

STREET & SMITH'S
SportsBusiness
 sportsbusinessdaily.com
DAILY

Wednesday, January 27, 2010

Vol. XVI -- No. 93

On Second Thought

NFL decides against holding news conference next week on labor updates due to "little progress toward reaching an agreement." (#11)

Cut To The Basket

NBA team owner admits plans to "chop the money down" for players in next CBA. (#12)

The Horse Whisperers

A-B benching iconic Clydesdales during Super Bowl for more humorous tone in its nine ads. (#1)

Sensitivity Training (#3)

Ad Age's Bob Garfield says he is "stunned" by CBS' decision to risk one of "last great franchises" on potentially polarizing Focus on the Family ad.

Full Disclosure

Nolan Ryan admits MLB has overseen Rangers' finances since July, but expects restrictions to end after sale. (#14)

Their Civic Duty (#5)

L.A. Marathon inks three-year deal with Honda to become first title sponsor in 25-year history.

Fighting Back (#28)

USOC reaches out to Subway, Verizon regarding ad campaigns it considers ambush marketing.

The Naked Truth

Greg Oden gets out in front of nude photo flap, apologizes for embarrassing Trail Blazers. (#17)

Pros And Cons

Can the NFL really save the Pro Bowl? The league hoped moving its all-star game one week before the Super Bowl and relocating to the same site would ignite some interest. However, early returns indicate the Pro Bowl may have been better off staying in Hawaii. Tickets are reportedly close to being sold out for Sunday's game at Sun Life Stadium, but fans may be the only people excited. Colts President Bill Polian lashes out at the league for making his Super Bowl-bound players attend Pro Bowl events in South Florida, saying, "It's stupid. It's a disruption. ... We have to send those players to Miami to do Lord knows what." Meanwhile, Sunday's game itself is "becoming more of a junior varsity game," with handfuls of marquee players -- Tom Brady, Philip Rivers, Larry Fitzgerald -- pulling out of the contest. The lack of interest from players forces some pundits to debate whether the NFL should cancel the showcase altogether (#10).



Also In Today's Issue

Phillies surpass '09 season-ticket sales base on strength of second consecutive NL pennant. (#16)

Quote Of The Day

"I'm corporate America's dream, and then at the same time, a fan base's ... nemesis of that."

-- NASCAR driver **Jimmie Johnson**, on his public image ("*24/7 Jimmie Johnson*," *HBO*, 1/26). (#8)

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'10

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Sponsorships, Advertising & Marketing

1. SUPER BOWL ADS: ANHEUSER-BUSCH CHOOSES HUMOR OVER CLYDESDALES

Anheuser-Busch's "iconic Budweiser Clydesdales have been sidelined" from A-B's "slate of nine ads" that will appear during CBS' telecast of Super Bowl XLIV on February 7, according to Todd Frankel of the ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH. The company "remains a big spender on Super Bowl ads, buying up five precious, pricey ad minutes" during the game, but the Clydesdales will not appear "for the first time in at least eight Super Bowls." Instead, A-B is "using humor ... to push leading brands



Clydesdales Not Appearing In Anheuser-Busch's Super Bowl Ads For First Time In Years

Bud Light and Budweiser, complemented by shorter nods to Michelob Ultra and the new, low-calorie, Select 55." A-B's Super Bowl ads "range from scientists turning to Bud Light as they worry about an Earth-bound asteroid, to a small town working to rescue a beer truck, to a spoof of popular TV series 'Lost.'" Frankel notes A-B's five Bud Light ads, via Cannonball, St. Louis, all "take aim at being funny." In one spot, a "husband on his way to play softball interrupts his wife's book club when he sees Bud Light is being served," while in another friends are "amazed by a house built of blue Bud Light cans." The two Budweiser ads, scheduled to appear in the second and fourth quarters, "emphasize how the brand brings people together." A-B InBev VP/Marketing Keith Levy yesterday

said that the decision not to use the Clydesdales was an "unintentional outcome of focus-group testing." Levy: "We did produce a Clydesdale spot. And we do continue to utilize Clydesdales in our marketing for Budweiser. But at the end of the day, I don't choose the spots. Brand managers don't choose the spots. The consumers do." Levy added that the emphasis on humor is a "reaction to consumers worrying about the continuing economic slump and glum news overseas" (*ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH*, 1/27).

MORE DETAILS OF THE ADS: In N.Y., Stuart Elliott noted "don't look" for Bud Light's ads "to be centered on 'drinkability,' an attribute the beer brand has spent more than a year promoting." Bud Light's five spots instead are "scheduled to be devoted to unveiling a new theme for Bud Light, 'Here we go.'" However, Levy "played down the significance of the disappearance of the drinkability theme." Levy: "It's sort of a planned evolution." Elliott noted neither of the two Budweiser spots are "laugh-out loud funny, but one is more light-hearted than the other." Meanwhile, A-B's ad for Michelob Ultra comes via Palm & Havas, Chicago, and will feature cyclist Lance Armstrong (*NYTIMES.com*, 1/26).

CHANGE OF DIRECTION: The *WALL STREET JOURNAL*'s Suzanne Vranica writes A-B's new direction for Bud Light "comes as sales of the brand are sputtering." The brand had its "worst year in 2009, suffering its first annual decline in volume since its launch in 1982." A-B's Super Bowl push also is "likely to come under extra scrutiny because this will be the first round created without" former Exec VP/Global Industry Development & CCO Bob Lachky, a "20-year marketing veteran" who left the company last year (*WALL STREET JOURNAL*, 1/27). The AP's Emily Fredrix noted A-B "shifted away a bit from one of its main agencies, DDB, which last year did all but one" of the brewer's Super Bowl ads. The agency this year was only responsible for the two Budweiser ads. Meanwhile, Fredrix noted A-B each year "films more Super Bowl commercials than it can use and then airs the ones that do best in consumer testing." However, the company "still may change its lineup at the last minute before the game" (*AP*, 1/26).

2. SUPER BOWL ADS: BRETT FAVRE TO PITCH HYUNDAI DURING BROADCAST



Hyundai Scheduled To Run Six Spots During CBS' Super Bowl Coverage

There are six automakers that will "vie for viewer attention and consideration" during CBS' broadcast of Super Bowl XLIV, but Hyundai "is shaping up as perhaps the brand to beat," according to Stuart Elliott of the *N.Y. TIMES*. Hyundai Motor America VP/Marketing Joel Ewanick said that the company made a deal with CBS for its package of Super Bowl ads "back in June ... enabling the brand to score some attractive terms for its six scheduled spots." Ewanick noted that the two Hyundai commercials "to

appear during the game will run in the first half, ... one in the first quarter and the other in the second quarter." The other four spots will air during the pregame show. Elliott reported Hyundai signed Vikings QB Brett Favre to "appear in one of the two Hyundai spots during the game." That spot will promote Hyundai's "10-year, 100,000-mile warranty with a scene showing [Favre] being interviewed after he wins a most valuable

player award in the 2020 football season," mocking his "well-known penchant for changing his mind about retiring from football." Ewanick said that the Favre spot was "filmed last month." Elliott noted actor Jeff Bridges "narrates all six of the Hyundai spots scheduled to appear on Super Bowl Sunday" (*NYTIMES.com*, 1/26). *MARKETING DAILY's* Karl Greenberg notes Hyundai's second in-game ad is "set to classical music" and "shows the balletic maneuvers of assembly-line robots applying paint to a Sonata body." Ewanick said of the company's strategy with the ads, "It's a trap for advertisers to be something they're not just to accomplish 'funny.' We sell cars. We aren't a beer brand. We have to stay within who we are" (*MARKETING DAILY*, 1/27 issue).

SPORTINGNEWS.com's Dan Levy writes, "This is what they expect to sell cars now? Brett Favre retirement jokes and paint? Actually, Hyundai, if you throw in a free undercoating and guarantee another summer without Favre's waffling, I'll go buy a Sonata right now" (*SPORTINGNEWS.com*, 1/27).

PANTS ON THE GROUND: *USA TODAY's* Bruce Horovitz writes under the header, "Super Bowl To Show More Ads With People In Their Underwear." Dockers' in-game ad will feature "about 30 men marching in unison in their undies while singing the song 'I Wear No Pants.'" Meanwhile, one of two finalists for CareerBuilder.com's consumer-generated Super Bowl ad "takes place in an office where 'casual Friday' attire means a workforce that's decked out in nothing but underwear." Also, a Bud Light spot posted on the brand's Facebook fan page "features an office full of folks who are only too eager to strip down to their briefs -- or less -- so they can donate their duds to a clothing drive in exchange for free Bud Light." Horovitz writes the commercials are "less about being sexy and more about showing everyday -- very everyday in some cases -- people in their undies" (*USA TODAY*, 1/27).

SOMETHING TO CHEER ABOUT: In Boston, Tenley Woodman reported former Patriots cheerleader Elizabeth Hanson is a "finalist in the Doritos Crash the Super Bowl commercial competition." Hanson's team is "vying with five others to get the most votes for her original commercial at crashthesuperbowl.com" by Sunday. The winning ad "will air during Super Bowl XLIV and earn a cool" \$1M (*BOSTON HERALD*, 1/26).

3. SUPER BOWL ADS: CBS DEFENDS DECISION TO RUN FOCUS ON THE FAMILY

CBS yesterday defended its decision to accept a Super Bowl ad from Christian group Focus on the Family, acknowledging that it has "changed its policy and now accepts commercials that advocate political causes," according to Meg James of the *L.A. TIMES*. A CBS spokesperson said the spot starring former Univ. of Florida QB Tim Tebow, which is rumored to carry a pro-life theme, was subjected to the "full standards process that all ads go through." James notes CBS now "finds itself in a difficult position," as it has previously rejected ads from "left-leaning organizations." CBS' policy shift has "galvanized a coalition of organizations, which have been urging the network to reject the Tebow ad." CBS Senior VP/Communications Dana McClintock said, "We have for some time moderated our approach to advocacy submissions after it became apparent that our stance did not reflect public sentiment or industry norms on the issue." The network added it will "continue to consider responsibly produced ads from all groups for the few remaining spots in Super Bowl XLIV." James notes the "thicket that CBS finds itself in could become increasingly common for TV networks." The net's decision to accept the Focus on the Family ad "comes as networks and TV stations have struggled for revenue amid a weak advertising market." *Women's Media*



Helping Families Thrive™

Center President Jehmu Greene, whose organization is spearheading the campaign urging CBS to reject the ad, said, "They are more concerned about their bottom line than fair play" (*L.A. TIMES*, 1/27).

A POLARIZING ISSUE: National Organization for Women Action VP Erin Matson yesterday said that "abortion is an incredibly complex issue that cannot be condensed into a 30-second commercial, and running the ad is not a smart thing to do for either viewpoint." However, Matson noted that her organization, which has joined Women's Media Center's campaign, has "no plants to buy a Super Bowl spot or specifically rebut" the Tebow ad. Focus on the Family VP/Media Relations Gary Schneeberger said that he is "surprised at the outrage over the content of the commercial considering the fact that the ad has not been seen." Schneeberger: "To comment on an ad that you haven't seen seems difficult to do" (*WASHINGTON TIMES*, 1/27). Schneeberger would not disclose details about the ad, which he called "refreshing and very inspiring." When asked if Focus on the Family would protest a pro-choice Super Bowl ad, he said, "It's hard to speculate. It would depend upon the details" (*EW.com*, 1/26).

OPENING PANDORA'S BOX? USA TODAY's Michael Hiestand writes the Focus on the Family ad "might pave the way for controversial spots to regularly pop up on marquee TV -- giving broadcasters new sideshows to generate buzz." CBS News and Sports President Sean McManus declined to comment on the network's ad policy, but said, "As far as generating interest and curiosity, (Super Bowl ads) are part of the game" (*USA TODAY*, 1/27). Ad Age columnist Bob Garfield said, "I'm stunned that any of the networks would risk one of the few, last great franchises of broadcast television for an ad that could polarize viewers." He added, "This is a multi-hundred-million-dollar franchise that networks have historically protected by avoiding controversy, especially in the ads. I'm surprised that anybody's going to take a risk by accepting an ad with an explicit religious message" (*WASHINGTON POST*, 1/27). In St. Petersburg, Eric Deggans wrote it "seems odd" that CBS would accept an ad that "might be construed as anti-choice from an organization known for controversial views opposing abortion rights and homosexuality." Is a Super Bowl commercial an "appropriate place to spark a discussion about abortion?" (*TAMPABAY.com*, 1/26).

THE RIGHT PLATFORM? In Orlando, George Diaz writes under the header, "Super Bowl Is The Wrong Audience For Tim Tebow's Message." Good for Tebow for "standing up for what he believes is right," but we are "going down a road here that is filled with potholes, moral and otherwise." The Super Bowl "shouldn't be hijacked and turned into a morality play of 30-second increments" (*ORLANDO SENTINEL*, 1/27). FanHouse.com's Jay Mariotti said, "There's a time and place to crusade and the Super Bowl, a 30-second advertisement on Super Bowl Sunday, is not the place to be talking about anti-abortion" ("*Around The Horn*," *ESPN*, 1/26). ABC News' Dan Harris: "Many sports fans say that is a great shame, that what has been a day for Americans to come together over football could become yet another day where we are divided over politics and the culture wars" ("*World News*," *ABC*, 1/26). But in Ft. Lauderdale, Diana Mellion writes under the header, "What's Wrong With A Super Bowl Ad That Promotes A Positive Message?" Mellion: "I guess Super Sunday is the best time to promote sex, promiscuity, gambling, etc., but don't instill any values to the most impressionable viewers watching the game: teens and young adults" (*South Florida SUN-SENTINEL*, 1/27).

SOMETHING TO BELIEVE IN: L.A. Times columnist Bill Plaschke said, "Whether you agree or disagree with the message, in my mind I admire Tim Tebow for doing this. We always rip athletes for not taking social stands. We always rip athletes for hiding behind their sports" ("*Around The Horn*," *ESPN*, 1/26). ESPN's Chris Mortensen: "If

anyone thinks Tebow is going to compromise his beliefs for marketers, they're badly mistaken" (*TWITTER.com, 1/25*). ESPN's Michael Wilbon: "I defend his right to be involved in a commercial to say whatever he wants to say. But it's a wildly passionate issue in an area he's venturing into, and this could open up Pandora's Box. ... I don't think anybody of (his) age can accurately assess the passion that's going to come back at them" ("*PTI*," *ESPN, 1/26*).

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING? YAHOO SPORTS' Matt Hinton wrote, "I've been writing about Tebow for more than four years, and the odds of him associating with anything remotely controversial or politically incorrect enough to justify the reactions to the Super Bowl ad are about as good as him becoming the next clown killer." The ad is "guaranteed to be generic and inoffensive -- in other words, for those of us more interested in the spectacle and sideshow than the politics, a letdown" (*SPORTS.YAHOO.com, 1/26*).

4. INFINITI TO ACTIVATE AROUND COLLEGE HOOPS GAMES ON ESPN, CBS

Infiniti is "launching a multiplatform campaign in support of its new line of luxury sedans, activating a full court press that includes buys in ESPN's college basketball telecasts and throughout CBS' March Madness coverage," according to Anthony Crupi of *MEDIAWEEK*. As part of the campaign, via TBWA/Chiat/Day, the automaker is "sponsoring a new pre-game feature on ESPN." The "Infiniti College Basketball Tip-Off" will air immediately before eight games, "including seven Saturday prime-time games" and one Tuesday night game.



Infiniti M Sedan Will Get Its First Advertising In Spot To Air During Championship-Game Tipoff

Crupi noted each Tip-Off show will feature "interviews with head coaches ... with an eye toward giving fans a better sense of the role that inspiration plays in securing victory." A "supplemental 'Inspiring Coaches' spotlight series will be available on ESPN.com and ESPN Mobile, immediately prior to each Infiniti-sponsored game," which will feature Q&As with 15 college coaches hosted by ESPN's Andy Katz. Infiniti also will buy time during CBS' broadcast of the NCAA men's basketball tournament, "ensuring it will be in position to reach its target demo" of males ages 35-45 with a household income of \$110,000-plus. Crupi noted Infiniti's creative will "shift to the 2011 Infiniti M sedan, a \$48,000 four-door set to hit dealerships in the spring" on the night of the national championship game (*MEDIAWEEK.com, 1/25*). Infiniti said that the Infiniti M sedan will "get its first advertising in a spot to air during the championship-game tipoff" (*MARKETING DAILY, 1/27 issue*).

5. HONDA AGREES TO THREE-YEAR TITLE SPONSORSHIP OF L.A. MARATHON



L.A. Marathon LLC and Honda yesterday announced a three-year title sponsorship deal designating the March 21 race as the Honda Los Angeles Marathon. This marks the first time in the marathon's 25-year history

that it will have a title sponsor. Honda has been a presenting sponsor of the race since '95. The agreement includes charitable components, signage, advertising, digital media, and a presence at satellite events such as the pre-race Expo and finish-line celebration (*L.A. Marathon/Honda*). In L.A., Lance Pugmire notes while officials declined to reveal financial terms of the deal, L.A. Marathon President Russ Pillar said that Honda "negotiated a multifaceted deal 'for millions of dollars'" to sponsor the race and "boost the event's ambition to stamp itself 'as a destination race for international participants.'" Pillar said that winners of the race "will receive a new Honda vehicle, and the deal also features yet-to-be-announced charitable, community-service and marketing components." He said that this year's new course, "which will start at Dodger Stadium and end overlooking the Pacific Ocean near Santa Monica Pier, passing through Los Angeles, West Hollywood, Beverly Hills and Santa Monica on the way, has drawn thousands paying the \$125 entry fee." Pillar noted that the marathon "will cap the field at 25,000." Honda officials cited the marathon's "new ownership, led by Dodgers owner Frank McCourt, the course change and the growing interest in an event 'that brings the entire community together' for its decision to increase its investment." American Honda Motor Co. Corporate Community Relations Manager Erik Wedin said that a "philanthropic element will be disclosed in coming weeks" (*L.A. TIMES, 1/27*).

6. WHEELS & DEALS: MICCOSUKEE INDIAN SPONSORSHIP COULD DISAPPEAR

In Charlotte, Jim Utter reported sponsorship from Miccosukee Indian Gaming in all three of NASCAR's main series -- Sprint Cup, Nationwide and Camping World Trucks -- "could be terminated as a result of an early February vote by the Indian tribe." The tribe elected Colley Billie as its new Chair on January 5, and Billie had "campaigning on promoting a new and 'proactive' economic development platform." Sources indicated that the tribe plans a February 4 vote to "decide whether it will continue its sponsorship in NASCAR, which includes Cup and Nationwide teams to be fielded in 2010 by team owner James Finch and a Truck team owned and driven by Kyle Busch." Sources said that the "chances the NASCAR sponsorships will continue are considered slim" (*THATSRACIN.com, 1/25*).

DOLLARS & SENSE: In Orlando, Tania Ganguli writes while other Nationwide Series teams "struggled last season," JR Motorsports "made more money than expected." JR Motorsports will "use that profit to keep the No. 88 team running throughout 2010, regardless of sponsorship issues." The team "only has about one third of the season's races sponsored for Kelly Bires No. 5 Chevrolet at the moment, but will be able to keep that going, too." JR Motorsports co-Owner Dale Earnhardt Jr. said the team "didn't want to downsize the company any more like the year before." He added the addition of Danica Patrick for a select number of races "really justified having two programs and keeping our employee count. That was awesome to have that" (*ORLANDO SENTINEL, 1/27*).

LIFE IN THE FAST LANE: ESPN.com's Terry Blount profiled JR Motorsports co-Owner & GM Kelley Earnhardt, who also "runs the show for Junior's numerous other endeavors." She "handles the day-to-day decisions" of the team along with "making sure all of her brother's other businesses run properly." Kelley Earnhardt was "instrumental in bringing Danica Patrick to the program." When asked if "dealing with the hype around Patrick" is different than dealing with her brother, Earnhardt said, "Oh no. It's totally the same. We definitely can handle that. We have that part figured out" (*ESPN.com, 1/26*).

CRUISE CONTROL: Joe Gibbs Racing (JGR) Sponsor Services Manager Byron Goggin said all of JGR's sponsors "are valuable" because the team "can't go racing without them." Goggin said sponsorships are "important enough that we have to get those guys in here, get their photo shoots done, get the new talking points." Goggin: "All

year, these companies have things they want to get across to their consumers, and the drivers need to learn what those things are and take ownership of those things themselves. ... Every sponsor has a reason they're on the race cars. The drivers convey that to the consumers." JGR sponsor Interstate Batteries Senior Art Dir Brenda Lyon said of working with JGR drivers, "All the drivers are very professional. They just come right in when we're doing the photo shoot and get to work" ("*Countdown to Daytona*," *Speed*, 1/24).

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST:

Michael Waltrip Racing Owner Michael Waltrip appeared on Fox Business yesterday, and Fox Business' Brian Sullivan told Waltrip, "Everybody knows you out there from the myriad of commercials. Actually, I'm happy to see you're still doing commercials, because a lot of talk with the economy that all the cars (in NASCAR) are going to be empty." Waltrip said, "NASCAR has survived these tough economic times as good as any sport could have hoped to. We at Michael Waltrip Racing have been able to sign all of our sponsors back." He added, "I treat my sponsors as total partners. We're friends. In most cases, I know the presidents/CEOs of the companies and we can talk about how we're going to use that race car to sell more of their products" (*Fox Business*, 1/26).



Waltrip Talks To CEOs Of Companies He Sponsors To Discuss Business Plans

THE LAND DOWN UNDER: SCENEDAILY.com's Jeff Owens reported NASCAR driver Marcos Ambrose has started his own marketing company in Australia named Pacific Pond "to help introduce Australian companies to NASCAR, and vice versa." Ambrose: "That is a huge growth for us, but on the flip side, there is even more opportunity for American sponsors and NASCAR in Australia." There are "plans to work on potential cross promotions between American and Australian sports as well" (*SCENEDAILY.com*, 1/25).

Sports Media

7. VANCOUVER GAMES COULD HELP NBC MOVE ON AFTER MESSY CONAN SPAT

A "solid Olympics performance" in Vancouver next month "could go a long way toward rehabilitating" NBC, according to David Bauder of the AP. The "past few weeks of bad publicity haven't helped" with the dispute between the NBC and former "Tonight Show" host Conan O'Brien, and the network's "struggling prime-time ratings hinder its abilities to promote" the Vancouver Games. N.Y.-based Carat USA analyst Shari Anne Brill: "The squabbling over late night has really overshadowed anticipation for the games." Chicago-based Campbell & Mithune analyst John Rash said that NBC's primetime troubles "hurt its ability to



get people excited about the games and emboldened rival networks to program more aggressively against the Games." But TNS Media Intelligence Senior VP/Research John Swallen "cautioned against connecting NBC's other problems with interest in the Olympics." Swallen: "Ultimately, it's the competition and the personalities of the athletes involved in the competition that makes the difference between a ratings bonanza and a ratings disaster. And you can't predict that until the games unfold." Bauder wrote NBC "has work to do this February," as the network "must remind viewers that Jay Leno is returning to 'Tonight' and demonstrate it is back with new programming at 10 p.m., including Jerry Seinfeld's new reality series, 'The Marriage Ref.'" NBC said that it will take "no financial shortcuts in its Olympics coverage that would cheat viewers," rather the network is "saving money with other efficiencies." NBC Sports & Olympics VP/Communications Chris McCloskey noted that the network "will have 600 fewer employees in Vancouver than it did in Turin" (*AP*, 1/26).

CLEANSING PERIOD: NBC Universal Television Entertainment Chair Jeff Gaspin yesterday said that he "hopes the two weeks of Winter Olympics coverage beginning Feb. 12 will be a 'cleansing moment' ... that will allow the network to move past being the butt of jokes" for the late-night situation. Gaspin admitted that NBC is "now in the process of rebuilding many key relationships in the creative community after the turmoil of the Leno decision and other moves." Gaspin: "You want the (creative) community to want you to succeed" (*DAILY VARIETY*, 1/27). While GE has said that NBC expects to lose \$250M on the Vancouver Games, Gaspin contends that he is "glad the network has the event, particularly now." Gaspin: "I look at it as a cleansing moment for NBC to reset its schedule. We'll come out of the Olympics with a new 10 p.m. and a new late night. We have the Olympics as a platform to promote these changes. We have between now and March 1 to re-launch our schedule. It's great timing for us. Whether that's worth \$250[M] -- it is for me, it is for NBC." Gaspin added, "I think there's great value to the Olympics. I would love to see us a part of the process but it has to be for the right economics" (*BROADCASTINGCABLE.com*, 1/26).

8. IMAGE IS EVERYTHING: HBO AIRS DEBUT EPISODE OF JOHNSON'S "24/7"



HBO Receives Praise From Media Members For First Episode Of "24/7 Jimmie Johnson"

HBO last night aired the debut episode of "24/7 Jimmie Johnson: Race to Daytona," which narrator Liev Schreiber described as "four weeks inside a legend's inner circle, unrivaled access to an unparalleled man, preparing for an event so venerated it's known simply as 'The Great American Race.'" The episode begins with Johnson starting his morning with some juice and an apple, with Schreiber saying, "A man and his clean-cut image: An uneasy alliance." NASCAR driver Jimmie Johnson: "Coming up through the ranks, the only opportunity

I had was to fit in corporate America. I almost had two lives. I had to separate myself and be so clean, polished, all those different things to get the opportunities. I'm corporate America's dream, and then at the same time, a fan base's ... nemesis of that. I guess I do a bad job of showing 'dumb Jimmie,' 'crazy Jimmie,' whatever that exact phrase is. ... I

work hard, I play hard." Schreiber: "While Jimmie Johnson's public face may not mirror his private life, one thing remains clear: The 34-year-old California native knows how to drive a race car." In transcending his sport, Johnson "has struggled with more than just his image. Some question the very nature of his achievement." Johnson: "The thing through it all that's frustrating and pisses me off more than anything is to not have the respect for what we've done and to not be considered an athlete" ("*24/7 Jimmie Johnson: Race to Daytona*," HBO, 1/26).

POSITIVE REACTIONS: SceneDaily.com's Bob Pockrass wrote on his Twitter account, "Overall first Jimmie Johnson 24/7 was really good. Production quality awesome. A little dramatic but supposed to be." Former NASCAR Scene writer Jeff Gluck: "NASCAR has never, ever, ever looked cooler than on this HBO show. Even if you don't like Jimmie, gotta love this show if you like racing." USA Today's Nate Ryan: "With best reality TV, you learn stuff you don't expect & that was case w/HBO's 24/7. Good production from this amateur's view, too."

9. MEDIA NOTES

DAILY VARIETY's Rick Kissell reports Fox scored "one of the most lopsided victories on record last week," winning "all key measures for the week of Jan. 18-24, including a monster" 8.8 rating in adults 18-49, in part due to the ratings for the Saints-Vikings NFC Championship game. The 8.8 rating is the "biggest in-season rating for any net since the week Fox covered the Super Bowl two years ago." Fox topped the "combined delivery of the five nets closest behind it: CBS (2.4), ABC (2.1), NBC (1.7), Univision (1.4) and USA (1.0)" (*DAILY VARIETY*, 1/27).

CLEARING THE AIR: Canucks GM Mike Gillis yesterday said that team officials "plan to meet with staff of the CBC's 'Hockey Night in Canada' over its criticism" of LW Alex Burrows. Gillis: "We're going to meet with them and we're going to see what their reaction is and go from there." The GLOBE & MAIL's Matthew Sekeres notes the Canucks "refused CBC interview requests" during last Saturday's "HNIC" game against the Blackhawks. Gillis said that the CBC "asked for the meeting, and that the team would likely drop its 'Hockey Night' boycott so long as it receives assurances that its players and officials will be treated fairly by the broadcaster." Gillis added that the Canucks are "not looking to extract an apology" from CBC host Ron MacLean. A Canucks spokesperson said that the meeting is "planned for Friday." Sekeres noted "HNIC" staff "would be in several remote locations because of the program's Hockey Day In Canada special" on Saturday (*GLOBE & MAIL*, 1/27).

EXTENDING ITS LIFT TICKET: The Ski Channel has extended its rights agreement with Bonnier Mountain Group, the parent company of ski film producer Warren Miller Entertainment. Ski will continue to air Warren Miller films, as well as the series "Spills and Thrills." Ski and Bonnier said that they also are in discussions on a more integrated partnership (*The Ski Channel*). Ski currently reaches 23 million HHs through distributors including DirecTV, Dish Network and Time Warner Cable, but the network "still does not have a deal with Comcast, which serves many of the Colorado-Utah skiing areas" (*DAILY VARIETY*, 1/27).

Leagues & Governing Bodies

10. COLTS' POLIAN UPSET AT NFL MAKING PLAYERS ATTEND PRO BOWL EVENTS

Colts President Bill Polian Monday called the NFL requiring players from the two Super Bowl teams to travel to Miami to participate in Pro Bowl-related events "stupid"

and a "distraction." Polian noted the team will practice today through Friday, and the seven Pro Bowl players will have Saturday off. Polian: "If it weren't for the Pro Bowl disruption, they would have the weekend off, but they can't because we have to send those players to Miami to do Lord knows what. We'll come back and practice on Sunday and the Pro Bowl players will go and do whatever they have to do and then the team will leave on Monday." When asked by ESPN Radio's Dan Dakich if those players will fly to Miami and then fly back later on Sunday, Polian said, "I don't know that they fly them back. I think they plan to keep them down there that evening. They haven't even told us yet what this is all about. We don't even have any details or anything like that."

Meanwhile, Colts DE Dwight Freeney injured his ankle late in the AFC Championship game Sunday, and Polian described his status for the Super Bowl as "optimistic." He added Freeney will need some treatment, and that "enters into the Pro Bowl equation."

Polian: "Do we send him down there to stand around for three hours, or does he get treatment?" (*"The Dan Dakich Show," ESPN Radio 1070 Indianapolis, 1/25*).

FOXSPORTS.com's Alex Marvez cited a source as saying that the Colts players "will leave at halftime to rejoin their ... teammates in Indianapolis" before flying back to Miami Monday morning. An NFL spokesperson said that the players "are allowed to leave the Pro Bowl at halftime after fulfilling media and television responsibilities." It is unclear if the seven Saints players "will stay for the entire Pro Bowl" (*FOXSPORTS.com, 1/26*).

BOWLING FOR PLAYERS: In Miami, Adam Beasley wrote under the header, "NFL All-Star Game Not So Super." The Pro Bowl, which is being played the week before the Super Bowl for the first time, "still has some sizzle," but the conference championships "certainly took a few molars out of the Pro Bowl's bite." Colts and Saints players are exempt from playing in the game, and in addition to players replaced due to injury, just "29 of the original 44 position players chosen to be starters will be on the field." The game's talent level "has been significantly diluted," and the "drop-off in top-line stars won't do anything to help the lackluster interest in the Pro Bowl" (*MIAMI HERALD, 1/26*). In Honolulu, Ferd Lewis wrote the game is "becoming more of a junior varsity game, even as far as Pro Bowls go." Five of the six QBs originally selected to play in the game -- Tom Brady, Drew Brees, Brett Favre, Peyton Manning and Philip Rivers -- will not be on the active roster (*HONOLULU ADVERTISER, 1/26*). In Dallas, Rick Gosselin wrote there were 84 players initially named to the Pro Bowl rosters, and 31 players "not voted to the teams have since been added." Gosselin: "That's 115 players who will be walking around NFL locker rooms in 2010 with the designation 'Pro Bowler.' Kind of takes the luster off the honor, doesn't it?" (*DALLASNEWS.com, 1/26*).

SPORTINGNEWS.com's Dan Levy: "They're all pros, but they're hardly All-Stars at this point" (*SPORTINGNEWS.com, 1/25*).



JUST END THE THING ALL TOGETHER: In Miami, Greg Cote wrote under the header, "No More Excuses: It's Time To Ditch The Pro Bowl." Cote: "It has become a sham. ... What is the point of having a Pro Bowl that supposedly is a legit all-star game if the best players from the best teams (in the Super Bowl) are automatically excluded, and so many others say no for no good reason?" (*MIAMI HERALD, 1/24*). In Pittsburgh, Bob Smizik wrote, "This is a game that

Are you more or less likely to watch the NFL Pro Bowl this year with it being played a week ahead of the Super Bowl instead of a week after?

- More likely
 Less likely
 Would not watch regardless of when it is played

VOTE

* A non-scientific poll offering a snapshot of readers' thoughts.

should be eliminated starting yesterday," as the Pro Bowl "stands light years ahead of other all-star games for absolute nothingness." Smizik: "Anyone foolish enough to have purchased a ticket for this event, should be outraged by the assembled talent. [NFL Commissioner Roger] Goodell should be embarrassed" (*POST-GAZETTE.com*, 1/26). Dallas Morning News columnist Tim Cowlshaw said, "Moving it to before the Super Bowl,

you just lose more players than all the players who beg out with injuries. It's a bad game" (*"Around The Horn," ESPN*, 1/25).

SOME FAR-FLUNG IDEAS: Denver Post columnist Woody Paige said, "There are ways to correct this problem, but playing it in South Florida before the Super Bowl is a gigantic, ridiculous mistake." Paige: "Move it to Hawaii (and) you blacklist the players if they don't show up. You don't let them get their Pro Bowl bonuses if they don't play in the game" (*"Around The Horn," ESPN*, 1/25). Meanwhile, *SPORTINGNEWS.com*'s Mike Florio wrote one "viable remedy exists for making it matter much more than it currently does. Play it in August." Florio: "Why not make the Pro Bowl the first game of the preseason instead of the last game of the postseason? It can be played in Canton, in place of or in addition to the Hall of Fame game. And though no one would confuse the northeastern corner of Ohio with the southeastern shores of Oahu, the carrot for the players wouldn't be a free vacation, but a free pass from training camp practices" (*SPORTINGNEWS.com*, 1/25).

11. NFL NOT HOLDING NEWS CONFERENCE SB WEEK TO DISCUSS LABOR TALKS

The NFL will not hold a news conference in which Packers President & CEO Mark Murphy will discuss negotiations with the NFLPA for a new labor deal on the Thursday of Super Bowl week, the NFL said today. "We had considered holding a media briefing next week on the CBA, but since there has been little progress toward reaching an agreement we decided there was no need for one," NFL Senior VP/Communications Greg Aiello said. "The commissioner will be available to the media on Friday (of Super Bowl week) to answer any CBA-related questions." The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel had reported that Murphy, a current member of the NFL's Management Council Exec Committee, would hold the media briefing to discuss "to discuss the slow pace of labor negotiations" on the same day the NFLPA is scheduled to hold its Super Bowl press conference. The NFLPA traditionally meets with the media on Thursday and the NFL traditionally holds its press conference on Friday of Super Bowl week. NFLPA Assistant Exec Dir of External Affairs George Atallah said, "We are disappointed that they reconsidered the press briefing with Mr. Murphy because the players were looking forward to hearing from the Management Council's new spokesperson" (*Liz Mullen, SportsBusiness Journal*).



Murphy Not Giving Labor Update Next Week, As Reported Earlier

THE INITIAL REPORT: In Milwaukee, Bob McGinn reported Murphy "will serve as the point man next week when [NFL] management holds a Super Bowl news conference to discuss the slow pace of labor negotiations." The briefing will be held February 4 in Ft. Lauderdale, the same day the NFLPA "traditionally holds its news conference at the Super Bowl." Murphy indicated that "other members of the executive committee will attend and at least one other member that he couldn't identify also would speak to reporters." Murphy said that he has been "present for the majority of the 11 negotiating sessions with NFLPA leaders since negotiation began last year" (*MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL, 1/27*).

DEAL LOOKING BLEAK? Titans C and NFLPA President Kevin Mawae said it "looks very bleak" that a deal for a new CBA will be reached "before March of this year or the beginning of the new NFL season." Mawae: "Until we come to some terms of what's really important and what are the big issues in this deal it's going to be tough to get something done. The players are more united than ever before, and we're preparing for a lockout." NFL Exec VP & General Counsel Jeff Pash said, "What we're trying to accomplish here is to have an economic system ... that will allow us to look back 15 years from now and say that we, meaning the clubs and the players, were creative and thoughtful and laid the groundwork for the game to continue to grow." The AP's Barry Wilner noted if a deal is not reached by March, the '10 NFL season will be played without a salary cap, though the "crop of players available won't be as substantial as in previous, capped seasons." CAA Football co-Head Tom Condon also noted that "less money will be available." Condon: "Over the past three years, 90[%] or so of the NFL teams have not, on average, spent up to the salary cap. Now you have no floor, so you have teams that were required to spend to the floor who don't have to participate or can participate on a lower level" (*AP, 1/26*).

12. NBA OWNERS MAY SLASH SALARIES UNDER NEW CBA; IS LOCKOUT LIKELY?

NBA team owners plan to "go for the jugular and drop the players' salaries immensely" during negotiations with the NBPA for a new CBA, according to sources cited by Chris Broussard of ESPN.com. The current CBA is set to expire after the '10-11 season, and a team owner said, "The owners are really going to chop the money down." A GM added, "Player salaries are definitely going to take a hit. Players that come up for contracts under the new CBA are going to find themselves getting a lot less money." Broussard noted it is "well-known that owners will try to shorten contracts" under the new agreement. A GM indicated that owners are "looking to shorten the maximum length of a contract to four or five years." He added that they have "actually discussed trying to guarantee only the first two years of a four-year deal, and that the third and fourth years would be guaranteed only if a player reached certain performance-based incentives." Broussard wrote in "other words, it would be closer to the NFL than to today's NBA." One GM said, "Is there a sentiment among some (owners) that they'd like to have it like football? Yeah. But I think that's out of bounds." The team owner said, "There's going to be a lockout. There's not even a doubt in my mind about that." He added NBPA Exec Dir Billy Hunter is "not going to make a deal like that. Teams are already saving up money for a strike" (*ESPN.com, 1/26*).

13. MLS, UNION OFFICIALS HOLD EXTENSIVE TALKS AHEAD OF SUNDAY DEADLINE



MLS and MLS Players' Union officials "met for eight hours yesterday at league headquarters, and discussions are

scheduled to resume" today over a new CBA, though "progress ... has been hard to track," according to Ridge Mahoney of SOCCER AMERICA. Some incentive to "cut a deal is certainly being provided by an expiration date of Jan. 31, this Sunday, for the current CBA, yet other forces are wielding influence as well." On the management side, while MLS Commissioner Don Garber and President Mark Abbott "present a united front, there's some sentiment among certain ownership groups to get a deal done while retaining the league's structure and philosophies." Meanwhile, the players "may have to give up on any form of free agency for the time being," but "adding a second fully guaranteed year to contracts would give the players some added security." Also, a "viable retirement plan along with incremental increases in the minimum salary and salary cap might be the best they can achieve this time around" (SOCCERAMERICA.com, 1/27). SOCCER BY IVES' Ives Galarecep cited sources as saying that "no deal is in place" for a new MLS CBA, and a deal is "still far from being completed." Galarecep: "MLS can't afford to not get a deal done. ... Any suggestions or hints that a deal is already done or close to done are misleading." The league is "still holding firm on many major issues while the Players Union appears ready to fight hard for changes, at least fight much harder than it did in the last CBA, when MLS trampled a weak union and walked away with every concession and a league-friendly CBA" (SOCCERBYIVES.net, 1/27).

DOWN TO THE WIRE: In San Diego, Mark Zeigler writes unless there is an "eleventh-hour accord" ahead of Sunday's deadline, the "most likely scenario is a players' lockout by the owners on Monday morning -- the first such labor stoppage in the league's 15-year history." Neither side is "talking much, respecting to a mutual media gag order, but snippets of sentiment have leaked out over the past few months as talks have grown more contentious." It is "not looking good," as several players and agents "privately say they consider a Feb. 1 lockout inevitable." Sounders G Kasey Keller wrote on his blog, "What's most disappointing to me is, this isn't a negotiation for a bunch of players wanting \$8[M] a year instead of \$7[M] a year. The main points revolve around us being given the same rights under FIFA as the rest of the players around the world" (SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE, 1/27). Philadelphia Union D Danny Califf: "To be honest, I don't think the demands of the players are unreasonable." Union D Jordan Harvey: "The good news is that both sides are talking, so I feel confident that if it doesn't happen (right away), it will." Union manager Peter Nowak: "We have had plans established for a few months in the event something (lockout-related) happens, but ultimately (as a team), it's not our decision" (PHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS, 1/27).

Franchises

14. NOLAN RYAN HOPEFUL MLB OVERSIGHT OF RANGERS WILL BE LIFTED

Rangers President Nolan Ryan yesterday acknowledged that MLB "continues to oversee the organization, something it's done since July," but noted that he "expects those restrictions will be lifted" once the new ownership group takes control, according to Richard Durrett of ESPNDALLAS.com. Ryan said, "We were required to have any expenditure that was not budgeted for ... to be



approved and also any signing outside of the slot limit had to be approved." **Ryan Expects MLB Oversight Of Rangers Will Be Lifted Once New Ownership Takes Control**

But he noted, "MLB did not want to affect the normal day-to-day operations. It really did not encumber us to the point where we couldn't do anything. They realized we needed to run as usual as much as we possibly could" (*ESPNDALLAS.com, 1/26*). In Ft. Worth, Jeff Wilson reports MLB "gave the green light" to the team's trade for C Ivan Rodriguez in August, but "would let the Rangers go only so far" when they tried to sign first-round draft pick Matthew Purke to a \$6M deal (*FT. WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM, 1/27*). Ryan said, "I'm very pleased that with the budget restraints that we were operating under, we were able to get creative, move things around and free up some money so we didn't leave a void in the ballclub. That made a difference." He noted he expects no "distinct changes" to the team's operations. Ryan: "We're going to stay with the overall plan we put in place in 2007 with developing our own players. We feel the organization is in a position to be very competitive" (*MLB.com, 1/26*).

MAPPING OUT A GAME PLAN: Prospective Owner Chuck Greenberg said he is "not going to interject" his opinions in baseball decisions, adding he plans to focus on the "business side" of the organization. Greenberg: "How do we connect with the community? How do we create a higher tempo of energy in the front office? How can we do a better job of filling the stands and make an impact on people's lives?" When asked about the team's payroll, Greenberg said the "resources are here" in the Dallas market. Greenberg: "We have to do a better job of cultivating that support. Is there one payroll figure that makes sense? No. I just think it depends on the circumstances." He added, "If the organization is doing all of the things it ought to do in all facets of the operation, this franchise should be able to operate like a big-market team." Greenberg said Rangers Ballpark at Arlington "could use some freshening up in 2010," noting a "more centrally located HD video board can enable the game-day experience to be enhanced." But he added, "Whatever we do with this ballpark will be with care for the legacy of the ballpark." Meanwhile, Greenberg said of outgoing Owner Tom Hicks' future with the club, "I'm sure there was a tremendous temptation to be involved and to be on the board, but I think for the franchise's future and for Tom's legacy, the way we ended up putting this together is best for everyone" (*ESPNDALLAS.com, 1/26*).

GLORY DAYS? In Ft. Worth, Baker & Ahles report Columbus-based development firm Steiner & Associates is suing Hicks "over who owns a portion of land" near the ballpark that is included in the proposed sale of the Rangers. The firm, which began working with Hicks more than five years ago, has filed suit in Tarrant County (TX) to "determine who has the rights to 45 acres that was to be the site of Glorypark," the planned development around the ballpark. Steiner filed the suit last Thursday, "two days before Hicks announced a deal" to sell the club and land to the Greenberg-led group. A Hicks spokesperson noted that "all the Glorypark land is included in the land to be transferred." However, Steiner's suit asserts that Steiner's Arlingtonpar LLC owns 25% of Glorypark Town Center LLC. Hicks yesterday said that the suit "has no merit and will not prevent the sale of the team." Hicks: "For them to be pirates and try to hold me up at the time the baseball team is being sold is just very disappointing." Steiner in the suit also is seeking \$14.5M, including \$6M the company "put into the partnership," \$6M spent on the project and a \$2.5M fee Hicks vowed to pay "if he sold the Rangers" (*FT. WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM, 1/27*).

15. **FALCONS RAISING PRICE OF SOME PREMIUM SEATS AT GEORGIA DOME**

The Falcons are "raising the prices of some premium seats at the Georgia Dome," according to Leon Stafford of the ATLANTA CONSTITUTION. Suites and club seats "will

cost 4[%] more next season." Falcons VP/Sales Dave Cohen: "We think that Atlanta is a growing market, and (there is) a lot of potential out there with small, mid and large companies to sell club seat inventory to." Cohen said that he is "confident he can sell 1,000 club seats this coming season, up from 766 sold" for last season. Stafford notes super suite seats "will decrease \$1,000, from \$4,250 each to \$3,250." Georgia Dome GM Carl Adkins said that the price reduction is aimed at making the premium boxes "more attractive to buyers." Meanwhile, Falcons VP/Marketing Jim Smith was "bullish on advertising for the upcoming season." He said that the team has \$9M in inventory at the Dome, an "increase over this past season when that number was around" \$8.6M (*ATLANTA CONSTITUTION*, 1/27). Cohen said that the team "expects to sell 14 suites at an average price of \$80,000." The team last year sold 17 suites altogether. Cohen added that the team "sold 150 single-game suites in 2009, and expects to sell the same amount this year." Those seats "average \$4,369 each." In Atlanta, Lisa Schoolcraft noted the Falcons have "contracts for 32 'super suites' at the dome, and hope to sell 42." Cohen said that the "goal for club and suite sales in 2010 is \$18.9[M]," which would represent \$4M in "new premium seat revenue" (*BIZJOURNALS.com*, 1/26).

16. PHILLIES AHEAD OF '09 FULL-SEASON EQUIVALENT TICKET SALES MARK
By [Eric Fisher](#), Staff Writer, SportsBusiness Journal

The Phillies have surpassed their '09 season-ticket sales base, selling nearly 27,000 full-season equivalents for the '10 season, about 10% ahead of the 24,600 FSEs sold for '09. The club is anticipating selling another 1,000 FSEs before the season starts. Thanks in part to a popular Sunday-only mini-plan, the Phillies' Sunday home games this season each have a pre-sold base of more than 38,000 people per game. The club is coming off its second straight National League pennant, but it also is buoyed by an improving economy. "It's really all come together for us. We have an incredibly loyal and passionate fan base," said Phillies VP/Sales & Ticket Operations John Weber. "Our baseball operations team has retained our core players, so they've established continuity there while still making acquisitions to improve our club. Players enjoy playing here, and while economically it's still tough, we're up and are seeing lift. It's all intertwined."

17. GREG ODEN APOLOGIZES TO TRAIL BLAZERS FOR NUDE PHOTOGRAPHS

Trail Blazers C Greg Oden yesterday apologized to his teammates, team Owner Paul Allen and his family after nude pictures of him surfaced on the Internet, an "embarrassment for the Blazers," according to John Canzano of the Portland *OREGONIAN*. Oden's apology was "driven from his own embarrassment and conversations" with his reps at BDA Sports Management, and he was "right to get in front of this and make a public statement." Canzano writes, "This error by Oden isn't dog fighting, or smoking pot in a yellow Hummer, or being caught with drugs by an airport metal detector. And if you can't tell the difference, you need to educate yourself" (*Portland OREGONIAN*, 1/27). Oden yesterday said the photos were for a "lady friend who I was having a relationship with" and were "definitely meant to keep private" (*OREGONLIVE.com*, 1/26). Oden prior to his apology held a teleconference with Trail Blazers GM Kevin Pritchard, coach Nate McMillan and agents Bill Duffy and Mike Conley Sr. Oden said that they all agreed that the "best way to tackle the problem was to 'address it and get it out of the way.'" In Portland, Kerry Eggers writes, "You have to be careful about what you do. Don't put yourself in a position where the world can make judgments about your character. Don't put the organization that is paying you millions of dollars to play basketball in such an unfavorable light" (*PORTLAND TRIBUNE*, 1/27). Pritchard

yesterday said, "I'm disappointed, and a little embarrassed." When asked if Blazers players are "warned to avoid such pitfalls," Pritchard said team Dir of Player Development Hersey Hawkins "does a great job of communicating with these guys." He added, "We'll continue to try to educate and help the players" (*PORTLAND TRIBUNE*, 1/27).

18. NBA FRANCHISE NOTES: FORDS, ILITCHES NOT BUYING THE PISTONS

Ilitch Holdings President & CEO Christopher Ilitch and Lions Vice Chair Bill Ford Jr. yesterday said that "their families were not interested in buying the Pistons" from Karen Davidson. Ford said, "Just answering for myself, no. I think between the Lions, Ford Field and Ford Motor Co., I feel like we've kind of got a full plate." Ilitch, whose family owns the Red Wings, Tigers and Little Caesars Pizza, said, "You never know what the future holds, but I would say we're focused on winning hockey games, winning baseball and trying to sell a little pizza once in a while" (*DETROIT FREE PRESS*, 1/27).

COMMUNITY SERVICE: In Detroit, Bill Laitner reports the Pistons are giving ticket discounts to their February 21 game against the Spurs as part of a "fund-raiser for the budget-strapped West Bloomfield School District after a parent came to the team with the idea." Pistons VP/PR Matt Dobek said that the team is "selling a \$175 lower-level ticket for \$100 and a \$40 second-level ticket for \$20 -- online and by phone -- and giving half of the proceeds to the West Bloomfield Education Foundation." Pistons G Richard Hamilton and F Austin Daye also are "featured in a video on the district's Web site, ... promoting education and asking viewers to buy tickets" (*DETROIT FREE PRESS*, 1/27).

IF YOU CAN'T BEAT 'EM ... In DC, Michael Wilbon notes "half of the 20,173 in attendance at Verizon Center" for last night's Lakers-Wizards game "seemed to be cheering for the Lakers." In addition, nearly "one-quarter seemed to be wearing Kobe jerseys." Wilbon: "We've reached that point of the season where the primary reason to attend Wizards home games is to go and see the opposition, the other guys' all-stars, the icons, the LeBrons and D-Wades and CP3s. They used to market the team this way, in the early 1990s when the Bullets were hopeless" (*WASHINGTON POST*, 1/27).

... JOIN 'EM? Nets GM & coach Kiki Vandeweghe yesterday said that he "did not believe" that free agents "might be turned off" by the team's poor season. The Nets currently sit at 3-40, and Vandeweghe said, "Having been through this before, having been down the recruiting process, having had a lot of cap space, having had a really bad rebuilding season, I was never asked once by an agent or a free agent about our record the year before. You're judged by not necessarily on your record, if you fast forward to July, you're judged on the assets you have in place and what the free agents are going to come join" (*Newark STAR-LEDGER*, 1/27).

19. FRANCHISE NOTES

In Boston, Christopher Gasper noted Patriots QB Tom Brady is headed into the final year of his contract, and it would "send a terrible message to players and a fretful fan base already roiled by the team's near religious reluctance to pay out lucrative, long-term deals if Brady were allowed to go into the 2010 season without a new deal." While the "buzzword for the Patriots is financial flexibility" heading into a potential uncapped season, there is "not a CBA agreement in the world that doesn't make signing Brady a smart business move on and off the field" (*BOSTON.com*, 1/26).

JET POWER: In N.Y., Mark Cannizzaro reports the Jets on Monday sent out a recorded message from coach Rex Ryan to season-ticket holders, "waxing about the fact

that these are not 'the same old Jets' and firing them up for next season in the first year in the new stadium they'll share with the Giants." Ryan in the message said, "Let's play this game in front of our fans and our stadium, the new Jets stadium. I can't wait. We get our own stadium and we are not visitors in our stadium. This is our stadium. We are the biggest show in town, and that's what it's going to be" (*N.Y. POST, 1/27*).

FANTASTIC FOUR: In St. Paul, Charley Walters writes Vikings QB Brett Favre "might be able to squeeze several million dollars" more out of team Owner Zygi Wilf if Favre elects to return next season because "Wilf needs Favre as his stadium marketing tool." Meanwhile, a source indicated that a local Vikings apparel shop "would have enjoyed a profit of about \$100,000 from merchandise sales had the Vikings beaten the Saints in New Orleans on Sunday and advanced to the Super Bowl" (*ST. PAUL PIONEER PRESS, 1/27*).

TOO BIG OF A DISTRACTION? MLB.com's Peter Gammons wrote Mark McGwire's return to the MLB Cardinals as a hitting coach was "never a ploy to get him into the Hall of Fame." It was instead about manager Tony La Russa's "belief in the work ethic, team values and teaching skills of McGwire." But the move has "turned into a PR disaster," as the "opening shot of the 2010 season is going to be McGwire in his Cardinals uniform." Gammons: "La Russa likes to control his team, his clubhouse and the environment, but can he control it enough so that McGwire isn't a distraction?" (*MLB.com, 1/25*).

Finance

20. CALLAWAY GOLF POSTS LOWER EARNINGS IN '09, EYES REBOUND THIS YEAR

Callaway Golf posted lower earnings for its Q4 and full year '09, but the company is forecasting a "rebound this year," according to Mike Freeman of the SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE. Callaway CEO George Fellows yesterday said, "We don't expect 2010 to restore itself to pre-recession levels, but we think we're going to make up a significant amount of ground."

Callaway said that it lost \$18M, or \$0.29 a share, in Q4, compared to a loss of \$3M, or \$0.05 a share, during the same period in '08. This year's Q4 sales increased to \$186M from \$171M in the year-ago period. Callaway for the full year '09 lost \$20.9M, or \$0.33 a share, on sales of \$950.8M. The company last year had a net income of \$66M, or \$1.05 a share, on sales of \$1.1B. Callaway "expects sales this year to reach" \$990M-1.05B.

Callaway "gets half its revenue from overseas," and the company "thinks the dollar will weaken, helping its foreign sales." It also is "working to expand into new international markets, including India and China" (*SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE, 1/27*). Callaway's Q4 results were "better-than-expected," and "reduced discounting and a better economic environment is likely to help boost margins" in '10 (*REUTERS, 1/26*). At presstime, Callaway shares were trading at \$7.52, down 5.76% from yesterday's close of \$7.98 (*THE DAILY*).



Facilities & Venues

21. DOLPHINS EYE TOURIST TAXES AS WAY TO FUND STADIUM RENOVATIONS

The Dolphins, in order to "raise public dollars to improve" privately-owned Sun Life Stadium, have "hatched a plan: get state legislators to lift the ceiling on Miami-Dade's hotel tax and then ask county commissioners to increase the rate of the so-called bed tax," according to Haggman & Hanks of the MIAMI HERALD. Florida state law "now caps the hotel taxes at" 6%, and revenues from the tax levied at Miami-Dade County hotels are "largely spoken for after county leaders agreed to use



Dolphins Hatch Plan To Raise Public Dollars To Improve Sun Life Stadium

public funds to construct" a new ballpark for the Marlins. Backers of the plan said that the move "would generate millions of dollars for renovations" to Sun Life Stadium, "along with upgrades of the Miami Beach Convention Center." Haggman & Hanks note NFL and Dolphins officials and stadium supporters "contend that Sun Life Stadium needs more than \$200[M] in renovations if future Super Bowls are to return to South Florida." But "winning public funding to enhance a stadium whose primary owner is billionaire real estate developer Stephen Ross remains a tall order." Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Alvarez yesterday said that he "hasn't been presented with any specific proposals," but he "declared his opposition to tax dollars being used for renovations" to the stadium. Alvarez: "I would not be supportive of any public funding for the renovation of the Dolphins' stadium. Now is not the time." Alvarez "strongly backed the use of public dollars for the under-construction" Marlins ballpark, but he said that the Dolphins' situation is "different." Alvarez: "The Marlins will play 81 home games a year here for the next 30 years, rather than paying for improvements to compete for one game every four or five years." Dolphins CEO Mike Dee yesterday "declined to discuss specific proposals, including raising the bed tax, saying he wanted to give time for a new sub-committee formed by the South Florida Super Bowl Host committee to consider improvements to the Dolphins home and ways to pay for it." Haggman & Hanks note that subcommittee is "set to hold its first meeting" tomorrow (*MIAMI HERALD, 1/27*).

MAKING THE CASE: In a special to the MIAMI HERALD, South Florida Super Bowl Host Committee Chair Rodney Barreto wrote if the Super Bowl stops coming to South Florida, it will be "difficult to replace that kind of economic and community benefit." Barreto noted the NFL "says Sun Life Stadium needs to keep up with the new state-of-the-art stadiums being built around the country," though who is "going to pay for those improvements is still to be determined." Barreto: "Let's open it up for discussion and see where it leads us. Keep in mind, our stadium is only one of two in the NFL that is privately owned. ... The last thing we want to do is wake up 10 years from now and ask why we haven't had a Super Bowl here in the last decade" (*MIAMI HERALD, 1/24*).

22. JED YORK DISCUSSES 49ERS' BACKUP PLANS FOR PROPOSED STADIUM



49ers President Jed York yesterday said the NFL "wants to make sure that we keep all of our options open and we want to make sure we keep all of our options open" in the team's search for a new stadium. When asked if he would

begin serious discussions with the Raiders to build a stadium in Oakland if voters do not approve a proposed venue in Santa Clara, York said he knows Raiders Owner Al Davis and Chief Exec Amy Trask "have been working very hard on trying to get something done" at the Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum site. York added that location "from an infrastructure standpoint" is a "much better site" than Hunter's Point in S.F. York: "From my standpoint we need to find a place where all of our fans can get to. That is why we like Santa Clara so much because the infrastructure is there, the freeways are there, the public transportation is there and none of that really exists at Hunter's Point." But York added the team is "not backing away from Hunter's Point." York: "There are a lot of hurdles that they need to overcome to make that a feasible site and they have a path to reach that goal, but they haven't done it yet." Meanwhile, asked whether Southern California would come into play in the 49ers' future, York said, "Not in the fact that we would go there. ... From a selfish standpoint, I'd love to see a team in Los Angeles to recreate that Los Angeles-San Francisco rivalry. But the 49ers are not going to be in Los Angeles. ... We're focused on northern California and we think we are going to win a ballot in June and we're going to build a new stadium right here in the Bay Area" ("*Chronicle Live*," *CSN Bay Area*, 1/26). In Sacramento, Matt Burrows wrote York's "interest in Oakland obviously means the 49ers -- and presumably the Raiders -- would be interested in sharing an Oakland stadium." However, the "question is whether the Raiders would be interested in sharing a stadium in Santa Clara" (*SACBEE.com*, 1/26).

MOVING FORWARD: In San Jose, Sandra Gonzales reports the Santa Clara City Council yesterday signaled it "would accept a pro-stadium group's initiative and move" the stadium issue to the June ballot. The council "unanimously voted to direct staff to draw up a resolution that would call for a special June 8 election" on the \$937M stadium proposal. The council will "vote on the resolution" February 9. Gonzales notes the pro-stadium group "turned in more than 7,000 valid signatures, a third more than required to place it on the ballot" (*SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS*, 1/27).

23. OILERS, NORTHLANDS AT ODDS OVER PROPOSED DOWNTOWN ARENA

The "historic blood feud" between the Oilers and Northlands, which built and operates Rexall Place, "has poisoned negotiations for a downtown arena," according to Scott McKeen of the EDMONTON JOURNAL. The two sides "haven't met since early October when Northlands received a take-it-or-leave-it ultimatum from the Oilers." Sources said that Northlands was "offered only a minor role in the proposed downtown arena."

Northlands "would continue as arena operator, for a fee, but share in none of the event revenues." The Oilers also "demand that the existing lease on Rexall Place -- it extends to 2014 -- be torn up so the NHL club can begin to immediately collect revenues from concerts and other non-hockey events." Northlands currently "pays all the maintenance and operating costs for Rexall Place, while the Oilers lease the building for just \$1 a year," and Northlands "argues the Oilers enjoy one of the best arena deals" in the NHL. However, McKeen notes the Oilers' offer to Northlands "isn't chump change," as Northlands "would be compensated at a level consistent with the current revenues it



Oilers, Northlands Appear To Be In A Stalemate Over Proposed Downtown Arena

receives from Rexall Place." Meanwhile, AEG is Oilers Owner Daryl Katz' choice to "replace Northlands as the partner in developing and managing" the proposed new arena, and Katz "argues he needs all the revenues from the new arena to make it and the Oilers viable." An announcement of "project details is expected soon," as Katz apparently wants the city council to "fast-track zoning approvals for the site." But the "mood at City Hall remains skeptical, if not hostile to the project" (*EDMONTON JOURNAL, 1/27*).

POWER PLAY: In Edmonton, David Staples reported Northlands is "hiring a leading U.S. sports consulting firm to help come up with its own plans for a made-in-Edmonton arena plan." Northlands said that Minneapolis-based CSL Int'l and Alberta-based Spotlight Strategies "will help the community group to focus on ensuring the broader interests of Edmontonians are met." In Northlands' announcement Monday, neither Katz nor the Oilers "were mentioned as partners or players in the arena project." Oilers President & CEO Patrick LaForge said that he "will wait to see what the Northlands announcement means." LaForge: "I'm trying to understand what it means. ... I don't have any comment until we have time to digest" (*EDMONTON JOURNAL, 1/26*).

24. TMS EXECS CAPITALIZING ON NEW NASCAR ATTITUDE IN BILLBOARDS



Texas Motor Speedway Billboards Promote NASCAR's Relaxed On-Track Rules

Texas Motor Speedway officials are "using 15 billboards in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex to tout NASCAR's 'relaxed' attitude regarding on-track action heading into the 2010 Sprint Cup Series season," according to Kenny Bruce of SCENEDAILY.com. The track's "most recent ad campaign meshes the slogan 'Approved' with a variety of Cup drivers and on-track incidents." Examples include a "photo of Joey Logano's No. 20 Toyota in mid-crash," with the slogan,

"Approved: Tailgating;" a "battered No. 48 of Jimmie Johnson" with the slogan "Approved: Door Dings;" and a "larger-than-life mugshot of Juan Pablo Montoya" with the slogan "Approved: Road Rage." The track hosts Sprint Cup races on April 18 and November 7 (*SCENEDAILY.com, 1/26*). WFAA-ABC's George Riba wrote it is "obvious that Texas Motor Speedway President Eddie Gossage loves the changes NASCAR had added for next season" (*WFAA.com, 1/21*).

MICHIGAN CUTTING TICKET PRICES: Michigan Int'l Speedway (MIS) President Roger Curtis yesterday said that ticket prices for the facility's two NASCAR Sprint Cup Series races "have been lowered." Curtis: "This is something that should have been done years ago, but it really made sense with the economy being the way it is now. We wanted to find a way to offer prices that made sense to people." In Detroit, David Goricki notes general admission tickets "start at \$25, down from \$40 with the highest price reserved ticket ... going down from \$110 to \$105." Meanwhile, Curtis said ticket sales are "down slightly, single digits from the same time last year." Curtis: "We feel we'll be at the same 100,000 mark as last year and that would be a huge success story with today's economy." Curtis yesterday also "introduced Heluva Good as the new main sponsor" of the June 13 Sprint Cup Series race, while Carfax "returns to sponsor" the August 15 Sprint Cup Series race (*DETROIT NEWS, 1/27*).

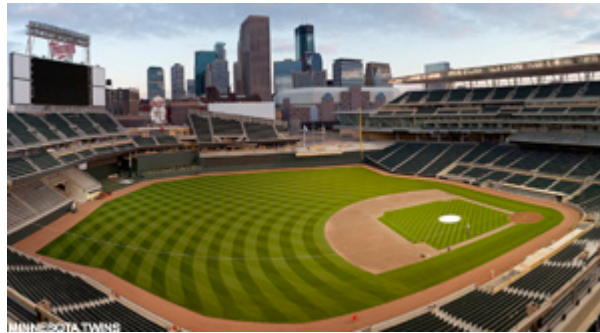
TRACK POSITION: Earnhardt Ganassi Racing co-Owner Felix Sabates recently suggested that NASCAR cut back on the number of events it holds, including eliminating

both Sprint Cup races at MIS. But SCENEDAILY.com's Bob Pockrass wrote Sabates' suggestion of "moving both races from Michigan just because the state is going through a tough time would be the worst public relations move ever." He added shortening the season to 30 races "would not be the way to go." Pockrass: "In these tough economic times, when sponsors need as much exposure as possible and the sport needs as much publicity as it can get, decreasing exposure to fans in the stands and on television is not the right move" (*SCENEDAILY.com, 1/26*).

25. MLB FACILITY NOTES: REPORT A BOON TO RAYS' BALLPARK PLANS

In St. Petersburg, John Romano writes a report released by the ABC Coalition, which has studied the Rays' ballpark issue for 18 months, "pretty much accomplished everything the Rays could have wanted this off-season." The report "acknowledged Tropicana Field is an inferior facility," and that downtown St. Petersburg is an "inferior location." It also "put a voice to the warning that the team could eventually flee if the stadium situation isn't resolved." The "best part of all for the Rays" was that they "didn't have to say a single word." The Rays now "need only point to the conclusions found by an independent group of highly respected business and civic leaders for evidence" they need a new ballpark. The report "takes the onus off the Rays and puts it back on the community" (*ST. PETERSBURG TIMES, 1/27*).

TARGETED SPENDING: In St. Paul, Charley Walters writes, "Look for the Twins, who privately spent \$55[M] for enhancements to Target Field, to spend up to \$10[M] more within the next two months to improve the ballpark." The team "will host a players-only reception Friday night to showcase their new" ballpark. Meanwhile, the club this weekend will host TwinsFest at the Metrodome and attendance "could surpass 30,000" (*ST. PAUL PIONEER PRESS, 1/27*).



Twins Reportedly Will Spend Up To \$10M On Target Field Improvements In Next Two Months

FANTASTIC FOUR: In Pittsburgh, Rob Biertempfel reports the Pirates this summer will erect a statue of Baseball HOFer Bill Mazeroski "outside PNC Park." Final plans are "expected to be revealed Friday at the opening of PirateFest, with Mazeroski in attendance." The statue "will be the fourth Pirates monument outside PNC Park, joining tributes to Honus Wagner, Roberto Clemente and Willie Stargell." Baseball HOFer Ralph Kiner and "several Negro League players are honored with smaller statues inside the park" (*Pittsburgh TRIBUNE-REVIEW, 1/27*).

SHUTTLE SERVICE: In Milwaukee, Don Walker noted local bar owners have "until the end of the month to decide whether they want to pay a \$300 yearly fee" to the Brewers "in order to provide a shuttle service to and from Miller Park." About 30 bars "offer some form of shuttle service." Brewers VP/Communications Tyler Barnes said that the \$300 fee was "imposed because of safety concerns related to the intersection of W. Blue Mound Road and N. Story Parkway and the drop-off point near the home plate area." Those concerns "include pedestrian traffic and shuttle activity" (*MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL, 1/26*).

BEST OF WHAT'S AROUND: The Dave Matthews Band yesterday released its summer tour schedule and the itinerary includes three MLB ballparks. Shows are booked for PNC Park (July 10), Citi Field (July 16-17) and Nationals Park (July 23). In addition,

DMB on June 22 will play Huntington Park, home to the Triple-A Int'l League Columbus Clippers (*THE DAILY*).

26. FACILITY NOTES



Predators Free To Search For New Naming-Rights Sponsor For Sommet Center In Nashville, Nate Rau reported as part of an agreement announced Monday, the Predators are "free to search for a new naming-right sponsor" for Sommet Center. Predators Corporate Communications Coordinator Jessica Jones said that it is "unlikely a new partner would be found before the end of the current season." Rau noted the Predators filed suit against Tennessee-based Sommet Group for "failing to make naming-rights payments last year." The team's "three-year naming rights deal with Sommet expires at the end of this season" (*Nashville TENNESSEAN*, 1/26).

NET GAIN: In N.Y., Erin Durkin reports N.Y. has "shelled out another" \$31M to help Forest City Ratner Chair & CEO and Nets Owner Bruce Ratner "buy land" for his Atlantic Yards project. The \$31M is "on top of \$100[M] the city previously pledged." However, N.Y. officials said that the \$31M "won't cost taxpayers more money" -- instead, it "will be subtracted from \$105[M] previously pegged to pay for infrastructure improvements" around the site. The funding was "moved because the cash-strapped" Ratner "needed more money up front" (*N.Y. DAILY NEWS*, 1/27).

STRONG DEMAND: In L.A., Lance Pugmire noted more than 20,000 tickets have been sold for the March 13 Manny Pacquiao-Joshua Clottey bout at Cowboys Stadium, and officials said that there "could be close to 60,000 in attendance on fight night." The Bedford Agency Owner Lester Bedford, who is assisting Top Rank and Cowboys Owner Jerry Jones in the fight promotion, said fight attendance "could go to 50,000, 60,000." Pugmire noted Jones "originally arranged a seating plan to accommodate 40,000" (*LATIMES.com*, 1/26).

Events & Attractions

27. SAN DIEGO EXPECTS TO LOSE \$200,000 ON THIS WEEK'S PGA TOUR EVENT

The city of San Diego "expects to lose \$200,000" on this week's PGA Tour Farmers Insurance Open at Torrey Pines, "stemming from unrecouped greens fees, staff overtime and turf maintenance costs," according to Brent Schrottenboer of the SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE. The event has been a "money-losing endeavor for the city since it was first hosted by the Century Club at Torrey Pines more than four decades ago," and the



PGA Event Has Been Money-Losing Endeavor For San Diego For More Than Four Decades

\$200,000 the city expects to lose this year is almost 45% of its \$450,000 investment. San Diego COO Jay Goldstone said of tournament operator the Century Club of San Diego, "They did not have enough cash to pay us for full cost recovery. ... And there are a number of indirect benefits (to the city)." Schrottenboer notes "most of the losses flow from the city's self-supported golf enterprise fund and not the city's general fund." Goldstone said that he "eventually wants to recover all the city's costs but that seeking any more this year 'would put too great a strain' on the host." Schrottenboer notes Century Club distributes "more than \$2[M] to charities each year," and the club has "structured its fundraising so that virtually all proceeds benefit charities directly, leaving it with little cash on hand." In tax returns the Century Club filed last year, it reported revenue and expenses in excess of \$14M, "yet ended the year with net assets of \$139,000." Tournament Dir Tom Wilson: "We're not building up a war chest of reserves. We would rather give fees or money we don't have to pay to charity." Goldstone said that he "plans to meet soon with the Century Club and achieve full reimbursement for the city within two years." But Century Club officials said that "could be a deal breaker." Century Club General Chair & President Tom Wornham: "The city can handle the expenses being incurred. I think it's a fair number right now. We're paying half; the city's paying half" (*SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE*, 1/27). In California, Marc Figueroa writes under the header, "A Lot Of Positives For PGA At Torrey." Since its inception in '61, the tournament has "generated nearly \$19[M] for local charities." Wilson said, "A lot of positive things happen because we have a PGA Tour event in San Diego" (*NORTH COUNTY TIMES*, 1/27).

Olympics

28. USOC SCOLDS COMPANIES FOR ALLEGED AMBUSH MARKETING EFFORTS

By [Tripp Mickle](#), Staff Writer, SportsBusiness Journal

The USOC today released a statement admonishing companies for alleged ambush marketing campaigns ahead of the Vancouver Games. In the statement, the USOC said, "Ambush marketing is unfair and runs contrary to the Olympic spirit because it allows the ambush marketer to benefit from an association with the Olympic marks without providing any financial support to America's athletes and the global Olympic Movement. These companies damage official Olympic sponsors and undermine the USOC's financial means to ensure that America's athletes are



Watch The Verizon Spot

given the best chance to perform to their best potential on the field of play." Over the past two weeks, the USOC has reached out to Subway and Verizon Wireless regarding campaigns it considers to be ambush marketing. Subway is running a commercial that features Gold Medalist Michael Phelps swimming his way across land toward Vancouver, "where the action is this winter." That commercial has upset TOP sponsor McDonald's, which has ownership of the category. Similarly, Verizon is airing a commercial that shows

a speedskater in red being pulled past his competition by the power of a phone on Verizon's 3G network. That commercial has upset AT&T, which is the official telecommunications partner of the USOC. Both AT&T and McDonald's have voiced their frustrations about the commercials to the USOC, which is responsible for policing ambush marketing in the U.S. The USOC has reached out to both Verizon and Subway and asked them to change their commercials. USOC CMO Lisa Baird said, "The Olympics are all about fair play. The campaigns that infringe on that are about the opposite. Everyone in the Olympic movement feels strongly about this."



Watch The Subway Spot

the statement, new USOC CEO Scott Blackmun said, "It is incredibly disappointing to see American companies taking advantage of the spirit of the Olympic Winter Games for their own profit, and at the expense of America's Olympic athletes. Olympism is based upon a spirit of fair play, and ambush marketing clearly violates that spirit. The USOC extends our sincere gratitude to all our official Olympic sponsors and suppliers. In the U.S., the USOC would be unable to support America's athletes and send the best prepared U.S. team to the Olympic Games every two years. It is the financial generosity of these companies that enable U.S. Olympians to reach for their dreams, and in turn, inspire all Americans." Added Gerhard Heiberg, Executive Board Member of the IOC and Chair of the IOC Marketing Commission, "Ultimately, companies which try to create the false impression that they are an official partner of the Olympic Games, or create a false association with the Olympic Games, are cheating Olympic athletes, Olympic Games' organisers and Olympic fans. It is important that the public is made aware of these organizations and how they are depriving the Olympic Games and sport development around the world of essential support."

IOC ALSO UPSET: The IOC has been equally vocal about the alleged ambush marketing. Timo Lumme, Managing Director of IOC Television & Marketing Services, said, "What isn't right is... any concerted attempt to confuse the public and falsely create an association in this case with the Olympics. You have to question the values of any such company. It's a free-loader attempt." Verizon Wireless, Subway, AT&T and McDonald's did not respond to requests for comment. In

29. COCA-COLA LAUNCHES MULTIPLATFORM CAMPAIGN AHEAD OF OLYMPICS

Coca-Cola is running a multifaceted Olympic-themed marketing campaign in the U.S. ahead of the Vancouver Games. Coca-Cola Olympic-themed collectible cans and FridgePacks featuring silhouettes inspired by Winter Olympic sports, including figure skating, ice hockey, speedskating and snowboarding, are currently hitting stores. An additional commemorative can featuring a contemporary interpretation of the



Watch The "Snowball" Spot

Inukshuk, the symbol of the Vancouver Games, will be released closer to the February 12 Opening Ceremony. Coca-Cola has also launched a global Olympic TV commercial, "Snowball," and a series of four 15-second spots promoting the collectible cans. Two 30-second spots featuring Coca-Cola's "Six-Pack" of athletes and cans will run on NBC during the network's primetime Olympics coverage. Coca-Cola also is partnering with NBC as an exclusive sponsor of Team USA on NBCOlympics.com and NBCOlympics mobile. The sponsorship includes a custom content section featuring Olympic highlights and a mobile application (*Coca-Cola*).

OFF THE MEDAL STAND: ADWEEK's Barbara Lippert wrote "Snowball," the "first of two 60-second Coca-Cola spots created by Wieden + Kennedy for the Winter Olympics," is supposed to serve as the "galvanizer for some high-energy high jinks and global kumbaya." But the merriment is "forced," and despite some "fun winter-sport references ... it never gels." Lippert: "'Snowball' hardly warms us up to the idea of having a cold one." But Lippert wrote "Finals," Coca-Cola's second spot, is "beautifully executed," and the animated parts are "exquisite." Lippert: "It's also a cooler concept and I like it a lot more than 'Snowball,' even if it starts out like a not-terribly-memorable mashup of kids' movies like 'A Night at the Museum' and past spots" (*ADWEEK.com*, 1/24).

30. OLYMPIC NOTES: ANTI-OLYMPIC ACTIVISTS WITHDRAW LAWSUIT

In Vancouver, Gery Bellett reported anti-Olympic activists have "withdrawn their lawsuit against the City of Vancouver following amendments to some controversial bylaws that placed restrictions on anti-games protests and where they could take place." Univ. of B.C. professor Chris Shaw and Alissa Westergard-Thorpe "filed the suit in response to bylaws they claimed offended civil liberties and violated the Charter of Rights and Freedoms." Shaw on Monday said, "The city has rewritten those bylaws. We see it as a good tactical victory and I think we've got most of the stuff we wanted -- about 80[%] of it." B.C. Civil Liberties Association Exec Dir David Eby said that the "most contentious parts of the bylaws, which outlawed any Olympic protests within a 40-block zone in downtown Vancouver, have been rescinded" (*VANCOUVER SUN*, 1/26).

SECURITY SYSTEM: In DC, Spencer Hsu noted Canada will spend close to \$1B on security for the Vancouver Games, while "American eyes also will be scanning the land, sky and seas from south of the border." U.S. officials said that their security presence for the Games "will be understated and in support of Canadian forces," but the Games "will nevertheless mark the largest-ever test of North American security coordination for a major border event." U.S. Rep. Rick Larsen (D-WA) said, "In terms of hosting the Games, they are Canada's Games. But the fact of the matter is security of the Games has to extend beyond the Canadian border" (*WASHINGTON POST*, 1/23).



Canadian Government Gives Priority Access To Olympic Tickets To Politicians, Bureaucrats

PLAYING POLITICS: In Vancouver, Jeff Lee reported Canada's federal government is "using its access to Olympic tickets to give priority to politicians, bureaucrats and others who will get some of the best seats in the house during" the Games. Of the "nearly 1,500 tickets that the government has received, more than half will go to MPs, senators and bureaucrats who were able to put in their own orders in advance of the

public." Canadian Heritage Minister James Moore said that "more than half of the \$447,000 spent on the tickets will be recovered from MPs and senators who have to pay out of their own pocket." Lee noted both the federal and provincial governments "insist taxpayers are only paying for tickets used to advance government agendas, not for anyone merely to have a good time" (*VANCOUVER SUN*, 1/24).

RED HOT: The *WALL STREET JOURNAL*'s Reed Albergotti wrote Canadians are "clamoring to get their fingers inside commemorative red mittens before the Olympics." Some of the proceeds from sales of the mittens, which are sold by Hudson's Bay Co. and retail for C\$10, are "going to benefit Canadian athletics and training programs." They are "so popular they're out of stock on the retailer's Web site, as well as Vancouver2010.com" (*WALL STREET JOURNAL*, 1/26).

Sports Industrialists

31. EXECUTIVE TRANSACTIONS

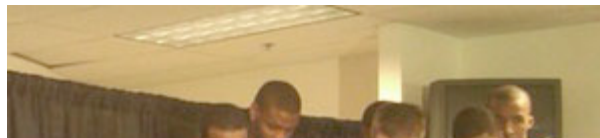
The South Florida Super Bowl Host Committee Monday named former NFLer **DICK ANDERSON** Chair of a subcommittee "exploring proposed stadium improvements" for Sun Life Stadium. The committee also includes Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau President & CEO **BILL TALBERT**, Greater Ft. Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau President & CEO **NICKI GROSSMAN**, Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce Chair **BRUCE JAY CONLAN**, Florida Regional Minority Business Council President & CEO **BEATRICE LOUISSANT** and Dolphins Senior VP/Public Affairs **ADAM GROSSMAN** (*SUN-SENTINEL.com*, 1/25).

EXECS: Columbia Sportswear Company named Lessons Learned Founder & President **SUSAN PARHAM** VP/Global Apparel, Accessories & Equipment, replacing **MARK KOPPE** (*Columbia*)....Spike TV promoted VP/Programming **JOHN GRIFFIN** to Senior VP/Programming. Griffin will continue to oversee scheduling and acquisitions for the network (*HOLLYWOOD REPORTER*, 1/26)....Callaway Golf has appointed Global Infrastructure Management LLC Chair & Managing Partner **ADEBAYO OGUNLESI** to its BOD (*Callaway*)....The Breeders' Cup "has eliminated the job" of Senior VP/Operations **PAM BLATZ-MURFF**, who joined the organization in '82. Blatz-Murff was "informed earlier in January that her job was being abolished." Breeders' Cup BOD member **SATISH SANAN** said that management "recommended the job be eliminated while reviewing ways to streamline the overall operation" (*BLOODHORSE.com*, 1/26)....**MARK LORETTA**, who announced his retirement from MLB Monday, will join the Padres as Special Assistant to Baseball Operations (*Padres*)....ESPN Senior Publicist **TILEA COLEMAN** has been named an HR Diversity Rep for the company (*THE DAILY*)....Del Mar Thoroughbred Club named Santa Anita Park Superintendent **RICHARD TEDESCO** as Superintendent (*BLOODHORSE.com*, 1/26)....Vivid Marketing promoted **RHENE BARTLETT** to Senior Account Exec and **NUVIA GUZMAN** to Account Exec (*Vivid*).

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

32. NAMES IN THE NEWS

The NHLPA has launched a Hockey for Haiti relief project, in which fans can bid on memorabilia donated by the union and its players. The auction,



online at eBay.ca, will include autographed jerseys and sticks. Fans also can donate directly to Hockey for Haiti through worldvision.ca/hockey (NHLPA)...**PRESIDENT OBAMA** yesterday called the Univ. of Kentucky men's basketball team to "congratulate them on the 'Hoops for Haiti' program that raised" more than \$1M (*Louisville COURIER-JOURNAL*, 1/27)...Members of the Saints signed autographs at a Walmart in Baton Rouge yesterday to help promote WYNK-FM's "Operation Hugs for Haiti" charitable effort (*Baton Rouge ADVOCATE*, 1/27).

CHICAGO STYLE: In Chicago, David Haugh profiles Blackhawks GM **STAN BOWMAN**, whose "smart, sobering style is worth remembering." Many Blackhawks fans "may not know Bowman if they bumped into him," and he said, "That is fine for me. I'm comfortable and I don't need to be getting a lot of the focus. It's not about me; it's about the team and the Blackhawks" (*CHICAGO TRIBUNE*, 1/27).

RINGS OF FIRE: The USOC has filed a federal lawsuit to get Pennsylvania-based nonprofit Int'l Institute for Sport & Olympic History to drop "Olympic" from its name. Institute President **HARVEY ABRAMS** said that the company, which is "dedicated to studying the history" of sports, is "not interested in a costly legal battle, and that may cause the group to eventually" change its name. The USOC contends that the institute "didn't get permission" to use Olympic as part of its name (*AP*, 1/26).

NAMES: The Massachusetts Eye & Ear Infirmary yesterday elected Celtics Managing Partner & CEO **WYC GROUSBECK** as its Chair. Grousbeck, whose son is blind, has "for years been involved with members of his family in helping to fund research and educational initiatives related to blindness and other conditions" (*BOSTON GLOBE*, 1/27)...**WAYNE GRETZKY** said that he plans to attend Molson Canadian Hockey House's "Wayne Gretzky Day" on February 19 (*VANCOUVER SUN*, 1/27)...Houston-based attorney **RUSTY HARDIN** is suing Nuggets G **J.R. SMITH** for "nonpayment of legal fees" stemming from an '07 civil lawsuit. Hardin is seeking \$22,753 (*HOUSTON CHRONICLE*, 1/27)...The band Free Reign -- which includes Cowboys offensive linemen **LEONARD DAVIS**, **MARC COLOMBO** and **CORY PROCTER** -- released a five-song EP titled "Tragedy" yesterday at stores and on iTunes (*DALLASNEWS.com*, 1/26)...Patriots QB **TOM BRADY** and Colts QB **PEYTON MANNING** will face off on the golf course for an episode of Golf Channel's "**DONALD J. TRUMP'S FABULOUS WORLD OF GOLF**" (*BOSTON HERALD*, 1/27)...Baseball HOFer **CAL RIPKEN JR.** has "lent his support" to an initiative to place Hinchliffe Stadium in Paterson, New Jersey, on the list of "America's Top 11 Most Endangered Places" (*Bergen RECORD*, 1/27)...The N.Y. POST's Raakhee Mirchandani ranked Jets QB **MARK SANCHEZ** and Knicks F **DANILO GALLINARI** as two of the N.Y.-area's "12 most eligible bachelors" (*N.Y. POST*, 1/26).

The Back Of The Book

33. NHL EASTERN CONFERENCE CLUBS SEEING 1.4% DROP IN ATTENDANCE

NHL Eastern Conference teams are averaging 16,926 fans per game through Monday night, down 1.4% from the same period a year ago. The Canadiens continue to lead all teams in average attendance, as their regular-season sellout streak at Bell Centre has reached 209 games. Three Eastern Conference teams are seeing drops in average attendance of at least 8%, with the Lightning seeing the sharpest dip, off 8.9% to date. Below is team-by-team attendance for Eastern Conference teams through January 25, with comparisons to the same period a year ago. See yesterday's issue of **THE DAILY** for Western Conference figures (*THE DAILY*).

NHL EASTERN CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE THROUGH JANUARY 25

HOME TEAM	GMS	TOTAL	AVG.	% CAP.	PREV.	% +/-	GMS ('08-09)
Canadiens	27	574,371	21,273	100.0%	21,273	0.0%	23
Flyers	27	524,891	19,440	99.5%	19,428	0.1%	23
Maple Leafs	24	461,573	19,232	102.2%	19,286	-0.3%	23
Sabres	26	479,345	18,436	98.6%	18,539	-0.6%	24
Capitals	24	438,648	18,277	100.0%	17,973	1.7%	23
Rangers	28	509,600	18,200	100.0%	18,155	0.2%	25
Senators	29	517,042	17,829	93.1%	18,993	-6.1%	22
Bruins	27	467,198	17,304	98.5%	16,731	3.4%	22
Penguins	25	426,584	17,063	100.7%	16,904	0.9%	24
Panthers	24	366,296	15,262	79.3%	14,967	2.0%	21
Devils	25	377,766	15,111	85.7%	15,314	-1.3%	23
Lightning	24	360,457	15,019	76.0%	16,479	-8.9%	22
Hurricanes	26	382,760	14,722	78.8%	15,358	-4.1%	23
Thrashers	24	315,380	13,141	70.9%	14,362	-8.5%	24
Islanders	25	314,649	12,586	77.5%	13,680	-8.0%	23
E.C. TOTALS	385	6,516,560	16,926	91.1%	17,174	-1.4%	345
NHL TOTALS	777	13,138,403	16,909	91.8%	17,278	-2.1%	699

NOTES: Attendance for the Bruins-Flyers Bridgestone Winter Classic at Fenway Park has been replaced by the Bruins' home capacity at TD Garden. 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

34. CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

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