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Wednesday, January 20, 2010 **Vol. XVI -- No. 88**

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The Great Divide

Mara Says Sides Moving Apart In Labor Talks

In a sign that frustration over the pace and tone of the NFL's labor negotiations is increasing, Giants President & CEO John Mara says he believes the owners and the NFLPA are "moving further apart." Mara: "I don't think we're making any progress. ... They want a deal that is equal to or better than the existing one, and that is not acceptable to us." He adds while he is hopeful a work stoppage in '11 still can be averted, he is "resigned" to the fact the '10 season will be played without a salary cap. The rare public admission is sure to mark an increase in the volume from both the NFL and union camps, and it further indicates both sides are preparing for a possible bitter standoff (#11).

Quote Of The Day

"**Spare us the lies about taking 'roids for health reasons. We're all grownups. You took stuff for the same reason most of us break or bend rules: you thought you could get away with it, and you did. You did because Commissioner Bud, being Bud, was of course asleep at the switch when you suddenly grew Shrek-like necks and bloated biceps. But even Bud is selling absolution these days. ... There may be no crying in baseball, but there is forgiveness.**"

-- HBO's **Bryant Gumbel**, addressing **Mark McGwire**'s apology in an open letter to former MLB players who have admitted to taking PEDs (*"Real Sports," HBO, 1/19*). (#9)

SportsBusiness Daily

staff

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1. CBS GIVES EARLY APPROVAL TO FOCUS ON THE FAMILY SUPER BOWL AD

FOCUS ON THE FAMILY
Helping Families Thrive

CBS officials have "approved a script for a Super Bowl spot" from Christian group Focus on the Family, which suggests that the ad "will not carry a pro-life message -- at least an overt one," according to David Goetzl of MEDIADAILYNEWS. CBS has a "policy of prohibiting advocacy ads, even ones that carry an 'implicit' endorsement for a side in a public debate." There has been speculation that Focus on the Family's Super Bowl spot, starring former Univ. of Florida QB Tim Tebow and his mother, might "offer a pro-life message." However, a CBS spokesperson said that the network "will review the video version of the spot before giving it the final green light, but does not anticipate any hurdles." Focus on the Family only announced the ad would carry a "Celebrate Family, Celebrate Life" theme, utilizing a "strategy that many Super Bowl advertisers employ: Announce that an ad has been bought, but hold off on releasing details in order to generate pre-game interest." Goetzl notes CBS in recent years has "rejected Super Bowl ads on the grounds that they advocate one side in matters where 'substantial elements of the community (are) in opposition to one another'" (*MEDIADAILYNEWS, 1/20 issue*). AD AGE's Brian Steinberg noted the ad buy "may come as a surprise to veteran Super Bowl watchers." NBC last year turned down an ad from PETA that "showed women in lingerie placed in suggestive positions with pumpkins and asparagus." CBS also "turned down a similar ad for its 2004 Super Bowl broadcast as well as one from MoveOn.org that bashed President Bush." Focus on the Family VP/Media Relations Gary Schneeberger said that the message in his organization's commercial "is likely to act more as an offer of help, with the hope the commercial will generate awareness for the organization and its family services" (*ADAGE.com, 1/19*).

THE WRONG MESSAGE AT THE WRONG TIME? CBSSPORTS.com's Gregg Doyel noted the ad may carry a "beautiful, undeniable message," but he wrote, "I don't want to see. Not during the damn Super Bowl." Doyel: "I'm not complaining about the ad because it's anti-abortion and I'm not. I'm complaining about the ad because it's pro-politics. And I'm not. Not on Super Sunday" (*CBSSPORTS.com, 1/19*). In Virginia, Bob Molinaro writes Super Bowl viewers "shouldn't be ambushed by political advocacy ads." It can be a "great thing when men and women believe in something bigger than themselves," but by teaming up with Focus on the Family, Tebow is "stepping out of the spiritual arena into the political, where idealism doesn't stand a chance" (*Norfolk VIRGINIAN-PILOT, 1/20*). In Ft. Lauderdale, Dave Hyde noted some people "will be upset" if the Tebow spot carries an anti-abortion theme as rumored, but "an athlete gets to use the platform however he/she wants." Tebow "wants to deliver Christian-based sermons." But Hyde noted it remains to be seen if such an ad "will affect how some teams view him" ahead of April's NFL Draft (*SUN-SENTINEL.com, 1/19*).

FLORAL ARRANGEMENT: Teleflora today announced it will return to the Super Bowl with a Valentine's Day-themed 30-second spot, set to air during the game's second quarter. Last year's game on NBC marked Teleflora's first time advertising during the Super Bowl, and this year's spot brings back the company's talking flowers campaign launched in '08. The ad, via in-house agency Fire Station, will continue to air through February 12 (*Teleflora*).

2. NFL SQUEEZING SMALL-SCALE ONLINE RETAILERS OVER MERCHANDISE

The NFL is "essentially cutting off ... small-scale online discounters," as the league will "only allow online shops that bought at least $3[M] worth of licensed merchandise from Reebok last year to apply to offer" the company's game day apparel line, according to Ken Belson of the N.Y. TIMES. Reebok's licensing division in a letter sent last fall notified "hundreds of ... online retailers that they would have to reapply for the right to continue selling the NFL's valuable game day line," which includes jerseys, hats and "other apparel modeled on what players and coaches wear." More traditional retail stores "that also sell online will have to meet a minimum threshold of $2[M] in purchases last year." NFL VP/Communications Brian McCarthy said that the league's strategy is to "protect its brand by combating counterfeiters who sold knockoffs and discounters who undercut value." McCarthy: "It's the same as Tiffany or Levi's or Ralph Lauren. Wal-Mart doesn't sell our top of the line. The game day stuff is our best stuff, and that's why we need to protect it." McCarthy added that small stores "excluded by its new policy can still sell non-game day merchandise like sweatshirts often found at mass-market retailers." Retail analysts said that NFL officials "appear to have calculated that they can make enough in extra sales through NFLShop.com and other approved Web sites to offset any loss of sales to small retailers." Meanwhile, Belson notes the league's new policy comes at a "critical legal and political juncture for the NFL," as the Supreme Court is deciding American Needle v. the NFL. The league's change in online sales strategy also comes as the U.S. House is "considering a bill that would make it an antitrust violation for manufacturers to set minimum retail prices" (*N.Y. TIMES, 1/20*).

3. WHO DAT? SAINTS' PLAYOFF RUN CONTINUES STRONG MERCHANDISE SALES

Following the Saints' playoff win over the Cardinals last Saturday, the “fever for all things Black & Gold stepped up a notch" at local

Saints Seeing Strong Merchandise Sales As Team Advances In NFL Playoffs

retailers, according to WWL-AM's Jay Vise. Supermarket chain Rouses' Owner Donald Rouse said that many of his stores "could not keep the Drew Brees ‘Finish Strong’ T-shirt on the shelves.” Louisiana-based Bayou Sports Shop co-Owner Shannon Ockman said that Brees “remains a fan favorite for merchandise,” but also said that RB Reggie Bush is “running a close second in sales.” Meanwhile, Vise reported some local merchants “who also have a presence on the Internet have found a major profit center in catering to out-of-town, and out-of-country Saints fans.” New Orleans-based Sports Avenue Manager Shawn Danos added that online sales have been “huge” since Saturday’s win (*WWL.com, 1/19*). Sales of Saints merchandise through NFLShop.com during the regular season ranked eighth in the league, and NFL VP/Communications Brian McCarthy said the team's win over the Cardinals will likely cause them to "probably move up a couple spots." In Baton Rouge, David Mitchell reported "jerseys and Saints flags have been top sellers" for the team. Louisiana-based Nawlins Sports Owner Michael Lester said that Saints merchandise sales "really dropped by the time they had their second loss" to the Buccaneers on December 17, but he added that sales "doubled between Saturday and Sunday," the day after the Cardinals game (*Baton Rouge ADVOCATE, 1/19*). Jimmy Kriener, who works as a contractor for L&G Concessions, said of Saints' merchandise sales, "It's been steady. 'Brisk' is the word you would use, I guess. Once they get to their first Super Bowl, I think it will really pick up. After Sunday, you'll have the first ever Saints NFC champions shirts, your first ever Saints Super Bowl shirts. I think that's what everybody is kind of waiting on" (*Alexandria TOWN TALK, 1/20*).

4. KOBE TEAMS WITH GEORGE LOPEZ TO LAUNCH NEW NIKE BASKETBALL SHOE

Lakers G Kobe Bryant and comedian George Lopez Saturday night hosted "Nike Live," an event to promote the new Nike Zoom Kobe V shoe that was "basically an infomercial masquerading as a one-night talk show," according to Arash Markazi of ESPNLOSANGELES.com. Bryant and Lopez during the one-hour sit-down at Ricardo Montalban Theatre in Hollywood "focused on what is being billed as the lightest basketball shoe ever." Markazi noted the most "striking aspect of the shoe is that it's a low top that looks more like a low-weight soccer cleat than a basketball sneaker." Bryant asked that it be designed that way "after looking at the shoes Nike had made for Ronaldinho and Thierry Henry while they played for Bryant's favorite soccer team, FC Barcelona." Bryant: "Soccer has improved my footwork and my foot speed." He added, "I keep hearing that basketball players can't play in low-cut shoes but soccer players play with twice as much torque on their ankles as we do and they manage just fine. A lot of it is change of direction and change of pace and change of tempo. Those are similarities that we both share" (*ESPNLOSANGELES.com, 1/19*).

DROP IT LIKE IT'S HOT: BRAND REPUBLIC's Maisie McCabe reports adidas has released a new ad featuring David Beckham and rapper Snoop Dogg to promote the brand's new "Star Wars" collection of shoes and apparel. The promo is "set at a block party," and as "Star Wars" music plays the "party turns sinister and Darth Vader appears through the mist." The new collection is "out this week and includes junior and adult sizes" (*BRANDREPUBLIC.com, 1/20*).

Watch The Latest adidas Spot

5. THAT WINNING FEELING: BRYANT, LAKERS REMAIN TOPS IN JERSEY SALES

Lakers G Kobe Bryant's No. 24 jersey is the best seller among all NBA players at the NBA Store in N.Y. and NBAStore.com since the start of the '09-10 season. Bryant's jersey has been the top seller among NBA players since the start of the '08-09 season. Magic C Dwight Howard and Bulls G Derrick Rose appear in the top five in jersey sales for the first time, with Howard rising from No. 10 on last year's list to No. 3, and Rose moving from No. 11 to No. 4. Meanwhile, the Lakers continue to top the list of most popular NBA team merchandise. The Celtics rank No. 2 for a second consecutive year, while the Cavaliers rose from No. 4 on last year's list to No. 3 (*NBA*). FANHOUSE.com's Matt Watson notes several of last year's "most notable postseason heroes have made the most dramatic climbs." Howard at this time last year was "already universally recognized as a bona fide superstar," but it was not until the Magic made the NBA Finals that it "became fashionable to wear his uniform." Rose's record-breaking performance in the Bulls' seven-game Eastern Conference Quarterfinals series against the Celtics also seems "responsible for [his] rising popularity" (*FANHOUSE.com, 1/20*).

RK	NBA PLAYER JERSEYS	RK	TEAM MERCHANDISE
1	Lakers G Kobe Bryant	1	Lakers
2	Cavaliers F LeBron James	2	Celtics
3	Magic C Dwight Howard	3	Cavaliers
4	Bulls G Derrick Rose	4	Knicks
5	Heat G Dwyane Wade	5	Bulls
6	Celtics F Kevin Garnett	6	Magic
7	Hornets G Chris Paul	7	Nuggets
8	Celtics F Paul Pierce	8	Heat
9	Cavaliers C Shaquille O'Neal	9	Spurs
10	Lakers F Pau Gasol	10	Suns
11	Nuggets F Carmelo Anthony		
12	Suns G Steve Nash		
13	Knicks F David Lee		

14	76ers G Allen Iverson
15	Thunder F Kevin Durant

6. KEEP HOPE ALIVE: BOB HOPE CLASSIC SET TO TEE SANS TITLE SPONSOR

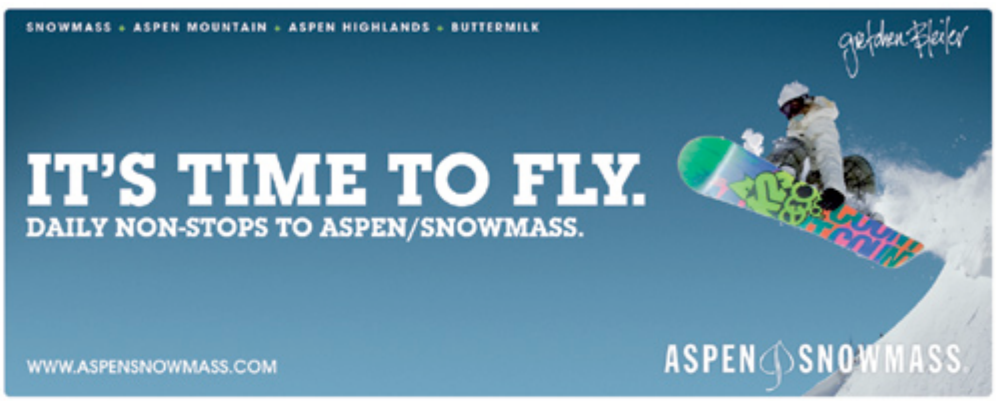
This year's PGA Tour Bob Hope Classic, which is tees off today, marks the first time in 25 years the event will take place without Chrysler as its title sponsor, according to Larry Bohannan of the Palm Springs DESERT SUN. Chrysler annually pumped "millions of dollars ... into the tournament to cover costs of the purse, television production and other tournament activities." But Bob Hope Classic Chair & President John Foster said that Chrysler's absence "will be felt more in the tournament boardroom than on the course itself." Foster: "There is an obvious financial impact by not having them here, and that's obviously important. But that said, yeah, we'll keep going. We've got the reserves to do it." Event officials said that they had "built up sufficient cash reserves to keep the tournament going through 2010 and 2011 without the help of a title sponsor." But Bohannan notes the "millions of dollars in reserves still must be augmented by smaller sponsorships to help cover the costs of running the tournament and also maintain the event's purpose as a nonprofit organization, distributing funds to a variety of desert charities." The tournament did sign a "small deal" with Under Armour this year to sponsor a "new fan-friendly viewing experience at the par-3 17th hole of the Palmer Course at PGA West." Fans wearing Under Armour apparel Saturday "will receive free admission to the course" (*Palm Springs DESERT SUN, 1/20*).

IN THE ROUGH: Many golfers are opting to play in the European PGA Tour's Abu Dhabi Championship this week instead of the Bob Hope Classic, and GolfChannel.com's Rex Hoggard said, "They're all independent contractors. They can play where they want, but this one hurts a little bit." Hoggard: "You have [PGA Tour Commissioner] Tim Finchem in what is basically a contract year. He is going to corporate America with hat in hand trying to get title sponsors to sign on, and you have players like Anthony Kim ... who are going overseas to play during what is actually his hometown event at PGA West." Mike Weir, who is ranked No. 37, is the highest-ranked golfer at the Hope, and author John Feinstein noted the tournament is "on life support." Feinstein: "It has no title sponsor and it isn't even on network TV anymore. ... The Hope deserves some protection and some respect, not 11 guys being told they can go flying for dollars" (*"Golf Central," Golf Channel, 1/19*).

SUNNY OUTLOOK: Farmers Insurance Monday announced it will title sponsor the PGA Tour's San Diego stop next week, and Farmers Insurance Senior VP Mark Toohey said that a "preliminary deal was struck over the weekend and only became official Monday morning." Toohey: "This thing came together quickly, but the pieces fit. It is a unique deal, and the stars just aligned on this one." In California, Marc Figueroa writes the deal "certainly brings a silver lining to the dark cloud that had been hovering over the tournament for the last year" (*NORTH COUNTY TIMES, 1/20*). Meanwhile, in San Diego, Tod Leonard reports the Padres and Century Club of San Diego today will announce a partnership in which the team will underwrite "military appreciation activities" during next week's event. This comes after the event this year lost its sponsor for its military pavilion and "was set to move forward with private donations." The Padres will "underwrite much of the pavilion costs," and Padres players will make appearances at the pavilion (*SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE, 1/20*).

7. **OLYMPIAN GRETCHEN BLEILER PART OF NEW ASPEN MARKETING PUSH**

Olympic snowboarder Gretchen Bleiler is part of a new Aspen Skiing Co. (SkiCo) campaign that is "promoting direct flights to Aspen/Snowmass" from S.F., L.A. and Chicago, according to Brent Gardner-Smith of the ASPEN DAILY NEWS. SkiCo put up billboards in the three cities that depict "either a skier catching air off a cliff" or Bleiler "going big with the headline 'It's Time to Fly.'" Underneath the billboards is the message, "Daily Non-Stops to Aspen/Snowmass." There are three billboard in both S.F. and Chicago, with another two in L.A. SkiCo "backed up the billboards in each market with print ads in the Sunday travel sections" of the L.A. Times, Chicago Tribune and S.F. Chronicle, "as well as online ads in each of those markets." The company also plans to tie in sweepstakes with a prize of a trip for two to Aspen "around creative photos of the various billboards sent to social media sites." The billboards are "part of an increased marketing investment SkiCo talked about making last fall." SkiCo also is "bringing the X Games to Denver next week as part of the ski industry trade show being held there on the same days as the X Games" (*ASPEN DAILY NEWS, 1/19*). In Aspen, Scott Condon noted SkiCo "sent out direct-mail pieces to 100,000 past guests and prospective visitors from its database." E-mail promos "will be sent multiple times this month to 200,000 people in the 'direct-fly markets' where the billboards were placed" (*ASPEN TIMES, 1/19*).



Aspen Skiing Co. Has Put Up Billboards In Chicago, L.A., S.F. To Promote Cities' Direct Flights To Aspen/Snowmass

8. **MARKETPLACE ROUNDUP**

INDYCAR.com's Dave Lewandowski wrote non-stop promotion of the IndyCar Series is the "strategic backbone" for Izod, which is in its first year as the league's title sponsor. Driver Graham Rahal will appear in a print and TV campaign for Izod, and he said of shooting the ads, "For five days, from the time the sun came up until it went down, we were shooting. I don't necessarily want to know how much they spent, but I was on a jet ski with helicopters chasing me so I know they spent some money." Lewandowski noted commercials featuring Izod and promoting the series opener March 14 in Brazil "began popping up on network TV over the weekend," and such "promotional breeze hasn't been felt at the Indy Racing League since ... well, possibly never" (*INDYCAR.com, 1/19*).

ON DISPLAY: Roush Fenway Racing President Geoff Smith said that his NASCAR team will "put its sponsorship data on a website and encourage other NASCAR teams to do the same, creating a clearing-house of information designed to procure new sponsors." Smith said that it "would be OK if the site drove a sponsor from Roush to another team because 'it's for the greater good'" (*USA TODAY, 1/20*).

GIRL POWER: The AP's Nancy Armour reported U.S. gymnast Nastia Liukin and Warner Bros. yesterday announced that Supergirl, "the brand based on the DC Comics character," will sponsor the Nastia Liukin Cup scheduled for March 5 at DCU Center in Worcester, Massachusetts. The Cup is "for up-and-coming gymnasts, not elite athletes." The girls who compete "will get a special leotard that's been designed by Liukin and has the Supergirl 'S' shield on the sleeve." The meet is "being shown on Universal Sports" (*AP, 1/19*).

SECRET WEAPON: In Minneapolis, Paul Levy reports UFC fighter Brock Lesnar, who today announced he will return to the Octagon this summer after battling severe health issues, was "scheduled to be in Las Vegas this week to promote" Alliant Techsystems' (ATK) Fusion line of ammunition at an industry show running through Friday. Lesnar is a "hunting enthusiast" and "knows and uses Fusion bullets." ATK is the nation's "leading manufacturer of small-caliber ammunition" (*Minneapolis STAR TRIBUNE, 1/20*).

Sports Media

9. MCGWIRE ROUNDTABLE PART II: PR EXPERTS DISCUSS COSTAS, MESSAGING

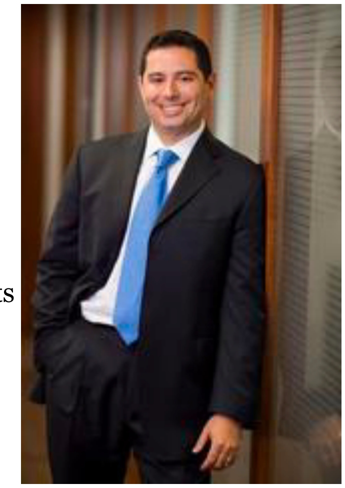
After MLB Cardinals hitting coach Mark McGwire admitted to using steroids during his playing career, critics were quick to weigh in on both the content of his words and the forums in which he spoke them. Staff writer Erik Swanson recently asked a panel of experts to analyze various aspects of the admission strategy, and in part two of our roundtable, panelists discuss the decision to grant Bob Costas and MLB Network the first on-camera interview, the messaging behind the admission, as well as the importance of holding a press conference. Panelists included SCP Worldwide Senior VP/Communications **Eric Gelfand**, communications consultant **Vince Wladika**, MGP & Associates President **Mike Paul**, sports and entertainment marketing and communications consultant **Joe Favorito**, Ketchum Sports & Entertainment Managing Director **Ann Wool**, 776 Original Marketing Managing Partner **Darryl Seibel** and Edelman GM of Sports & Sponsorship **Mary Scott**.

Q: What is the right forum? Was MLB Network the right forum and was Costas the right guy? Or do you target ESPN and/or a Jeremy Schaap?

Scott: Working with the Cardinals to disseminate the information was a safe channel to break this news. Since Costas is synonymous with baseball and a former play-by-play announcer in St. Louis, I believe Costas and the MLB Network was the right forum for McGwire to discuss this admission.

Wool: After watching the interview I would say that Bob tested McGwire but also let him explain his side of the story. It seemed fair.

Gelfand: The first TV interview certainly plays a large role in shaping public opinion. In addition, who conducts it (and how they handled the sit-down) has undoubtedly become part of the story itself. As a result, the choice of interviewer almost dictates what outlet you should go to not the other way around. And they clearly went the right way with Bob Costas, who you cannot get any better than.



Gelfand Agrees With Decision To Go With Costas

Seibel: Bob Costas was absolutely the right person for a major television interview. Several reasons: 1) Bob is one of the most respected baseball authorities in our country. He understands the game, has studied its history, and appreciates its place in American culture. In terms of knowledge and perspective, Bob is unsurpassed -- and that leads to a much more thoughtful and productive interview for everyone (the newsmaker, the viewer and the network). 2) In terms of image and perception, the newsmaker benefits from being interviewed by someone who is credible and respected. 3) Bob is a St. Louis guy. He has had a front row seat for every chapter in the Mark McGwire story -- the highs and the lows.

Wladika: I'm a little old school. To me, the right forum was a press conference -- that is the "fairest" way to not play any favorites with the media. ... I am sure that the PR handlers were very concerned about getting a "wolfpack" mentality that can occur at press conferences. And clearly the PR handlers were worried about McGwire's ability to handle the forum of a press conference.

Paul: I am sure Ari [Fleischer] chose the MLB Network because he believed they would go easy on Mark. As the league he played in and is still employed by, MLB has a biased interest in his future. Also, Major League Baseball is also one of Ari's clients. No coincidence there.

Q: Where do you hold a press conference now? Do you have to?

Seibel: Press conferences are to journalism what big-box retailers are to shopping: efficient, but impersonal. ... Frankly, I don't know who dislikes press conferences more -- journalists or newsmakers. I'll take the personal attention of a series of one-on-one interviews over a press conference every time.

Scott Feels McGwire Does Not Need Presser

Scott: These days I don't believe you have to hold a press conference to get the news out. Holding a press conference also means you need to be willing to answer every reporter's questions, and for something like this there would have been hundreds of media in attendance.

Wool: No, would not recommend. Since this is the offseason and the media's focus on MLB is temporarily on hiatus, I am sure there will be more to come on this story as it evolves and as Spring Training gets closer, but I can't see a reason for a press conference.

Wladika: St. Louis would have been the place to hold the press conference. He broke the record in St. Louis -- and it's the Cardinals who he is returning to as a coach. If the Cardinals are proud and comfortable in having him return to the organization as a coach, then they should have not had a problem with hosting a press conference for him.

Gelfand: I really don't believe it matters where you hold the press conference. Sometimes there is too much thought put into the "where" part. It's going to be a distraction no matter where you have it. ... I do believe a press conference can play an important part of any strategy, if you decide to hold one. It is not a "stand alone" strategy, but it allows you to speak to every media outlet at once.

Q: How are you crafting what you are saying and how it is said? As one source said, if he handled the "don't you think you hit more HRs because of it" question better, he's not getting knocked as much.

Wladika: That's the most important part -- the forum you elect to use is secondary to getting the messaging correct and delivering it in a believable fashion. And the messaging and delivery was severely lacking. McGwire was either poorly prepared by his PR handlers -- or he didn't listen to his PR handlers advice and went "off the reservation." For McGwire to say to Costas that his records are "completely legit" while he was on PEDs was a travesty. ... He left more questions hanging out there than he answered and he showed he still is not coming clean and telling the truth.

Paul: In my opinion, McGwire is giving only a half-truth, which is one of the most hurtful types of lies. His response to the performance-enhancing question in the MLB interview showed he is not fully humbled himself and he is lying about portions of his story. As a result, McGwire's reputation is still in crisis, in my opinion.

Gelfand: It really comes down to what the person wants to say. If there is an answer that doesn't seem like it will go over well it is your job to push back. But it never really is that simple and as much as you may want (and try) to show them a better way to answer a question, you also want them to be comfortable and force-feeding an answer may cause more harm than good. If they don't believe their answer, it will show. At the end of the day though, this is all about the substance of your answers.

Favorito: This is not a movie, where you get re-takes. It also is a matter of what the client wants to say. You can make suggestions, but you can't force anyone to say what they do not want to say, that's not what media training is. You provide the Q&A and your best advice, but it is not an exact science. If the client doesn't believe, it can be very, very insincere and make things even worse. All you can do is advise and counsel. The main message, which was an admission of steroid use, was the one that needed to be conveyed and was conveyed pretty clearly.

Favorito Says Message Was Conveyed Clearly

Scott: Going back on a previous denial is tough. ... I believe he truly believes that drugs played a role only in recovery, not in his ability to play once he took the field. He feels strongly about this and I'm not sure there is a win-win answer to this question.

Wool: One can make suggestions on how to approach an answer to a question but the best media training comes when advice is given, not a script. McGwire clearly articulated his guilt, which was the goal of the interview, not the anecdotes surrounding it.

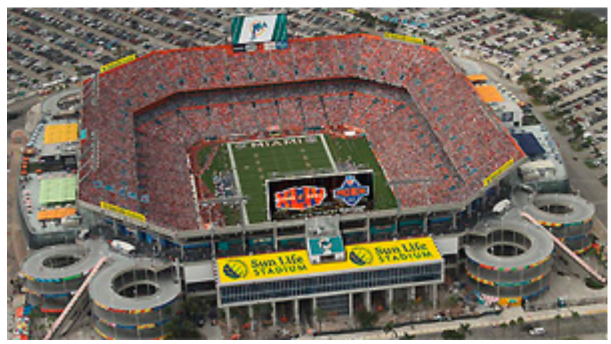
Seibel: Well-crafted messaging will quickly unravel if, at some level, it's not a reflection of what the newsmaker actually believes. ... If McGwire truly believes his steroid use had no impact on his home run production, no matter how illogical or implausible that may be to most everyone else, what can you do? You can't risk having him say something he doesn't actually believe. ... The timing of this was spot-on: after the major college bowl games and the first weekend of the NFL Playoffs.

LET ME BE "REAL" CLEAR: In his closing statement on HBO's "Real Sports" last night, HBO's Bryant Gumbel addressed the McGwire's steroid admission. Gumbel said, "Finally tonight, an open letter to baseball's usual suspects. Dear Barry, Roger, Sammy, and Rafael. I'm writing in hopes you saw Mark McGwire's phony non-apology last week and learned from it. I'm assuming that you, like most people not named Tony

La Russa, got a good laugh out of Mark's crocodile tears and his self-serving claims about truth, guilt and the pharmaceutical way. So on behalf of all fans, do us a favor. If and when you're ready to come clean, don't insult us with talk of how much of what you did was God-given and how much was chemically induced. Let us figure that out, okay, and don't play us for idiots. Don't play us for idiots. Spare us the lies about taking 'roids for health reasons. We're all grownups. You took stuff for the same reason most of us break or bend rules: you thought you could get away with it, and you did. You did because Commissioner Bud, being Bud, was of course asleep at the switch when you suddenly grew Shrek-like necks and bloated biceps. But even Bud is selling absolution these days. He's cheering any and all mea culpas, even half-assed ones. If you don't believe me, just ask A-Rod and Manny, Papi, Jason and the others who've come forward because they had to. There may be no crying in baseball, but there is forgiveness, maybe even enough to get you to Cooperstown. In closing guys, please feel free to share this letter with Bagwell, Nomar, Pudge and all those others who went from hitting homers to power outages overnight. Tell them fans are ready to accept what happened, tell them we're ready to move on. Tell them that most of us get it, even if they, like you, still don't" (*"Real Sports," HBO, 1/19*).

10. MEDIA NOTES

An NFL spokesperson today for the first time confirmed that the league's broadcast rightsholders will use the Sun Life Stadium name in the upcoming Pro Bowl (ESPN) and Super Bowl (CBS) broadcasts from Miami. Sun Life Financial is officially taking over the naming rights to the former Dolphin Stadium today. The league will also refer to the stadium by its new name in its collateral materials surrounding the Pro Bowl and Super Bowl. Coors' presence as the NFL corporate sponsor rightsholder made it impossible for Anheuser-Busch's Land Shark Lager to continue as stadium entitlement holder beyond the FedEx Orange Bowl (*Terry Lefton, THE DAILY*).



CBS, ESPN To Use Sun Life Stadium Name During Super Bowl, Pro Bowl Broadcasts

VIRTUAL INSANITY: BROADCASTING & CABLE's Glen Dickson reported ESPN has acquired Texas-based technology developer Vistas Unlimited Inc., which supplies "virtual insertion technology which can be used to insert advertisements or graphic enhancements into live coverage of various sports including golf, basketball, hockey and rodeo." ESPN said that the deal "will boost the network's use of virtual technology across its various platforms" (*BROADCASTINGCABLE.com, 1/19*).

BACK IN THE SADDLE: In K.C., Sam Mellinger reports Royals and college basketball analyst Paul Splittorff Saturday called his "first game broadcast in nearly 10 months" with the Texas Tech-Kansas men's basketball game, after suffering an "infection that jumbled his announcer's voice." Splittorff: "I'm not 100[%] yet. But I'm getting close to it." Splittorff will call the Oklahoma State-Kansas State men's basketball game this weekend, "get a few weeks off, come back with another game or two with a three-man crew and then transition into the more traditional two-man team." His schedule as Royals TV analyst "hasn't been worked out," but he said that he "feels healthy enough that he's hoping to get the 100 games he was scheduled to do last year" (*K.C. STAR,* 1/20).

SHOWN THE SIDELINE: Univ. of Florida (UF) football radio sideline reporter Steven Michael Babik yesterday was charged in federal court with "receipt and distribution of child pornography and possession of child pornography." Babik, who also hosted the "Urban Meyer Post-Game Show," was the "longtime network coordinator" for UF athletics. Babik "has been fired from his UF job" (*GAINESVILLE SUN, 1/20*).

SO FAR, SO GOOD: In Daytona Beach, Michael Lewis wrote ESPN "has done a real nice job so far" with its Australian Open coverage, and announcer Chris Fowler "continues to get better and better" (*NEWS-JOURNALONLINE.com, 1/19*).

Leagues & Governing Bodies

11. GIANTS' MARA FIRST OWNER TO SPEAK EXTENSIVELY ABOUT NFL CBA TALKS

Mara Says He Is Resigned To An Uncapped Season In 2010

NFL Giants President & CEO John Mara yesterday said that he is "resigned to an uncapped season in 2010 and thought the union and owners might be moving further apart in talks toward a new labor agreement," according to Judy Battista of the N.Y. TIMES. Mara yesterday was among the owners who "took part in the 11th negotiating session with union leaders" in DC, and he is the "first owner to speak extensively since negotiations began." Mara said that he "still had hope that a lockout could be averted." However, he added, "I don't think we're making any progress. We made a proposal in early November. I don't think we've received a meaningful counterproposal. The point that we try to make to them is that the costs and risks are much greater than they ever have been. ... They want a deal that is equal to or better than the existing one, and that is not acceptable to us." Battista notes Mara's comments represent a "ratcheting up of rhetoric between the two sides and is particularly noteworthy," as "until now, owners have avoided speaking publicly about negotiations at the behest of Commissioner Roger Goodell." By allowing Mara to "speak about feelings privately shared by other owners, management is likely hoping to win over public opinion." The "crux of negotiations is how to divide a revenue pie" of about $8.5B. The current CBA "calls for players to receive nearly 60[%] of revenue," but the NFLPA "views the real percentage players receive as closer to 51[%], and union leaders think owners want a rollback" of 18%. Meanwhile, both sides "seem to agree that a rookie cap is necessary to redirect money to current and retired players." Mara: "We'd rather have money going to retired players and veteran players as opposed to unproven rookies." Battista writes the "need for a limit on rookie wages may be the only common ground players and management have" (*N.Y. TIMES, 1/20*).

NUMBERS GAME: SI.com's Peter King wrote NFLPA Exec Dir DeMaurice Smith "would never walk into a room and try to present a contract to players that called for them to take" an 18% pay cut. Before CBA talks are "even close to a conclusion, the NFL will have more money thrown into the pot -- from negotiations over how much of a contribution players should make to the new stadium construction leaguewide (if anything), from the new money coming in from two additional regular-season [games], and from the money funneled to veterans if and when a rookie salary pool is instituted, which could mean upwards of $150[M] per year put into the veteran payment pool" (*SI.com, 1/19*). NFLPA Assistant Exec Dir of External Affairs George Atallah wrote on his Twitter page, "The $8.5B secret: 32 factories are making $ in this economy and threatening to shut down unless employees took 18% cut. Why?"

12. NHL OWNERS REMAIN HESITANT ABOUT FUTURE OLYMPICS PARTICIPATION

The three Olympics that have seen NHL players participate -- "particularly the two overseas editions -- have soured some NHL owners, who see their employees' participation as high risk with little reward," according to E.J. Hradek of ESPN THE MAGAZINE. The league in every Olympic year since '98 has "shuttered its regular season for roughly two weeks," and the thought has been that Olympic exposure "would lure a big-bucks national TV deal and help the NHL cut a larger swath through the pro sports landscape." But the league "got virtually no bounce" from the '98 Nagano or '06 Turin Games due to the location of the games and the fact both the U.S. and Canada "failed to medal either time." However, even during the '02 Salt Lake City Olympics, when Canada beat the U.S. in the Gold Medal game, things "didn't work out as planned." The TV rating was a "huge 10.7 in the U.S.," but the NHL "saw no carryover" -- the '02 Red Wings-Hurricanes Stanley Cup Final earned just a 3.6 rating. Bruins Owner Jeremy Jacobs said of the Olympics, "As owners, we have to decide if it's worth it. When the games are held outside North America, we can't take advantage of it nearly as much as we'd like." Hradek notes some owners "see no value in suspending league play just as the sports calendar clears." Possible injuries also play a factor; the Senators in '06 lost G Dominik Hasek "for the season after he was hurt playing for the Czech Republic." However, NHL players "absolutely want to chase their Olympic dreams." Meanwhile, "lurking in the background are the impending collective bargaining talks in 2011." If playing in the Olympics is "really so important to the players," NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman "may try to trade the participation for something he and the owners want" (*ESPN THE MAGAZINE, 1/25 issue*).

13. AHL PRESIDENT SAYS LEAGUE IS HOLDING UP WELL IN TOUGH ECONOMY

AHL President Says Ticket Revenue Across The League Is "About Even"

AHL President Dave Andrews before last night's All-Star Game in Portland, Maine, said the league is "doing very well" considering the economy, noting "ticket revenue across the league is actually about even," according to the PORTLAND PRESS HERALD. Andrews: "Relative to other professional sports properties ... we're doing extremely well looking at the results we've seen with other sports. On the other side of it, there continue to be challenges. We have 29 teams, and some of them are ahead of last year, some of them are even and some of them are off from the previous year" (*PORTLAND PRESS HERALD, 1/19*). The league is averaging 4,659 fans per game through the All-Star break, after finishing last season with an average of 5,115 (*THE DAILY*). Meanwhile, Andrews said that the issue of a salary cap, which the league "currently does not have," is "certain to come up when the league attempts to negotiate a new" CBA with the Professional Hockey Players Association (PHPA). In Pennsylvania, Dan Hickling notes the league's current pact with the PHPA "expires in September." Most AHL players are "paid by the NHL parent club," but those AHL teams that are "owned by local operators, about half of the league's current 29 members, are free to add player salary on their own." And while a few "do on occasion, the rest do not" (*Wilkes-Barre CITIZENS VOICE, 1/20*).

AFFILIATE CHANGES: Andrews said that he "expects to reach the 30 team threshold if Edmonton activates its dormant franchise," the Road Runners, next season. He "expects that decision to be made by the end of January" (*Wilkes-Barre CITIZENS VOICE, 1/20*). The Ducks are the only NHL team without an AHL affiliate, and Andrews said, "We don't know (Anaheim's) plans, but we are working with them on their options next year and hopefully that will work itself out over the next couple of months" (*PORTLAND PRESS HERALD, 1/19*). Andrews said there are "five or six" expiring affiliation agreements in the AHL, and in Albany, Pete Dougherty reports the AHL Albany River Rats are "in the final year of their affiliation agreement with the Hurricanes, who have openly said they would like to get an AHL team closer to their home base in Raleigh." Charlotte "seems to be where the 'Canes would like to place a team, but they would have to acquire a franchise or convince an existing club to relocate." River Rats Owner Walter Robb has said that he is "trying to sell the Rats, but with the contingency that they stay in Albany" (*Albany TIMES UNION, 1/20*).

IN THE STARS: The TIMES UNION's Dougherty reported the AHL All-Star Game's "format of Canada vs. PlanetUSA will disappear" next year. Andrews said that the '11 game, which will "help celebrate the league's 75th anniversary," will adopt the "East-West format first utilized in 1942." No decision has been made on the host city, but Dougherty wrote Hershey, Pennsylvania, is the "best bet" (*TIMESUNION.com, 1/19*).

14. LEAGUE NOTES

SI.com's Jon Wertheim wrote the impetus behind top players participating in the Hit for Haiti fundraiser Sunday at the Australian Open was simply that, "Something horrible happened on the other side of the world, we recognize that and we want to use our platform to help." There are "no Haitian players" on the ATP World Tour or Sony Ericsson WTA Tour, and there is "no event in Haiti, no Haitian sponsor, no ulterior motive." It was "just a great day for the sport, a great showing from the top players starting with" Roger Federer, who organized the event. It was a "great indication of what can [happen] when tennis cuts through the in-fighting and everyone works for a greater cause" (*SI.com, 1/18*). Meanwhile, THE HOCKEY NEWS' Ken Campbell wrote, "Any display of charity when it comes to the Haitian relief effort is commendable, but is there anyone else out there who thinks the NHL's contribution of just $100,000 is a joke?" The NHL is "donating no more than" 76ers C Samuel Dalembert, which is "embarrassing" (*THEHOCKEYNEWS.com, 1/18*).

TIMING IS EVERYTHING: Tennis player Andy Roddick said forming a union for ATP World Tour players "would have been the right move ... five years ago," but he does not feel the "time is right to do that." Roddick said that to "force a players' union through now would undermine" ATP World Tour Exec Chair & President Adam Helfant. Roddick: "We've thought about it a lot. We've definitely talked about it." Roddick added the players have not acted on the idea "to be fair to" Helfant, who he believes has "good intentions" (*FANHOUSE.com, 1/20*).

STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION: ESPN.com's Rob Neyer wrote there are "three obvious ways to improve" MLB umpires, and their new five-year deal with the league "would seem to address two of them." One way is to "have the best umpires on the field during the most important games," and another way is to "increase the use of video replay." The third way is to "drop some of the dead weight, and there's still no obvious mechanism for doing that" (*ESPN.com, 1/19*).

Franchises

15. RAMS OWNERS CLOSING IN ON DECISION TO SELL OR KEEP TEAM

Rams co-Owners Chip Rosenbloom and Lucia Rodriguez are "closing in on a decision to accept one of three offers to purchase the team or walk away from the bidders and keep the franchise," according to NFL sources cited by Jim Thomas of the ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH. A decision "could be reached before the NFL draft in late April, not because of any kind of firm deadline, but simply to avoid uncertainty surrounding the team and its future entering the 2010 season." All three offers, which the sources described as "acceptable," are "comparable to what the Pittsburgh Steelers franchise recently sold for" -- $720-800M. The "only known bid for the team is from a group of investors headed by" SCP Worldwide Chair Dave Checketts. The three bidding groups are "committed in varying degrees to keeping the franchise in St. Louis, and that may have an impact on any sale decision." Thomas notes "at least one of the bids is for the full 100[%] of the team, in which case" Stan Kroenke's 40% share "would be bought out as well." But if Rosenbloom and Rodriguez "end up selling only their 60[%] of the team, Kroenke could potentially scuttle the deal by saying he wants to 'cash out.'" Sources said that Rosenbloom has "yet to get any indication from Kroenke on what he will do." Kroenke has "matching rights on any outside offers for the team," but under current NFL cross-ownership rules, he "would not be allowed to exercise that right as long as he owns majority shares" of the Nuggets and Avalanche. Some "clarity could be added to the issue this week," as Rams execs are meeting in L.A. today and tomorrow for the team's annual end-of-season summit meeting. Kroenke is "expected to attend at least one day's worth of the meetings." If he indicates that he is "on board with any sale decision," an agreement "could be signed relatively quickly" (*ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH, 1/20*).

16. FORMER PISTONS INVESTOR CONFIRMS DAVIDSON PREPARING TO SELL

Former Pistons minority owner Oscar Feldman yesterday confirmed that team Owner Karen Davidson is "preparing to sell" the franchise, according to Bill Shea of CRAIN'S DETROIT BUSINESS. Feldman said Davidson, who inherited the team after the passing of her husband, Bill, in March, is "inquiring into selling the team, and her limited partners concur in that decision." The franchise is currently "run by a five-person board:" Karen Davidson; Bill Davidson's son from a previous marriage, Ethan Davidson; estate trustees John Aaron and Eric Garber; and Palace Sports & Entertainment President & CEO Tom Wilson. The trustees are "believed to have financial control of the team while" Bill Davidson's estate is settled. Feldman said that he "sold his minority stake to the estate" of Bill Davidson on October 31 as "part of a previous agreement with Davidson" (*CRAINSDETROIT.com, 1/19*). Meanwhile, Cavaliers Senior VP/Communications Tad Carper, when asked if Cavaliers Owner Dan Gilbert is interested in selling his team and pursuing the Pistons, said, "The answer is no" (*CRAINSDETROIT.com, 1/19*).

TIME TO COME TOGETHER? In Detroit, Bob Wojnowski writes the Pistons and Red Wings "need to finance and share a new arena in downtown Detroit." Having separate arenas "isn't nearly as economically feasible as it once was." Sharing a venue "seems simple, but is fraught with complications." If Bill Davidson "were still alive, this would not even be discussed." But Red Wings Owner Mike Ilitch is 80 years old and "loves big moves, and this could be a chance to seal an already-amazing legacy." But for the move to happen, "clustering all four Detroit pro teams downtown, Ilitch would have to take the aggressive lead" (*DETROIT NEWS, 1/20*).

The Predators' ownership "may be forced to strengthen their $50[M] guarantee with the city because of the discovery of a financial agreement among the owners that has tougher terms than the city can guarantee," according to David Shoalts of the GLOBE & MAIL. Under the agreement, which was signed in December '07, if "one or more of the owners can no longer meet his financial obligations to the franchise and the NHL or causes a financial loss, then the other owners have to cover the obligations in a ratio of their ownership percentage in the franchise." The Predators owners also "signed two agreements with the NHL, one a financial guarantee for as much as $50[M] and the other a consent agreement, that are far more binding than the city agreement." Those contracts "give the NHL the right to be the front of the line of any creditors and the right to revoke the franchise if it decides the owners are no longer meeting their obligations." They also do "not allow any of the owners to escape financial commitments by declaring bankruptcy." Shoalts notes the city of Nashville, which owns Sommet Center through the Metro Sports Authority (MSA), is "seeking assurances from the team owners about their financial situation." That "became necessary after the news last month" that Predators Owner David Freeman had a "federal tax lien placed on his house." If Freeman "cannot settle the lien, he and the team could be found in default on the city guarantee." MSA Finance Committee Chair Rusty Lawrence said that he was "not aware" of the agreement among Predators owners, and that he "now plans to bring it to the attention of the Sports Authority committee that is negotiating with the Predators owners and add it to his list of reasons why the city's guarantee needs to be strengthened." Lawrence noted that the negotiating committee "plans to meet with the owners early next week." Their report "will be delivered to a special meeting of the finance committee" on January 28 (*GLOBE & MAIL, 1/20*).

18. NFL PANTHERS FACE DECISIONS ON CONCESSIONS, BEER, TICKETS

Panthers Officials Expected To Make A Decision On Concessions In Next Few Weeks

NFL Panthers President Danny Morrison and other team officials "face crucial issues ... between now and the start of summer training camp: to lock in ticket renewals, land new backers and put renewed sizzle into the NFL franchise's marketing blitz," according ton Erik Spanberg of the CHARLOTTE BUSINESS JOURNAL. The Panthers are "grappling with a range of economic concerns, from declining corporate hospitality sales to fans and sponsors resistant to price hikes." Team officials "within the next few weeks ... expect to make a decision on which company will handle the team's concessions," as they shift from Stadium Food & Beverage, which was "created and owned by the Panthers for the past 12 seasons." Panthers officials have narrowed the list to three -- Aramark, Levy Restaurants and Delaware North Sportservice." Spanberg writes it is "time for the Panthers to decide whether they want to remain a part of the Pepsi generation -- or have a Coke and a smile instead." Also, "not long after the Panthers settle on a soft drink, the franchise will be looking at its beer options." Miller and Bud Light "share the team's beer sponsorship in deals worth a combined $4[M] annually," but those contracts "expire after the 2010 season." The Panthers also currently lack an automotive sponsor, as Carolina

Chrysler-Jeep dealers "walked away" before the '08 season, and the team is "hoping some signs of life among carmakers in recent months can drive a new deal." Meanwhile, the Panthers "suffered a 3% dip in turnstile attendance and a 10% drop in Carolinas TV viewership" during the '09 season, and Panthers Dir of Ticket Sales & Operations Phil Youtsey said that the team is "working on its sales plans and strategies for a rollout later this year." While he declined to disclose plans, it "seems likely the Panthers will focus on adding perks to lure corporate buyers back" (*CHARLOTTE BUSINESS JOURNAL, 1/15 issue*).

19. MLB FRANCHISE NOTES: GIANTS LIKELY TO SURPASS $100M IN PAYROLL

In S.F., Ray Ratto notes the Giants are about to become a "nine-figure baseball team, and that's a whole lot more than they said they had a month ago." With Ps Tim Lincecum and Brian Wilson filing for arbitration, the Giants are "about to sail well past their stated budget of the low $90[M] level. And unless [GM] Brian Sabean is signing players with his own money, the Giants are actually ready to break the $100[M] mark for the first time." The Giants are "suddenly either spending money they don't have, spending money they do have, or are hoping to have with a sudden burst of public interest." Ratto: "No matter what the answer, this is their version of going for it" (*S.F. CHRONICLE, 1/20*).

SEEING RED? D'Backs officials said that the team's one-year, $4.5M deal with 1B Adam LaRoche moves the club's payroll close to $79M, "a figure that makes a finish in the red a realistic possibility." In Phoenix, Nick Piecoro notes D'Backs Managing General Partner Ken Kendrick "throughout the off-season" said that the team "would be willing to stretch its payroll close to $80[M] in the right situation." Kendrick said that if the team "isn't in contention this season," the franchise "likely will lose money." Kendrick: "If they don't play well, we absolutely will have a loss. But we're willing to take that risk. We're not about making money. We're about winning and trying to avoid significant losses" (*ARIZONA REPUBLIC, 1/20*).

INCREASED SPENDING: In West Palm Beach, Joe Capozzi reports the Marlins yesterday committed to another $8M in salaries, putting them "on track for a payroll of at least" $45M. The team yesterday agreed to one-year deals with 3B Jorge Cantu and P Leo Nunez, which puts the team at $34.7M "in contract commitments in 2010 for just 10 players." If the team does not trade 2B Dan Uggla, who agreed to a one-year, $7.8M deal Monday, the Marlins' payroll "projects to be at least" $45M. However, Capozzi writes the "increased spending isn't a direct result of last week's agreement with the league and union over the Marlins' promise to spend revenue-sharing money on player salaries" (*PALM BEACH POST, 1/20*).

COST OF COMPETING: In Seattle, Steve Kelley writes the Mariners "can't afford not to keep [P] Felix Hernandez, so they are about to sign him to a five-year deal worth about $78 million." In signing Hernandez, "once again, the M's, under general manager Jack Zduriencik, are doing the right thing." They "aren't lowballing their budget and throwing up their hands at the millions it will take to keep the brightest, youngest gun in baseball." Kelley: "They're sending a message -- to the fans, to the other players in their clubhouse and to the rest of baseball -- that they are ready for the big time" (*SEATTLE TIMES, 1/20*).

IN THE DARK: ESPN.com's Buster Olney reported "part of the unusual nature of the Mets' offseason has been the fact that" Mets GM Omar Minaya "has never been given a budget." As the Mets' front office has been "evaluating possible strategies, the executives haven't been able to cast these choices against the context of how much money is available." They instead are making their recommendations to COO Jeff Wilpon "on a case-by-case basis, without knowing whether" they are "yet bumping up against a financial ceiling." Olney noted Wilpon "has been the lead negotiator for the Mets this offseason, and not Omar Minaya, which has reinforced the belief in some corners of the organization that Minaya is one extended losing streak removed from being fired" (*ESPN.com, 1/19*).

20. FRANCHISE NOTES

A source said that "contrary to multiple reports and abundant speculation," the Wizards "have not considered voiding Gilbert Arenas' contract in the wake" of his felony gun plea. The source added that the Wizards have "not had any discussions or communications with Arenas in regards to voiding the deal, and haven't decided what their course of action is in the situation because the legal process must play out" (*MIKEJONESSPORTS.com, 1/18*).

DIGGING OUT OF DEBT: EPL club West Ham United co-Owner David Sullivan estimated that the team's debt "could be as much as" US$179M as a "result of excessive spending on transfers and wages and borrowing against future income." Sullivan: "We are like a government of national unity in crisis." He "predicts that the next set of accounts will show a loss" of US$65-81M and "has not ruled out selling the naming rights to Upton Park." In London, Gary Jacob noted the new owners have "targeted qualifying for the Champions League within seven years, want to rent the Olympic Stadium after the 2012 London Games and pledged money for transfers this month in an attempt to avoid relegation" (*TIMESONLINE.co.uk, 1/19*).

DRAWING POWER: The Texans are increasing ticket prices by an average of 6.67% next season, and in Houston, Richard Justice writes they are "raising ticket prices because they can." They have "sold out every game for eight years, and there's no reason to believe a 6.67[%] price increase is going to snap the streak." The Texans have "blown by the Astros in the hearts and minds of fans, and even though they've never been great on the field, people still care deeply" about them (*HOUSTON CHRONICLE, 1/20*).

SPURRING THEM ON: In San Antonio, William Pack reported the Spurs are "creating a Silver & Black Pack," which will consist of 30 of the team's "zaniest fans as selected by audition Jan. 30 at the AT&T Center." The winners "must be able to attend the Spurs' final regular season games at the arena." Auditions "will include an interview, a Spurs trivia quiz and a showcase to demonstrate how far their support carries them." Participants "must be at least 18 and complete an application form" (*SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS-NEWS, 1/19*).

Facilities & Venues

21. PACQUIAO-CLOTTEY GIVES COWBOYS STADIUM A BIG DEBUT BOUT

While the March 13 Manny Pacquiao-Joshua Clottey bout at Cowboys Stadium "isn't the hoped-for mega showdown" between Pacquiao and Floyd Mayweather Jr., it still is a "good, big-time boxing start for the house that Jerry Jones built," according to Gil LeBreton of the FT. WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM. The stadium will use its "basketball configuration for the bout." The top deck will not be opened, and the center-hung video board "will be lowered to 30 feet over the ring." Ticket prices to the fight will range from $50-700, and Top Rank Chair Bob Arum is "excited about being able to offer what he called 'reasonable prices' for a world-class boxing show." LeBreton notes with the "gate reasonably priced, more people -- with a younger demographic -- will be exposed to big-time boxing." Arum yesterday, announcing the fight during a press conference at Cowboys Stadium, "likened the upcoming bout" to a fight in '66 between Muhammad Ali and Cleveland Williams at the Astrodome, which he recalled "centered more around the then-new Astrodome than the ring matchup" (*FT. WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM, 1/20*). Cowboys Owner Jerry Jones said, "The fact that we've got Manny Pacquiao here says a tremendous amount to the constituency of our new stadium. You don't build something for ($1.2B) without putting yourself on the incentive plan to go get the very best. From the beginning, I pictured boxing matches in this stadium. I would have never dreamed, though, that I could introduce that with this stadium with a man of the character of Manny Pacquiao" (*"SportsCenter," ESPN, 1/19*).

THE NEXT BIG THING? Jones yesterday said he envisions as many as "four or five significant fights a year" in the new stadium. Jones: "Las Vegas has its aura, and we can do things here to capture our own aura." The ring will be placed at midfield, and Arum and Jones noted that they are "hoping to fill 40,000 seats." Jones: "It was always in our mind that right here on the star we would put the ring" (*DALLAS MORNING NEWS, 1/20*). In Ft. Worth, Tobias Xavier Lopez notes there were "comparisons to the Roman Coliseums" throughout yesterday's press conference at Cowboys Stadium, and Arum suggested that the Dallas facility "could replace Madison Square Garden or Caesar's Palace as the 'new Mecca of boxing'" (*FT. WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM, 1/20*). Jones said, "With the stature of Pacquiao, we're going to be able to put on a unique fight." While the plan is to fill 40,000 seats, Arum indicated that a "60,000-seat plan can be arranged if necessary." Arum also announced that HBO PPV will televise the fight (*L.A. TIMES, 1/20*). Jones yesterday vowed, "We're going to make this one of the most interesting fights to view that there's ever been." He noted that he has already "gotten ticket requests" from Dolphins Exec VP/Football Operations Bill Parcells and Fox' Jimmy Johnson. Jones yesterday also revealed that he "once looked into investing in Pacquiao's career." He said Parcells "really encouraged me to meet with the guy who had Pacquiao." Jones: "I had him come in and sit down and talk about backing Pacquiao. You could see his potential at that time" (*ESPNDALLAS.com, 1/19*).

DODGING A RIGHT HOOK: YAHOO SPORTS' Kevin Iole noted HBO Sports officials "weren't too excited about having to choose between" airing a Mayweather or Pacquiao bout on March 13. HBO was "freed from having to make a decision when Andre Berto withdrew from his Jan. 30 fight with Shane Mosley and a Mayweather-Mosley fight became a possibility." It would have been "almost impossible to negotiate a deal and properly promote" a Mayweather-Mosley bout by March 13. Had Berto not pulled out of his bout, Golden Boy Promotions was "planning a Mayweather fight against a different opponent on March 13," and that would have put HBO in the "unenviable, and losing, position of having to choose" (*SPORTS.YAHOO.com, 1/19*).

22. MLS WIZARDS STADIUM RECEIVES OK; CONSTRUCTION TO BEGIN SOON

The Wyandotte County (KS) and Kansas City, Kansas, Unified Board of Commissioners yesterday approved a $400M development plan that includes an 18,000-seat stadium for the MLS Wizards, according to Kevin Collison of the K.C. STAR. Plans call for construction of the $147M stadium to "begin as soon as possible" on an 11-acre site in Kansas City, Kansas. Wizards President Robb Heineman said that the stadium, which

Plans Call For Construction Of Wizards' $147M Stadium To Begin As Soon As Possible

will be built by Turner Construction, will be capable of "hosting professional soccer as well as many other sports and entertainment events." Wizards Owner OnGoal LLC is "teaming with Lane4 Property Group to develop the project," which is "being subsidized with $144.5[M] in STAR Bonds and $85[M] in state tax credits and cash." The complex also "includes an 18-field, tournament-quality youth complex at Wyandotte County Park," as well as a Cerner Corp. office complex, for which construction will be "under way by December 2011" (*K.C. STAR, 1/20*).

23. PAVCO NEAR DEAL TO HELP PAY FOR BC PLACE'S NEW RETRACTABLE ROOF

PavCo Chair David Podmore yesterday said that a deal to "sell off development rights to land on the west side of BC Place Stadium, which will help pay" for the facility's new C$458M retractable roof, "is 'imminent,'" according to Derrick Penner of the VANCOUVER SUN. The deal would be on a "75-year lease and will likely see both residential and commercial development on the site." PavCo, which operates BC Place, is in the midst of a C$565M renovation of the stadium, which includes C$55M in "interior improvements ahead" of next month's Vancouver Games. The new roof is "expected to add about 40 additional days of events per year in BC Place, which is already used 200 to 210 days per year." Construction is scheduled to begin "immediately after the Olympics and Paralympics, and will be complete by July 2011," in time for the Vancouver Whitecaps' first season in MLS (*VANCOUVER SUN, 1/20*). In Vancouver, Glenda Luymes reports BC Place after the construction will "boast the world's largest cable-supported retractable roof." The entire renovation project "will be financed through a 40-year loan from the provincial government." Podmore yesterday said he is "absolutely satisfied" the loan will be repaid (*Vancouver PROVINCE, 1/20*).

BRIDGE OVER TROUBLED WATER: BC Place officials yesterday said that a "small flood at BC Place Stadium won't dampen the excitement" of the February 12 Opening Ceremony at the facility. The CP's Jim Morris noted water "poured through [the] stadium's aging roof last week causing a minor flood." But Podmore said, "It's not a concern at all. We had a minor incident. Some water did come through a vent, a couple of hundred gallons. It wasn't much in context of BC Place" (*CP, 1/19*).

24. FACILITY NOTES

In DC, Dan Steinberg reported the Redskins this week mailed letters to ticket holders, "informing them of significant changes to the in-game video experience, headlined" by two 30-foot-by-100-foot HD video boards, "one in each end zone" of FedExField. The new boards "should be in place for the preseason." In addition, the Redskins will install 10 other new screens "in the lower bowl, from the game clocks to the time clocks to the out-of-town scoreboard displays, which will be equipped to also convey game stats and fantasy football totals" (*WASHINGTONPOST.com, 1/19*).

Redskins Plan To Have HD Video Board In Each End Zone Of FedExField Next Season

SWIMMING IN CLEAN WATERS: In Miami, Toluse Olorunnipa reports developers of the Marlins' new ballpark are planning "to 'green' the entire construction process, build an environmentally conscious stadium, and get official recognition from an organization that gives environmental ratings to buildings." At the site, "virtually all waste is recycled, most building materials are made locally and pieces of old concrete from the demolished Orange Bowl are repurposed into support beams." Contractor Hunt/Moss spokesperson Edwin Perkins noted that the ballpark, scheduled to open in '12, would be the "first LEED-certified stadium with a retractable roof in the country" (*MIAMI HERALD, 1/20*).

LEADING THE CHARGE: Chargers President Dean Spanos yesterday said that he "doesn't suspect Sunday's loss or the lack of a Super Bowl title" will affect the team's push for a new stadium. Spanos: "If we can come up with an agreeable proposal with the mayor and the City Council, I can see it coming to a 2012 vote." He added, "I have no secondary plan. We haven't looked anywhere else. I'm not working on an alternative. I'm not trying to leverage the city of San Diego. I know winning helps, but I don't think it will carry the day, even if we win a Super Bowl" (*SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE, 1/20*).

TAKING IT BACK TO THE OLD SCHOOL: NHL Panthers President & COO Michael Yormark Monday said that a new "Den of Honor" will open later this summer at BankAtlantic Center, "replacing one that was taken down over the summer." About 70% of the new 4,000-square-foot structure is "dedicated to the Panthers and the rest is going to junior and high school hockey in the tri-county area." Yormark said that the building "will be dedicated March 20" (*MIAMI HERALD, 1/19*).

Events & Attractions

25. SPORTS LICENSING & TAILGATE SHOW KICKS OFF TODAY IN LAS VEGAS

By Terry Lefton, Editor-At-Large

The Sports Licensing & Tailgate Show, the nation's last dedicated sports licensing trade exposition, opens in Las Vegas today with what organizers say is a slight uptick in business. Noting the synergy between tailgating and sports licensed products, ShowProCo organizers combined the two markets into a show several years back. Show organizer Stanley Schwartz said both revenue and booth count are up from 380 to 400 at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center, where the show moved this year from its former location at the Sands Expo & Convention Center, which is about 20% larger. The show is expected to attract upward of 5,000 people in its three-day run, about on par with last year, Schwartz said. While the number of licensors has dwindled over the years, those remaining with booths include MLS, IMG College and the Collegiate Licensed Properties Association. Most of the leagues will be sending representatives to the show, but are not renting space. Top licensees include G-III Apparel and Northwest. New this year is a program under which industry members voted online for the best licensed-product retailer in every state. Winners got a trip to Las Vegas for the show and their Rising Star Retailer Awards will be presented at a breakfast tomorrow.

Winners Of The Best Licensed-Product Retailer

STATE	RETAILER	STATE	RETAILER
Alabama	Campus Spirit	Montana	J&J Trading Post
Alaska	Excalibur Sports	Nebraska	Husker Hounds
Arizona	Sports Magick	Nevada	Uniform Sports and Front Row Sports

Arkansas	Univ. of Arkansas Hog Heaven	New Hampshire	EMS
California	National Tailgate	New Jersey	Lip Smackin Smokers
Colorado	Big 5 Sporting Goods	New Mexico	Krystal's NFL Shoppe
Connecticut	Olympia Sports	New York	Cooperstown Cookie Co.
Delaware	Modell's	North Carolina	Chapel Hill Sportswear
Florida	College Corners	North Dakota	Pro Image
Georgia	Field of Dreams Northpoint	Ohio	Justice Stores
Hawaii	Star Trade Inc.	Oklahoma	Homewetbar.com
Idaho	Premier Performance Products	Oregon	Portland Beavers
Illinois	Wrigleyville Sports	Pennsylvania	Giant Eagle #10
Indiana	All Stars	Rhode Island	Aah! La Cart
Iowa	Locker Room Legends	South Carolina	Mr. Knickerbocker
Kansas	Sports Time Fun Shop	South Dakota	Lynn's Dakotamart
Kentucky	Cardboard Heroes Inc.	Tennessee	Sports Seasons-Nashville
Louisiana	Louisiana Tech Univ. Bookstore	Texas	Academy Sports & Outdoors
Maine	Old Orchard Beach Baseball Card and Sport Shop	Utah	Fanzz
Maryland	Hall of Fame Cards	Vermont	Jim's Sports
Massachusetts	BarbecueGrillsandMore.com	Virginia	B&C Sports Collectibles
Michigan	FanaticU.com	Washington	The Dawg Den
Minnesota	Goldy's Locker Room (Gold Country)	West Virginia	WVSportsfan.com
Mississippi	Hibbert Sporting Goods	Wisconsin	Green & Gold Zone
Missouri	Sports NUTZ of Clinton	Wyoming	Univ. of Wyoming Bookstore

Sports Industrialists

26. TONY GEORGE RESIGNS FROM BOD OF IMS, ALL HULMAN & CO. AFFILIATES

Former IRL and Indianapolis Motor Speedway (IMS) CEO **TONY GEORGE** has resigned from the BOD of IMS and all other Hulman & Co. affiliated companies, effective immediately. The resignation removes George from any remaining role in Hulman, the IRL, IMS and IMS Productions. George stepped down as CEO of the companies on June 30, 2009. The BOD vacancy will be addressed at a later date (*IMS*). In Indianapolis, Anthony Schoettle noted George "continues to be involved in the IRL through his ownership of Vision Racing." Meanwhile, George's mother, IMS Chair **MARI HULMAN GEORGE**, said that she is "very pleased with the direction of the company and the progress that has been made during the last six months" (*IBJ.com, 1/19*). In Indianapolis, Curt Cavin notes George was "unavailable for comment" yesterday, and he has "not publicly addressed his status since he was forced out of his position" at IMS Corp. in June. In addition to "conflicts with family members," George has "hinted at a strained relationship with" his replacement, IMS Corp. President & CEO **JEFF BELSKUS**. Belskus said, "I feel bad for Tony; I know he's hurt. But again, that's between him and his family." Meanwhile, Hulman George and Belskus said that IMS and the IRL are "not for sale, although Belskus confirmed there have been multiple inquiries" (*INDIANAPOLIS STAR, 1/20*).

TUNNEL VISION: SPEEDTV.com's Robin Miller wrote George "seemed content to run his one-car Vision Racing team with step-son **ED CARPENTER** and has been supportive of the proposed Delta Wing project (a new Indy car for 2012 owned by several IndyCar owners)." But without longtime sponsor **JOHN MENARD** "on board for 2010, George is scrambling to keep Carpenter on the track." In a team meeting recently George "reportedly told his crew that he hadn't given up and was searching for sponsorship but it was possible the season might only include Indy and a couple of ovals" (*SPEEDTV.com, 1/19*).

27. CATCHING UP WITH SAINTS VP/MARKETING BEN HALES

The Saints this weekend will host their first NFC Championship Game in team history, and few know just how much it means to both the franchise and the city as Saints VP/Marketing & Business Development **BEN HALES**. Since joining the team in '00, Hales, a New Orleans native and former Saints season-ticket holder, has been a part of some of the Saints' biggest successes, including their first playoff win and first conference championship game appearance. He also has experienced firsthand the toll Hurricane Katrina has had on the city, region and the team. Ahead of Sunday's big game, Hales took some time to speak with Staff Writer William Cooper from Miami, where Saints officials were preparing for what they hope will be a return visit in two weeks for Super Bowl XLIV.

Saints VP/Marketing & Business Development Ben Hales

Favorite leisure time activity in New Orleans: Spending time with my wife and two daughters.
Book you are currently reading: A biography of **NIXON** and **KISSINGER**. It's really interesting the dynamics between them as well as the history of world affairs at that time.
Favorite vacation spot: Anguilla.

Q: What is your favorite memory of your time with the Saints thus far?

Hales: Winning our first divisional game against Philadelphia because it was a year after Katrina. I remember watching the game, and people were still in unfinished suites and it was still very rudimentary. To have that kind of emotional payoff after what the whole city had been through was really something that's probably unmatched.

Q: What has been the team's marketing strategy during such a successful regular season and playoff run?

Hales: What we've really tried to do is to keep the focus on football. We've got a great team, we've got great players, we've got great coaches, and it's pretty simple just to focus on them, and let the players tell the story. The connection between our players and our fans I think is greater than anywhere else.

Q: What is the feeling around the franchise relative to the last time the Saints made it this deep in the playoffs in 2007?

Hales: It's interesting, when we were leaving these prep meetings when we were this close last time the [Super Bowl] was also in Miami. There's a lot of similarities. Last time, when we made it we were coming off of a 3-13 season and Katrina, and while we were all really hopeful, I think there was a certain sense that we were just excited to be there. I think right now is a little more business-like. We've learned a lot about preparing and how we can really go out there and maximize the opportunity to make sure that we take care of this, and make it as great as it can be for our teams, players, families and fans.

Q: What do the Super Bowl prep meetings entail? How much prep are you doing for the potential Super Bowl appearance ahead of Sunday's game?

Hales: It's a huge undertaking for any organization to do this. The demand for tickets and hotels and everything, when you go to these meetings, really that's what you spend your time on. A lot of times we're going over the different hotels, where the tickets are allocated, what services are provided to the team, where the team's going to practice, where the media is going to be, what the media schedule is. The idea behind all of this is you spend a week in planning so that when you get here, things are running as smoothly for everybody as possible so it’s a good experience, not a burden for anybody.

Q: Playoff football obviously is different than regular-season football. What are some of the differences on the business side of things?

Hales: It's just a little bit different in that things are a little bit more compressed. You have to get all of the sponsors, suite holders and everyone taken care of in terms of tickets and any other needs that they have. You don't have quite as much time leading up to the game as you usually would. At the same time, you have to plan a couple steps ahead in case you are fortunate enough to make it to the Super Bowl.

Q: What is the biggest misperception out there about teams that go deep in the NFL playoffs and what it means on the business side?

Hales: I think people assume that there is a lot of additional revenue for the participating clubs, and the reality is that's not the case. It's a league event and the revenue is really split up among the teams far more than it is the teams that are actually participating. All the ticket revenue, for example, goes to the league, you don't get your usual share from that. You don't get any additional suite revenue because the tickets and leases are already inclusive of any event in the building. It's not the financial boon that some people might think it is.

Q: In your own words, what would making the Super Bowl mean to Saints fans and the city of New Orleans?

Hales: I'm probably a little bit partial being from New Orleans, but I really don't think there's any connection between fans and the team like in New Orleans. When we get back from a road victory, you'll have ten thousand people lining the streets where we get off the plane. Just imagine, it kind of sets up perfectly, if we can get to the Super Bowl and basically play a week before Mardi Gras, I would say it would be the greatest party the world has ever seen.

28. EXECUTIVE TRANSACTIONS

NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Dir **JOHN DARBY** is leaving his position "for a new managerial role at NASCAR." Darby, who has held the job since '02, "will not leave until his replacement is fully trained" (*SCENEDAILY.com, 1/19*). In his new role, Darby will oversee the "officials in all three of NASCAR's national series, as well as focus on the technical aspects of the sport." The news "surprised many in the industry" at the Sprint Cup Series media tour (*AP, 1/19*). The move is "in line with the spirit of change that's coursing through" NASCAR, as it is "trying a lot of things to jump-start the series and this could be another one of those moves" (*ORLANDO SENTINEL, 1/20*).

EXECS: The Competitor Group (CGI) promoted COO **SCOTT DICKEY** to President. He assumes the title from President & CEO **PETER ENGLEHART**, who will remain CEO. Dickey joined the CGI BOD upon the company's inception and became COO in '08. He also serves as an Operating Partner for CGI parent company, Falconhead Capital. Prior to joining CGI, Dickey served as Transworld Media President (*CGI*)....Golf Channel promoted VP/Marketing & Brand Management **REGINA O'BRIEN** to Senior VP/Marketing. O'Brien will lead all the marketing and promotional efforts for the network and its new media businesses, including GolfChannel.com (*Golf Channel*)...The Electric Beverage Company named Pro Football HOFer **LAWRENCE TAYLOR** Exec VP *(THE DAILY)*....The CFL Calgary Stampeders named **LYLE BAUER** President & COO, replacing **SCOTT ACKLES**, who stepped down to become Chair of the '11 Grey Cup *(Stampeders)*....The Padres named **RANDY SMITH** Dir of Player Development *(Padres)*....The D'Backs named **KRISTINE HEDLUND** Dir of Community Affairs. Hedlund is the former Publisher of Phoenix Woman Magazine *(BIZJOURNALS.com, 1/18)*....The Nets announced assistant coach **TOM BARRISE** will move to the front office as Special Assistant to the President *(Nets)*....The MLS Portland Timbers named **GAVIN WILKINSON** Technical Dir *(Portland OREGONIAN, 1/18)*....The Triple-A Int'l League Gwinnett Braves named **NORTH JOHNSON** GM, replacing **BRUCE BALDWIN**, who stepped down in October after 23 seasons with the team *(Braves)*.

Do you have an executive announcement? If so, please send to editorial@sportsbusinessdaily.com.

29. NAMES IN THE NEWS

In N.Y., George Willis writes the "love affair between" Colts QB **PEYTON MANNING** and Indianapolis is "like none that has ever existed in sports." While most of the U.S. might "view Manning as a four-time MVP quarterback and pitchman for a number of products," he is more famous in Indiana for his work with charitable organizations. 2012 Indy Super Bowl Host Committee President & CEO **ALLISON MELANGTON** said, "I'm not sure of any professional athlete who has dug into a community the way Peyton has dug in here." Indianapolis Public Schools AD **CURT ERVIN**: "If Peyton ran for mayor or governor of Indiana, it would be a landslide" (*N.Y. POST, 1/20*). Meanwhile, CBS' **PHIL SIMMS** said of Manning being the greatest quarterback ever: "If he wins another Super Bowl or two, it's going to be hard to argue it because of what he's done for the city. He probably kept that franchise in Indianapolis" (*"Outside The Lines," ESPN, 1/19*).

THINKING BIG: BROADCASTING & CABLE's David Tanklefsky profiles Base Productions co-Founder & co-CEO **JOHN BRENKUS**, the host of "Sport Science," which ESPN recently acquired. The show "challenges long-held assumptions about what makes athletes successful, and utilizes Base's signature fast-paced visual production techniques." Brenkus on the show "plays the Everyman foil, often putting himself in harm's way to illustrate a point" (*BROADCASTING & CABLE, 1/18 issue*).

DON'T FORGET ABOUT US: Jewish charity Areivim has sued the estate of late Pistons Owner **BILL DAVIDSON** for "refusing to pay the charity" money that Davidson pledged before his death. Davidson pledged to contribute $5M to the charity, but had contributed only $200,000 before his death. Areivim is suing in Oakland County (MI)

Probate court for the remaining $4.8M (*DETROIT FREE PRESS, 1/20*).

BEST WISHES: Thirty officials, coaches and referees from the Haitian soccer federation died in last week's earthquake, while "another 20 remain missing." FIFA is donating $250,000 to relief efforts, and FIFA CONCACAF President **JACK WARNER** has pledged $100,000 (*MIAMI HERALD, 1/20*)....MLS Crew President & GM **MARK MCCULLERS** was "injured in a personal watercraft accident yesterday while vacationing in Puerto Rico." McCullers, who was transported to the ER, said, "I'm OK. My arm is in a sling, but I'm able to walk. I feel pretty lucky" (*COLUMBUS DISPATCH, 1/20*).

NAMES: Cavaliers F **LEBRON JAMES** and Pro Football HOFer **JIM BROWN** yesterday gathered at Quicken Loans Arena to "kick off a celebration of black heritage." The pair talked about **DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.** before signing "special Sports Illustrated covers featuring the two of them" (*AKRON BEACON JOURNAL, 1/20*)....GQ named James, Patriots QB **TOM BRADY**, Galaxy MF **DAVID BECKHAM** and Real Madrid MF **CRISTIANO RONALDO** to its list of the "25 Most Stylish Men in the World" (*THE DAILY*)....Former boxer **TOMMY HEARNS** and actor **ROB LOWE** -- friends of Colts Owner **JIM IRSAY** -- watched Saturday's game against the Ravens from a Colts suite, as did NFL Commissioner **ROGER GOODELL** (*INDIANAPOLIS STAR, 1/19*)....49ers LB **PATRICK WILLIS** has signed a deal with EAG Sports Management to handle his publicity (*EAG Sports Management*)....Bobcats Managing Member of Basketball Operations **MICHAEL JORDAN** is a "regular at Miami Beach's Cafe Prima Pasta" restaurant, where he "orders chicken parmesan and red wine" (*CHICAGO SUN-TIMES, 1/20*)....Browns QB **BRADY QUINN** and his girlfriend, U.S. gymnast **ALICIA SACRAMONE**, yesterday picked up fellow gymnast **NASTIA LIUKIN** from Boston's Logan Int'l Airport and had lunch at Stephanie's (*BOSTON HERALD, 1/20*)....ESPN/ABC NBA analyst **JEFF VAN GUNDY** completed Sunday's Houston Marathon in 4:14:29 (*THE DAILY*).

IN MEMORY: **ALASTAIR MARTIN**, who was the top executive of the U.S. Lawn Tennis Association from '67-70, "when the distinction between pro and amateur was abolished," died last week at the age of 94 (*WALL STREET JOURNAL, 1/20*).

The Back Of The Book

30. BIRMINGHAM TOPS LOCAL RATINGS FOR COLLEGE FOOTBALL BOWL SEASON

Birmingham's 67.4 local rating for Alabama's win over Texas in the January 7 Citi BCS National Championship on ABC was the highest local rating among the 56 Nielsen metered markets during the '09-10 bowl season. For the 34 bowl games, Birmingham topped all markets with a 12.4 average local rating, earning either the highest or second-highest local rating for 21 bowls. Viewers in Knoxville tuned in for the New Year's Eve Virginia Tech-Tennessee Chick-fil-A Bowl on ESPN, as the market's 30.6 local rating on ESPN was tops among all non-BCS bowl telecasts. Below are the top 10 local market ratings for the '09-10 college bowl season, as well as top local ratings for non-BCS bowls (*THE DAILY*).

TOP 10 RATINGS IN LOCAL MARKETS FOR '09-10 BOWL GAMES

MARKET	BOWL	NET	DATE	LOCAL RAT.
Birmingham	Citi BCS National Championship: Alabama-Texas	ABC	1/7	67.4

Columbus	Rose Bowl: Ohio State-Oregon	ABC	1/1	49.8
Austin	Citi BCS National Championship: Alabama-Texas	ABC	1/7	48.2
San Antonio	Citi BCS National Championship: Alabama-Texas	ABC	1/7	37.2
Dayton	Rose Bowl: Ohio State-Oregon	ABC	1/1	35.7
Oklahoma City	Citi BCS National Championship: Alabama-Texas	ABC	1/7	34.3
Nashville	Citi BCS National Championship: Alabama-Texas	ABC	1/7	33.4
Cleveland-Akron	Rose Bowl: Ohio State-Oregon	ABC	1/1	33.0
Portland	Rose Bowl: Ohio State-Oregon	ABC	1/1	32.2
Knoxville	Citi BCS National Championship: Alabama-Texas	ABC	1/7	31.9

TOP 10 RATINGS IN LOCAL MARKETS FOR '09-10 NON-BCS BOWL GAMES

MARKET	BOWL	NET	DATE	LOCAL RAT.
Knoxville	Chick-fil-A Bowl: Virginia Tech-Tennessee	ESPN	12/31	30.6
Oklahoma City	AT&T Cotton Bowl: Ole Miss-Oklahoma State	Fox	1/2	28.4
Birmingham	Outback Bowl: Auburn-Northwestern	ESPN	1/1	27.4
Oklahoma City	Brut Sun Bowl: Stanford-Oklahoma	CBS	12/31	24.4
New Orleans	Capital One Bowl: Penn State-LSU	ABC	1/1	23.8
Tulsa	AT&T Cotton Bowl: Ole Miss-Oklahoma State	Fox	1/2	22.9
Tulsa	Brut Sun Bowl: Stanford-Oklahoma	CBS	12/31	21.6
Jacksonville	Konica Minolta Gator Bowl: Florida State-West Virginia	CBS	1/1	21.1
Columbus	Capital One Bowl: Penn State-LSU	ABC	1/1	20.0
Birmingham	AutoZone Liberty Bowl: Arkansas-ECU	ESPN	1/2	17.0

Classified Advertisements

31. CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

32. SBJ IN-DEPTH: SPONSORSHIP

Tight scrutiny of sponsorship spending puts more challenges on sports properties to deliver. Marketers want to find creativity in how they are allowed to activate and reach consumers, and they want to be able to measure the results to make sure their efforts are cost-effective. SportsBusiness Journal will look at how the sports industry is meeting those demands and helping brands achieve their goals. What will sports sponsorships look like in the year ahead? **Publishing Date**: February 15 **Ad Close**: February 1 **Materials Close**: February 3.