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Keep Your Friends Close, Enemies Closer

Ticketmaster forced to boost competition to gain approval for pending Live Nation merger. (#20)

Burying The Hatchet (#12)

NHLPA reaches tentative settlement to pay former Exec Dir Paul Kelly \$1.5M, plus fees.

Seeing Red

NFL planning to make wildly successful RedZone Channel available to cellphones. (#9)

Not Bolting Yet (#21)

Chargers commit to Qualcomm for '10, but not beyond; team gauges downtown stadium support.

Star Attraction (#4)

TNT, with 80% of NBA All-Star inventory sold, confident it can compete against Winter Games.

If At First You Don't Succeed ...

Orlando City Council approves scaled-back plan to show videos on Amway Center screen. (#26)

... Try, Try Again (#13)

NASCAR officials take "unprecedented step" of meeting with each Sprint Cup team on new rules.

Back In The Swing Of Things (#5)

Sybase returns to LPGA, signing three-year deal to title sponsor new Match Play Championship.

Rarefied Air

The final numbers from Sunday's games are in, and the NFL is seeing its product reach rating and viewership levels not seen in well over two decades. The epic Saints-Vikings NFC Championship game draws the second-most viewers ever for a conference championship, behind only the legendary 49ers-Cowboys game in '82. The Colts' win over the Jets also results in the largest audience for an AFC title game since the Patriots' upset of the Dolphins in '86 (#8). While both the Saints and Colts briefly can catch their breath before heading to Miami, merchandisers cannot, as Super Bowl apparel in both Indy and New Orleans is flying out of stores (#1). In other Super Bowl news, the NFL for the first time will put up for sale pieces of the Sun Life Stadium field used during the game (#24), several advocacy groups are putting more pressure on CBS not to air a potential pro-life ad featuring Tim Tebow (#2), and Pete Townshend reveals what The Who plans to play during their halftime gig (#28).



Saints, Colts Wins Bring Best Ratings In Decades

Names In The News

President Obama welcomes Lakers players, execs to White House in honor of NBA Championship. (#31)

Quote Of The Day

"I have this 1970 bottle of LaTache burgundy that I plan to open."

-- MLS Commissioner **Don Garber**, on what he'll do if the U.S. wins the FIFA World Cup (*ESPN.com*, 1/25). (#31)

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'10

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Sponsorships, Advertising & Marketing

1. COLTS, SAINTS FANS SNAPPING UP MERCHANDISE AHEAD OF SUPER BOWL

Sales of Colts AFC Championship merchandise in the Indianapolis area both in stores and online "were strong in the 24 hours after the playoff game victory" over the Jets Sunday, according to a front-page piece by Jeff Swiatek of the INDIANAPOLIS STAR. Marc Harnist, Manager of the Colts Pro Shop location at Circle Centre Mall in Indianapolis, said it was "crazy in here all day" yesterday. Harnist: "If it's got Colts on it, it sells." Harnist was replacing \$24 AFC Champion T-shirts "on the rack with a new batch after the lunch hour rush." MainGate COO Bruce Lynch, whose company handles merchandise sales for the Colts, said that the Colts Pro Shop at Lucas Oil Stadium "racked up its best-ever game-day sales Sunday, topping the previous best day" by 15%. MainGate "had AFC champion T-shirts and caps for sale in Lucas Oil Stadium immediately after the game Sunday evening," and Lynch said that the "sellout crowd bought every one of the thousands of T-shirts MainGate had pre-ordered." The two Colts Pro Shop stores "opened at 7 a.m. Monday, three hours earlier than usual, and Dick's Sporting Goods' eight Indianapolis stores stayed open extra late Sunday, to 10 p.m., and opened extra-early Monday at 7 a.m." (*INDIANAPOLIS STAR*, 1/26). The INDIANAPOLIS BUSINESS JOURNAL's Anthony Schoettle reported sales at the Lucas Oil Stadium shop Sunday were "so strong, the stadium shop stayed open until 11 p.m., about five hours after the game ended." MainGate officials "expect sales of team items leading up to this year's Super



Colts AFC Championship Merchandise Selling Quickly

Bowl to be more than 10[%] higher than they were" ahead of the Colts' appearance in Super Bowl XLI in '07 ([IBJ.com, 1/25](#)). USA TODAY's Rick Jervis reported at the Circle Centre Mall Colts Pro Shop location yesterday, Colts "caps, jerseys, steering-wheel covers -- most anything emblazoned with a Colts logo -- were breezing off the shelves" ([USA TODAY, 1/26](#)).

WHO DAT NATION STEPS UP: In Louisiana, Zack Southwell reports Saints-themed merchandise "sold briskly immediately after" the team's win over the Vikings in Sunday's NFC Championship. Heath Williams, Dir of an Academy Sports & Outdoors location in West Monroe, Louisiana, said that sales after the game "were outstanding." Williams: "I'd say we had about between 2,000 and 3,000 people in here last night. As soon as the game ended, we opened up our boxes of championship gear." Williams said that the "line of customers was outside the store, making the wait at least three hours long." Monroe-based Sports & Co. Manager Donald Payne: "We still have some shirts left. But it didn't take us long to sell out of some sizes" ([Monroe NEWS-STAR, 1/26](#)). New Orleans' WDSU-NBC reported the Geaux for the Gold store in Slidell, Louisiana, yesterday was "packed" with Saints fans "looking for gear." The Metairie, Louisiana-based Black & Gold Shop also "did brisk business and was gearing up to do more." Black & Gold Shop Owner Pam Randazzo: "We're talking about collector's items. We're not just talking about the T-shirts. We're talking about collector pins, balls, house items. We're talking about everything" ([WDSU.com, 1/25](#)). In Shreveport, Bobbie Clark reports local retail stores "were bombarded with merchandise-hungry ... Saints fans." Items were "flying off the shelves so fast that some stores had to restock before noon" ([SHREVEPORT TIMES, 1/26](#)).



Saints' NFC Championship Win Firing Up Fans Across South Mississippi

T-shirts by mid-afternoon" yesterday. He added that the "NFC championship 'locker room' gear, which is similar to the hats and T-shirts the players [were] wearing after the game, was popular there" ([Biloxi SUN HERALD, 1/26](#)). Meanwhile, WLBT-NBC's Bert Case reports the Saints' win "has unleashed an unprecedented demand for Saints merchandise" in Jackson, Mississippi. Merchandisers "have never seen anything like it, there is a greater demand for the Saints jerseys, T-shirts and caps, than they have been accustomed to." The demand is "greater than the demand for Ole Miss, Mississippi State and Jackson State gear" ([WLBT.com, 1/26](#)).

DELTA DELIGHT: In Biloxi, Michael Newsom reports the Saints' win Sunday "fired up" fans across South Mississippi as well, as yesterday they "hunted in area stores for merchandise and store managers reported brisk sales of Black and Gold NFC championship gear." Matt Smith, Dir of the Academy Sports & Outdoors in Gulfport, Mississippi, said that he "arrived at 5 a.m. Monday to help get the merchandise set for fans when the store opened an hour early at 7 a.m. to a small line of eager customers." Tony Berutti, Manager of a Biloxi-area J.C. Penney location, said that he "estimates the store sold about 200 Saints

2. SEVERAL WOMEN'S GROUPS URGE CBS TO SCRAP TEBOW SUPER BOWL AD

A national coalition of women's groups called on CBS yesterday to "scrap its plan to broadcast an ad during the Super Bowl featuring college football star



Tim Tebow and his mother, which critics say is likely to convey an anti-abortion message," according to David Crary of the AP. The 30-second spot -- paid for by Christian group Focus on the Family -- is "expected to recount the story" of Pam Tebow ignoring a "recommendation by doctors to abort her fifth child," which was Tim. N.Y.-based Women's Media Center President Jehmu Greene said, "An ad that uses sports to divide rather than to unite has no place in the biggest national sports event of the year -- an event designed to bring Americans together." The center is coordinating the protest "with backing from the National Organization for Women, the Feminist Majority and other groups." The protest suggests that CBS "should have turned down the ad in part because it was conceived by Focus on the Family." The letter from Women's Media Center read in part, "CBS is aligning itself with a political stance that will damage its reputation, alienate viewers, and discourage consumers from supporting its shows and advertisers." But CBS said that it has "approved the script" for the ad and has "given no indication that the protest would have an impact." CBS Senior VP/Communications Dana McClintock said that the network "would ensure that any issue-oriented ad was 'appropriate for air.'" Focus on the Family VP/Media Relations Gary Schneeberger said the group is "a little surprised" with reaction to the ad. He added, "There's nothing political and controversial about it. When the day arrives, and you sit down to watch the game on TV, those who oppose it will be quite surprised at what the ad is all about" (AP, 1/25).

ALL SYSTEMS GO? In DC, Casey Curlin notes NBC last year "rejected a pro-life Super Bowl commercial because of its policy against running political advocacy or issue ads." However, Schneeberger said that CBS execs have "seen and approved the Focus on the Family script." CBS said that the finished commercial "will be reviewed before it is approved to air, but the network does not anticipate any problems that would prevent the ad from airing." CBS VP/Corporate Communications Shannon Jacobs: "Our standards-and-practices process continues to adhere to a policy that ensures that all ads on all sides of an issue are appropriate for air" (WASHINGTON TIMES, 1/26).

WISE MOVE FOR TEBOW? In Utah, Doug Robinson writes if Tebow thought "300-pound tacklers are tough, wait till he meets the pro-choice crowd." Robinson: "Wait till he wades into Roe v. Wade. Wait till he lowers his head and bulls his way into the scrum of the abortion argument." Athletes and other celebrities "use their names and faces to sell beer and shoes simply to enrich themselves, and nobody blinks." But a "famous athlete is using his celeb status to promote a cause he believes in, and he's castigated for it" (DESERET NEWS, 1/26).

3. VALUE OF A SUPER BOWL AD IN QUESTION DURING ECONOMIC DOWNTURN



The Super Bowl each year is "one of those moments when advertising reveals itself at the center of our culture and zeitgeist and is worthy of deeper thought," and the "news is not good" this year, according to Dan Neil of the L.A. TIMES. The ad community for weeks has been "buzzing about which companies are in the show and which are not." When big, "category-defining incumbents like FedEx skip the Super Bowl, it's hard not to take that as a sign of decline, or retreat." It is debatable

Are Super Bowl Ads Like Kia's This Year Still Worth The Cost?

whether the "venerable, distinctly old-school Super Bowl buy is worth it in the redrawn media landscape." While Nielsen indicated that the costs for a spot have "accelerated well past the growth of the audience," the marketing ROI is "more subtle than eyeballs divided by dollars." Buzz for a Super Bowl spot is, "in a way, priceless," and marketers have "learned by now to leverage Super Bowl buys with a coordinated seek-and-persuade campaign online, where the ads will enjoy a longer shelf life" (*L.A. TIMES*, 1/26). AD AGE's Brian Steinberg notes there is a "growing debate about the overall value" of the Super Bowl for advertisers. Brand-strategy firm Millward Brown Optimor contends that "investing in the game results in an immediate sales increase; consumer package goods brands can see an average sales lift of more than 11% in the month following the Super Bowl and one Super Bowl ad can be as effective as 250 more regular TV commercials." ETrade saw a 19% increase in "online applications in the week after last year's game aired compared with the average number of online applications in the first three weeks of the year." Likewise, CareerBuilder Senior Dir of Advertising Cynthia McIntyre said that the Web site over the past five years has "seen its sales increase an average of 40% each year in the three months following the Super Bowl broadcast" (*AD AGE*, 1/25 issue).

THINKING SMART: *MARKETING DAILY*'s Aaron Baar reports Intel will have a presence during CBS' coverage of Super Bowl XLIV "with a commercial running in the fourth quarter, and as the title sponsor of the post-game show." Intel Senior Media Manager Thom Campbell said that Intel also will run two postgame ads. The spots, via Venables Bell & Partners, S.F., will continue the "geek humor" of the company's "Sponsors of Tomorrow" campaign that launched in May. Intel for last year's game on NBC "partnered with four other companies to enable the launch of a 3-D television commercial." But with a "new line of processors to promote, the company saw a need to go it alone this year." Baar notes title sponsorship of the Intel Super Bowl Today Post-Game Show is a "way to extend brand recognition beyond mere commercials and hedge the company's bets a bit should viewers lose interest in the game and advertising by the fourth quarter" (*MARKETING DAILY*, 1/26 issue).

SPEND YOUR MONEY

WISELY: U.S. Rep. Dean Heller (R-NV) registered a complaint with U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner yesterday "over Chrysler's decision to spend millions of dollars to air a commercial during the Super Bowl." Heller said that the move "seems 'extravagant' in light of Chrysler's acceptance of federal bailout funds." He asked Geithner to "get the company to reconsider" airing a 60-second ad for its Dodge brand. Chrysler officials did not comment yesterday, but a company official earlier this month said that Chrysler "saw the Super Bowl as a good opportunity" (*LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL*, 1/26).



U.S. Rep. Thinks Chrysler Should Reconsider Spending Millions On Dodge Super Bowl Ad

ON THE LOCAL LEVEL: MillerCoors is buying a 30-second local ad in many major markets during the Super Bowl in support of its Miller High Life brand that will feature four small businesses from across the country. The commercial will feature the owners of Del's Barber Shop in Escondido, California; Tim's Baseball Card Shop in Chicago;

Loretta's Authentic Pralines in New Orleans; and Bizarre Guitar & Drum in Phoenix. The ad comes via Saatchi & Saatchi, N.Y. (*MillerCoors*). BROADCASTING & CABLE's Claire Atkinson reports the Super Bowl is "shaping up to serve as a much-needed shot in the arm on the station level." CBS' owned-and-operated stations have been "pitching local ad buys ... to a much wider circle of advertisers than Super Bowl broadcasters have in the past." GroupM Matrix Managing Partner & Dir of Client Service Peter Gusmano indicated that this year's game "appears to be attracting much more activity than usual on the local front because of stronger pricing in national." Atkinson notes local affiliates "gain 11 or more spots to sell during the Super Bowl than their network time usually allows, with as many as five of those commercials in-game and the rest in pre- and post-programming" (*BROADCASTING & CABLE, 1/25 issue*).

CHANGING DIRECTION: In Pittsburgh, Teresa Lindeman reports PepsiCo instead of advertising its beverages during the Super Bowl will "pour millions of dollars into an online project meant to build connections over time by reaching consumers through blogging, Facebook and Twitter." This strategy could be a "significant moment for the digital ad evolution that's been starting and stalling and then revving up again for years." Advertisers have been "teased by the potential, struggled to keep up with the latest innovations and endlessly debated the proper balance between traditional and new marketing mediums." TNS Media Intelligence data indicated that "total marketing spending on the Internet in the first nine months of last year still trailed that of television, magazines and newspapers" (*PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE, 1/26*).

4. TNT'S NBA ASG AD INVENTORY 80% SOLD; NET EXPECTS STRONG RATINGS



The NBA moves into the February 12-14 All-Star Weekend with a "full head of steam," as TNT has "moved 80[%] of its All-Star hoops ad inventory, thanks in part to a resurgence of auto and retail business," according to Anthony Crupi of MEDIAWEEK. Turner officials expect that this year's game will make its ratings guarantees "despite going head-to-head against NBC's Winter Olympics." Turner Sports Exec VP/Ad Sales & Marketing Jon Diament noted the NBA "attracts a much greater concentration of young male viewers than the Olympics." Crupi noted TNT this week "to ensure optimal viewer turnout" is beginning its "All-Star

marketing blitz, a blend of prime-time broadcast and cable spots, radio, and print, including USA Today, Sports Illustrated, ESPN the Magazine and Entertainment Weekly." Meanwhile, some of the "more vulnerable categories are coming back to TV sports." Retail, auto and financial service commitments "are on the rise, and last year's replacements are staying put," and on the domestic auto front, Ford "has bought :30s across the slate" (*MEDIAWEEK.com, 1/24*).

GIVE ME MORE: TNT and singer Usher have partnered to feature the song "More" as part of the net's marketing campaign for the All-Star Game. An exclusive music video for the song will serve as a promotional spot airing in 600 Regal Cinemas beginning Friday. Ads also will air across Turner's entertainment networks, including TNT, TBS, CNN, HLN, Cartoon Network and truTV. The spot will feature clips from the music video mixed with footage of NBA players, including Lakers G Kobe Bryant, Celtics F Kevin Garnett, Cavaliers F LeBron James, Hornets G Chris Paul and Heat G Dwyane Wade

(Turner).

5. SYBASE RETURNING TO LPGA FOLD AS TITLE SPONSOR FOR NEW TOURNEY

By Jon Show, Staff Writer, SportsBusiness Journal

Sybase will return as title sponsor of a new LPGA event in '10 after declining to extend its title sponsorship of the Sybase Classic late last year. The California-based software company has signed a three-year deal that is worth approximately \$2M annually based on comparable events. The new Sybase Match Play Championship will be held May 17-23 at Hamilton Farm Golf Club in Gladstone, New Jersey. The four-round tournament will award a \$1.5M purse to a 64-player field and coverage will appear on Golf Channel. The Sybase Classic was held from '01-09 in northern New Jersey, most recently at the Upper Montclair Country Club in Clifton. The tournament lost Shoprite as a presenting sponsor in November when the grocery chain decided to title sponsor a new tournament in Atlantic City, and Sybase declined to renew for '10. Octagon, which owned the former event, will continue to own and run the new tournament. The addition of the tournament pushes the LPGA to 25 official money events this year, down from 27 last season but nearly three times the number of events that were under contract for '10 as late as last July.

6. UFC EXPANDS BRAND WITH OPENING OF FIRST UFC GYM IN CALIFORNIA

The inaugural UFC Gym opened Saturday in Concord, California, as part of the "latest extension of the [UFC] brand," according to Dave Meltzer of YAHOO SPORTS. The location is the first of "what is expected to become a large chain of UFC Gyms." The UFC Gym "features the traditional assortment of weights, treadmills, exercise bikes and other aerobic equipment, along with television monitors and blaring music." However, an octagon in the center of the gym is "used for martial arts classes," and "huge wall photos of UFC Hall of



Inaugural UFC Gym Opens In California As First Of What Is Expected To Become Large Chain

Famers and life-sized cardboard cutouts of current stars decorate the interiors." The gym "also features the type of training equipment that fighters use, like various punching bags." UFC Gyms also will serve as "new venues to market the company's stars and major events, as part of the concept includes regular appearances by fighters at the gyms." One of the marketing concepts is to "use the names of major star fighters in their home areas, such as the plans for a Georges St. Pierre UFC Gym in Montreal and a B.J. Penn UFC Gym in Honolulu." The concept for the branded gyms was first thought of about 18 months ago after meeting between UFC President Dana White, Chair & CEO Lorenzo Fertitta and former 24 Hour Fitness execs Mark Mastrov and Jim Rowley. The result of those meetings was a "merger of the 24 Hour Fitness-type of gym with a traditional martial arts gym." The goal is to "open 10 locations before year's end, with the next facility scheduled to open in a few months" outside L.A. Meanwhile, Meltzer noted "another change in the UFC landscape for 2010 is the addition of a second English-language U.S. cable television deal with Versus." The new deal "will include two live

television specials, the first on March 21" in Broomfield, Colorado (SPORTS.YAHOO.com, 1/25).

7. MARKETPLACE ROUNDUP

MARKETING WEEK reported Carlsberg is set to launch a US\$48M World Cup-themed marketing campaign, the beer brand's "biggest single year investment, as it looks to leverage its sponsorship of the England national team." Carlsberg will "launch television, digital and point of sale activity in the build to this June's World Cup in South Africa." The six-month "Teamtalk" campaign "calls on fans to deliver a team talk to the England team." Speeches "can be sent by video or text message or at Premier League grounds and supermarkets, which will be visited by a branded tour bus." A "dedicated YouTube channel will show selected team talks." In addition, more than 2.5 million promotional Carlsberg packs "will be seen in-store from February" (MARKETINGWEEK.co.uk, 1/25).

CAUSING A RACQUET: In L.A., Diane Pucin wrote tennis player Rafael Nadal during the Australian Open this week wore a "form-fitting bright-orange shirt that has gotten some criticism for being borderline bizarre, but at least on high-definition television, it looks great" (LATIMES.com, 1/25)...Prince Racquets offered tennis player Nikolay Davydenko a contract, and Davydenko said the deal was "just for Grand Slam." He added, "Because it's [a] big tournament, I think for Prince it's ... okay" (COWBELL.TYPEPAD.com, 1/25).

WRONG SHOE SIZE: In L.A., Broderick Turner reported "something has caused Ron Artest to develop plantar fasciitis in both feet," and Lakers coach Phil Jackson "believes that something might be the shoes" Artest wears. Artest has a shoe-endorsement deal with China-based apparel company Peak, and Jackson said, "Those shoes look like they are made for the Hudson River. ... He looks like he's clogging around out there" ([L.A. TIMES](http://L.A.TIMES.com), 1/25). But Artest replied, "Coach Phil Jackson made a statement that my shoes are the reason my feet were hurting. He has no evidence. I love my shoe company. Peak" (TWITTER.com, 1/25).

WELCOME ABOARD: The PGA Tour is announcing today that it signed five new retail licensing partners: Softe active sportswear; Barrington Gifts of Distinction, a manufacturer of business and event gifts; specialty cookie maker Unibic; Tumi, an international brand of premium travel, business and lifestyle accessories; and Accessory Network Group, a maker of high-end luggage and travel accessories (*Jon Show, SportsBusiness Journal*).

Sports Media

8. CONFERENCE TITLE GAMES EARN BEST RATING AVERAGE SINCE '82

CBS' broadcast of Sunday's Colts-Jets AFC Championship game and Fox' broadcast of Sunday's Saints-Vikings NFC Championship game earned an average of 52.9 million viewers, the most for an NFL Conference Championship Sunday since '82, when NBC and CBS averaged 60.2 million viewers for coverage of Bengals-Chargers and 49ers-Cowboys, respectively. The 52.9 million viewers is also up 34% from 39.6 million average viewers for Fox' broadcast of the Cardinals-Eagles NFC Championship Game and CBS' broadcast of the Steelers-Ravens AFC Championship game last year (*NFL*).

BEST IN A LONG TIME: Fox earned a 30.6 fast national rating and 57.9 million viewers for Saints-Vikings, the largest audience ever for an NFC Championship game on Fox and the second-largest audience for any conference championship game, trailing

only 68.7 million viewers for the '82 49ers-Cowboys game. Excluding Super Bowl broadcasts, Saints-Vikings drew the most viewers for any program since the "Seinfeld" series finale in '98, which attracted 76.3 million viewers. The 30.6 rating for Saints-Vikings was up 40% from a 21.9 rating for Cardinals-Eagles in the early window last year. Fox averaged a total of 40.2 million viewers for its four playoff games this year, besting the previous mark of 37.3 million set in '95, and the best total since Nielsen introduced the people meter during the '87 season. Fox also averaged a 22.4 rating for its NFC playoff coverage, up 24% from an 18.1 for last year's coverage and Fox' best mark since '97. Meanwhile, CBS drew 46.9 million viewers for Colts-Jets, marking the most viewers for an AFC Championship since Patriots-Dolphins in '86 had 47.5 million viewers. CBS also earned a 26.3 fast national rating for the game, up 2% from Cardinals-Eagles and up 20% from Steelers-Ravens, which was broadcast in the late window (*THE DAILY*). *DAILY VARIETY*'s Stuart Levine notes "excluding Super Bowls and Super Bowl postgame shows," Saints-Vikings was the "most-watched program in the history of Fox" (*DAILY VARIETY*, 1/26).

**TOP TEN MOST-VIEWED
NFL CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES**

YEAR	NET	MATCHUP	VIEWERS (000)
'82	CBS	49ers-Cowboys	68,690
'09	Fox	Saints-Vikings	57,933
'95	Fox	49ers-Cowboys	56,809
'08	Fox	Giants-Packers	53,937
'96	Fox	Cowboys-Packers	52,685
'93	CBS	Cowboys-49ers	51,987
'78	CBS	Cowboys-Vikings	51,640
'82	NBC	Bengals-Chargers	51,620
'79	CBS	Cowboys-Rams	51,317
'81	NBC	Raiders-Chargers	50,510

HUGE NUMBERS NO REAL SURPRISE: Sports media consultants weighed in this morning on the NFL's stout playoff TV ratings. Neal Pilson said the ratings are "no surprise given the strong regular season ratings." Pilson: "Great story lines into the playoffs with Manning, Favre, New Orleans and the Jets. I expect a good SB rating as well if the game is close -- perhaps a 43.5." He added, "NFL numbers are up all season due in part to the recession and people staying home to watch sports on their new HD sets. I really do. Great entertainment ... and it's free." Likewise, former Clear Channel Entertainment Chair Mike Trager also said he was not surprised ratings increased this past weekend. "I am a little surprised at the size of the increase last weekend," Trager noted, "but the games, story lines, and match ups were very compelling with New Orleans and Brees, Favre, Manning, and the NY Jets" (*Brian Helfrich, THE DAILY*).

LOCAL SUCCESS: In New Orleans, Dave Walker notes WVUE-Fox earned a 63.2 local rating for Saints-Vikings, which was "higher than any home-market Super Bowl rating ever recorded." The 63.2 rating topped a 63.0 local rating in Chicago for Bears-Patriots Super Bowl XX in '86 (*New Orleans TIMES-PICAYUNE*, 1/26). In Milwaukee, Bob Wolfley reports WITI-Fox' broadcast of Saints-Vikings earned a 47.4 local rating or 427,453 HHs, which marks the "highest-rated non-Packers championship game" in the market since at least '88. Saints-Vikings also "likely is the highest-rated non-Packers

championship game ever on Milwaukee TV." The matchup earned a "better rating than nine of the last 11 Super Bowls in this market" (*MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL*, 1/26).

RECORD VIEWERSHIP IN CANADA: CTV averaged 2.6 million viewers for its broadcast of Saints-Vikings, marking the largest audience ever recorded for a non-Super Bowl NFL playoff game in Canada. The audience peaked at more than 3.6 million viewers at 10:19pm ET, when the Saints won the game on a field goal in overtime. Meanwhile, CTV averaged 2.3 million viewers for its broadcast of Colts-Jets (*CTV*).

SPECULATION BEGINS: Sports business writer Tim Lemke predicted CBS' Super Bowl XLIV telecast of Colts-Saints will be the "#3 Super Bowl all time in terms of viewership," behind Steelers-Cardinals last year and Giants-Patriots in '08. Despite the "national attention placed on the Saints, they still play in one of the NFL's smallest markets," and though local ratings "during the regular season were off the charts, it's just not possible for them to draw the same level of interest as a team from New York or Chicago." The Colts, "like the Saints, ... play in a relatively small market," and "outside of Indianapolis, few people will be emotionally invested in the Colts." However, Lemke lists the teams' offenses as a "pro." Lemke: "Rest assured, this will be a high-scoring affair" (*TIMLEMKESPORTS.com*, 1/25).

BOOTH REVIEW: In N.Y., Bob Raissman writes under the header, "Under Pressure, Troy Aikman Strong In Pocket During NFC Championship Game." To say Aikman was "brilliant, late in the fourth quarter, would be too much gaga," but he was "close." Raissman adds the "comfort and security level Aikman and Joe Buck share is apparent." Raissman: "Disagreements are not part of every game they work, but when they occur the voices are sincere. Their back-and-forth moments have a positive effect" (*N.Y. DAILY NEWS*, 1/26). *SI.com*'s Peter King wrote CBS sideline reporter Steve Tasker during Colts-Jets did a "nice job with the quick-question halftime interview" of Colts coach Jim Caldwell (*SI.com*, 1/25). Meanwhile, the *DAILY NEWS*' Raissman notes there were "plenty of promos alerting viewers" to this Sunday's Pro Bowl during the conference championship games, but "what was missing was any word on where you can watch the game." Raissman: "Ya think the suits don't want ESPN mentioned on either CBS or Fox?" (*N.Y. DAILY NEWS*, 1/26).

A PLEA TO PLAY: ESPN's Mike Golic noted with the possibility of a work stoppage in '11, NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell and NFLPA Exec DeMaurice Smith should look at the rating for Saints-Vikings and say, "We can't let this happen. We can't let no football happen. We are riding too high on the wave right now" ("*Mike & Mike in the Morning*," *ESPN2*, 1/26).

9. NFL PLANNING TO MAKE REDZONE CHANNEL AVAILABLE ON CELLPHONES

The NFL is "planning to make its RedZone Channel available to cellphone users next season, a move that has its broadcast partners questioning whether they will still get



the same bang for their buck" on their deals, according to Matthew Futterman of the *WALL STREET JOURNAL*. NFL Senior VP/Digital Media Brian Rolapp: "This is tailor-made to be able to watch during your kids' soccer games. We want to put it on the Internet and wireless phones for next season, so we're thinking about how we do that." Futterman notes the move is a "significant shift in media strategy" for the NFL, whose focus "has long been to protect the value of its lucrative television deals." CBS News and Sports President Sean McManus: "RedZone hasn't hurt us yet, but we watch it very

closely. Anything that would adversely affect our ratings on a Sunday afternoon would be a major concern for us." Futterman notes NFL highlights "currently are available on the Internet only via NFL.com," and the league has "limited its wireless ambitions to two deals," including one with Sprint this season. The league also has a deal with DirecTV for NFL Sunday Ticket, but subscribers "have to pay \$280 for the Sunday Ticket and then another \$100 for the mobile feed." Prices "haven't been set yet for the mobile RedZone" (*WALL STREET JOURNAL*, 1/26).

10. SPIKE EXEC BRIAN DIAMOND DISCUSSES UFC, NET'S SPORTS PLANS



Diamond Discusses UFC's Importance To Spike

Spike Senior VP/Sports & Specials Brian Diamond as part of a Q&A with SI.com's Josh Gross said the UFC is "always going to be the gold standard" for the net, which will present season 11 of "The Ultimate Fighter" later this year. Diamond said of the UFC, "Unless the audience comes to us and says 'stop, too much,' and no one has done that yet, it's going to be a big part of what we do. ... For us, every time we think it'll plateau, it goes up for another reason." Diamond noted the net is "not a sports network, we're a network that has sports." Diamond: "UFC is a very important part of that. There are other sports that will be breaking out over time on Spike." Diamond added sports entertainment is a "big part of what we do." Diamond: "We don't have a lot of sports that we put on our air, but to us what we put on is our filet mignon. We have other stuff. We launched 'Blue Mountain State' [last] week that everyone is going crazy over. We're always cognizant of a balance and not going overboard with it, but I don't think we've reached the saturation point yet." Meanwhile, when asked why viewers "can't find boxing on television," Diamond said the "problem with boxing is twofold." Diamond: "It's the business of boxing, and the stars are starting to fade. The Mayweathers. The De La Hoyas. There's not enough big stars out there that are transcending everything. You look at the Chuck Liddell, you look at Tito Ortiz, you look at Kimbo Slice, even the Randy Coutures of the world, they're transcending just being fighters." Meanwhile, Diamond added there is "some crossover" between wrestling and MMA audiences, but wrestling is "more of a soap opera" (*SI.com*, 1/22).

11. MEDIA NOTES

SPORTS MEDIA WATCH reported the Yankees are "set to make two primetime appearances on Fox during the 2010 season." The printable schedule available on the Yankees' Web site indicates that the May 22 Yankees-Mets game and the June 26 Yankees-Dodgers game both are "scheduled to air on Fox" at 7:05pm ET. It is "not clear whether the telecasts would air nationally or as part of regional coverage" (*SPORTSMEDIAWATCH.BLOGSPOT.com*, 1/25). USA TODAY's Michael Hiestand yesterday noted Fox Sports VP/Communications Dan Bell indicated that the net is "talking to MLB about moving two dates in its regular-season Saturday afternoon coverage -- one in May and one in June -- into prime-time slots" (*USA TODAY*, 1/25).

FIGHT FEVER: HBO Sports President Ross Greenburg said that he believes the controversy surrounding the attempted Manny Pacquiao-Floyd Mayweather Jr. fight "could drive PPV buys" for Pacquiao's fight against Joshua Clottey on March 13. Greenburg: "I think probably, in a weird way, all of this attention over the last month will

help both fighters. Other than Tiger Woods, no one else has knocked them out in terms of press coverage." HBO PPV VP & GM Tammy Ross said that the network "will look to target Hispanic viewers and mainstream sports fans with its marketing campaign for Pacquiao-Clottey, which will include originally produced content focused on the Latino fighter-heavy undercard and aggressive Internet-based promotion for traditional sports fans" (*R. Thomas Umstead, MULTICHANNEL NEWS, 1/25 issue*).

GAINING A FOLLOWING: The Blackhawks said they have garnered more than 30,000 subscribers to "Blackhawks Mobile," the wireless effort developed in partnership with Chicago-based mobile marketing outfit Vibes Media. The "Blackhawks Mobile" effort includes a variety of ticket and merchandise offers, text-to-win campaigns, and in-venue game enhancements (*Eric Fisher, SportsBusiness Journal*).

LISTEN LIVE: BRAND REPUBLIC's Daniel Farey-Jones reported EPL club Tottenham Hotspur "has launched an iPhone and iPod Touch app charging [US\$3.85] per month for live audio commentary on club games." While the club's app is "four months behind" one released by EPL club Arsenal, Tottenham is "claiming its commentary offering is a first" for the EPL. The app "does not currently carry any advertising or sponsor, in contrast to Arsenal's app" (*BRANDREPUBLIC.com, 1/25*).

Leagues & Governing Bodies

12. NHLPA REACHES TENTATIVE SETTLEMENT WITH FORMER EXEC DIR KELLY

The NHLPA has reached a "tentative settlement with Paul Kelly in which the union will pay its former executive director \$1.5M plus \$200,000 in attorneys' fees," according to Larry Brooks of the N.Y. POST. The agreement was outlined on an NHLPA conference call Sunday and is "subject to ratification by a majority vote of the 30 player reps." The e-mail vote will be conducted over the next couple days and "is expected to gain unanimous approval." The settlement contains a "confidentiality clause in which Kelly, who was fired last August less than two years into his five-year contract, and members of the NHLPA are prohibited from discussing his dismissal and the issues leading up to and surrounding it." Meanwhile, players on the conference call were "informed that the league is experiencing an overall two-percent decline in hockey-related revenue prior to currency conversion." Also, 10 teams are "experiencing a double-digit revenue increase while the same number of teams are suffering double digit" declines. The union "focused on Tampa Bay and Phoenix as trouble spots." Players were also told that escrow deductions "will remain at 18-percent for this quarter, the same rate as the first two quarters of the season" (*NYPOST.com, 1/25*).



Union Will Pay Kelly \$1.5M Plus \$200,000 In Attorneys' Fees In Tentative Settlement

NEXT ORDER OF BUSINESS: The GLOBE & MAIL's David Shoalts cites sources as saying that the NHLPA's constitution committee is "getting most of the attention now because the union would prefer to have most of it in place so that candidates for executive director will know the parameters of the job." The sources added that former MLBPA Exec Dir Donald Fehr, who "has said he is not a candidate to replace Kelly, might

develop an interest in the position." Fehr has been advising the NHLPA since Kelly's departure, and he "handled most of the conference call" on Sunday (*GLOBE & MAIL, 1/26*). In Boston, Kevin Paul Dupont reported it is a "good bet the NHLPA ... won't be ready to name its next boss until early summer" (*BOSTON GLOBE, 1/24*).

13. NASCAR'S RULE CHANGES A POSITIVE STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION



Writer Says NASCAR's Announcement It Will Give Drivers More Freedom A "Positive Step"

process." It is the "type of 'working together' attitude the Frances ... have been reluctant to forge in the past." But there are "still valid concerns going forward." No car "will drive more aggressively without a driver willing to push the envelope, and there's widespread debate on whether they'll do just that." NASCAR's company line of "'loosening up' the rules has actually been in place for several years, but sponsors focused on political correctness -- along with lingering fears of punishment -- leave drivers hesitant to change." However, there "seems to be a universal pulling together of everyone involved in the sport to try to right the ship." Meanwhile, Bowles noted NASCAR is also "bouncing back economically, with all four manufacturers recovering well and able to remain in the sport" (*SI.com, 1/23*).

ARE RULE CHANGES IN SPORT'S BEST INTEREST? In Daytona Beach, Godwin Kelly wrote, "Let me be the first to congratulate NASCAR's brass for loosening the leash on some of the best race drivers in the world. ... If they do as they say, this season could turn into one of the most entertaining in many, many years" (*NEWS-JOURNALONLINE.com, 1/22*). Denver Post columnist Woody Paige said NASCAR is "taking a big risk" with the rule changes "because fans want a big risk." He added, "They want to return to high drama, high speed." But L.A. Times columnist Bill Plaschke said, "I'd yellow flag NASCAR for this. ... This is a sport that's lost some of its brightest stars to death on the track. This is a sport where fans are in danger with flying cars and they want to make it more dangerous because they're not getting TV ratings" ("*Around The Horn,*" *ESPN, 1/22*). ESPN's Tony Kornheiser said NASCAR will "devolve into UFC because their ratings are sinking. Why else would you do this?" Miami Herald columnist Dan Le Batard said, "They're doing it because they're listening to their fan base. Leagues don't very often do this" ("*PTI,*" *ESPN, 1/22*).

THINGS BECOMING TOO NEGATIVE: NASCAR driver Matt Kenseth addressed the sport's popularity and said, "I got in the Cup series when it was really starting to grow and through all those great years you couldn't do anything wrong. Everything was great." But he added, "Then you get more and more coverage and get new fans coming in and everybody's looking at it and then, all of sudden, everything's negative. It seems like the last four years, nothing was right -- the races are too long, the races are boring. I mean, it turned from everything positive to everything negative. I think things are a lot more

NASCAR last week announced it will give more freedom to NASCAR Sprint Cup Series drivers and the move is a "positive step in changing perception the series has gone overzealous in rules enforcement," according to Tom Bowles of *SI.com*. Early reaction to a "week's worth of change seems to be one of guarded optimism, with officials taking an unprecedented step of town hall meetings with each individual driver and team in the series during this

positive than they are negative." Kenseth did admit that an "argument could be made for shorter races." He said if a race could consistently be three-and-a-half-hours long, it "would be a little better for the television viewer." Kenseth: "Some of our races are pretty long to sit through, like Pocono" (*THESTAR.com, 1/24*).

CALLING FOR RADICAL CHANGES: Earnhardt Ganassi Racing co-Owner Felix Sabates said that NASCAR is "supplying more than fans demand right now." Sabates: "We grew too fast. Some of these race tracks put in 140,000 seats, 120,000. That's crazy. We had no business increasing those seats." He said there is "always tickets for sale" at Charlotte Motor Speedway, and if he were SMI Chair & CEO Bruton Smith, he "would cut the two top rows off" at Bristol Motor Speedway. He added that there also are "too many NASCAR television shows." Sabates also indicated that there are "too many races," and on his "list of the expendable events" are Pocono Raceway, Michigan Int'l Speedway, Auto Club Speedway, Atlanta Motor Speedway and Phoenix Int'l Speedway (*Brant James, CHARLOTTE OBSERVER, 1/26*).

MONEY TALKS: Smith said that NASCAR "could help him out in one big way" as his tracks "try to sell tickets to races." Smith "intensified his lobbying efforts for NASCAR to pay more for wins, asking for a \$400,000 difference between the payout for first and second place." Smith: "Let's make winning more important. I'm not impressed with a driver when he gets out of the car and he's talking about points. We're not interested in that. The race fans aren't interested in points." Smith also "questioned whether having the first Chase For The Sprint Cup race at New Hampshire is a benefit for the track." Smith: "I'm not as sold on the Chase races as I should be. Maybe that was overused. In New Hampshire, we have the first race of the Chase. I don't know that it does a thing for us. I think maybe we have overused it and we should move on to something else" (*SCENEDAILY.com, 1/23*).

14. LEAGUE NOTES

Patriots QB Tom Brady yesterday addressed NFL CBA talks and said, "We're all way overpaid." He added, "As a player rep now, I realize all the issues that our league faces. It's a really unique time in our league. As a team player, I don't sit here and say, 'What about me? What about me?' I'm under contract. I'll go out there and play and play my butt off." Brady also said the league and NFLPA are a "long way away, from the way it sounds" (*BOSTON HERALD, 1/26*). ESPNBOSTON.com's Mike Reiss writes Brady's comments "might make union leaders cringe." But the Patriots QB "somehow finds a way to walk in both worlds." He can "connect with the common fan who works hard just to pay for season tickets," and on the other hand "can lend his support" to the NFLPA (*ESPNBOSTON.com, 1/26*).

NO STARS IN SKY: In Portland, John Canzano noted the NBA "went to great lengths to put this year's All-Star Game into Cowboys Stadium," but there "just isn't any substance to the event anymore." The league "sold out sponsorship rights to everything from Taco Bell to T-Mobile," and there will be an 11-acre setup "around the stadium that will market sponsors products in conjunction with the NBA." But the players are "worried about getting injured," and all the weekend events "end up as lackluster sideshows with no main event" (*Portland OREGONIAN, 1/24*).

PROGRESS REPORT: In Denver, Terry Frei wrote the NHL has "made progress" in increasing its profile, but the league "still could take better advantage of its stars and marquee teams." Last Thursday's Capitals-Penguins game "wasn't even on Versus." Better promotion can be "done in a number of ways, from billboards and television ad campaigns, both for individual teams in their markets and for the league internationally; to even scheduling that gets the most possible exposure for top games" (*DENVER POST,*

1/24).

UP, UP AND AWAY: WPS Washington Freedom D Cat Whitehill discussed the status of the league and said, "The good news is that everything is looking up." Whitehill: "When we made it through such a tough economy last year, that was a good showing for us. Atlanta has announced that they're building the first-ever WPS-specific stadium, so that is a good sign. We are doing it better this year. We learned from our mistakes in the WUSA" (*"Washington Post Live," Comcast SportsNet Mid-Atlantic, 1/25*).

Franchises

15. NATURAL GAS EXECS HELP FINANCE GREENBERG-RYAN RANGERS TAKEOVER



Ryan Will Head New Rangers Ownership Group With Greenberg

Rangers Baseball Express (RBE), the group that has reached a definitive deal to purchase the MLB Rangers, is "apparently drawing a significant chunk of its bankroll for the \$500[M]-plus acquisition" from Ft. Worth-based XTO Energy Chair Bob Simpson and former Dallas-based Energy Transfer Partners co-Chair & co-CEO Ray Davis, according to Jack Smith of the FT. WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM. Simpson and Davis, who "made their fortunes from

natural gas and benefited from the riches of North Texas' Barnett Shale," will be co-Chairs of the board of RBE, which is headed by Pittsburgh-based attorney Chuck Greenberg and Rangers President Nolan Ryan. Meanwhile, Smith notes the purchase of the Rangers "could be consummated by April 4, the team's season opener." The deal is "expected to pass muster from baseball's executive committee and eight-man ownership committee," though the 40 lenders who hold \$525M "in Hicks Sports Group debt also are to review the agreement" (*FT. WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM, 1/26*).

STAYING ON BOARD: Outgoing Rangers Owner Tom Hicks, who will assume the role of Chair Emeritus under RBE's ownership, said of the deal, "The key is we all love the Rangers and we all expect to be big fans and still plan to go to the games and we have an official connection. The way the deal turned out, at the end I was given a choice of owning significantly more of equity in the team and taking less cash or taking a small ownership role and much bigger cash and land considerations and I chose the latter for business reasons. I'd rather complete the transaction and be a fan." In Ft. Worth, Jennifer Floyd Engel writes to pretend Hicks' time as Rangers owner "has been an unmitigated disaster is just wrong." Hicks: "Doing this for 12 years, in hindsight, I learned what I did that was smart and what I did that wasn't so smart. And I feel good about how I'm leaving it. I insisted I had some ownership in the deal because I want to celebrate in the locker room. I want a World Series ring. I want to get dirty with champagne again." Hicks added he does "not now" have any plans to sell the Stars. Hicks: "It will depend on a lot of things." Hicks also indicated that he does not "have any plans at all to sell" his stake in EPL club Liverpool (*FT. WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM, 1/26*).

NO TRICKLE-DOWN EFFECT: In Dallas, Mike Heika reports the sale of the Rangers "probably will not improve the Stars' ability to spend money this season, and it might not even change how they look at free agency this summer." Hicks in an e-mail

said, "The Stars will continue to operate in a business-as-usual manner. Our biggest goal is to make the playoffs and to have success in them as we did two years ago." Heika notes this means the Stars have an internal budget of about \$45M "that probably won't change." If GM Joe Nieuwendyk "wants to make a trade, it likely will have to be a dollars-in-for-dollars-out deal, and he probably will have to move assets from an area of strength to fill perceived weaknesses" (*DALLAS MORNING NEWS, 1/26*).

16. LEONSIS TURNS TO COMCAST FOR FINANCING TO BUY WIZARDS

Comcast is "one of several companies that have been approached" by Capitals Owner Ted Leonsis as he "looks to secure financing to buy majority interest" in Washington Sports & Entertainment (WSE), the holding company for the Wizards and Verizon Center, according to Ourand & Lombardo of SPORTSBUSINESS JOURNAL. Leonsis contacted Comcast "late last year to gauge its interest in extending the Capitals' television rights package with Comcast SportsNet Mid-Atlantic." One way for Leonsis to finance the deal for the Wizards "could be to have Comcast front money to help pay" for the 56% of WSE Leonsis is seeking to buy "in exchange for extending the Capitals TV deal." In addition to holding the Capitals' TV rights, CSN Mid-Atlantic "holds the local TV rights for the Wizards." Comcast-Spectacor's Global Spectrum arena management division "could be hired to manage Verizon Center." Ownership of the Verizon Center is a "crucial important component for Leonsis, who pays rent as a tenant with the Capitals." Ourand & Lombardo note talks with Comcast are "in the early stages," as the two sides "have met twice" (*SPORTSBUSINESS JOURNAL, 1/25 issue*).

17. NATIONALS GAIN RESPECTABILITY WITH FRONT-OFFICE OVERHAUL



Rizzo Has Reconstructed Nationals' Front Office With Almost Dozen Additions

Nationals GM Mike Rizzo has "had the chance to reconstruct his front office," and for "all the free agent signings to come, this was the most important part" of the team's offseason, according to Chico Harlan of the WASHINGTON POST. Rizzo, thanks to approval from team Owner the Lerner, was able to create "hire-by-hire the unit whose opinions, arguments, biases and preferences would determine the future of the organization." After almost a dozen additions, the Nationals now have a "complete front office -- fully stocked and respected." The club hired two new assistant GMs, Roy Clark and Bryan Minniti; two new senior

advisers, Ron Schueler and Davey Johnson; a new Dir of Baseball Operations, Jay Sartori; and a new Dir of Player Development, Doug Harris. They also promoted Kris Kline to Dir of Scouting and created "several scouting positions that didn't previously exist." Harlan notes the Nationals, beginning their sixth season in DC, "draw rightful criticism for waiting so long to fortify their organization behind the scenes." Fans in DC "always had a reason to hesitate," but when the club "finally started hiring at the end of the 2009 season, the momentum surprised even Rizzo himself." The Nationals have had their "most productive offseason," and Rizzo "correlates the free agent signings with the front-office additions." He said, "A lot of people want to come here. And there is a momentum. There's a synergy here that's attracting people. If you'd told me coming off a

59-win season that we would have all this interest from people, it's really remarkable. People in the industry get it. They see what we're doing" (WASHINGTON POST, 1/26).

18. SOCCER FRANCHISE NOTES: MLS UNION EXPECT TO SELL OUT STADIUM

In Philadelphia, Jeff Gammage reported MLS Philadelphia Union President Tom Veit is "certain the team will sell out its new 18,500-seat stadium in Chester, basing his analysis on current sales, trends in ticket purchases, and the depth of the regional soccer market." Veit: "I'm very confident we'll sell out, and could sell more if we had them." Veit added that the team's season-ticket total is "now nearing 9,100," and that Union officials "plan to cap those sales at 12,000." N.Y.-based sports and entertainment group Herrick, Feinstein L.L.P Chair Irwin Kishner said, "To sell half the stadium's capacity two months before the inaugural game is extremely promising, especially in this economy" (PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER, 1/25).



Union President Is Certain Club Will Sell Out Its New 18,500-Seat Stadium In Chester

"To sell half the stadium's capacity two months before the inaugural game is extremely promising, especially in this economy" (PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER, 1/25).

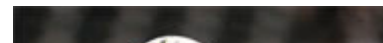
MAKING PROGRESS: In Montreal, Randy Phillips reports officials from MLS and the Montreal Impact are "now in a period of due diligence after having completed a second round of meetings in less than a month which could see the club" join MLS "in 2012, possibly 2011." Impact President Joey Saputo: "MLS was satisfied with the meetings and received the assurances it needed. Our bid has now proceeded to the next level" (Montreal GAZETTE, 1/26).

EPL NOTES: In London, Marlow & Rushe reported EPL club Manchester United's "controversial bond issue" has cost the club \$87.1M (all figures U.S.). As part of the \$806.4M in funds raised by ManU last week, the club "has been forced to pay [\$24.2M] in fees and expenses to investment bankers and lawyers," and has also taken a \$62.9M "hit from the unwinding of interest rate hedging arrangements on the debt that has been refinanced by the bond" (LONDON TIMES, 1/24)....MLS Earthquakes Exec VP/Business Operations David Alioto said that the club is "in discussions" with Tottenham Hotspur "about setting up an exhibition" at Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum (SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS, 1/26).

19. FRANCHISE NOTES

In Columbus, Tom Reed notes the Blue Jackets, who despite being in last place in the Central Division are seeing a 4.7% bump in attendance at Nationwide Arena, have "received a boost from the 600-plus season-ticket subscriptions they sold after making the playoffs" last season. The team will play 12 of its next 17 games at home, and Reed wonders, "What kind of crowds and atmosphere await?" Team President Mike Priest "estimates weekday games should average at least 13,500 the rest of the season." Reed notes it is a "pivotal time for a franchise that says it's losing" \$12M a year, as there has been "no development in the club's bid to gain public financial support for its arena rent." Meanwhile, of the 36 luxury boxes available, "18 are up for renewal this summer" (COLUMBUS DISPATCH, 1/26).

MOVING THE CHAINS: In Sacramento, Matthew



Barrows reports the UFL is "strongly considering moving its San Francisco franchise to Sacramento, where it would play games on a new surface at Sacramento State's Hornet Stadium." UFL Commissioner Michael Huyghue yesterday said that the league "planned on making an announcement next month when the deal is expected to be finalized." At that time, the UFL team is "expected to change 'Redwoods' to a more Sacramento-specific mascot and to announce the addition of two local minority owners." The team averaged 5,836 fans per game last season, with two games being played at AT&T Park and one at San Jose State's Spartan Stadium (*SACRAMENTO BEE*, 1/26).

MIGRATING SOUTH? AHL Albany River Rats Owner Walter Robb said that reports the team has been sold to a buyer in Charlotte, North Carolina, are "a little premature." However, he "did not deny that possibility." A source said that the Hurricanes and Charlotte "struck a deal Monday for the city to house" the NHL team's AHL affiliate, and that the "franchise to be relocated is the current Albany team" (*Pete Dougherty, Albany TIMES UNION*, 1/26).

HOLD THE LINE: Ravens VP/Ticket Sales & Operations Baker Koppelman said that the team "plans to hold steady the cost of tickets for 2010." The move is "in line with the Ravens' pattern of raising seat prices every other year." Season-ticket holders "saw the price of their seats last year increase by \$5 to \$15" (*BALTIMORE BUSINESS JOURNAL*, 1/22 issue).

Facilities & Venues

20. TICKETMASTER, LIVE NATION BOOST COMPETITORS TO GAIN MERGER OK

The U.S. Department of Justice yesterday approved the merger of Ticketmaster and Live Nation, and to "win federal approval, Ticketmaster had to agree to license ticketing software" to AEG and to sell ticketing division Paciolan Inc. to Comcast-Spectacor "or another buyer within 60 days," according to Peggy McGlone of the Newark *STAR-LEDGER*. The DOJ said that these moves "will spark competition" for the newly formed company, to be named Live Nation Entertainment. The new company also "agreed to federal monitoring for 10 years to prevent it from using anti-competitive practices." U.S. Assistant Attorney General for Antitrust Christine Varney: "The public can expect to see three competitors. When you have robust competition, you see prices coming down." But the compromises "did little to mollify critics of the deal who have warned that the merger gives the new company a stranglehold on the industry." Concert promoter John Scher said that the agreement "leaves a 'mountain of issues' to be resolved." Scher: "It leaves the risk takers out of the scenario, the people who are risking money to put events on, the concerts, the circus, the family shows. The people taking the risk ... don't seem to have a say in what ticketing operation they want to choose. That, to say the least, is unfortunate" (*Newark STAR-LEDGER*, 1/26). U.S. Rep. Bill Pascrell Jr. (D-NJ) said that the agreement "still allows for the creation of one company that manages every segment of the entertainment industry, including acts, music sales, ticketing, T-shirts, promotion and arenas." Pascrell: "This is a terrible decision." Pascrell said that he will "continue to push for a bill he introduced that would put new conditions on ticket sales and resales" (*Bergen RECORD*, 1/26).



CONDITIONS OF DEAL: The *WALL STREET JOURNAL*'s Smith & Catan report Ticketmaster and Live Nation "will be required to offer ticketing and concert-promotion

services separately, rather than as a bundle," and divisions of Live Nation Entertainment "won't be allowed to share certain kinds of data so as to reduce the competitive edge afforded by its vast scope" (*WALL STREET JOURNAL*, 1/26). Live Nation Entertainment Exec Chair Irving Azoff said the new company will "create more choices for family entertainment, sports, artists, teams and other rights holders" (*USA TODAY*, 1/26). In L.A., Chmielewski, Fritz & Lewis note Live Nation Entertainment "would have the ability to book concerts, sell tickets and merchandise, and manage artists all under one roof." Live Nation Entertainment is "prohibited from retaliating against venue owners that defect to competitors" (*L.A. TIMES*, 1/26). In DC, Zachary Goldfarb notes Ticketmaster is the "country's largest seller of tickets to concerts, sports games and other live events," and Live Nation "runs more than 100 concert venues." Varney said the original Ticketmaster-Live Nation deal was "anti-competitive." Varney added, "This settlement will preserve competition in primary ticketing and maintain incentives to innovate and discount" (*WASHINGTON POST*, 1/26). In N.Y., Ben Sisario reports Ticketmaster in '08 sold 141 million tickets worth \$8.9B, and the company also "owns a controlling interest in Front Line Management." Live Nation Entertainment "would have an estimated \$6[B] in annual revenue" (*N.Y. TIMES*, 1/26).



COMPETITORS' GAIN: In N.Y., Peter Lauria writes the settlement "will create a new ticketing competitor in AEG -- which ranked as Ticketmaster's largest client, selling about 10 million tickets through the company last year -- and strengthen Comcast's position in ticket sales" (*N.Y. POST*, 1/26). The agreement allows AEG to operate a private label ticketing site using the Ticketmaster system for up to five years. In addition, AEG can move some or all of its

ticketing business to a separate platform at any time following the merger. Also, AEG has an option to license and install Ticketmaster host software to power a competing system should AEG elect not to pursue an alternative technology (*Don Muret, SportsBusiness Journal*). In Philadelphia, Bob Fernandez writes the proposed settlement has the "benefit of boosting Comcast-Spectacor's ticketing business, which is operated as New Era tickets." The business "has 50 ticketing accounts that produce about 10 million ticket sales a year." In the settlement, Comcast-Spectacor "would purchase Ticketmaster's Paciolan Inc. subsidiary," which "has 200 accounts that produce millions of tickets" (*PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER*, 1/26).

21. CHARGERS STAYING AT QUALCOMM NEXT YEAR, WON'T COMMIT PAST '10

The Chargers yesterday said that they will continue to play home games at Qualcomm Stadium "for at least one more season as the team tries to build support for a new venue in downtown San Diego," according to Matthew Hall of the *SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE*. Chargers Special Counsel Mark Fabiani said that the club "won't trigger the termination clause in its lease this year." But he noted that the team "won't commit to staying in San Diego beyond the 2010 season." The Chargers' lease with San Diego allows the franchise to "quit Qualcomm Stadium between Feb. 1 and May 1 from now until the end of its lease in 2020." A termination fee for leaving the facility decreases annually; it was set at \$54.6M this year and falls to \$25.8M in '11. Fabiani indicated that the Chargers' "focus in 2010 will be on assessing the political support for building" a new stadium, "partly via public subsidy." Hall notes the Chargers' announcement yesterday "comes the same week that the Centre City Development Corp., San Diego's downtown redevelopment arm, considers launching a 15- to 18-month process to obtain the

approvals to pump hundreds of millions of tax dollars into a stadium." The CCDC board will meet tomorrow morning to "consider asking the City Council to support seeking approval to use redevelopment revenue for a stadium and other downtown projects" (*SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE, 1/26*).

VIKING QUEST: The Vikings yesterday said that their loss in Sunday's NFC Championship game "doesn't change their push" for a new stadium. Vikings VP/Public Affairs & Stadium Development Lester Bagley in a statement said, "If nothing else, the last several weeks -- indeed the entire dramatic season -- reminds our state leaders and all Minnesotans how fortunate we are to have an NFL team" (*WCCO.com, 1/25*).

22. PALACE SPORTS CEO: PISTONS, RED WINGS SHARED ARENA MAKES SENSE



Red Wings' Lease With City Of Detroit To Play At Joe Louis Arena Expires In June

Palace Sports & Entertainment President & CEO Tom Wilson last week said that a shared arena for the Red Wings and Pistons "makes sense," according to Bill Shea of *CRAIN'S DETROIT BUSINESS*. Wilson said, "An arena for both parties is the logical thing and best thing for everybody -- the fans, the teams and the owners. ... If we were together, we'd sell a lot more suites." But he added, "We're not anywhere near to having those conversations." Shea notes a shared arena would mean construction and

development "would go through the Detroit-Wayne County Stadium Authority, a five-member public board that oversees the ownership" of Comerica Park and Ford Field. Stadium Authority Chair William Wolfson said that he "hasn't had any talks about a new stadium in about a year." Wolfson: "There have been some very preliminary, very general telephone conversations a year ago." The Red Wings "won't comment" on a possible joint arena (*CRAIN'S DETROIT BUSINESS, 1/25 issue*). In Detroit, Terry Foster notes the Red Wings' lease with the city of Detroit to play at Joe Louis Arena expires in June, and the Red Wings said that it "would cost them \$10[M] in renovations to remain" at the facility. Red Wings Owner Mike Ilitch "wants the city to build a new arena downtown," and the team reportedly is "considering signing a three-year lease with" The Palace at Auburn Hills while a new arena is built. Foster notes, "Whatever the outcome, Joe Louis appears on its last legs." The restrooms are "so inadequate that fans -- especially women -- are forced to miss portions of the game because of long lines." The seats are "too small" and parking is a "mess" (*DETROIT NEWS, 1/26*).

23. ST. PETE LEADERS URGE NEW, CENTRALLY LOCATED BALLPARK FOR RAYS

A group of St. Petersburg business and community leaders yesterday said that the Rays need a "new, centrally located baseball stadium and planning should begin soon," according to Stephen Nohlgren of the *ST. PETERSBURG TIMES*. The 11-member ABC Coalition, which has "studied the stadium issue for 18 months, approved



its final report Monday, which it hopes to present to St. Petersburg and Pinellas County officials over the next few weeks." The report has "no legal standing and acknowledges that a sour economy and scarce tax revenues preclude construction anytime soon." But ABC said losing the Rays is a "real possibility" without a new ballpark, and it would cause "irreparable damage to the economic, social and cultural well-being of the region." St. Petersburg Mayor Bill Foster, who has yet to read the report, emphasized that the Rays have a "contractual obligation to play their games at Tropicana Field through the 2026 season." But Foster conceded, "Reading the tea leaves, we don't believe (the Rays) will make it through that season without some discussion of stadium suitability" (*ST. PETERSBURG TIMES*, 1/26). WFTS-ABC's Tom Korun wrote of the report, "Do you think that Pinellas or Hillsborough County taxpayers are going to pay the freight for this thing, now? Don't think so." Rays ownership will have to "pony up some of their own money to get this new home built" (*ABC ACTION NEWS.com*, 1/25).

WELCOME TO THE MAGIC KINGDOM? In Orlando, Andrea Adelson reports Republican congressional candidate Armando Gutierrez has "caused a stir with his idea to bring a baseball team to the area, but there are many hurdles that must be overcome before fans can even start thinking about eating Cracker Jack and watching the boys of summer." Gutierrez yesterday claimed that he has a "group of investors interested in making the move happen," but declined to name the investors, "potential teams that are on his radar or whether he has been in contact" with MLB. He said, "I'm not going to get into any specifics as far as scenarios. The goal is to get a Major League Baseball team in Orlando. We're trying to unravel all the other hurdles that may exist." Adelson notes the team would need a "new or renovated stadium, costing hundreds of millions of dollars to start." Given the way fans have "failed to support the Rays or the Marlins in this state, there are questions about whether there is enough interest in Central Florida to field a team." Relocation would seem to be the "only option for getting a team" to Orlando, and the Rays "could be a candidate, considering their lousy attendance figures." The Rays declined to comment on the matter. Adelson notes two previous efforts to bring an MLB club to Orlando "have failed, both in the 1990s and both because Orlando did not have the stadium or the fan support MLB wanted to see" (*ORLANDO SENTINEL*, 1/26).

24. **PIECES OF FIELD USED DURING SUPER BOWL XLIV GOING UP FOR SALE**

By Don Muret, Staff Writer, SportsBusiness Journal

Stadium Associates has signed a licensing deal with the NFL to sell game-used sod from the Super Bowl in Miami, a first for the league, confirmed NFL Dir of Licensing Richard Seidlitz. New Jersey-based Stadium Associates is the same firm selling game-used turf from the BCS Championship Game played January 7 at the Rose Bowl. It is also MLB's official licensee for selling authentic sod from big league parks and has a similar agreement with IMG's Collegiate Licensing Co. In its most recent deal, Stadium Associates, in conjunction with the NFL, plans to cut 75,000 pieces of turf from the two end zones at Sun Life Stadium and up to 50,000 pieces of the NFL shield at midfield. Each 3-inch square, freeze-dried, preserved and encased, will sell for \$99.99, or \$249 for a set of all three, said Stadium Associates co-Founder David Andres. In



Example Of What Game-Used Sod From Super Bowl Will Look Like

addition, the two parties will work together to identify 10-15 spaces on the field tied to key plays in the Super Bowl. Those 3-square-foot pieces of sod will be carved into smaller pieces and marketed as "special moments" selling for \$134.99. Stadium Associates is also offering live Super Bowl sod, in 1-square-foot and 2-square-foot pieces, that can be ordered and shipped in the spring and transplanted onto homeowner's lawns, Andres said. Free shipping, a \$10 value, is available until Super Bowl kickoff, he said. One dollar from the sale of each piece of Super Bowl sod will be distributed to the Haitian relief effort. As of deadline, Stadium Associates and the NFL were still determining which charity to use, Andres said.

A DIFFERENT KIND OF MEMENTO: Selling game-used items from the Super Bowl is nothing new, said Seidlitz, but the turf mementos provide a far more affordable option than, for example, a Super Bowl-used football or stadium banner. "It's an exciting deal for us," he said. "We have thought about this for a while. Most of the time, the [Super Bowl] fields get pulled up or donated. This is an opportunity for a lot of fans looking for that connection to the game to acquire a meaningful memorabilia piece." Univ. of Alabama football fans have placed 1,000 orders for game-used sod since the Crimson Tide won college football's championship, Andres said. Those pieces of turf -- the end zones and midfield portions priced the same as the Super Bowl grass, as well as 11 special moments, including the spot where Alabama coach Nick Saban was doused with Gatorade -- have produced about \$100,000 in revenue, he said.

INDIVIDUAL TEAMS COULD BE NEXT: As an NFL licensee, Stadium Associates owns the exclusive rights to sign deals with teams. The company has had initial discussions with the Packers, among other teams, Andres said. The Packers have been talking with Andres for the past six to eight months, seeing an opportunity at Lambeau Field after Stadium Associates did a deal with the Yankees in '09 to sell authentic sod and grass seed used at Yankee Stadium. Simply cutting the turf up is not an option because it is supported by a synthetic net that helps hold it all together, said Aaron Hart, a Packers corporate sales account executive. "We are exploring ways that we could tap into their experience in bringing something to market," Hart said. "If the Yankees can do it, it sure makes sense for our fans."

25. MESA CITY COUNCIL APPROVES DEAL FOR CUBS SPRING TRAINING COMPLEX



Cubs Could Leave Hohokam Stadium, Build New Spring Training Complex With Council Approval

Cubs Could Leave Hohokam Stadium, Build New Spring Training Complex With Council Approval

The Mesa City Council last night approved a deal to "build a new spring training complex, dubbed Wrigleyville West," for the Cubs, according to Garin Groff of the EAST VALLEY TRIBUNE. Cubs officials said that they "would respond to Mesa's offer very quickly after Monday's action." If the team agrees to the deal, it would enter into "exclusive negotiations with the city while the two spend about one year working on a formal agreement to build a complex that the Cubs have sought for nearly a year." The 100-acre plus complex would cost about \$84M and "include a stadium of 13,000-15,000 seats, practice fields and commercial development." Part of Mesa's deal with the Cubs "requires that the team will help attract" another MLB team to the city for Spring

Training. The Arizona Legislature still "must approve a bill for tourism taxes to fund part of the complex, and Mesa voters must approve two ballot measures." A vote is "likely in November" (*EAST VALLEY TRIBUNE*, 1/26). In Phoenix, Gary Nelson notes the council also "approved offering amendments to the Cubs' current lease for Hohokam Stadium and Fitch Park." The team currently "faces financial penalties if it leaves those facilities before its lease expires in 2016." But if the Cubs "agree to the city's offer and negotiate over the next three years, those penalties will be waived." If the Cubs "agree to move into a new Mesa stadium, the deal calls for them to stay for at least 25 more years." Nelson notes if the city or state "miss any of the deadlines, the Cubs would be free to talk with other parties -- most likely Naples, Fla. -- about leaving Mesa." Naples in the past several months has "made an aggressive bid" to land the Cubs (*ARIZONA REPUBLIC*, 1/26). In Chicago, Dave van Dyck notes the Cubs have "not formally ruled out a move" to Naples, but sources said that is only an "in case" scenario (*CHICAGO TRIBUNE*, 1/26).

26. FACILITY NOTES

In Orlando, Mark Schlueb reports the Orlando City Council yesterday by a 5-2 vote "approved a scaled-back plan to show video clips and images on a huge screen mounted on the side" of the Magic's new Amway Center, "despite predictions that it could cause a rash of crashes by drivers passing on Interstate 4." Magic officials "previously estimated video clips would be about 15 seconds long." But under the new rules, the screen "can display only two full-motion video clips per minute; they can't run consecutively; and each clip can be no longer than five seconds." In between video clips, the screen "will display static images that change every eight seconds." The Magic's screen time "will include advertising for a half-dozen team sponsors, including Amway, AirTran Airways and Harris Corp." (*ORLANDO SENTINEL*, 1/26).



Orlando City Council Approves New Plan To Show Video Clips On Amway Center Screen

FUNDING GAME: In Colorado Springs, Daniel Chacon reports city taxpayers "may have to cough up an additional \$1.9[M] this year -- and at least \$2.5[M] more in the future -- to meet the terms of the renegotiated agreement to keep the U.S. Olympic Committee in the city." At issue is the "money needed to buy the former Colorado Springs Utilities gas operations building, which would be used to house several USOC national governing bodies." The agreement "called for the city to issue so-called certificates of participation, a form of borrowing that doesn't require voter approval, to pay the remaining balance of the property." But that "didn't happen" (*Colorado Springs GAZETTE*, 1/26).

CONFLICTING INTERESTS: In London, Simon Hart reports U.K. Athletics Chair Ed Warner has warned that EPL club West Ham United's "rekindled interest in relocating to the Olympic Stadium after the 2012 Games could wreck the country's chances of hosting its first" IAAF World Championships. U.K. Athletics "has been considering a bid to stage the 2015 championships in London but fears the new uncertainty over the stadium's future could make it impossible to meet the tight selection timetable for candidate cities." Warner said that "unless there was a prompt decision about the stadium, he would have no choice but to pull the plug on London's bid"

(London TELEGRAPH, 1/26).

BIG BUMP: In Albany, Carol DeMare reports the Times Union Center's operating profit of more than \$1.7M in '09 was the "second highest for the facility that opened 20 years ago." After 12 months with "more events and higher attendance, the profit was a marked difference -- and nearly double -- from 2008, which ended with \$901,399" *(Albany TIMES UNION, 1/26).*

Events & Attractions

27. SOUTH FLORIDA TOURISM WORKING TO LURE COLTS, SAINTS FANS

The Saints-Colts Super Bowl XLIV matchup "may not be ideal for South Florida tourism, but travel-industry leaders are rallying behind the two football teams to woo their fans -- and fast," according to Doreen Hemlock of the South Florida SUN-SENTINEL. The Greater Ft. Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau is "increasing radio and cable TV ads in the Indiana and Louisiana markets to lure visitors for the Feb. 7 game and related festivities." Before Sunday's AFC Championship game, "many tourism leaders had hoped the New York Jets would win their playoff game, bringing crowds familiar with South Florida." But New Orleans is "sure to send thousands," and Visitors Bureau President & CEO Nicki Grossman said that Colts fans "may recall the fun they had at the 2007 Super Bowl played in South Florida and come again in droves." Hemlock notes tourism leaders "expect roughly 74,000 people will attend the Super Bowl," and they are "focused on luring at least 40,000 more football fans to the area to watch the event on TV and enjoy the excitement" *(South Florida SUN-SENTINEL, 1/26)*. New Orleans is "excited about its team's first-ever trip to the Super Bowl," and Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau President & CEO Bill Talbert said, "They're all coming, whether they have tickets, whether they have a room. ... This is driveable. It's a short flight. It's off the charts" *(SUN-SENTINEL.com, 1/25)*. But Boca Raton-based ticket broker Todd Rubin said, "It's a pretty average Super Bowl. Nothing special about it. New York would have been unbelievable, just because of the fans here." In West Palm Beach, Carlos Frias notes New Orleans' "economic devastation in the wake of Hurricane Katrina might have tapped their assets." Rubin said, "With everything everyone there has been through, there just isn't the money there to spend" *(PALM BEACH POST, 1/26)*. FanSnap.com Dir of Corporate Communications Christian Anderson said that the Jets not being in the Super Bowl "drove down ticket prices a bit." In New Orleans, Mark Schleifstein notes a "similar shift could occur after Saints season ticket holders learn the results of a lottery for 4,000 tickets that will be held by the team today" *(New Orleans TIMES-PICAYUNE, 1/26)*.

28. JOIN TOGETHER: TOWNSHEND REVEALS THE WHO'S SUPER BOWL PLAY LIST

The Who's Pete Townshend revealed the band's upcoming Super Bowl XLIV halftime performance "will feature a 'compact medley' of their signature classic-rock anthems," according to Waddell & Prince of BILLBOARD.com. Townshend said, "We're kinda doing a mashup of stuff. A bit of 'Baba O'Riley,' a bit of 'Pinball Wizard,' a bit of the close of 'Tommy,' a bit of 'Who Are You,' and a bit of 'Won't Get Fooled Again.' It works -- it's quite a saga. A lot of the stuff that we do has that kind of celebratory vibe about it -- we've always tried to make music that allows the audience to go a bit wild if they want to." Waddell & Prince noted the set was conceived by lead singer Roger Daltrey, Townshend's brother Simon, halftime show exec producer Ricky Kirschner and director Hamish Hamilton. The medley concept "is not unusual for artists with such a deep catalogue," as

recent Super Bowl halftime performers Bruce Springsteen, Tom Petty and Prince "took a similar approach" ([BILLBOARD.com](http://www.billboard.com), 1/25). USA TODAY's Cherner & Weir note the set list is "going to be split on generational lines." Older fans "will be treated to some of the most iconic music of their youth," while younger fans "will think they have stumbled into the opening of a 'CSI' episode" ([USATODAY.com](http://www.usatoday.com), 1/26). ROLLING STONE's Daniel Kreps noted last year's set list from Springsteen "was subject to so much speculation gambling Websites were offering up bets on what the E Street Band would play" ([ROLLINGSTONE.com](http://www.rollingstone.com), 1/25).

HIS GENERATION: NBC's Jay Leno last night noted The Who will perform during the Super Bowl and said, "NFL officials are concerned now that Brett Favre is out of the Super Bowl because he's the only player old enough to know who The Who are" ("*The Jay Leno Show*," NBC, 1/25).

Collegiate Sports

29. UNIV. OF COLORADO BOOSTERS DESIGN NEW ATHLETIC FUNDRAISING PLAN

Univ. of Colorado (CU) boosters have "designed a stealth-style fundraising campaign, the most ambitious ever for the school's athletic department, to make the Colorado football team nationally relevant again," according to Woody Paige of the DENVER POST. The goal is \$50M donated by 50 CU supporters "in an attempt to level the playing field" against other Big 12 schools, "improve the athletic facilities and enable CU to attract top-quality coaches in the future." In return for the "huge investment, the group of Colorado alums/supporters would seek an active



advisory role in athletic department decisions." CU AD Mike Bohn acknowledged the \$50M proposal is a "positive vision" and "viable." But he "cautioned that the idea 'is in its infancy,' and there haven't been official meetings between CU administrators and boosters." Paige noted the architect of the \$50M plan is Cordillera Energy Partners President George Solich, a CU alum. Sources said that Solich has "initiated discussions with a number of well-known, well-heeled Colorado boosters," and the "response has been encouraging" ([DENVER POST](http://www.denverpost.com), 1/24).

Sports Industrialists

30. EXECUTIVE TRANSACTIONS

Octagon promoted Marketing Solutions Head **JEFF EHRENKRANZ** to Exec VP of its Marketing Americas division. The company also named Alcone Marketing Senior VP **ANNE SULLIVAN** VP (*Octagon*)....Bike New York appointed **KENNETH PODZIBA** President & CEO, replacing **PAM TICE**. Podziba has been N.Y. Sports Commissioner since '98 (*Bike New York*)....The Western & Southern Financial Group Masters & Women's Open, part of the U.S. Open Series, has named **WILL SIKES** Dir of Marketing & Communications. Previously, Sikes was Senior Manager for Cincinnati-based PR and

marketing firm JZMcBride & Associates (*Western & Southern Financial Group*)....Comcast VP/PR **MARK APPLE** was named Business Development Account Exec at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway (*IMS*).

EXECS: The CFL Winnipeg Blue Bombers announced Dir of Player Personnel **JOHN MURPHY** has been relieved from his position (*Blue Bombers*)....EPL club Portsmouth Finance Dir **TANYA ROBINS** has resigned from the club's BOD. Robins will remain as Finance Manager and Secretary and her resignation "confirms the shift of power towards the new owner, **ALI AL-FARAJ**" (*LONDON TELEGRAPH, 1/22*)....Univ. of Delaware Dir of Athletics & Recreation Services **BERNARD MUIR** was appointed by the NCAA to the USA Basketball BOD. Muir will serve on the board through 2012 (*USA Basketball*)....Florida Gulf Coast Univ. (FGCU) promoted Assistant Dir of Alico Arena & Special Events **WILLIAM BLOOD** to Assistant Dir of Facilities & Operations (*FGCU*)....Former Oklahoma State Univ. Ticket Sales Rep **MATT RITCHIE** has joined the D'Backs as a Sales Consultant (*THE DAILY*).

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

31. NAMES IN THE NEWS

PRESIDENT OBAMA welcomed the Lakers to the White House yesterday to celebrate their '08-09 NBA Championship. Lakers Exec VP/Business Operations **JEANIE BUSS**, Exec VP/Strategic Development **JOHNNY BUSS** and **MAGIC JOHNSON** were among the approximately 150 members of the team's contingent. Obama "expressed delight in meeting" Lakers coach **PHIL JACKSON**. He said, "I want to congratulate him on his 10th NBA championship, the most in history. I do want to point out that six of them came with the Bulls" (*L.A. TIMES, 1/26*).

SETTING A GOOD EXAMPLE: Patriots QB **TOM BRADY** yesterday at the Tobin Community Center presented a \$30,000 check to the Boston Centers for Youth & Families from sponsor Smartwater, "huddled with the kids to explain why he was there, promoted the product, then played touch football for a while." ESPNBOSTON.com's Mike Reiss writes it is "hard not to appreciate his polish," and he "seems as sincere as it gets" (*ESPNBOSTON.com, 1/26*). Smartwater had pledged to donate \$5,000 for each game Brady finished this season "without being sacked" (*BOSTON HERALD, 1/26*).

PAY YOUR DUES: Former NFLer **VINNY TESTAVERDE** is "being sued by his longtime agent, **MICHAEL AZZARELLI**," who alleges that Testaverde "profited from ongoing financial advice but didn't produce his end of the bargain" -- a 15% cut. The lawsuit "alleges breach of contract" and says that Testaverde "has made money but hasn't paid Azzarelli his fees." Azzarelli "demands documentation substantiating the cash flow received on investments," though the suit "doesn't estimate how much money is at stake" (*ST. PETERSBURG TIMES, 1/26*).

ON THE SILVER SCREEN: Former MLBer **PETE ROSE** will celebrate the 25th anniversary of his record-breaking 4,192nd hit this summer with a "full-length documentary about his baseball career produced by" Cincinnati-based Barking Fish Entertainment. Barking Fish Partner **TERRY LUKEMIRE** said that "**4,192: THE CROWNING OF THE HIT KING**" will concentrate on Rose's "record-breaking baseball achievements, which have been overshadowed by his banishment from baseball 20 years ago for betting on games." Rose has done "four lengthy on-camera interviews" in Cincinnati "for the 'in his own words' part of the film." Lukemire and his partner, **AYMIE MAJERSKI**, "pitched the movie to Rose last summer." Majerski said that producers are trying to arrange a limited theatrical release in Cincinnati, Philadelphia, L.A. and N.Y. for the 90-minute film, "followed by a DVD release near the Sept. 11

anniversary of Rose's breaking **TY COBB's** all-time hit record" (*CINCINNATI ENQUIRER*, 1/26).

SPEAKING OF A ROSE: ESPN.com's Page 2 profiled MLS Commissioner **DON GARBER**, who has a tattoo of a "compass rose on the right clavicle." Garber said, "My daughter wanted a tattoo when she turned 18 and I wanted to be there, so she got one, and I did too." Garber, who owns about 1,300 bottles of wine, said that when the U.S. men's soccer team wins a World Cup, "I have this 1970 bottle of LaTache burgundy that I plan to open" (*ESPN.com*, 1/25).

NAMES: All Pro Sports & Entertainment has signed former Oklahoma State Univ. OT **RUSSELL OKUNG**, a projected top-five pick in the NFL Draft, for representation. APSE Principal and agent **PETER SCHAFFER** will co-rep Okung with partner and agent **LAMONT SMITH**. Schaffer: "We were honored to represent (Browns OT) **JOE THOMAS** a few years ago, and we feel Russell is similarly situated" (*Liz Mullen, SportsBusiness Journal*)....Saints Owner **TOM BENSON** Sunday "gave the team an emotional address" after the team's NFC Championship game victory over the Vikings. Saints WR **DEVERY HENDERSON**: "He just thanked us. This means a lot to him and his family. There were tears in his eyes, and his voice cracked." Benson has "spent plenty of time walking on his treadmill the last four months," and the workouts "helped him drop nearly 15 pounds" (*SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS-NEWS*, 1/25)....Mavericks F **DIRK NOWITZKI** yesterday "volunteered to sell tickets" to the February 11-13 NBA All-Star Jam Session. Nowitzki, who "put in a half-hour as a ticket seller," also signed autographs "for the first 100 ticket buyers" (*DALLAS MORNING NEWS*, 1/26)....Bengals WR **CHAD OCHOCINCO** yesterday "recorded some voice work" for Cartoon Network's "Squidbillies" (*SPORTINGNEWS.com*, 1/25)....NASCAR driver **DALE EARNHARDT JR.** plans to open a second location for his Whisky River nightclub in Jacksonville (*CHARLOTTE BUSINESS JOURNAL*, 1/22 issue)....NESN Red Sox announcer **JERRY REMY** plans to open his new Sports Bar & Grill in Boston in early March (*BOSTON GLOBE*, 1/26)....Yankees 3B **ALEX RODRIGUEZ** and SS **DEREK JETER** this past weekend attended **MICHAEL JORDAN's** celebrity softball game in the Bahamas (*N.Y. POST*, 1/26)....Phillies SS **JIMMY ROLLINS** married **JOHARI SMITH** Saturday in the Cayman Islands (*ESPN.com*, 1/25).

The Back Of The Book

32. NHL GATE DOWN 2% OVERALL; WESTERN CONFERENCE SEEING 2.8% DIP

The NHL is averaging 16,909 fans through last night's games, down 2.1% from the same period a year ago. Western Conference teams are down 2.8% through the same period. The Blackhawks are leading the conference in average attendance, drawing 20,931 fans per game and filling the United Center to 106.2% capacity. The Kings are seeing the conference's biggest increase at home this season (5.4%), while the Blue Jackets, despite sitting next-to-last in the conference standings, are up 4.7%. However, three Western Conference teams are seeing double-digit declines at the gate, with the Coyotes seeing the sharpest drop, down almost 28% from a year ago. The Coyotes are also the only NHL franchise averaging fewer than 12,000 fans. Below is team-by-team attendance for NHL Western Conference teams through January 25, with comparisons to the same period a year ago. See tomorrow's issue of *THE DAILY* for Eastern Conference figures (*THE DAILY*).

NHL WESTERN CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE THROUGH JANUARY 25

HOME TEAM	GMS	TOTAL	AVG.	% CAP.	PREV.	% +/-	GMS (08-09)
Blackhawks	27	565,131	20,931	106.2%	21,663	-3.4%	22
Red Wings	25	484,778	19,391	96.6%	19,724	-1.7%	21
Flames	27	520,803	19,289	100.0%	19,289	0.0%	25
Blues	27	507,921	18,812	98.2%	18,606	1.1%	23
Canucks	30	564,300	18,810	100.0%	18,630	1.0%	24
Wild	25	458,820	18,353	101.6%	18,568	-1.2%	25
Sharks	28	491,598	17,557	100.0%	17,483	0.4%	25
Stars	24	413,110	17,213	92.9%	17,645	-2.4%	21
Oilers	27	454,653	16,839	100.0%	16,839	0.0%	22
Kings	25	420,832	16,833	92.9%	15,965	5.4%	29
Blue Jackets	24	365,306	15,221	83.9%	14,533	4.7%	21
Ducks	26	390,397	15,015	87.4%	16,887	-11.1%	26
Predators	25	358,226	14,329	83.7%	14,568	-1.6%	22
Avalanche	23	316,637	13,767	76.5%	15,798	-12.9%	24
Coyotes	29	309,331	10,667	62.3%	14,802	-27.9%	24
W.C. TOTALS	392	6,621,843	16,892	92.6%	17,380	-2.8%	354
NHL TOTALS	777	13,138,403	16,909	91.8%	17,278	-2.1%	699

NOTES: Attendance figures for European Premiere Series games featuring the Blackhawks, Panthers, Red Wings and Blues also have been replaced with the teams' home capacities. Clubs can exceed 100% capacity because of standing-room-only ticket sales. All attendance figures are based on totals posted immediately following games. It may not reflect any subsequent adjustments made by teams or the league.

Classified Advertisements

33. CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

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For more information, contact Julie Tuttle, National Director of Advertising at 212-500-0711 or jtuttle@sportsbusinessjournal.com