates found a place in line. After a reporter spoke with Lewis, he made certain to deliver a final message.

"Tell those people we're going to play the season for them," Lewis said. "We're going to win for them."

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August 2, 2007

Baseball Gets Into Resale of Tickets

By [BRAD STONE](#) and [MATT RICHTEL](#)

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug. 1 — Major League Baseball once frowned on scalping, the resale of tickets among fans and sidewalk entrepreneurs. On Thursday, professional baseball will announce plans to get into the business.

In a nod to the growing strength of Internet ticket exchanges, the league has entered into a revenue-sharing agreement with StubHub, an online market owned by [eBay](#) that acts as a middleman in the resale of tickets to entertainment events. Under the five-year deal, all 30 baseball team Web sites and [MLB.com](#) will direct fans who want to sell their tickets or buy tickets from other fans to [Stubhub.com](#).

The deal caps a growing trend over the last several years to legitimize the secondary ticket market. Most of the league's teams participate in ticket resale from their own Web sites and within rules and regulations dictated by teams and state laws. The deal not only embraces the activity and validates the secondary ticket market, but gives Major League Baseball a share of the revenue from sales.

"The taboo of the secondary ticket market has been all but eliminated," said David M. Carter, assistant professor of sports business at the [University of Southern California](#)'s business school. He said that baseball and other professional sports franchises are asking: "Why not capture some of the revenue that for years has been left on the table to scalpers?"

That revenue could be sizable. StubHub charges a combined 25 percent fee to buyers and sellers on the exchange of tickets. Under the new arrangement, baseball's interactive company, Major League Baseball Advanced Media, which is partly owned by all the baseball franchises, will get a share of revenues, plus a fee, said Robert DuPuy, president and chief operating officer of the league. He declined to specify the precise revenue sharing of the deal.

But the arrangement may not be without a cost to the league. In what may sound like inside baseball (and it is), some teams have in the past eschewed StubHub in favor of striking individual deals with other ticket services. For example, a dozen teams have contracts with TicketMaster, a division of [InterActiveCorp](#), the conglomerate of various Internet and media businesses.

Several teams have also openly criticized the use of StubHub in the past. Last season, the [New York Yankees](#) revoked season tickets of fans who used StubHub, saying it violated the contract that the ticket holders had with the team. The Yankees even went so far as to ask its flagship radio station, WCBS, to turn down ads from StubHub, and [security guards at Yankee Stadium](#) regularly questioned fans arriving with StubHub envelopes.

A New York state law passed in 2005 essentially legalized reselling by allowing ticket holders to sell their seats for a maximum of 45 percent over face value.

Fewer than a dozen states still have antiscalping laws on the books. StubHub itself has lobbied extensively to repeal such provisions.

Robert A. Bowman, the chief executive of Major League Baseball Advanced Media, said that the deal with StubHub signals the league's recognition that the secondary market is in the interest of baseball owners and that it made sense to have a centralized place where fans would feel comfortable conducting their exchanges.

"Clubs realize the secondary business is a vibrant business in baseball," he said. "Therefore it's in the clubs' interest to endorse it, embrace it and make sure it's a fan-friendly venue. Fans feel it's safe and ethical and legitimate."

Mr. Carter, from U.S.C., said that the changes were being driven by technology, but also lifestyle. He said that fans contemplating buying expensive season ticket packages are increasingly eager to know they are going to be able to sell tickets to games they cannot attend, particularly if their lives are busy and schedules tight.

"How people consume sports has changed," he said. "Schedules are tight — people want to be able to purchase and sell tickets." He added that fans' growing confidence with the online experience has lent to the popularity of the secondary markets.

But Mr. Carter said that the deal is likely to exacerbate the tension between some teams and the league over who has control of marketing and e-commerce in the digital age. He said that some team managements think they can do a better job of making money from their own efforts and entrepreneurship, rather than ceding it to the league.

"It's part of a bigger issue as technology moves forward," said Mr. Carter. "There's a push and pull between teams and leagues." Individual teams were not going to be officially informed of the deal until Thursday, league officials said. For the auction giant eBay, which acquired StubHub in January for \$310 million, the deal marks a significant victory and a sign that StubHub is losing its reputation as a rogue online exchange which encourages illegal activity.

Greg Bettinelli, director of business development at StubHub, said the company would now work on a new system for baseball that would allow sellers to digitally transfer tickets to buyers. In the case of a last-minute sale, he said, sellers will be able to digitally send tickets to the ballpark box office in the name of the buyer.

"Usually ticket sales fall off within 72 hours of the game. This is a landmark opportunity to have tickets for sale up to game time," he said.

The deal also represents a defeat for TicketMaster, which has deals with a dozen baseball teams, including the [Los Angeles Dodgers](#), to operate their secondary ticketing exchanges.

Executives at TicketMaster would not comment on the deal. But they have been known to resort to the courts when the company believes its contracts are being violated. Last month, the company sued a customer, the [Cleveland Cavaliers](#) of the National Basketball Association, in a California federal district court for offering season ticket holders another place to sell their tickets online.

Earlier this week, the Cavaliers countersued in an Ohio federal district court, accusing TicketMaster of monopolistic practices.

Executives from Major League Baseball said that no existing contracts were being violated in the new deal with StubHub.

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Coaches message recruits: C U later

NCAA ban on texting takes effect but faces review after outcry

By Heather A. Dinich

Sun Reporter

August 2, 2007

On Tuesday night - the eve of the NCAA's ban on text messaging - St. Frances standout guard Sean Mosley received what is supposed to be his last digital devotion from a college coach. It was Florida State's final attempt 2 B his BFF via text message.

Mosley's former teammate, Naji Hibbert, who transferred to DeMatha last month, got a similar note from Clemson.

And Baltimore native Isaiah Armwood, a power forward at Montrose Christian, received one from Villanova.

"They were basically telling me we have to stay in contact because they can't text anymore," said Mosley, who is rated the No. 14 shooting guard in the class of 2008 by rivals.com. "He just said call if I needed to talk to them."

Or, as Maryland football coach Ralph Friedgen predicted will happen, coaches could invest in the latest technology to skirt the new rule and e-mail recruits their electronic love letters.

"Here's what's going to happen," Friedgen said. "They're going to buy - what's the new phone, the Apple phone? The iPhone? - and they're going to e-mail it. So they're going to pass a rule where you have to spend more money to do the same thing. Which is typical NCAA."

LOL.

Actually, Friedgen might want to wait another week before splurging on any new gizmos.

The NCAA board of directors might overturn the legislation as early as Aug. 9. Enough Division I schools requested an override to trigger an automatic review by the board, which already had a meeting scheduled next Thursday.

Erik Christianson, a spokesman for the NCAA, said at least 30 institutions must request a review in order for the board to reconsider. None of the schools in the Atlantic Coast Conference requested the review. The board has several options for its meeting:



- The board could uphold its original decision. If it does, then it goes to a vote by NCAA members at the association's annual convention, to be held in January in Nashville, Tenn. It would require a five-eighths majority to overturn the legislation.
- The board could vote to overturn it.
- Or the board could propose different legislation (such as setting a time frame during which text messaging is allowed). If that happens, there would be another period for discussion.

"My only concern is, if you're going to ban it, how are you going to govern it?" Friedgen said. "How are you going to find out if somebody else is texting a kid when they're not supposed to be?"

Christianson said the coaches are supposed to police themselves and report any violations.

"As a self-governing organization, the expectation is that our members are going to comply with the rules," he said.

Armwood, the No. 20 prospect in the class of 2009 according to rivals.com, said there was no need to ban text messaging - just to limit it.

"We have lives, too," he said.

Just ask his father.

"My father gets more than me," he said. "Sometimes it's a nuisance to him."

Armwood's teammate at Montrose Christian, Terrell Vinson, is equally coveted by major programs, but he might be the only prized recruit in the country who hasn't received any text messages.

His stepfather, James Gilyard, won't allow it.

Instead, the coaches text him.

"And I don't text them back, either," he said. "Personally, I think it's a bad thing," Gilyard said of coaches contacting 16-year-old players such as Vinson. "You should go to the parents. The coaches who won't go to the parents, we won't look at it at all."

"I will text them next year," he said.

C U then.

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After last-minute text messaging Brewster switches to e-mailing

Just because there is a new NCAA rule outlawing texting doesn't mean coaches won't be electronically plugged into recruits .

By [Chip Scoggins](#), Star Tribune

Last update: August 02, 2007 – 12:08 AM

CHICAGO - For the first time in a long time, Eden Prairie star defensive lineman Willie Mobley didn't have a text message from a college recruiter when he turned on his cell phone Wednesday.

"But I had 10 e-mails," Mobley said.

Yes, college coaches are a determined bunch. Wednesday marked the first day that college coaches were prohibited from text messaging prospects after the NCAA banned the practice this past spring.

As Mobley knows, e-mail contact is still allowable, evidence of the problems associated with legislating technology. Even the text message ban might be short-lived.

The NCAA might lift the text ban when its board of directors meets next week. Responding to requests from member schools to override the decision, the board could either keep the text messaging ban or possibly lift it and enact restrictions as opposed to an outright ban. That is the proposal that many schools favor.

The NCAA passed the legislation with the hope that it would alleviate some of the financial and time burden that teenagers sometimes endure during the recruiting process.

Gophers football coach Tim Brewster said he gave his fingers a workout on Tuesday as he text messaged recruits before the deadline.

"I texted about 250 guys," Brewster said at the Big Ten media gathering. "It was fun. I said this was the last one. I'm getting texted from a lot of kids saying, 'Coach, I know you can't text anymore. Here's my e-mail address.' "

Mobley has e-mail access on his Sidekick, so nothing really changed overnight for him. A highly coveted recruit, Mobley had 10 e-mails and his mother received another 20 or so Wednesday. Not that Mobley cared.

"I don't think it's a problem," he said. "Texting actually helped me get to know the coaches better."

Many college coaches opposed an outright ban because text messaging is popular with teenagers and many recruits often prefer it in recruiting because it's less intrusive than phone calls. Coaches view texting as an easy and crucial form of communication. It doesn't require teenagers to be in front of their computers to respond to e-mail.

Several coaches at the Big Ten event didn't seem bothered by the texting ban, though. They said the mass e-mails and fawning over recruits had become a bit too much.

"[Text messaging] 'Good morning sunshine,' the kids that we recruit, they don't want to hear that," Northwestern coach Pat Fitzgerald said. "If I have to text message a kid to wake him up, at a certain point I hope he says, 'Coach, what are you doing? You're a loser. Leave me alone. Get a life and go change a poopy diaper.' At a certain point I think they tune you out."

Said Wisconsin coach Bret Bielema: "I'm not a head coach that coddles and loves and does all that stuff [in recruiting]. I'm very personal with our guys. I think they will tell you that. But I'm not in position to just love up someone."

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Fighting his way back to the sideline

UW assistant inspires team with his resolve

By JEFF POTRYKUS

jpotrykus@journalsentinel.com

Posted: Aug. 1, 2007

Chicago - The face of the recent visitor to the University of Wisconsin football offices was familiar.

The smile, the laughter and the subtle needling. Business as usual.

"As soon as he came in the door, you could just feel the intensity rise," UW senior wide receiver Luke Swan said Wednesday on the second day of the Big Ten Conference pre-season meetings. "Guys were excited to see him. For a lot of the guys, that was the first time they had seen him."

Still hospitalized and dependent on a wheelchair, at least for now, wide receivers coach Henry Mason returned to the football complex last week because he needed to spend time with his fellow coaches and players.

"It was unbelievable," coach Bret Bielema said. "It was like he never missed a day. I mean, it was different because he was in a wheelchair and not the way we last saw him."

"But the great thing is . . . his spirit, his mind, his charisma, everything is there intact."

Mason, who turns 51 on Monday, has been hospitalized since June 24. According to UW officials, he suffered a spinal cord injury, which was related to a previous injury. Mason's spinal canal is unusually narrow and, according to Bielema, he required CPR the night of the latest incident.

"It was a pretty serious deal," Bielema said.

Bielema has since hired DelVaughn Alexander on a six-month contract to fill in for Mason this season. However, he insists that Mason's prognosis is such that he should eventually be able to return to his job.

"The reason I hired a guy to a short-term contract," Bielema explained, "was the indication is he'll be back. And that is the way I'm thinking."

Mason's visit last week was a first step, one that touched the players.

"I saw Coach in a wheelchair," tailback P.J. Hill recalled. "That's our coach. We're going to win games and practice hard for him, keep him in our minds."

Linebacker Jonathan Casillas saw a man in a wheelchair and didn't immediately realize it was the team's receivers coach.

"It makes you realize how short life is," Casillas said, "and how life could be changed drastically at any time."

Mason's condition forced Bielema to change his routine and juggle the recruiting responsibilities of the staff.

Bielema first had to handle several business items normally handled by Mason, who was named associate head coach in the off-season.

The recruits for the 2008 freshman class who were originally under Mason's watch have been divvied up among several assistants, including Alexander, with the players assigned to their position coaches.

That could change if Mason is able to return to the office at any point this season.

To that end, Mason is on a grueling rehabilitation program: five days a week, as many as eight hours each day.

Swan is one of a handful of players who have been able to visit Mason in the hospital.

"His rehab," Swan said, "he treats it as a workout. I've seen a couple of his workouts and he was grunting out that last set. That is a great thing for me to see. He is really pushing to get back and help.

"I was so encouraged. His spirits were high. He was determined to get back. You could see it in his eyes. You could see the old athlete coming back out in him, just wanting to beat this thing and get back to where he was."

Swan, a favorite of Mason's in part because of his work ethic and attention to detail in practice and games, believes his position coach will return sooner rather than later.

"Coach Mason is going to be around," Swan said, smiling. "I know him. I know he's going to be getting out of the hospital as much as he can and getting up in the office. . . .

"He will have an effect on us this year. He is going to do what he can to get us ready.

"He loves the game of football. It is going to help him mentally, help him with recovery. Doing something he loves to do is going to lift his spirits and help him to get back to where he was."

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Posted on Thu, Aug. 02, 2007

Gridiron wars? TCU coach has the real thing on his mind

By JIM REEVES

Star-Telegram Staff Writer

For 45 minutes Wednesday, Gary Patterson talked almost non-stop at TCU's media day kickoff for the 2007 football season.

It was only in the privacy of his office later that the Horned Frogs' head coach turned almost speechless.

Hold it. That's a bit of an exaggeration, because Patterson is almost never really without something to say. It's just that this time the subject was a little more personal. This wasn't just talking football with a room full of reporters.

This was about life.

And death.

And war.

Heavy stuff.

This was about Josh Patterson, the coach's 19-year-old son, and Josh's fast-approaching deployment to Iraq as a tank driver in the Army's 4th Infantry.

In December, at about the time that Gary Patterson should be preparing the Frogs for their sixth bowl appearance in his seven years as head coach, Josh will be shipping out for a 15-month tour in war-torn Iraq.

It's not exactly the career path Patterson had envisioned for his eldest son, but the coach's upper lip couldn't have been stiffer if it had just been freshly shellacked. Looking on the bright side is a way of life for Gary Patterson.

"I've slept well a lot of nights because somebody's out there protecting me. I've thought about that a lot," he said when we started talking about Josh's decision. "I'm very proud of him being in the armed services. All of his grandfathers were involved in the service. Two of them were in Vietnam and the third was in the Korean War."

If that sounds like one too many granddads, you should remember that Josh's mom and dad were divorced at about the time Gary was becoming the Frogs' head coach six years ago. Gary has since been remarried to Kelsey, providing his three sons with yet another set of grandparents.

A three-sport athlete out of Gary's old high school, Pawnee Heights in Rozel, Kan., Josh might have come to TCU to throw the javelin and maybe even as a walk-on quarterback for his dad. It was something they talked about. In the end, he joined the Army instead.

"It's one of the things he always wanted to do," Patterson said. "He's thinking about the service as a career. He does want to get a degree, but he's very excited about the opportunities the military gives him.

"I kind of wanted him to go to school, maybe go to ROTC and come out of it as an officer. His thing was that he wanted to go do it right now."

You know kids. They can be stubborn to a fault. Certainly Gary knows kids. He works with young men Josh's age every day.

"It's kind of like with my players, too. If you talk them into something, then you're going to be involved and it doesn't work," Patterson said. "All you can do is give them advice on what you think and let them go from there.

"Let them live their lives and learn from their mistakes. They learn a lot better that way. Then he has nobody to blame but himself, or nobody to thank."

Of course, the consequences of a decision like this can be a little more serious than the normal, run-of-the-mill decision back in Rozel, where Josh lived with his grandparents and uncle in a small, blue-collar community.

Will Gary worry about Josh? Sure he will. But he totally respects and supports his decision.

"Because of the divorce, my kids have lived away from me, and so I've already come to understand that I can't always be there to protect them," Patterson said. "I'm probably a little bit more grounded in knowing that there are things I can take care of, but I can't worry about things I don't have any control of. I know that he's in good hands."

Patterson understands as well as anyone who has never been in a war zone what Josh is getting into. Having coached future Marines, Seals and Special Forces troops while an assistant at the Naval Academy, Patterson has seen young men he's close to leave for far-off battlefields before.

"A lot of those guys have gone to Afghanistan, Iraq and probably a lot of other places I don't even know about," he said. "Josh knows a lot of those guys and talks to them about what they've been through.

"It gives me some peace to know he's talking to them. The more information you have, the better off you are."

Ironically, Patterson had talked earlier about how much time he spends before two-a-days begin making sure that all of his players' off-the-field problems -- academic, personal, whatever -- are settled so that there will be no distractions once practices begin.

A mind free of worries, he said, makes for a better football player.

We can only assume that applies to coaches, too, but Patterson seems totally at peace with Josh's decision.

Still, December will be a big month for the TCU coach, very likely in more ways than one.



Wolverines blast alum Harbaugh for academic criticism

August 2, 2007

FREE PRESS STAFF AND NEWS AND SERVICES

U-M tailback Mike Hart is no fan of Jim Harbaugh. He heard the Stanford coach's comments in May to a reporter about how Michigan athletes are admitted under easier standards and was predictably perturbed.

"He's a guy I have no respect for," said Hart, who said he has no interest in meeting the former U-M quarterback. "Maybe he wants to coach here. He just accepted one of our transfers (quarterback Jason Forcier). He wants guys like at our school and maybe he can't get them."

Always a team spokesman, Hart's loyalty and appreciation for U-M has grown over the years and he feels he needs to defend the program. Hart also hinted Harbaugh has blown his chance to coach the Wolverines.

"That guy got me angry," Hart said. "I don't know if he's doing it for a recruiting standpoint. He can say what he said and not talk about Michigan. ... There's always a coaching ladder. He coached at San Diego and could have spent a (few) years at Stanford and maybe come to Michigan. But I don't know what he was thinking. It was a dumb move."

Harbaugh told the San Francisco Examiner in May that Michigan's athletic department "has ways to get borderline guys in and, when they're in, they steer them to courses in sports communications. They're adulated when they're playing, but when they get out, the people who adulated them won't hire them."

Harbaugh later told the Ann Arbor News that even serious student athletes are encouraged to take easier majors.

"I would use myself as an example," Harbaugh said. "I came in there, wanted to be a history major, and I was told early on in my freshman year that I shouldn't be. That it takes too much time. Too much reading. That I shouldn't be a history major and play football."

"As great as the institution is at Michigan, I think it should be held to a higher standard. I don't think it should cut corners that dramatically for football and basketball players. I love the university. I got a tremendous education there. I think it should be held to a higher standard."

"I think it should hold itself to a higher standard."

Michigan coach Lloyd Carr called Harbaugh's comments "elitist" and "arrogant."

"Do I think they're elitist? Yeah," Carr said Wednesday. "Arrogant? Yes. Self-serving? Yes."

As for his current school, Harbaugh told the Examiner, "College football needs Stanford. We're looking not for student-athletes, but scholar-athletes. No other school can carry this banner. The Ivy League schools don't have enough weight. Other schools which have good academic reputations have ways to get borderline athletes in and keep them in."

This isn't the first time Harbaugh, 43, has made headlines with controversial comments.

He told CBSSportsLine.com earlier this year that he had heard Pete Carroll would be leaving for the NFL after the 2007 season.

Carroll was upset. "If he's going to make statements like that, he ought to get his information right," Carroll told the Los Angeles Times. "And if he has any questions about it, he should call me."

Harbaugh told reporters later: "It's been widely publicized that (Carroll) has interviewed for other jobs, and that is what I've heard. I definitely said that. But we bow to no man. We bow to no program here at Stanford University."

At Pac-10 media day Harbaugh made headlines by saying USC might have the best college football team ever.

"I really just say what I think," said Harbaugh. "I tend to be frank. I say what I know and what I've heard."

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Thursday, Aug 2, 2007

Posted on Thu, Aug. 02, 2007

Opinions mixed on no bye weeks

By Jeff Rice

CHICAGO -- Though he is the longest-tenured Big Ten football coach, at 15 seasons and counting, Joe Paterno still feels like the new guy.

Coaching for 27 seasons as an independent will do that to you. Penn State's 80-year-old head coach said Wednesday he was content to follow his conference peers when it came to issues like a Big Ten championship game and the proposed plus-one national title playoff system.

Ask him about bringing back a bye week, however, and you'll get a different sort of answer.

"That's the only thing I feel strongly about," Paterno said Wednesday during Big Ten Media Days.

"Whether we have a playoff, or what, that's up to some other people. Whatever they do, they'll do. But we can't have a lot of people that don't understand how much pressure is on football players during the season."

Beginning last season, the NCAA allowed football teams to schedule 12 regular-season games instead of 11. The Big Ten, in choosing to keep its tradition of completing the regular season before Thanksgiving, consequently removing the bye week from all 11 schedules. A year later, the move has Paterno, several of his conference peers and their players wondering whether it was the right one.

"I missed it," said Northwestern linebacker Adam Kadela of the bye week. "I know a lot of guys on the team missed it. We love playing football, wanted to play as many games as we could, but at the same time, we definitely missed it. It's a grind, going from camp right into game week and going all the way through to Thanksgiving. You can't help it. It's physical, and your body wears down. It's nice to have a weekend to relax."

Kadela spent Northwestern's 2005 bye weekend going duck-hunting with friends and watching, of all things, college football on television.

"You get a chance to just reload and get your mind right," he said. "And your body feels a lot better."

Paterno took offense with recent comments by NCAA president Myles Brand, who said he believed coaches mourned the loss of a bye week because it cost them an extra week of practice.

"That really irritated me," Paterno said, "because I want a week off because I think the kids need a little time to get caught up with their studies and everything else."

Minnesota linebacker Mike Sherels agreed.

"A bye week should be mandatory," Sherels said. "All the guys deserve a bye -- we're in college, we're not in the NFL. Bumps, bruises, nicks happen. Not only that, but it's easier to catch up on your schoolwork. NFL guys can go 12, 14 games without a bye week. But we have other responsibilities besides football."

Some Big Ten players and coaches weren't as sad to see the bye week depart.

"Honestly, bye weeks, depending on when they are in the season, can actually be pretty tough,"

Penn State wide receiver Terrell Golden said. "The coaches know that you don't have a game that Saturday and practices are usually turned up a notch because they know you get to rest for the weekend."

"A lot of guys on the team, all they know is a 12-game season. So I don't think it's really affected us that much."

Indiana football coach Bill Lynch believes that, in certain ways, bye weeks can be disruptive.

"Here's my thing about it -- college football is the most routine of all the college sports," Lynch

said. "I could tell you right now what we're gonna be doing on Tuesday at 4:05, and on Wednesday at 3:30. When you have a bye week, to get (the players) all back on focus is sometimes tough. The reasoning to get a break physically, to give them time to work on academics -- I think that's all very valid. But I've found through the years that sometimes the disruption of the schedule sometimes works against you."

"From a football standpoint, sometimes if you're winning, you don't want to take a break," Lynch

added. "And if you're losing, if you take a break, sometimes you lose them."

Paterno and other league coaches will likely continue to express their displeasure publicly and privately, but until moving traditional season-ending games, such as Michigan-Ohio State and Penn State-Michigan State, after Thanksgiving receives a great deal more support from Big Ten coaches and administrators, the byes won't be back.

"It was tough not having the time off," Penn State quarterback Anthony Morelli said. "But we had to get used to it pretty fast."

Big Ten, Pac-10 seem to be punting on reform ideas

By **BERNARD FERNANDEZ**

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CHICAGO - On April 12, 1861, Confederate forces commanded by Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard fired on Union troops at Fort Sumter, S.C., the first engagement in the Civil War.

A little more than 146 years later, talk of secession again could lead to a divide between North and South. The difference between then and now, however, is the field of conflict could be big-time college football stadiums, and it's the north - OK, the west, too - that has at least raised the issue of breaking away from more revolutionary Bowl Championship Series member institutions, which again seem to be following the Southeastern Conference's let's-shake-things-up-again lead.

On one side of the issue are the Rose Bowl and its longtime partners: the Big Ten and Pac-10 conferences. They represent what might be described as the stodgy traditionalists. On the other is the SEC and those fellow BCS dissidents, the Big 12 and Atlantic Coast Conference, which in recent years have initiated sweeping reforms within their own ranks. SEC commissioner Mike Slive - a latter-day Beauregard, to hear some tell it - has said he was at least open to investigating the possibility of a "plus-one" format, by which a game would be added at the conclusion of the bowl season the better to determine a "true" national champion.

The SEC went to two six-school divisions way back in 1992 and since then has staged a league championship game that has produced a torrent of revenue. The Big 12 and ACC took note and proceeded with their own expansions and league championship contests, much to the chagrin of the Big Ten and Pac-10, which normally move with the speed of melting glaciers on such matters.

But never did the crack in the BCS ranks seem more evident than last week, when Pac-10 commissioner Tom Hansen, in an interview with *The Sporting News*, threatened to pull his league out of the BCS before it became part of any plus-one scenario.

"Our presidents have no interest whatsoever in a plus-one model. None," Hansen stated. "It's a little annoying that my colleagues [in other BCS conferences] continue to float this idea as though it has merit."

Big Ten commissioner Jim Delany, to date fighting a losing skirmish regarding the Aug. 30 launch of the Big Ten Network, apparently is not as intractable on plus-one and other issues

as Hansen. He ignited a firestorm of his own last week when he told the *Des Moines Register* that his league was considering an expansion to 12 teams, which would be the first since Penn State was granted membership in 1990 and began playing a full Big Ten football schedule in 1993.

Although Delany did not mention any schools under consideration, the newspaper speculated that Big East members Rutgers and Syracuse are the most likely candidates to join the Big Ten were it to enlarge.

Delany, whose penchant for brashness sometimes is at odds with Big Ten schools' generally conservative presidents and athletic directors, thus was obliged to spend much of this past week in damage-control mode. He assured Big East commissioner Mike Tranchese - whose league had been sent reeling by the abdications of Miami, Boston College and Virginia Tech to the ACC some years earlier - that the Big Ten had no designs on Rutgers and Syracuse, and that the possibility of expansion was "not on the front burner."

And if that weren't enough, Delany also had to make nice to SEC boss Slive after the Big Ten commissioner publicly suggested that SEC schools fared better in recruiting because they had lower admission standards.

So it was in a swirl of disparate controversies that Delany appeared at Big Ten Media Day here Tuesday. The most pressing concern for now is the sluggish pace the much-ballyhooed Big Ten Network is proceeding in its bid to widen its broadcast reach.

Delany and Big Ten Network president Mark Silverman, a former Disney executive, noted that only 20 percent of cable TV subscribers in the Big Ten's eight-state region would be able to get the network if it were to go on the air today.

Delany and Silverman are adamant that major cable providers, most notably Comcast and Time Warner, make the Big Ten Network available as part of their basic packages, and not stash it away in a specialized sports tier guaranteed to have fewer viewers. The Big Ten Network also is demanding that the cable providers pay the conference \$1.10 per subscriber to receive its feed, which will include football telecasts and other sports.

So far, neither side seems inclined to blink.

"The network cannot exist on a sports tier, and it won't exist on a sports tier," Delany insisted, although he categorized the negotiations with the cable providers as "at halftime."

As for that expansion talk and the furor it sparked, well, Delany said it really was much ado about nothing.

"What I said was, every 3 to 5 years we look at expansion and we will continue to look at it," Delany said. "We haven't looked at the issue since we had the conversation with Notre Dame [in 1999]. Since those talks, we have not had conversations with anyone, nor do we plan on having those conversations with anyone.

"One would believe we're on the cusp of expansion, and that simply is not an accurate characterization."

Asked if he were in lockstep with Pac-10 boss Hansen on a possible split from the BCS if plus-one proceeded, Delany also backpedaled just a bit.

"Secede is a very strong word," he said. "I'm trying to be more politic. I wouldn't use the word secede."

So, what word or words would he use?

"The Big Ten and the Pac-10 have a Rose Bowl relationship that has 7 years to go," Delany said. "We are going to honor that. The BCS has a 4-year relationship with Fox. We are going to honor that."

"Now, 7 years from now, I think it'll be someone else's issue, to secede or not to secede. I probably won't be here." *

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Published: 07.31.2007

Opinion by Greg Hansen : Top man in Pac-10 a good fit, time tells

Opinion by Greg Hansen

The firetomhansen.com Web site suggests that the Pac-10 commissioner is responsible for "third-rate TV contracts," "weak bowl alliances" and "continuous financial loss."

It also labels him incompetent, weak, politically motivated and one who has grossly mismanaged the Pac-10's business for the last 24 years.

Those who regulate the site, and those who periodically check for updates, couldn't have been happy last week when Hansen told national media outlets that the league won't participate in a proposed expansion of the BCS. Or: please, please, one more game, just to make sure the BCS boys get it right.

"It's a little annoying that my colleagues continue to float this idea as though it has merit," Hansen told The Sporting News. If pushed to support an extra tier of postseason football, Hansen said the Pac-10 would withdraw from the BCS.

"No question," he said.

Hansen's critics say the game has passed him by. Why? Well, because he's 70. That's about all they have that sticks.

He has been blamed for Oregon's absence from the 2002 BCS title game and for USC's inability to get into the 2004 championship game. They forgot that it was a points system that determined the entrants.

Fire Tom Hansen, they say. The next Pac-10 commissioner will surely persuade ESPN to withdraw from its alliances with the Big Ten, Big 12, ACC and Big East to give the Pac-10 its prime viewing hours.

Fire Tom Hansen, they contend, and bowl committees in Miami, Orlando, New Orleans and Atlanta will be rapping at the door, inviting Pac-10 also-rans to play in those faraway bowl games.

It has always amazed me how inaccurately the public has gauged Tom Hansen's performance.

Losing money? The Pac-10 has never been more profitable. Its TV contract with Fox Sports Net netted far more zeroes than any possible odd-hours, odd-nights deal made available by ESPN.

Weak bowl alliances? Where would fans rather travel than to this year's Pac-10 bowl games in San Diego, Las Vegas, the Dallas area and Pasadena (and next year in Hawaii)?

Gross mismanagement? The Pac-10 and Big East stand alone among the six BCS conferences in determining a true football champion. Nobody gets a bye. Compare that to the Big 12, where, outrageously, Nebraska this season won't play Oklahoma. Or the Big Ten, where Penn State won't play Minnesota but, on Nov. 10, does play at Temple.

What Hansen's long-standing critics have forever missed is that he doesn't bolt out of bed and decide to oppose expansion of the BCS. Nor is it his decision to deny membership to Utah and BYU or San Diego State or anyone.

The annual tie-in with the Sun Bowl in much-dreaded El Paso? At least El Paso cares; Tucson and Seattle didn't support bowl games.

The league's 10 presidents call the shots and most of them are based — shock! — on academic performance and potential. To their credit, Pac-10 presidents have decided they don't want a longer football season and

thus want no part of an SEC-type, football-driven mentality that has resulted in an eight-year, \$32 million contract for Alabama coach Nick Saban.

Tom Hansen doesn't do TV. He's not a self-promoter who insists on being the face of Pac-10 sports. He works the numbers, listens to his presidents and athletic directors and therefore has survived for 24 years in a conference flush with corporate support and television dollars.

Much of the credit belongs to him although, strangely, he gets not credit but criticism. Hansen has proved that the Pac-10 doesn't need a Big Face or a Big Voice to get the job done. All you need is a capable and loyal guy who doesn't get carried away and step on the toes of the Tournament of Roses committee.

Pac-10 presidents adore the Rose Bowl and that historic (and financially beneficial) alliance. They would prefer the Big Ten and Pac-10 champions play in that game on New Year's Day every year, at 3 p.m. sharp, and let the BCS fall where it may.

Naturally, this has created a backlash from unhappy fans at Oregon and USC, among other precincts, who are absorbed by the BCS and its many promises and see the Rose Bowl as yesterday's news.

Under Hansen's guidance, the Pac-10 has neither been bold nor adventuresome. The presidents don't want to be that way. The most daring bit of maneuvering was a mid-1990s attempt to add Colorado and Texas and therefore add the vast TV markets of Texas and the Rocky Mountains to its appeal.

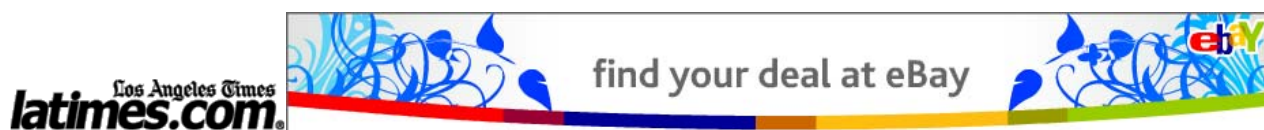
That mostly behind-the-scenes attempt was scuttled by Texas political clout. After that, the Pac-10 has been content to share its bowl and TV revenues among 10 partners. All of the league ADs are happy with that bottom line.

In the Pac-10, this isolationist theory works. Ignore those east-of-the-Rio Grande voices who cry that Pac-10 football is a joke and that you have to stay up until midnight to watch West Coast football.

Yes, the SEC is real football country, where, on Nov. 17, mighty Alabama will play Louisiana-Monroe rather than engage Florida, Kentucky or South Carolina, league members conspicuously absent from its 2007 schedule.

Let the BCS computers choke on that one.

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 From the Los Angeles Times

The NBA has to beat the odds

The gambling scandal calls the league's entire officiating system into question.

By Dave Zirin

July 29, 2007

In 1950, the preeminent college basketball power in the country wasn't UCLA, Kentucky or Duke. It was City College of New York, the winner that year of the top two college championships. Then it all came tumbling down. In February 1951, three players were arrested as the program became enmeshed in a devastating point-shaving scandal. Basketball at CCNY -- and in the city as a whole -- has never truly recovered.

As the late New York Post sportswriter Maury Allen wrote: "That was the last time I really believed in pure idealism. For these guys to sell out their school and themselves and their careers for \$800, for \$1,000, for \$1,500 was just such an emotional blow

It is a wound in your psyche that lasts all your life."

No one can empathize with Allen's angst more than a man who came of age in Teaneck, N.J., as the scandal unfolded -- David Stern, the commissioner of the National Basketball Assn. Today, he confronts a betting scandal in the NBA that could make the CCNY nightmare seem tame.

The FBI is investigating allegations that NBA referee Tim Donaghy bet on games that he officiated to pay off large gambling debts to organized crime. He recently resigned after 13 seasons in the league.

Last week, Stern called the Donaghy allegations "the worst situation" of his 40-year tenure. He is absolutely right.

Much has been made of the off-court behavior of some NBA players: confrontations with police, arrests at strip clubs or firearms violations. While proving tough public relations challenges, such misconduct didn't really hurt the NBA's image, in part because it promoted players, such as Allen Iverson, who personified the antihero. More recently, Stern has fulminated against the "hip-hop gangsta" image perceived as common among many players.

But an NBA referee possibly betting with real gangsters is something entirely different and more ominous for the multibillion-dollar league, because it directly threatens the integrity of the sport. No sport is more affected by officials than basketball. By virtue of their calls, referees are effectively the game's puppeteers, setting the pace and even the style of play, especially in the final minutes of close games.

For years, many NBA fans, as well as some teams, have suspected referees of calling games to favor big-media-market teams or extend playoff series to enrich the league. Team stars expect different treatment than role players from officials, and fans assume the same. In the most famous shot of his career, one that won the 1998 NBA championship for the Chicago Bulls, Michael Jordan pushed off Utah Jazz forward Byron Russell but was not called for a foul.

The possibility that an NBA referee may have called games to win bets feeds and reinforces such conspiracy thinking, making every future game that swings on a "bad" call look fixed. As Bill Simmons of *ESPN.com* wrote, "Guilty or innocent, we will never watch an NBA game the same way."

Unfortunately for honest referees working games, it won't matter what happens to Donaghy -- their collective integrity will be doubted. An officiating track record that many fans and sportswriters believe veers from the competent to the comical won't help matters.

If Stern is to prevent the NBA from being re-categorized in the eyes of fans as "sports entertainment," like professional wrestling, he will have to take some bold measures independent of the government probe of Donaghy.

But it's not a good sign that Stern relied on the "bad apple" public relations strategy at his news conference last week, calling Donaghy a "a rogue, isolated criminal." This isn't the way to go.

Instead, the commissioner should publicly admit that the league's entire officiating system needs to become much more transparent. As recently as 2003, he boasted that the NBA's 59 referees were "the most statistically analyzed and mentored group of any company in any place in the world." If that's so, then the accusations against Donaghy raise serious questions about who has been "analyzing" and "mentoring."

The NBA gave Donaghy an above-average evaluation last year, according to sources close to the referee. "The league was extremely pleased with his progress," one source told the New York Daily News. "They thought it was his best year."

The problem is that no one outside the backrooms of the NBA's executive offices know what this means. The referee system is shrouded in secrecy. Salaries, internal rankings and evaluations all remain in the dark. How referees are assigned to games is a mystery.

Stern needs to drag the NBA's sclerotic officiating system into the light -- or risk the implosion of a tremendously successful sports league.

If the NBA's ruin seems unrealistic, ask David Stern what happened to "the beautiful game" at a place called City College.

Dave Zirin is the author of "Welcome to the Terrordome: The Pain, Politics and Promise of Sports."



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NBA INSIDER

League jolted by crisis
Commissioner facing public relations nightmare

By [SEKOU SMITH](#)
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Published on: 07/29/07

NBA commissioner David Stern needs more than a wicked Allen Iverson crossover dribble to dodge his latest crisis.

No amount of public-relations maneuvering can wipe away the ugly mark of 13-year NBA referee Tim Donaghy being accused of gambling on games, both those he officiated and those he did not, as well as his alleged passing on of "inside" information to members of organized crime so they could profit on bets.

Unlike the issues Stern has dealt with in the NBA's recent and rocky past — the infamous brawl at the Palace of Auburn Hills and Kobe Bryant's rape trial come to mind — he has no convenient scapegoat here.

Donaghy is no longer an employee; he resigned July 9. So he can't face the same public punishment from the league that Ron Artest did when he was suspended for the remainder of the season for his role in the brawl, a sentence that cost him close to \$5 million.

Stern was on the firing line Tuesday, when he addressed the media and answered questions about the Donaghy situation for the first time.

He wasn't his usual defiant self. He even admitted that his initial reaction was, "I can't believe this is happening to us."

Stern did his best to clear up other issues and questions related to the Donaghy mess:

Q: Is betting in any form or fashion against the rules for NBA officials?

A: Oh, yes, you are not permitted to bet if you're a referee. You're not permitted to bet legally, and you're not permitted to bet illegally. The legal betting will cost you your job. The illegal betting, depending upon the context, may cost you your freedom.

Q: To the best of your understanding, do you really feel that it's possible to determine if a referee is actually cheating, making calls that aren't real?

A: That's a really good question. It's very hard, but we're going to give it our best shot. There are things that you have been speculating about in the media in the last few days about the number of calls, the disparity of calls and the like. But it's hard, but we're going to do it and we'll be able to make the judgment at that time.

It would not surprise me if it proves to be difficult, but I just want to say one thing here. If you bet on a game, you lose the benefit of the doubt. So I'm not going to stand here and say to you it didn't happen, because that would impair the credibility that I think the NBA deserves for its efforts, and that's why we don't allow betting on games because as our brochure that we give to the referees says, that if you bet, then people will assume that the game is being subjected to the possibility that it would be decided by other than on its merits, and I think that's a fair point. And I will make no defense [or] neat criminal distinction between betting on games ... and something worse. You lose the benefit of the doubt when you do it.

Q: Given that it's likely that Donaghy laid his bets down illegally with illegal bookies, what do you think about the debate about whether sports betting should be legalized in this country so folks like the Las Vegas regulatory authorities could track it and possibly regulate it?

A: Historically, I think that by making it legal, you're going to encourage more people to bet, and that's been the policy underlying the illegalization of offshore gaming and the like. I'm going to leave that for smarter policy makers than I, but it has been our historic position and ... really encoded by the U.S. Senate in the '90s in legislation introduced by then-Senator Bradley that made sports betting specifically illegal in any jurisdiction that didn't have it at the time of the legislation.

Q: Do you feel you will know what games may have been compromised before the FBI lays out their case; will they share it with you, or will you have to wait?

A: I have to wait. That has been made clear to me. And I appreciate that and I support that. If I haven't been effusive enough in my praise of the FBI and the Justice Department, I want to add to that here; we appreciate what they are doing and we don't in anyway want to compromise their investigation and we appreciate their understanding that as a matter of our business, and our sensitivity to what you folks think and our fans think, that we have to come out here and sort of having to walk this difficult line.

Q: Will you examine raising the salaries of NBA officials to reduce the risk of debt or anything else that might factor into them thinking bad thoughts?

A: Mr. Donaghy earned this past season, \$260,000. I think that and with each year of additional experience that, gets raised and has a component of regular season and for playoffs, and he only has 13 years of experience. We have referees with 29 or 30 years of experience who are appropriately higher earners.

So we do think that that is fair, and there are lots of people that keep the peace that earn a lot less.

Q: And what is from them or from the public your greatest fear about what this could do to the credibility of the game?

A: I think the public learning, what we do, what we have done and what we are determined to do is going to be by and large with us. And it's not about my fear. The only fear I have is not making good on the covenant to do whatever is necessary. And I'm saying here as a personal matter, that I am going to be deeply involved in the analysis and changes that go on so that if I stand here again to say what we're going or what we've done, it's going to be because I had firsthand knowledge and got my hands as dirty as they possibly can get in connection with any changes that we might make.

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