

STREET & SMITH'S SportsBusiness sportsbusinessdaily.com DAILY

Thursday, January 28, 2010

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The Wonderful Wizard?

Leonsis' planned acquisition of NBA team, Verizon Center now in jeopardy after exclusive purchase window reportedly expires. (#14)

Farewell To Firearms (#11)

David Stern "let everybody know who's in charge" with suspensions for Arenas, Crittenton, but should he have come down even harder?

Chew On This (#3)

Snickers returning to Super Bowl for first time since disastrous '07 ad; did CBS accept Tebow spot because it "needs the money?" (#2)

The Missing Link

Tiger's absence from the course magnified as PGA Tour tees off from Torrey Pines. (#12)

Paradise Lost

NFLPA leaders add to the growing chorus frustrated with changes to the Pro Bowl. (#24)

No Cash For Clunkers

ISC says \$122.5M investment in Motorsports Authentics has completely lost its value. (#19)

Spreading The Field (#21)

Dynamo looking at a new stadium site after downtown Houston plans "started stalling a little."

A Boy Named Suh

The consensus top pick in April's NFL Draft selects Maximum Sports for representation. (#28)

iCandy

The tech world is still trying to wrap its head around Apple's new iPad, the long-awaited mobile tablet unveiled yesterday to much fanfare, but one thing appears certain: the iPad is likely to have a huge impact on the way we consume sports. The device gets front-page treatment in all the major dailies, sharing headlines with President Obama's State of the Union

address. But in addition to the hype for its "gamechanging" versatility, it is the iPad's potential for sports integration that draws our attention. Convergence Sports & Media President Tom Richardson says, "We've seen what's happened with the iPhone and a 3-inch screen. Can you imagine the possibilities with the larger real estate?" Meanwhile, Apple's dedication to protecting rightsholders clearly resonates with some partners, particularly MLBAM, which plans to stream live MLB games through the iPad. Bob Bowman says Apple's "appreciation for publishers and copyright is critical." But some wonder if cost hurts the iPad, as NBA Digital's Bryan Perez says it "still seems rather expensive" at a base price of \$499 (#7).



GETTY IMAGES
New iPad Could Change Way Sports Is Consumed

In Case You Missed It

NBA D-League Utah Flash Owner **Brandt Andersen** is quietly making a sizable difference in Haiti. (#27)

Quote Of The Day

"It being a player issue, we really wish we had a bigger say so."

-- Titans C and NFLPA President **Kevin Mawae**, on changes to the Pro Bowl (*South Florida SUN-SENTINEL*, 1/28). (#24)

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'10

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Sponsorships, Advertising & Marketing

1. SUPER BOWL ADS: COCA-COLA USING FACEBOOK TO HELP PROMOTE SPOTS



One Of Coca-Cola's New Ads Features Characters From Fox' "The Simpsons"

Fox' "The Simpsons." Billionaire Montgomery Burns in the ad "has lost millions and only looks at the bright side of life after convenience store clerk Apu gives him a Coke." In the other spot, a sleepwalker "leaves his tent to trek through the African savannah, bypassing a cheetah, a herd of elephants and other dangerous wildlife, to get to a Coke inside a cabin fridge" (*ADWEEK.com*, 1/28). AD AGE's Natalie Zmuda noted Coca-Cola also "plans to run a third spot during the pre-game show." That 30-second ad "will be for the Sprite brand and will be the first from new agency Bartle Bogle Hegarty." In addition, Coca-Cola "has two bumpers during the game, one of which will be used to promote the

Coca-Cola is using its Facebook page to help promote its two 60-second ads that will debut during CBS' coverage of Super Bowl XLIV. Visitors to Facebook.com/livepositively who send a virtual Coca-Cola bottle to other users will receive a 20-second preview of one of the two new spots. Coca-Cola also will donate \$1 to the Boys & Girls Clubs of America for each message sent. The ads, via Wieden & Kennedy, Portland, are part of Coca-Cola's "Open Happiness" campaign (*Coca-Cola*). ADWEEK's Eleftheria Parpis notes one of the new ads features characters from

Boys & Girls Clubs of America and the other to promote the American Red Cross' efforts in Haiti" (*ADAGE.com*, 1/27).

SODA SPOTLIGHT: In Atlanta, Jeremiah McWilliams notes Coca-Cola is "taking a rare opportunity this year to outduel its main rival on television's biggest stage," as PepsiCo will not run an ad for its beverage brands. Coca-Cola North America CMO Katie Bayne said, "As far as our competitor choosing to go somewhere else, we'll miss them. At the same time, I know they have other things planned. We have been planning on the Super Bowl for a long time." PepsiCo "insists that its retrenchment on the broadcast is not related to Coca-Cola's presence, or with the Super Bowl's value as a marketing vehicle." Pepsi North America Senior VP/Communications Peter Land: "The Super Bowl is a great platform for the right brand at the right time. Our decision is in no way a knock on the Super Bowl at all" (*ATLANTA CONSTITUTION*, 1/28). In N.Y., Stuart Elliott noted PepsiCo execs, in explaining why they chose not to purchase ad time during the Super Bowl, said that they "wanted to concentrate on a campaign centered on philanthropy and the social media." Coca-Cola, by incorporating social media and philanthropic elements to its campaign, is showing PepsiCo that "when it comes to Super Bowl advertising, you can walk and chew gum at the same time" (*NYTIMES.com*, 1/27). Bayne said that plans to benefit the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, as well as other organizations through cash matching and My Coke Rewards points-matching efforts at *livepositively.com*, "were in place well before Pepsi announced it would put its focus behind" its Refresh Everything Project (*ADAGE.com*, 1/27).

2. SUPER BOWL ADS: TEBOW SURPRISED BY FOCUS ON THE FAMILY ATTENTION

Former Univ. of Florida QB Tim Tebow yesterday said that he is "surprised by the attention" the Focus on the Family Super Bowl ad is generating, according to Ben Volin of the PALM BEACH POST. Tebow, who appears in the ad alongside his mother, said, "I definitely didn't think it would have this much hype, this much buzz. I know some people won't agree with it, but I think they can at least respect that I stand up for what I believe, and I'm never shy about that." Tebow, currently participating in workouts ahead of the Senior Bowl, noted that the allegedly pro-life commercial "has not come up in any of the interviews he has conducted so far with NFL teams." He said, "If anything (the teams) like that I took a stand for what I believe. And if they don't ... then it probably wouldn't be a good fit for me in the first place, because I'm never going to deny what I believe in" (*PALM BEACH POST*, 1/28).

LOOKING TO CASH IN: In Boston, Ron Borges writes by accepting the Focus on the Family spot, CBS is showing that the Super Bowl is designed "to sell TV spots," and not to "bring Americans together." Borges speculates the net accepted the commercial because "with less than 10 days to go before the Super Bowl airs, CBS still has unsold spots, a circumstance born from the collapsing economy" (*BOSTON HERALD*, 1/28). NBCSPORTS.com's Mike Celizic wrote CBS plans to run the spot because it "needs the money." Celizic: "There is no other reason -- and certainly no good reason -- for anyone, including a television executive, to decide that the ethical standards which had stood for generations are suddenly no more worth preserving than that hairball the cat just coughed up." CBS will "still have standards, except they'll be based on money and who'll be upset." But Celizic contends neither CBS "nor any other network will take an ad from an atheist group whose message is there is no heaven, no hell and no god," because that "would tick off the paying customers" (*NBCSPORTS.com*, 1/26). In Chicago, Jim O'Donnell writes CBS "must be desperate to sell out remaining ad inventory" for the February 7 game. The network's decision is "wretchedly inappropriate." O'Donnell: "At any point in time, did the CBS jambones consider the across-the-board implications of

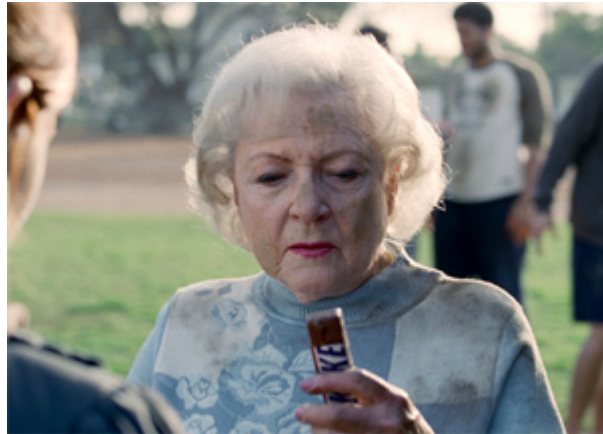
their decision?" The legacy of CBS' decision "will be a dicey one to the NFL and all future sports programming" (*CHICAGO SUN-TIMES*, 1/28). In West Palm Beach, Dave George predicts the spot will "be the last of its kind for CBS and other networks in the Super Bowl rotation." If the ad runs, "it will be because no boycott threat is sufficient enough to push CBS affiliates into withholding the exclusive Super Bowl broadcast from their respective markets" (*PALM BEACH POST*, 1/28).

NOT THE WORST THING IN THE WORLD: In Birmingham, Ray Melick writes, "I'd rather watch an ad that makes me think than one that makes me blush, which happens too often as it is." Melick: "If one commercial actually causes us to question something, is that really so dangerous?" (*BIRMINGHAM NEWS*, 1/28). An *AUGUSTA CHRONICLE* editorial stated CBS "seems to be sticking to its guns" in regards to airing the ad, and has in fact "more or less invited other advocacy groups to air tastefully produced ads." The editorial: "And why not? Shouldn't we be celebrating free speech, rather than trying to curtail it?" (*AUGUSTA CHRONICLE*, 1/27).

KEEPING THE WRONG COMPANY: In Orlando, Scott Maxwell wrote his "only beef" with Tebow's decision to participate in the spot "has to do with the group he has chosen to hook up with." Focus on the Family "does more than promote alternatives to abortion." The group is "responsible for some of the most divisive and intolerant, religious-based campaigns of our time, opposing everything from human rights to diversity." Maxwell: "Someone who wants to spread an abortion message would be more effective by teaming up with a group that has less baggage and is more respected by more Americans" (*ORLANDOSENTINEL.com*, 1/27).

3. SUPER BOWL ADS: SNICKERS RETURNS 3 YEARS AFTER CONTROVERSIAL SPOT

Mars Chocolate North America today announced plans for Snickers to "return as a Super Bowl telecast advertiser -- three years after it raised the wrath of gay advocates by airing a Super Bowl spot that showed two male mechanics who accidentally kiss, then react with disgust," according to Bruce Horovitz of *USA TODAY*. The new ad stars actors Betty White and Abe Vigoda and features the tagline, "You're not you when you're hungry." Mars VP/Integrated Marketing Communications Carole Walker said that Snickers' ad for Super Bowl XLIV "has been tested with a focus group of more than 1,000 people and has been approved by the company's CEO." Walker: "It has nothing that the gay community would find offensive." Horovitz notes Snickers' controversial ad during Super Bowl XLI was "yanked less than 24 hours after it aired" (*USA TODAY*, 1/28).



**Snickers Returning To Super Bowl
With Spot Featuring Betty White**

SPECIAL DELIVERY: In N.Y., Stuart Elliott reported Papa John's Int'l "will advertise for the first time during a Super Bowl game" this year, with plans for an ad "that may not look to many viewers like one." The spot, "scheduled to air near the two-minute warning of the first half," will feature Papa John's Founder & Chair John Schnatter "delivering pizzas to the people behind the scenes at Super Bowl XLIV on Feb. 7 -- the on-field painters, for example." The ad, via Zimmerman Advertising, Ft.

Lauderdale, "will be filmed on Sunday during the Pro Bowl by NFL Films for that in-the-game look." Due to the Super Bowl and Pro Bowl both being played at Sun Life Stadium, when the "commercial appears during the Super Bowl it may seem as if it is taking place live." Elliott noted the ad is "part of an agreement by Papa John's to become the official pizza sponsor" of the NFL and Super Bowl XLIV. Papa John's "made the deal to run the spot with the NFL rather than with CBS" ([NYTIMES.com](http://www.nytimes.com), 1/27). Papa John's had "hoped to film live on Super Bowl Sunday, but was told it would be impossible, due to game-day security" ([ADAGE.com](http://www.adage.com), 1/27).



Watch Denny's Teaser For Its Super Bowl Spot

FREE FALLIN': Denny's will return to the Super Bowl for the second consecutive season, this time with three ads. A 30-second ad airing in the third quarter will announce the restaurant's free Original Grand Slam breakfast offer on February 9, with a voiceover saying, "It's going to be a tough week for egg layers." The breakfast offer is again highlighted in a second 30-second spot running in the fourth quarter, while a 15-second ad

prior to the two-minute warning will re-launch Denny's free Grand Slam birthday offer. The ads come via Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, S.F. (*Denny's*). ADWEEK's Eleftheria Parpis notes Denny's gave away "2 million Grand Slam Breakfasts last year two days after the Super Bowl" following a similar promotion ([ADWEEK.com](http://www.adweek.com), 1/28).

NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH: truTV officials said that the network's decision to advertise during the Super Bowl "for the first time is a sign of growing vigor," as the network is "two years into a rebranding effort." truTV is promoting its new series "NFL Full Contact" and will feature Steelers S Troy Polamalu in the ad. In Atlanta, Jeremiah McWilliams reports the spot "appears to be the network's most expensive advertising buy to date." truTV Exec VP & GM Marc Juris: "This one was a bit of a no-brainer. This would be a great way to reach a very engaged and interested football audience" ([ATLANTA CONSTITUTION](http://www.atlantaconstitution.com), 1/28).

STUCK ON THE SIDELINES: AD AGE's Jeremy Mullman reported Colts QB Peyton Manning, the NFL's "most prolific endorser," could be "sidelined during a Super Bowl in which he'll be playing a starring on-field role ... barring any last-minute reversals." None of Manning's "myriad brand-backers," including MasterCard, Sony and DirecTV, are "currently slated to run any Super Bowl ads." Sprint, despite being an "official sponsor of both the game and the NFL, as well as having active endorsement deals with Mr. Manning and [Saints QB] Drew Brees, is using its only Super Bowl spot for a secondary brand, Boost Mobile." Q Sports Marketing Founder Patrick Quinn: "It has nothing to do with Peyton's desirability, because he's probably the best pitchman going" ([ADAGE.com](http://www.adage.com), 1/27).

OPEN BAR? MEDIA magazine's David Goetzl reports InBev's acquisition of Anheuser-Busch in late '08 "has some wondering whether InBev will allow ... MillerCoors to buy coveted Super Bowl time." A-B has "exclusivity in the alcoholic beverage category" for the Super Bowl, but former A-B marketing exec Tony Ponturo "thinks the day is coming" that the brewer will relinquish the exclusivity. Ponturo believes that the brewer "will continue to buy some spots, but won't spend the premiums needed to keep competitors off the stage." Ponturo: "I just think that there's an overall philosophy that it's a lot of money and they can still have a strong presence, but then use that money for

other things" (*MEDIA, 1/ '10 issue*).

4. RIGHT GUARD LAUNCHING NBA-THEMED AD CAMPAIGN WITH CHRIS PAUL

Right Guard is planning to launch an "ad push during the April NBA Playoffs" for its new premium product Right Guard Total Defense 5 that stars Hornets G Chris Paul, according to Karl Greenberg of *MARKETING DAILY*. Dial Corporation GM Doug Weekes said that the ads will "most likely have game footage" of Paul. Weekes: "For instance where, in the final seconds of a game, he steals the ball, runs it down the court, gets the final point -- that sort of thing." Weekes said that while the spot, via Energy BBDO, Chicago, is "built around an NBA thematic, the media buy isn't limited to hoops, but will include a heavy presence around other sport networks." The tagline for advertising is "Upgrade Your Defense." As part of the campaign, Right Guard also has "signed on as third founding partner of the NBA's new youth basketball initiative" with the NCAA known as iHoops. The brand will sponsor "The Right Guard Total Defense Challenge," a nationwide search for the "best high school defensive stopper, which starts next month" (*MARKETING DAILY, 1/28 issue*). *SPORTSBUSINESS JOURNAL*'s Michael Smith notes the iHoops connection "puts Right Guard in front of an even younger target audience than the 21-45 it normally seeks." iHoops.com's targeted ages are 14-18. Smith notes Right Guard already has been "visible on the site with ads on a variety of pages" (*SPORTSBUSINESS JOURNAL, 1/25 issue*).



Right Guard's NBA-Themed Ad Campaign Most Likely Features Game Footage Of Paul

5. FOOTBALL NAMES & FACES: MANNING TOPS BREES IN DAVIE BROWN INDEX

The latest Davie Brown Index, which evaluates celebrities across several attributes, puts Colts QB Peyton Manning's awareness score on par with Vikings QB Brett Favre, singer Diana Ross and actor Colin Farrell. Meanwhile, Manning's likeability rating is comparable to singers Jon Bon Jovi and Elvis Presley, NASCAR HOFer Richard Petty and actor Jake Gyllenhaal, and his aspiration score is among the top 50 in the DBI database and is similar to scores for Pro Football HOFer Joe Montana, Suns F Grant Hill, actor Denzel Washington and Dick Clark. Saints QB Drew Brees' appeal score on the DBI is actually higher than Manning's, but Brees' awareness score is half of that of his Super Bowl XLIV counterpart. Brees trails Manning in every other DBI attribute. The following lists DBI scores for Manning, Brees and Saints RB Reggie Bush (*THE DAILY*).

Player	DBI Score	Awareness	Appeal	Aspiration	Endorsement	Trust
Peyton Manning	78.99	84.57	76.73	73.12	75.05	65.89
Reggie Bush	61.15	59.27	75.92	63.66	66.69	56.27
Drew Brees	51.83	42.44	77.18	67.22	67.35	61.30

LIVING IN THE MOMENT: CNBC.com's Darren Rovell reported Provide Commerce, owner of online flower Web site ProFlowers, signed a deal this week that will give the company the rights to use Brees' "image in its digital advertising for a period of two weeks" beginning Monday. Brees as part of the deal "won't have any speaking role,

but the fact that a deal has been struck since the Saints made it into the Super Bowl is a good sign" for Brand Affinity Technologies (BAT), which made the deal "possible." BAT "has 22 Saints and 18 Colts on its roster of players willing to hear proposals from companies," and BAT President & CEO Ryan Steelberg "suggests that savvy companies might want to sign a player to a deal before the big game that extends beyond it" (*CNBC.com*, 1/26).



Vilma Appearing In Edible Arrangements '10 Ad Campaign

Warner Bros. Looney Tunes characters in a limited-edition ad piece that commemorates Brees in '08 becoming in the second NFL QB to throw for more than 5,000 yards in a season. "Catch Dat Brees" depicts Brees completing the pass to Bugs Bunny. This marks the first animated Warner Bros. sports limited-edition piece to feature an athlete in nearly a decade. Proceeds will benefit the Brees Dream Foundation (*Broadman Fine Arts*).

IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR: *CNBC.com*'s Rovell noted it is "hard to be more marketable than Peyton Manning," but his father, Archie Manning, who played for the Saints from '71-82, "might have him beat this Super Bowl." Leverage Agency CEO Ben Sturner said, "For a clever marketer, Archie could be a big win. I could see him doing three or four last minute deals here. It depends on how nimble the marketers are." ProVentures Group President Patrick McGee said that he thinks Archie "can do as many as five speeches for corporate America in Miami, garnering up to \$20,000 a piece" (*CNBC.com*, 1/25).

HE MEASURES UP: *PRO FOOTBALL TALK*'s Mike Florio reported projected first-round NFL Draft pick RB C.J. Spiller has signed a six-figure, "exclusive, multi-year memorabilia arrangement" with Razor Entertainment. Florio wrote contracts of that value have "become a rarity in the current economy, and it could be a sign that things are turning back around" (*PROFOOTBALLTALK.com*, 1/27).

6. MARKETPLACE ROUNDUP

Royal Bank of Canada will announce this afternoon that it has signed endorsement deals with three golfers. Luke Donald and Morgan Pressel both will wear the RBC logo on their bag and left sleeve. IMG represents the two golfers. Fred Couples will also now put the RBC logo on his bag. Couples is represented by Players Group. RBC last week announced new endorsement deals with Mike Weir and Stephen Ames to join existing endorser Anthony Kim. RBC works with IMG on golf marketing (*Jon Show*,

THE SWEETEST THING: Saints LB Jonathan Vilma and Cowboys WR Miles Austin have signed to appear in Edible Arrangements '10 national ad campaign, which debuted today and will run through February 8. The ad, which comes via Hot Dish Advertising, Minneapolis, titled "Upstaged," will air on ESPN and ESPN2, including during "SportsCenter," NBA and college basketball broadcasts and Sunday's Pro Bowl telecast. The ad promotes the company's Berry Chocolate Bouquet for Valentine's Day instead of a box of chocolates (*Edible Arrangements*).

AT RECEIVER, BUGS BUNNY:

Brees is featured along with several

SportsBusiness Journal).

FLYING HIGH: BNP Paribas Open Tournament Dir Steve Simon yesterday announced that Emirates Airlines "has become a premier sponsor and the official airline" of the tournament. In California, Debra Gruszecki reports the deal "will run from 2010-2012 and includes a renewal option," and includes "prominent on-court signage, broadcast spots and advertising." Emirates also will run a "series of exciting promotions, including on the first Saturday of the competition," which has been designated "Emirates Day." The deal marks the airline's "third major sports sponsorship" in the U.S. It is "already the official airline of the USA Rugby National Sevens Teams and a premier partner of the Emirates Airline Breeders' Cup," and it also "sponsors the Rogers Cup in Toronto and the Dubai Tennis Championships in its home city" (*Palm Springs DESERT SUN, 1/28*).

EASTERN PROMISES: In a front-page piece for the WALL STREET JOURNAL, Loretta Chao reports former NBAer Stephon Marbury, who has signed to play with the Taiyuan Shanxi Zhongyu Professional Basketball Club, "isn't playing in China for the money," rather he is there to "promote his shoe and apparel brand" Starbury. The market for Marbury's shoes and apparel is "potentially huge," as the NBA "estimates that 300 million people play basketball in China." Marbury is the "biggest [NBA] star ever to have played professional basketball in China," and his "reputation as a top-notch point guard is still relatively untarnished" in the country. But his team is "one of the worst teams in the league," and Taiyuan is "markedly less tourist-friendly, internationalized and cosmopolitan than" Beijing and Shanghai. U.S. Basketball Academy President Bruce O'Neil: "If he lasts 10 days, I'll be amazed" (*WALL STREET JOURNAL, 1/28*).

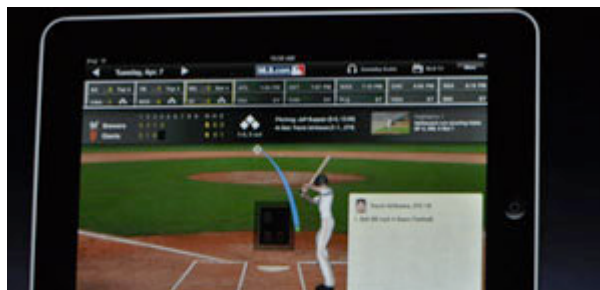
STAR TURN? In Boston, Gary Washburn notes reserve players for the NBA All-Star Game will be announced tonight, and a selection to the Eastern Conference team for Celtics G Rajon Rondo "would increase the visibility and perhaps marketability of one of the NBA's top young point guards." Rondo is a "smooth, well-spoken player who has picked up Ray Allen's dapper dressing style." Rondo's "reluctance to pursue marketing opportunities" is the "biggest obstacle faced" by his agent, BDA Sports CEO Bill Duffy. Rondo has deals with Red Bull and Dunkin' Donuts, but he "has resisted delving into other deals." Duffy: "A lot of stuff we present to him, he's not interested in" (*BOSTON GLOBE, 1/28*).

BLAST FROM THE PAST: In Minneapolis, Jerry Zgoda reported T'Wolves G Jonny Flynn during Tuesday's game against the Knicks "unveiled a pair of blue suede basketball shoes." Flynn, who has a deal with Nike, "called them 'throwback' sneakers that follow the theme of the 1989-90 jersey the Wolves wore once again" (*Minneapolis STAR TRIBUNE, 1/27*).

Sports Media

7. THINKING BIG: SEVERAL SPORTS PROPERTIES EXCITED BY NEW IPAD

Numerous sports properties and execs are seeing a bright future from the iPad, the mobile tablet device unveiled yesterday by Apple Inc. targeted to go on sale beginning in March. The device, featuring a 9.7-inch touch screen, will run a version of Apple's iPhone operating system and



combine mobile application functionality with a color e-reader. Pricing will start at \$499 and run to \$829 depending on the model. As such, the device is being positioned as a hybrid between a traditional mobile smartphone and a laptop. MLBAM participated in the iPad announcement in S.F., showing how live MLB games will operate on the device. MLBAM's successful MLB.com At Bat mobile application may carry a different name for the iPad. But baseball's digital arm yesterday began marketing MLB.TV subscriptions, the earliest it has done so for an upcoming season. Pricing for MLBAM's flagship video product will be \$119.95 for a premium-level version, and \$99.95 for a basic-level one, and the single subscription will include portability between wired computers, and mobile devices such as the iPhone and iPad, provided a user has also made the one-time purchase of the At-Bat application. "The portability is going to be a big element this year," said MLBAM President & CEO Bob Bowman. "There are a couple of things that have been very clear with Apple -- people love their products and they work very well with our technology. We're delighted with this announcement." Bowman also cheered Apple's support for content owners such as MLBAM and the N.Y. Times, which also was part of the device announcement yesterday. "Their appreciation for publishers and copyright is critical," Bowman said. "Their understanding of rightsholders is a hidden strength of theirs."

THE START OF SOMETHING BIG? Digital media consulting outfit Convergence Sports & Media President Tom Richardson called the iPad a "gamechanging" product. Richardson: "We've seen what's happened with the iPhone and a 3-inch screen. Can you imagine the possibilities with the larger real estate? That said, a lot of functions here could be done before in a various ways, but what Apple's done is packaged it all together with a big-time ease of use and a surprisingly competitive price. Apple has a big time halo effect around it, and again has something I think can be pan-demographic in its appeal." Early criticisms of the device, however, have centered on its lack of a camera of any type, another virtual keyboard that will require an adjustment period to use efficiently, and its use of the much-debated AT&T Wireless network. Some execs also questioned the pricing, as it still is higher than virtually every netbook on the market, and many full-featured laptops that use the Windows 7 operating system. NBA Digital Senior VP & GM Bryan Perez: "It's going to be interesting to see how that price point plays out. It still seems rather expensive" (*Eric Fisher, SportsBusiness Journal*).

WE'VE GOT AN APP FOR THAT: ESPN.com's Ryan Corazza reported Magic C Dwight Howard, Vikings DE Jared Allen and Bills WR Terrell Owens are expected to debut personal iPhone apps that will "closely align with their personal brands." Bengals QB Jordan Palmer is a Partner in Rock Software and is helping to create the apps, which the company already did for Bengals WR Chad Ochocinco. Howard's app will be largely based on his "well-known sense of humor by featuring a joke of the day." Allen's will be centered around his "love of hunting and his 'Mullet Militia' lifestyle," while Owens' will revolve around his "penchant for fashion and workout routine." Palmer: "We do not want to make cookie-cutter applications." Corazza noted as smartphones "continue to become more widespread in the mobile landscape, it's likely so too will athletes continue to integrate their personality and brand with technology specifically catered to them" (*ESPN.com, 1/27*).

8. SKY TO LAUNCH 3D CHANNEL, BROADCAST SUNDAY EPL MATCH IN 3D

BSkyB announced it will launch Sky 3D, Europe's first dedicated 3D TV channel, this April. The company also will become the first TV company in the world to broadcast a live 3D TV sports event to a public audience when it broadcasts Sunday's Manchester United-Arsenal EPL match in 3D. The match will air over the Sky 3D platform to selected

pubs in the U.K. and Ireland and will mark the first-ever 3D EPL match broadcast (*BskyB*). The AP's Rob Harris reported soccer fans will "have to wear special glasses to watch the 3-D televisions" at nine available venues "as they preview Sky's dedicated 3-D channel." Sky 3D "will be available to pub subscribers before being expanded to regular customers and will initially broadcast one Premier League match a week in the new format" (*AP, 1/27*). Sky Sports Dir Of Operations Darren Long said that filming in 3D "offers viewers a different experience from HD." Long: "Normal practice is to have a camera high in the stand, but with HD we move closer to the pitch. The camera moves less, too, to give the viewer time to appreciate the image. With golf, for example, we can show every small undulation on a green, so that you can, for instance, for the first time see why a player misses a putt that even in HD appears simple" (*TIMESONLINE.co.uk, 1/27*).

9. CANUCKS, CBC RESOLVE DIFFERENCES; TEAM ENDS BOYCOTT OF "HNIC"

The Canucks and the CBC "resolved their differences in a conference call Wednesday and Canuck players will again be doing interviews" Saturday on "Hockey Night in Canada," according to Elliott Pap of the VANCOUVER SUN. The disagreement began January 16 when the CBC's Ron MacLean "presented a one-sided piece on the Alex Burrows-Stephane Auger affair." When MacLean "refused to offer an apology to either Burrows or the Canucks, Canucks President & GM Mike Gillis told his players to decline all interview requests" for "HNIC's" January 23 telecast of Canucks-Blackhawks (*VANCOUVER SUN, 1/28*). CBC Sports Exec Dir Scott Moore: "It's fair to say we're putting the incident behind us. They expressed their views and we understand them. We have agreed to move forward." In Toronto, Chris Zelkovich notes "neither side would divulge what was said in the meeting or if an apology was offered" (*TORONTO STAR, 1/28*). The GLOBE & MAIL's Bruce Dowbiggin writes the resolution is a "huge relief" to "HNIC" -- which has been "playing defence on this story for almost two weeks." Sources said that the Canucks are "not happy but they will move on." However, Dowbiggin writes the team is likely "to monitor how they're covered" by the "HNIC" crew. The team "may also wrest some behind-the-scenes concessions" from "HNIC" as the CBC "tries to make nice to avoid alienating its West Coast mandate" (*GLOBESPORTS.com, 1/28*).

10. MEDIA NOTES

Comcast Chair & CEO Brian Roberts yesterday reiterated that the company "isn't going to make NBC a cable channel" once its takeover of NBC Universal is complete. Roberts said there is "still a broadcast audience," as when "MNF" went from ABC to ESPN, the audience "went down." Roberts: "For those of us who are connected, you can't understand that. But there are people who aren't connected, and there are people who turn on their dial and they want to watch broadcast because that's how they were trained" (*CABLEFAX DAILY, 1/28*). Roberts added, "We think there is a vibrant role for local broadcast and national broadcast television" (*BROADCASTINGCABLE.com, 1/27*).



COVERAGE PLAN: ESPN yesterday announced that 10 FIFA World Cup games will be on ABC, including U.S.-England on June 12 and the July 11 championship game. ESPN will televise 44 matches, with the remaining 10 on ESPN2 (*ESPN*). The AP's Ronald Blum notes all but the ABC games "will be on ESPN360.com, 46 games will be on ESPN Mobile TV and every game will be replayed at night on ESPN Classic." Meanwhile, in what "appears to be an attempt

to ambush Univision's Spanish-language coverage, ESPN Deportes will broadcast up to 40 matches" in Portuguese. Blum noted ESPN2 also will "go all soccer for a 24-hour countdown before" the opening game of the World Cup on June 11. ESPN Senior VP & Exec Producer Jed Drake: "The level of ambition we have for this project is second to none compared to anything we do at ESPN" (*AP*, 1/27).

COMFORTABLE WITH SHOW: NASCAR driver Jimmie Johnson said of his control over the content of HBO's "24/7 Jimmie Johnson: Race to Daytona" documentary, "If there's something they're shooting that I don't like, I can certainly say no, but once they have it, they take it. ... Essentially once they seal the package and FedEx that little package off, it's done. It's in the hands of the editors." However, Johnson added the "part that probably makes it easier is it is not a reality show." Johnson: "They're not camped out in our house waiting for every moment. ... I would not be interested in this if it was a reality show. I have no desire to open my life up and have my relationship with my wife and my personal stuff exploited" (*SI.com*, 1/27).

Leagues & Governing Bodies

11. NBA SUSPENDS ARENAS, CRITTENTON WITHOUT PAY FOR REST OF SEASON

NBA Commissioner David Stern yesterday suspended Wizards Gs Gilbert Arenas and Javaris Crittenton "without pay for the remainder of the season after they displayed handguns during a locker room dispute last month," according to Michael Lee of the WASHINGTON POST. Stern reached his decision after an "hour-long meeting with Arenas." The commissioner later released a statement, reiterating that guns "would not be tolerated" in the NBA. Two NBA sources noted that Stern was "contemplating suspending Arenas for 82 games but elected for remainder of the season after talking" with NBPA Exec Dir Billy Hunter. Arenas' 50-game suspension, dating back to January 6, is the third longest in NBA history behind Ron Artest (86 games) and Latrell Sprewell (68 games). Crittenton's 38-game penalty would be the fourth-longest in league history. Prior to this, the NBA's "longest suspension for a gun-related offense was seven games," which Stephen Jackson received in '06. While Arenas asked the NBPA "not to challenge Stern's decision," the union said that Crittenton "has not reached a decision on whether he would file an appeal." Lee cites a source as indicating that Arenas during yesterday's meeting asked Stern about the possibility of having the four years and \$80M left on his contract voided by the Wizards. Stern reportedly replied, "That would be left up to the team." Wizards President Ernie Grunfeld last night said, "We haven't made any kind of decisions, but we are exploring all our options" (*WASHINGTON POST*, 1/28).



Arenas Receives Third-Longest Suspension In NBA History

STERN WARNING: Stern during an interview on NBA TV last night noted guns in the locker room violates the league's CBA and said, "They'd been warned about that at the beginning of each season in writing and with a visit from team security to team meetings." He added, "I decided that it just can't be tolerated and each of them was suspended for the rest of the year. ... I would've done more if I didn't believe their

contrition and their sincerity." When asked if the players' violation of DC law or NBA policy was "more significant," Stern said, "NBA policy. It's not that the other isn't significant, but it doesn't concern me at the moment. At the moment, what I was dealing with was players who violated a specific prohibition agreed to by their union and the NBA that there will not be guns in any NBA facilities. They violated that, put themselves in potential danger and they put their teammates in potential danger. It's nothing that we're going to tolerate." Stern added he agreed to sit with Hunter outside of collective bargaining meetings and discuss "how we can deliver the message even stronger than we do today that guns will not be tolerated in NBA facilities" (*NBA TV*, 1/27). Stern yesterday also said, "If there's any doubt to any of our players about it in the future, we will be dealing with this in an even more severe way" (*N.Y. TIMES*, 1/28). ESPN's Marc Stein said, "Having guns on league property is what really took this thing to a new level. ... Stern wanted to send a very loud message here that nobody better even think about trying this again" ("*SportsCenter*," *ESPN*, 1/27).

DON'T PLAY WITH FIREARMS: When asked about what "message the penalties sent" to NBA players, Stern said, "We mean what we say when we say that guns are prohibited from being in our buildings and on team business." He added, "I felt that I should do something to keep Arenas from doing even further damage to himself and I told him that." NBPA President and Lakers G Derek Fisher said, "We respect that process, but from a union perspective we have to protect the short-term and long-term rights of our members, and when members do wrong things or make mistakes, they'll be rightfully punished, and we're just here to make sure that that doesn't go beyond what it should be under the circumstances" (*ESPN.com*, 1/27).

TOO LENIENT? Comcast SportsNet's Ivan Carter said of Stern, "He was going to come down hard on this. He had to. It was the image of the league. ... Stern did what he had to do" ("*Washington Post Live*," *Comcast SportsNet Mid-Atlantic*, 1/27). ESPN's Michael Wilbon said, "Any pro basketball-circle people ... presumed this would be the penalty" ("*PTI*," *ESPN*, 1/27). *SI.com*'s Chris Mannix noted some NBA sources are "surprised the punishment didn't exceed the season-long suspension and push Arenas' ban into the 2010-11 season" (*SI.com*, 1/27). In Sacramento, Ailene Voisin wrote the suspension is "totally reasonable," and given that Arenas "previously had been cited for possessing an unlicensed gun, the punishment might even be considered lenient" (*SACBEE.com*, 1/27). In N.Y., Mitch Lawrence writes what Stern "needed to hand out were pink slips." Arenas could have been Stern's "agent for change on guns," but instead "all we got yesterday from the commissioner was tough talk about the current firearm laws on the books." League sources indicated that Stern "never considered a lifetime ban for Arenas or Crittenton." Lawrence: "It was all set up for Stern to make this a watershed moment in NBA history. Surprisingly, he failed to see what he had" (*N.Y. DAILY NEWS*, 1/28).

STERN TAKES THE EARLY LEAD: *CBSSPORTS.com*'s Ken Berger wrote the NBA is "headed for a lockout after next season, and Stern scored the first negotiating victory" yesterday by getting Arenas to accept his suspension without an appeal. Berger cited a source as saying that Hunter offered Stern a "plea bargain by which Arenas and Javaris Crittenton would get leniency in exchange for strengthening" the CBA's prohibition on guns. But Stern "smacked that idea out of the air." Berger: "Make no mistake: It was a sign of things to come." If this situation is "any barometer, Stern let everybody know who's in charge." He played Arenas and Crittenton into a "cataclysmic opening salvo in the looming dispute between owners and players" (*CBSSPORTS.com*, 1/27).

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD? ESPN's Stein reported the "consensus

around the league is that the Wizards would love to void (Arenas') contract if they could be successful doing so." However, there is "almost unanimous agreement that trying to void Arenas' contract wouldn't be successful. ... So really the only way the Wizards could go forward with a contract void is if Arenas is sentenced to jail time during the season" ("*SportsCenter*," *ESPN*, 1/27). ESPN's Tony Kornheiser: "They'll move to void the contract. He'll never play for them again. ... This is like what happened to Michael Vick" ("*PTI*," *ESPN*, 1/27). CBS' Berger noted "short of a trade, the only solution to rid the Wizards of Arenas -- and vice versa -- would be a buyout reaching into the tens of millions." However, with the "transfer of ownership from the family of the late Abe Pollin" to Capitals Owner Ted Leonsis "still up in the air, that's not a realistic option." Meanwhile, Berger noted Arenas will forfeit a total of about \$7.1M during the unpaid suspension. A source noted that the money "typically is divided evenly between the NBA and players association charitable foundations." The source added that the league and the union also could "agree to let the Wizards keep the money." But in either case the Wizards "get no break on their luxury tax bill" (*CBSSPORTS.com*, 1/27).

12. PGA TOUR NOW TRULY HEADS INTO LIFE WITHOUT TIGER AT TORREY PINES

Tiger Woods traditionally begins his PGA Tour schedule at the Torrey Pines event presently named the Farmers Insurance Open, which tees off today, and "now is the time to start keeping score" as to how his absence will impact the Tour, according to Doug Ferguson of the AP. This is the "first tournament on network television" for the '10 season, and "now is the time to start measuring TV ratings, which traditionally spike when Woods is in contention." Woods missed last year's event at Torrey Pines due to his knee injury, and the '09 final round earned a 2.0 rating. That was "down from a 4.2 in 2008 when Woods won by eight shots over Stewart Cink." Woods' absence "will continue to capture attention if he's not at the Match Play Championship or another World Golf Championship at Doral the second week of March, or at Bay Hill" (*AP*, 1/26). In San Diego, Tim Sullivan wrote the void Woods has "left has brought the PGA Tour's systemic problems into sharper focus." Without Woods around to "make it matter, the whole West Coast swing hangs on the lip of irrelevance." Phil Mickelson is making his '10 PGA Tour debut this weekend, but he is among just "five of the world's top 30 players" competing in the event. Meanwhile, Sullivan noted what is "worse" is that fellow golfers "are a collective shrug in the search for answers" in generating interest without Woods. Rocco Mediate said, "I don't know how you fix that situation." Brandt Snedeker added, "I don't think there is a solution" (*SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE*, 1/27).



**Woods Notably Absent From
Farmers Insurance Open Today**

TICKETS, SPONSORSHIPS DOWN: USA TODAY's Michael McCarthy reports Woods' absence is "taking a toll on tournament sales." Farmers Insurance Open Tournament Dir Tom Wilson said that ticket and sponsorship sales are "down 15%-20% at Torrey Pines from the last time Woods played" in '08, though sales are "about even" with '09. McCarthy notes other tournaments Woods "normally plays will have a harder time selling tickets and attracting sponsors" without his presence, and if "recent history is a guide, TV ratings will be sliced in half for those events." CBS Sports Senior

VP/Programming Rob Correa: "There'll probably be a ratings dip in the Tiger events. But we're confident established stars like Phil Mickelson and new ones like Anthony Kim will pick up the slack" (*USA TODAY*, 1/28).

PHIL-OSOPHY: GOLF.com's Cameron Morfit wrote to "say that all eyes will be on" Mickelson this weekend "would be an understatement." Mickelson is the "Pitt to Tiger's Clooney, and seldom has golf needed him more." Golf Channel is "promoting its next month or so as 'Five weeks of Phil,' because the game is desperate for a story other than the one the tabloids and mainstream news outlets have feasted on for months" (*GOLF.com*, 1/26). Golf Channel's Charlie Rymer said the two events played in Hawaii earlier this month and last weekend's Bob Hope Classic "were a little subdued." Rymer: "All of that is going to change this week because (Mickelson) is teeing it up in San Diego. Make no mistake about it, the Phil-fanatics will be out in force. The energy level will be high" ("*Golf Central*," *Golf Channel*, 1/26). In Charlotte, Ron Green Jr. writes golf "needs sunshine, and that's what Mickelson brings this week" (*CHARLOTTE OBSERVER*, 1/28). Golf World's John Hawkins, on Mickelson: "He needs to be playing and he needs to be front and center because he is basically all we've got right now in terms of mainstream pull" ("*The 19th Hole*," *Golf Channel*, 1/27).

POWER PLAY: Tiger Woods, Mickelson and Cavaliers F LeBron James top the Bloomberg BusinessWeek 2010 Power 100 ranking of the most powerful athletes in sports. Bloomberg BusinessWeek teamed with Horrow Sports Ventures CEO Rick Horrow and Managing Dir Karla Swatek and CSE Sports & Entertainment to determine the list. Based on CSE's data, Woods' Power 100 ranking would have ranked No. 1 even if the rumors of his infidelity had surfaced earlier last year (*Bloomberg BusinessWeek*). BLOOMBERG NEWS' Adam Fusfeld noted "unlike previous Power 100s, this year's would focus only on athletes -- not owners, agents, commissioners or coaches" (*BLOOMBERG NEWS*, 1/27).

13. **MLS, UNION WORKING HARD TO AVOID POTENTIALLY CRIPPLING LOCKOUT**

MLS and the MLS Players' Union met again yesterday in an effort to negotiate a new CBA before the expiration of the current deal on Sunday, and there are "promising signs that labor peace will land on time and that good sense will prevail," according to Steve Davis of ESPN SOCCERNET. The two sides have "never seemed that far apart, but they have drawn



tough lines on sticking points of player rights issues." Media reports have "typically (and accurately) downplayed the strike or lockout factor, although the DEFCON level has risen lately." Both the league and union have handled the negotiations "privately and, by all appearances, professionally." Any rancor seems to be "coming from media or from peripheral voices." Negotiators for the MLSPU have been "mum on the process, keeping all negotiations behind closed doors and declining media interviews." So too have the "primary negotiators from the league." Davis noted MLS officials, "team owners and labor interests all understand how potentially destabilizing such action would be to the entire pro soccer platform." Dynamo G and player rep Pat Onstad said, "Obviously, we're not one of the bigger sports, where we can go by the wayside for a time and expect fans to come right back. In the last couple of weeks, I think both sides will tell you progress has been made, and we're all cautiously optimistic of getting a CBA in place before the deadline" (*ESPNSOCCERNET.com*, 1/27). ESPN.com's Andrew Hush reported

"slowly but surely, an agreement is getting closer." It also seems that "even if this weekend's deadline passes, things will be sorted out well before the start of the new season on March 25" (ESPNSOCCER.NET.com, 1/27).

Franchises

14. LEONSIS' TAKEOVER OF WIZARDS, VERIZON CENTER NOW IN JEOPARDY

Washington Sports & Entertainment claims that it "has the right" to put the Wizards and Verizon Center "on the open market, throwing into question attempts" by Capitals Owner Ted Leonsis to assume full ownership of the two properties, according to a front-page piece by Thomas Heath of the WASHINGTON POST. WSE President of Business Operations & CFO Peter Biche, whose organization controls 56% of the NBA team and Verizon Center, in a memo to employees Tuesday acknowledged that Leonsis "has the right to match any offer submitted" to the estate of Abe Pollin. Leonsis' Lincoln Holdings already owns the remaining 44% of the Wizards and the arena. But Biche in the memo also said that "no one has an exclusive right to negotiate a purchase" for the entities in Pollin's estate, which also include the local Ticketmaster franchise. Sources indicated that Leonsis believes his investor group "has an exclusive period to reach a deal," and Leonsis "thinks that period is still in effect." Heath notes the news will "probably complicate what has been a civil negotiations process between representatives of Leonsis" and Pollin's estate. These events "point to an unraveling of what many thought would be a smooth transition from Pollin to Leonsis." When Leonsis bought the Capitals from Pollin in '99, the two "set conditions that would create a path for Leonsis and his investors to buy the basketball team and Verizon Center upon Pollin's death." However, the two sides are "thought to be more" than \$100M apart in their "respective valuations of a package" (WASHINGTON POST, 1/28). A source close to Leonsis said Lincoln Holdings is "surprised and disappointed" by Biche's e-mail. The source said of WSE, "They are forced to sell if we want to buy" (AP, 1/27).

15. MLS SOUNDERS TO CAP SEASON TICKET SALES AT 32,000 FOR '10 SEASON

After setting an MLS attendance record last season with 30,897 fans per game, Sounders FC yesterday said that it "will cap season ticket sales at 32,000 for the coming year," according to Greg Johns of SEATTLEPI.com. Sounders Majority Owner Joe Roth said that 96% of the team's season-ticket holders "renewed after last year." Less than 1,000 season tickets "remain for the 2010 season," and only a "limited number of single-game tickets" will be available next season. The team "does not plan on expanding its Qwest Field seating configuration of about 35,500 used at the end of last year." The full stadium capacity of 67,000 "could be opened up for three still-to-be-announced 'international friendly matches' that are part of the season-ticket package, but regular-season games will be played using only the lower bowl plus one section of seating above the concourse." Sounders Senior VP/Business Operations Gary Wright said the current seating is a "natural fit without going into the Hawk's Nest." Johns noted the "other option would be to open up the huge expanse of seats in the upper bowl, but ticket demand doesn't warrant that at this point." Wright: "It's important to keep the atmosphere what it is. If you open up the whole bowl, you don't have that same energy and feeling because you'd have lots of empty seats." Wright said that he "expected an announcement of the international friendly matches in the next several weeks" (SEATTLEPI.com, 1/27).

FRIENDLY COMPETITION: Wright said of the international friendlies, "We're

looking at some big ones again. We feel good about it. ... But now we've got so many other games, I don't think we can fit all three of our friendlies (into the July and early August time period favored by European clubs). So I think we're going to have to take another of our windows and find a team from another part of the world than Europe to come play in October or May." In Tacoma, Don Ruiz notes the Sounders are "guaranteed at least one home game in the CONCACAF Champions League, and they are likely to host games in defense of their U.S. Open Cup title." But early round games in those competitions "will be played at Starfire Sports Stadium" in Tukwila, Washington, and are "not part of the season-ticket package" (*Tacoma NEWS TRIBUNE, 1/28*).

16. JON DANIELS SAYS MLB RANGERS' SALE WAS NOT A DISTRACTION TO TEAM

MLB Rangers GM Jon Daniels yesterday said he does not think outgoing Owner Tom Hicks putting the team up for sale "affected anyone inside the clubhouse walls last year." Daniels, during a chat on ESPNDALLAS.com, said, "The players are aware of what's going on, but they really didn't see any effects, and were pretty well insulated. So I don't think it affected our play at all." Daniels added it was "mostly the same for the organization as a whole," and the idea that Rangers President Nolan Ryan was "part of the group that seemed like the most likely new ownership team probably helped." Daniels: "People on both the baseball and business sides were able to focus on their jobs, as Nolan brought a sense of continuity when a lot was unknown." Meanwhile, Daniels said under the new ownership group, the organization expects to "win, and now that we've put a plan in place to do so, we hold ourselves to ... that standard." Daniels added he feels a "tremendous obligation" to prospective Owner Chuck Greenberg "to deliver." Daniels: "He's given me and our group an opportunity to mold the franchise, spend resources against our vision. It's more pride than pressure" (*ESPNDALLAS.com, 1/27*).



PRESSURE'S ON: ESPNDALLAS.com's Matt Mosley wrote Hicks "got one thing right:" his decision in '08 to hire Ryan as president and "put him in charge of all baseball decisions." Mosley: "It was a much-needed credibility infusion, and Ryan's very presence seemed to point the organization in the right direction." But Mosley wrote "no matter how much some of us loved collecting Ryan's baseball cards when we were kids, most of us have learned not to revere owners," and once a "beloved player becomes part of management, it changes our relationship with him." Mosley: "Even when Ryan became the team president for the Rangers, we still had Hicks to kick around when things backfired. ... But Hicks' departure puts Ryan directly in the line of fire" (*ESPNDALLAS.com, 1/27*).

REMEMBER THE GOOD: In Dallas, Evan Grant writes if Hicks' Rangers tenure is "remembered purely for the failures, it would be revisionist history." Grant: "If you closely examine the 12-year Hicks reign, you might just conclude it to have been the most successful in the club's history on virtually every front." The Rangers "finished 10 games above .500 or better four times" under Hicks, and the club's farm system was "ranked as the best in baseball last year." The Rangers also are "more of a force in Latin America," and in Ryan and Greenberg, Hicks "seems to have found the best possible caretakers for the franchise" (*DALLAS MORNING NEWS, 1/28*).

HISTORY LESSON: In Dallas, Mike Heika wrote in the "wake of the sale of the

Rangers, one thing seems clear" -- Hicks' vision for running the Stars is "similar to the vision he had for the Rangers in 2003." Heika: "He will run the team on a tight budget, and that budget will be set yearly based on the team's revenue." Heika wrote he "believed for a while that the difference between the finances of Major League Baseball and the NHL would entice Hicks to spend money on the Stars for the simple reason that it makes financial sense." But the NHL has "changed since the lockout." The league is "participating in a ton of revenue sharing, so a lot of the money that a team makes in the playoffs actually goes to the NHL and is redistributed." Heika: "The financial incentive to win isn't as great as it was five years ago" (*DALLASNEWS.com, 1/27*).

17. ORACLE CEO LARRY ELLISON CONFIRMS INTEREST IN BUYING WARRIORS



Sources Indicate Ellison Unwilling To Pay Asking Price Of \$400M For Warriors

Oracle CEO Larry Ellison yesterday confirmed that he is "interested in buying" the Warriors from Owner Chris Cohan, according to Frank Hughes of SI.com. Ellison was asked about speculation that he will buy the Warriors during a conference to discuss Oracle's plans for its takeover of Sun Microsystems. Ellison: "I'm trying, I'm trying. Unfortunately you can't have a hostile takeover of a basketball team." But Warriors President Robert Rowell said that Ellison has "never made an offer to buy the team." NBA sources said that Cohan is "asking at least \$400[M] for the team, and indications are that Ellison is not willing to pay what appears to be an inflated price given the economy and impending lockout after next season." But Ellison's latest comments indicate that he "may be looking to open dialogue with Cohan" (*SI.com, 1/27*). Rowell yesterday said, "I've been hearing this for years. At some point in time, the media speculation will become a reality. But right now, there's not much to this." While Cohan has given "no indication he plans to put the franchise up for sale any time soon, there's thinking that he would certainly listen if an incredible offer was made down the road" (*AP, 1/27*). In Oakland, Monte Poole writes, "So ends the speculation, rumor and innuendo. So begins the dreaming." It is "game on," as Ellison is "telling the world he wants to buy the team." Ellison "used 15 unambiguous words to thrust the ball into Cohan's chest." Since becoming the principal owner of the team in '95, Cohan has been a "disaster, with teams defined by failures and a franchise gripped in dysfunction." There is "no knowing what kind of owner Ellison would be, but it's impossible to imagine him being less effective than Cohan" (*OAKLAND TRIBUNE, 1/28*).

18. NBA FRANCHISE NOTES: PROKHOROV MAY NOT GET NETS UNTIL MARCH

In New Jersey, Al Iannazzone reports Mikhail Prokhorov's expected takeover of the Nets from Bruce Ratner "probably won't be until the very end of the first quarter" of this year. Sources indicated that Prokhorov "may not take control" of the NBA team until March, and it is "possible it could go into the second quarter, early April, depending on when everyone and everything is cleared from the Atlantic Yards site in Brooklyn." Prokhorov also still needs

approval from the NBA BOG, "which could happen next month" (*Bergen RECORD, 1/28*).

THAT'S THE TICKET! The Cavaliers will become the first pro franchise to use a new dynamic ticket pricing product from Indianapolis-based pricing software developer Digonex Technologies Inc. The team next month will begin employing Digonex's Sports & Entertainment Analytical Ticketing System (SEATS), which analyzes sales data and provides price suggestions using dozens of parameters and data points, for select individual games at Quicken Loans Arena. Digonex launched SEATS in November, and the dynamic pricing product is a direct competitor to Qcue Inc., which works with the MLB Giants and Stars. "Our technology helps sports franchises stay in sync with an ever-changing marketplace and provides a fair-to-all pricing solution that benefits both sports teams and fans," said Jan Eglen, Digonex CEO (*Eric Fisher, SportsBusiness Journal*).



Prokhorov May Not Take Control Of Nets Until March

CHECKING INTO THE GAME? In Toronto, Doug Smith reported the Raptors, NBA and Ontario government are "on the verge of allowing professional basketball to be part of the daily Pro-Line" gambling offerings. MLSE Exec VP & COO Tom Anselmi: "It's not done yet, but it will probably be done for next year, maybe this year's playoffs." Smith noted the NBA "originally ordered the province to drop NBA games from its daily offering on Pro-Line as a term of the franchise's expansion agreement with the Raptors." But Anselmi noted gambling on NBA games "happens in other provinces." When the Grizzlies left Vancouver, the NBA "went back on" B.C.'s Pro-Line game (*TORONTO STAR, 1/27*).

THE KINGS & I: The Kings on Tuesday announced an "exclusive new community-based leadership" organization called Kings 100. The group of 100 Sacramento-area community leaders is working to "continue garnering support in the region" for the NBA club (*SACRAMENTO BEE, 1/27*).

Finance

19. ISC SAYS INVESTMENT IN MOTORSPORTS AUTHENTICS HAS LOST ALL VALUE

By Michael Smith, Staff Writer, SportsBusiness Journal

Int'l Speedway Corp. announced this morning that its \$122.5M investment in Motorsports Authentics had completely lost its value, based on declining sales and the lack of potential for a turnaround. ISC, which wrote down the value of MA to zero, will not record any future profits or losses from the merchandise and apparel company that it jointly owns with Speedway Motorsports Inc. Bankruptcy remains an option for MA if it cannot renegotiate the terms of its licensing deals with several NASCAR teams. Those contracts are in default, ISC said, because MA has not been making payments on the full amount of the guarantees. The management at MA continues to negotiate with the teams to create new terms that would allow MA to be successful. ISC President John Saunders: "In my view, time is of the essence. There is an element of urgency. The longer this goes on, the more uncomfortable people become that something can get done. There are a

number of stakeholders at the table and getting everyone on the same page is complex. We expect some resolution in the next 3-6 months." ISC's net income dropped 95% from \$134.6M in '08 to \$6.8M in '09, with its stake in MA costing a total of \$77.6M.

RUNNING ON EMPTY: In ISC's earnings report this morning, the company said admissions revenue for '09 was \$195.5M, down from \$236.1M in '08. The only change in the number of events was one fewer IRL race. Total attendance for ISC's 21 NASCAR Sprint Cup races and other events was 3.1 million, down from 3.7 million in '08. Further dips are expected in '10, as ISC projects admissions revenue to drop year over year in the mid-to-high single digits. Sponsorship revenue is expected to be down in the mid-single digits and hospitality will be down in the high single digits to the low teens. Four Sprint Cup races and three Nationwide Series races in '10 remain without a title sponsor, which is consistent with last year. ISC's total revenue is projected to be down in the low single digits. Still, ISC reports encouraging signs from the corporate sales front, citing recently signed deals with UAW, Valvoline, HP Hood and Hershey's Milk.

20. UNDER ARMOUR SEES REVENUE INCREASES OVER '08 FOR Q4, FULL YEAR

Under Armour for Q4 of FY '09 saw net revenues increase 24% to \$222.2M from \$179.3M for the year-ago period. Net apparel revenues for the period ending December 31 climbed 26% to \$192.1M from \$152.4M in the year-ago period, while net footwear revenues fell 5.4% to \$8.7M from \$9.2M last year.

Operating income for the quarter grew 17.8% to \$26.9M from \$22.9M in the year-ago period, and gross margin for Q4 increased to 51.4%, compared with 50.7% the previous year. Meanwhile, Under Armour's net revenues for FY '09 climbed 18.1% to \$856.4M from \$725.2M in '08, ahead of the company's previously provided outlook of \$830-835M. Apparel net revenues for FY '09 grew 12.6% to \$651.8M from \$578.9M last year, while footwear net revenues for the year increased 60.6% to \$136.2M from \$84.8M in '08. Operating income for the year grew 10.9% and totaled \$85.3M, up from \$76.9M last year (*Under Armour*). At presstime, shares of Under Armour were trading at \$26.11, down 6.5% from yesterday's close of \$27.91 (*THE DAILY*).



UNDER ARMOUR®

Facilities & Venues

21. MLS DYNAMO CONSIDER SOUTHWEST HOUSTON SITE FOR STADIUM

The MLS Dynamo are "considering a pitch to build a soccer stadium on private land" in southwest Houston, according to Chris Moran of the HOUSTON CHRONICLE. Dynamo President & GM Oliver Luck yesterday said that the team has "not abandoned plans to build downtown on city-owned land east of U.S. 59," but he confirmed that he "has met several times with" officials from Houston-based developer Midway Cos., which owns 30 acres at the southwest Houston site. Luck said of Midway, "They have not yet presented a full-blown plan to us.



It's an interesting location and certainly worth looking at." Moran notes the Dynamo and the city of Houston "have a deal in which the team would pay \$60[M] in stadium construction costs" at the downtown site. But Midway Chair & CEO Brad Freels said the deal downtown "started stalling a little bit," and added Midway "started wondering if that stadium could make sense" at the company's property. Freels "envision[s] a 21,000-seat soccer and concert arena as part of a multi-use project" at the site. Houston Mayor Annise Parker said building a stadium at the southwest Houston site is an "excellent option that takes the city taxpayers largely or completely out of the loop." Parker added that the city "would consider contributing infrastructure work or tax abatements to the Midway development" (*HOUSTON CHRONICLE*, 1/28).

GROUNDBREAKING MOMENT: In San Jose, Elliott Almond reports the MLS Earthquakes today will break ground on a training field at the proposed site of a new stadium, "the most tangible evidence yet that ownership is serious about building a pitch" across from Mineta San Jose Int'l Airport. The \$1.2M grass training field "will give the team a permanent home" after it spent the past two seasons sharing practice facilities with Santa Clara Univ. and West Valley College (*SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS*, 1/28).

DEAL BROKEN: In Vancouver, Ian Walker reports Delta, B.C., city politicians Monday "nixed" the USL Whitecaps' "plan for a national soccer training centre" in the city. The Whitecaps and Delta in May had held a press conference to "announce a tentative agreement for the construction of the [C\$31M] facility, of which the B.C. Liberals had agreed to pay more than half." Whitecaps President Bob Lenarduzzi: "It's disappointing that they chose to pursue their own plans for the site; we were quite prepared to give back to the community and that was part of our deal." Lenarduzzi confirmed that there are "other municipalities interested in hosting national training grounds, but refused to get into specifics" (*VANCOUVER SUN*, 1/28).

22. CUBS-MESA DEAL FOR NEW SPRING TRAINING COMPLEX NOW UP TO VOTERS



Cubs' Proposed \$84M Complex Will Require Legislature, Voter Approval

Cubs President Crane Kenney yesterday confirmed that the team has given Mesa, Arizona, an "exclusive window to keep the team" for Spring Training, and now the fate of the proposed \$84M complex "lies in the hands of the Arizona legislature and ultimately the city's voters, who will vote on funding for the facility in November," according to Phil Rogers of the *CHICAGO TRIBUNE*. Kenney "acknowledged the difficult timing for such a measure," and noted that the Cubs "aren't taking voters' approval for granted." He said, "Especially with the recession today, there is no sure thing." Kenney added that the team "will suspend thoughts about a proposed move to Naples, Fla., which made a strong pitch built around a public-private partnership" (*CHICAGO TRIBUNE*, 1/28). MLB.com's Tom Singer noted the Cubs' proposed 100-acre project in Mesa is "in the very early stages." A specific site has "yet to be determined," but Kenney noted that the choices "have been whittled to three possibilities, with an East Mesa location most likely." As part of the Memorandum of Understanding, Mesa "did away with the annual \$850,000 penalty the club had faced for

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early termination of its contract with the city." Although the MOU "does not have a formal deadline, it essentially gives Arizona a one-year window." If approved, Kenney believes a "2012 move into the new facility" is possible, although 2013 is "more realistic" (*MLB.com*, 1/27). In Phoenix, Walsh & Nelson note the Arizona Sports & Tourism Authority bill "would have to be approved by mid-July to give Mesa time to call a November election on the bond proposal." How much money each source would contribute has "yet to be determined" (*ARIZONA REPUBLIC*, 1/28). Collier (FL) County Tourist Development Council Dir Jack Wert said because the complex must be approved by the Arizona legislature and Mesa voters, "we still think we have an opportunity" to lure the Cubs to Florida. Wert: "The owners said to our group here, 'You're a solid second place.' So until that happens, there's still a possibility" (*Ft. Myers NEWS-PRESS*, 1/28)

FLYING SOLO: Kenney said that the Cubs "have been approached by other major-league teams about the possibility of sharing a new facility, but the Cubs have rejected that idea because they want complete control to build a facility that best suits the needs of the Cubs and their fans." The "idea is to have a real Chicago flavor" to the complex. Cubs BOD member Laura Ricketts: "Our home is Wrigley Field, so we appreciate that unique feel. That's why we want to recreate it. ... We want to bring some of that unique feel West" (*ARIZONA REPUBLIC*, 1/28).

23. FACILITY NOTES

Mavericks President & CEO Terdema Ussery yesterday said that the February 14 NBA All-Star Game at Cowboys Stadium is "'past 85,000 tickets sold,' the most of any basketball game in history." Ussery said that Mavericks, Cowboys and NBA officials are "working with Arlington fire marshals and public safety officials to determine how many more standing-room tickets can be sold." Ussery: "Whether or not we get to 100,000, we don't know." The largest basketball attendance on record was 78,129 for a Kentucky-Michigan State game at Ford Field in December '03 (*DALLAS MORNING NEWS*, 1/28).

CHARGE ACCOUNT: Sports finance consultant Mitchell Ziets yesterday offered San Diego's Centre City Development Corp. board an "overview of recent stadium projects," noting that the public investment in 11 football stadium projects since '02 averaged 54%. In San Diego, Matthew Hall notes Ziets' analysis "means the taxpayer contribution to a new Chargers stadium" could be in the \$400M range based on the team's estimated \$700-800M cost of building a new venue in downtown San Diego. The CCDC is "months away from preparing a financing plan that might work for the city and the team." Yesterday marked Ziets' "first public appearance since CCDC retained his firm, Evolution Media Capital, for \$160,000" (*SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE*, 1/28).

GREEN & GOLD: In Portland, Dylan Rivera noted Rose Garden Arena has "accomplished the greenest retrofit of a sports stadium in the United States, an effort affirmed this week when energy efficiency measures and operational improvements were certified by a rigorous green building program." The arena this week "was certified LEED Gold, the second highest ranking in the program." A "handful of sports stadiums have been certified at the lowest levels of the LEED program, but among major



Rose Garden Arenas Has Been Certified LEED Gold, Second Highest Ranking In The Program

league sports facilities, no new buildings or retrofits have reach[ed] the gold ranking" (*Portland OREGONIAN*, 1/27).

JOINING FORCES: In Columbus, Barbara Carmen reports a "new fan group is working to build community support for fixing the Blue Jackets' financial troubles, which officials have said could endanger the team's future" in the city. Forward Together has "set up an online petition for central Ohioans to express support for a solution." The group is "getting an assist from" Blue Jackets Owner John McConnell, and has "hired Hinson Ltd. Public Relations for 60 days to help it organize and set up its Web site, www.forwardtogethercolumbus.org." More than "2,300 visitors had signed an online petition of support by mid-yesterday" (*COLUMBUS DISPATCH*, 1/28).

BACK TO SCHOOL: Sources indicated that the Univ. of Massachusetts and the Univ. of New Hampshire have "reached a two-year agreement" for their football teams to play each other at Gillette Stadium beginning this year. In Boston, Mark Blaudschun notes Patriots Owner Robert Kraft is "exploring the idea of playing more college games" at the stadium, and there is the "possibility of Notre Dame making a visit in the future, although nothing official has been done toward that end" (*BOSTON GLOBE*, 1/28).

Events & Attractions

24. NFLPA LEADERS EXPRESS FRUSTRATION WITH PRO BOWL CHANGES

NFLPA leaders yesterday "expressed frustration with the league changing" the location of the Pro Bowl this year and "positioning it before the Super Bowl," according to Sarah Talalay of the South Florida SUN-SENTINEL. Both Titans C and NFLPA President Kevin Mawae and NFLPA Exec Dir DeMaurice Smith indicated that the union's concerns include "moving the game from Hawaii ... and depriving Super Bowl players from starring in their All-Star game." NFLPA officials also are "not pleased Super Bowl players must attend the game to receive their Pro Bowl pay." Mawae: "Some of those guys voiced their frustration because they want to be with their teams when they travel here on Monday, which is part of the Super Bowl experience." Mawae added, "It being a player issue, we really wish we had a bigger say so." But NFL VP/Communications Brian McCarthy said that the union and its player advisory council "were included before the Pro Bowl change for 2010 was announced in December 2008" (*South Florida SUN-SENTINEL*, 1/28).

TRAVEL ISSUES APPEAR SETTLED: ESPN's Chris Mortensen reported the Colts and Saints "will fly their players to South Florida" for the Pro Bowl on a chartered jet that the NFL "will reimburse them" for. The seven Colts players will then "stay overnight" in South Florida and await the rest of the team to arrive on Monday "as opposed to flying back to Indianapolis and then returning" with the full team. Colts President Bill Polian has been outspoken regarding the need for the players who will not play in the game to attend Pro Bowl festivities, and Mortensen noted they were "contemplating not going to Miami as so mandated by the NFL." ESPN's Trey Wingo asked, "The league had to think these things might be coming when they did this logistically and put the game the week before the Super Bowl, right?" Mortensen said NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell "just wanted to try this one time to see how it works and based on the early returns, it's got some problems" (*"NFL Live," ESPN*, 1/27). Meanwhile, Saints GM Mickey Loomis yesterday confirmed that the team's seven players who are scheduled to attend the Pro Bowl "will remain in the Miami area Sunday night, then be joined by their teammates Monday" (*New Orleans TIMES-PICAYUNE*, 1/28). ESPN's Tony Kornheiser noted Goodell is the son of a politician, and he "should

understand that you count heads to find out if the bill is going to pass. There's no good that can come out of this" (*PTI*, *ESPN*, 1/27).

BETTER FORMAT BEFORE: Eagles QB Donovan McNabb said, "It's unfortunate that it has to be before the Super Bowl because it doesn't do any justice for the guys who are playing in the Super Bowl game." Dolphins S Jeremiah Bell added, "The old format was better. I think guys like it that way. It's a little unfair for the guys who are playing in the Super Bowl who probably wanted to play in the Pro Bowl. I know they're going back to the old format next year and I think guys will be happy with that." ESPN's Wingo: "What they're saying, but they're not saying, is, 'We want to go to Hawaii!'" (*NFL Live*, *ESPN*, 1/27). In Miami, Greg Cote writes the Pro Bowl "stinks," and the NFL "needs to solve it, or scrap it." The NFL "rarely makes a misstep, a decision that fails so obviously, but this qualifies." Cote: "Kicking off Super Bowl Week with the Pro Bowl is like kicking off your vacation with rain" (*MIAMI HERALD*, 1/28). But Cowboys QB Tony Romo said, "There's something to be said for the game being played while football season is still going on" (*NFL Network*, 1/28).

TIME FOR A CHANGE? ESPN's Adam Schefter noted the league needs to "go away from the actual game." Schefter: "These are the biggest, fastest, strongest men in the world. ... Showcase those talents. Have a 'Superstars'-like competition ... and let's see how fast (Titans RB) Chris Johnson is, let's see how strong some of these linemen are, let's see how far they can throw footballs. That's the way to drive interest in this event." Players' bodies are so beat up from the regular season that the "last thing they want to do is play in another physical, tough, demanding game." But ESPN's Mark Schlereth, who played in two Pro Bowls, said, "If it's not broke, don't fix it. ... It may be for three quarters not a very good game, but that fourth quarter -- when the difference between the winner's share and the loser's share is on the line -- a real game will break out" (*SportsCenter*, *ESPN*, 1/27). Meanwhile, in Virginia, Bob Molinaro wrote if Goodell "sticks with this year's scheduling format" in the future, it "can't help but warp the definition of what a Pro Bowl player really is." But the "bigger point is that All-Star games of all types, not just the Pro Bowl, are obsolete" (*Norfolk VIRGINIAN-PILOT*, 1/27).

OFFICIALLY SOLD OUT: NFL officials said that the game "has officially been declared a sellout with about 70,500 tickets sold," though some club seats and a "few single seats are still available" (*South Florida SUN-SENTINEL*, 1/28). NFL Senior VP/Events Frank Supovitz Tuesday said that Sunday's game "will be the highest-attended Pro Bowl since 1959" (*NFL.com*, 1/27).

Olympics

25. "COLBERT NATION" DONATIONS TO U.S. SPEEDSKATING SURPASS \$300,000

Fans of Comedy Central's "The Colbert Report" have been "donating money to U.S. Speedskating since November via the 'Colbert Nation' website," and host Stephen Colbert last Tuesday "supplemented their \$299,993 ... to push the total to \$300,000, an amount that has piqued the interest of other cash-starved Olympic sports seeking new fundraising methods," according to Rachel Blount of the Minneapolis STAR TRIBUNE. U.S. Speedskating Exec Dir Bob Crowley: "When we started, we had no idea if we'd raise \$5 or \$50,000. It's been a great adventure and a lot of fun. The Colbert Nation has been our knight in shining armor." U.S. speedskater Chad Hedrick said of Colbert, "For him to jump in and become a fan, to want to support us and raise money for us, it's a blessing. It's great to get the athletes in the public eye." Meanwhile, Crowley said that Colbert's sponsorship "has attracted more potential partners," and it also has "gained attention

from the governing bodies of other U.S. Olympic sports, which have to hustle for sponsor dollars even in good economic times." USOC Chief of Sport Performance Mike English: "The new funding opportunity with Stephen Colbert was an exciting breakthrough. It's revolutionary. It's a unique opportunity that caught us by surprise, but those are good surprises" (*STARTRIBUNE.com, 1/27*).

INTO THE SPOTLIGHT: In Salt Lake City, Martin Renzhofer wrote while U.S. speedskater Katherine Reutter "has made a name for herself inside the sport, it was an appearance on Comedy Central's 'The Colbert Report' that has brought" her into the "spotlight." Reutter said there has been "so much positive coverage" of U.S. speedskating since "The Colbert Report" began sponsoring the team, as Colbert "has pinpointed [the team] into a specific group." Reutter: "Followers of the 'Colbert Report' actually know about speedskating. They can relate to us." U.S. speedskater Alyson Dudek: "People thought that Colbert sponsoring us would turn the sport into a joke. That has never happened" (*SALT LAKE TRIBUNE, 1/27*). U.S. speedskater J.R. Celski said Colbert is "awesome." Celski: "I didn't really pay much attention to him, but my friends kind of got me into him and I was really surprised when he picked us up as a sponsor." Meanwhile, Celski noted he has an endorsement deal with Wheaties, and when asked if he would be featured on the box, Celski said, "If I do good at the Games, hopefully I'll get it" (*SEATTLETIMES.com, 1/26*).

26. OLYMPIC MARKETING NOTES: VERIZON DEFENDS SPEEDSKATING ADS



Verizon Exec Says She's Unaware Of Any Communication From USOC Regarding Ads

Verizon Wireless Exec Dir of Corporate Communications Brenda Raney yesterday said that she is "not aware of any communication from the USOC" regarding alleged ambush marketing efforts, and she added that she "stood by the company's commercials." In DC, Amy Shipley notes Verizon Wireless is a sponsor of U.S. Speedskating, and the company "mentions that association" in a speedskating commercial. But Verizon is not an official USOC partner, unlike its competitor AT&T, and USOC officials said that "sponsorships of

national sport governing bodies ... do not extend to the Olympic Games." USOC CMO Lisa Baird: "The fundamental issue is, we want to protect our sponsors' rights, because it's only through the financial generosity of our sponsors and donors that our athletes can compete" (*WASHINGTON POST, 1/28*). But in Seattle, Ron Judd wrote the USOC "isn't likely to garner much sympathy in Washington state, where the USOC itself has been engaging in ambush harassment of legitimate small businesses for years." The USOC "has exclusive copyright to the commercial use of the Olympic rings, the names and dates of each Olympics, and so on," and it "attempts to enforce that copyright not only aggressively, but downright recklessly" (*SEATTLETIMES.com, 1/27*).

LET'S MAKE A DEAL: In N.Y., Nathaniel Vinton cites sources as saying that U.S. skier Lindsey Vonn recently "signed a deal with Rolex," which "has previously had endorsement contracts with iconic skiers like" Austrian Hermann Maier and American Picabo Street (*N.Y. DAILY NEWS, 1/28*). Meanwhile, U.S. speedskater Apolo Anton

Ohno is sponsored by Alaska Airways, but when asked if he gets to fly free as an endorser, Ohno said, "If I use my miles I do." Ohno also endorses Washington Potatoes and said when he first became involved with the company, "Initially, we said, 'Okay, how can we make this work as a partnership? How can they benefit, how can I benefit?' It was actually pretty easy. They've been great to work with and to have a Washington state sponsor, I'm all for that." Ohno noted the deal includes "all the potatoes" he can eat ([SEATTLETIMES.com](http://seattletimes.com), 1/26).

DANCING INTO THE SPOTLIGHT: The WASHINGTON POST's Shipley wonders if Vancouver Olympics viewers in the U.S., a population "recently fixated on 'Dancing With the Stars' and other such shows," will be "captivated by the elegant" U.S. ice dancing team. U.S. figure skating coach Don Laws said dancing "has become cool" in the U.S. Laws: "If we got our good ones up on top, they'll be hot. They'll be marketable. ... I think 'Dancing With the Stars' will help our team." U.S. figure skating officials hope that ice dancing ratings "will get an additional boost from the compelling story lines surrounding those with medal hopes." The "regal and photogenic" Ben Agosto and Tanith Belbin, who won Silver Medals at the '06 Turin Games, were "surpassed at the U.S. championship" by Charlie White and Meryl Davis, an "equally handsome team" ([WASHINGTON POST](http://washingtonpost.com), 1/28).

BRIGHT FUTURE: In N.Y., Joanne Gerstner wrote Australia snowboarder Torah Bright, with her "sunny personality, photogenic and fashion-forward appearance," could be "one of the more popular athletes" at the Vancouver Games. Bright has "no major endorsements outside of snowboarding circles," and her "major sponsor is Roxy, the apparel company." Bright's agent Circe Wallace said, "What's coming up could be the perfect storm for making Torah a star beyond snowboarding. She has the talent, the personality, and the visibility is now coming. She's poised to take off" ([N.Y. TIMES](http://nytimes.com), 1/25).

Sports & Society

27. BRANDT ANDERSEN QUIETLY MAKING A DIFFERENCE DOWN IN HAITI

By [Brian Helfrich](#), Assistant Managing Editor

With his Utah Flash in the midst of a four-game homestand last week, Brandt Andersen quietly slipped some 3,000 miles away to lend a hand in Haiti. The NBA D-League owner led a group of 16 doctors to the third-world country ravaged by one of the deadliest earthquakes in history. Andersen contacted the Mormon Church soon after the devastation to see if he could be of any assistance. "Because I speak three languages and know some people in the UN," he said, "it was a good fit." Once on the ground in Haiti, Andersen helped organize the group of physicians organized by the Church -- where to go, what to do -- in addition to handling the receipt of shipments of aid.



Andersen (r) Helping Rebuild Haitian Orphanage Destroyed In Earthquake

A SHOCKING SIGHT: "I think it's probably pretty brutal even when there's not a

disaster like this," Andersen said of Haiti. "It's a true third-world country. I've been in a lot of places, but the quality of life is as low as you can get. ... It's an incredibly difficult place to be right now. It's devastating. There's sadness and death everywhere."

Andersen's group arrived in Haiti within the first week after the earthquake struck, when disrepair in the county seemed almost irreparable. "There were still dead bodies in the streets," he said. "There were still people dying everywhere."

TEAM REBOUND: Now back in Salt Lake City after his seven-day visit, Andersen remains just as committed to providing aid to the country. The Flash raised about \$18,000 at their home game on Monday night, with all contributions going toward the construction and operation of an orphanage in Haiti. While in the country, Andersen and a friend found the orphanage, which he said is "off the beaten path" and "not what you would consider a commercial orphanage." The facility was destroyed in the earthquake, and Andersen promised the director he would build a new center. "We hope to go under construction in the next couple of weeks," he said. "I felt connected to these people down there. They're beautiful people." Andersen at the moment is active in the design process, and said his commitment to the orphanage is "something longer term" than just building it. "We can't just build it and then let them be on their own," Andersen said. "We intend to help with resources: computers, supplies and maybe even a basketball hoop or two."

Sports Industrialists

28. MAXIMUM SPORTS SIGNS TOP-RATED PROSPECT SUH FOR CONTRACT WORK

By [Liz Mullen](#), Staff Writer, SportsBusiness Journal

Maximum Sports Management has signed former Nebraska DT **NDAMUKONG SUH**, the consensus No. 1 NFL Draft prospect, for representation for his playing contract work. **ROOSEVELT BARNES**, veteran NFL player agent and Maximum partner, confirmed the information yesterday. "We signed him late [Tuesday] night," said Barnes, who co-owns the NFL player rep firm Maximum with agent **EUGENE PARKER**. "It is very exciting to represent one of the best, if not the best, defensive players to come out in the last 10 years." Suh is ranked No. 1 on most NFL Draft analysts' boards, including that of ESPN Draft analyst **MEL KIPER JR.** and Web site [nfldraftscout.com](#). Barnes said he will serve as Suh's lead agent, but Parker will assist in his representation. Despite his rankings on various mock drafts, Barnes said Suh is not taking his draft status for granted and has been training hard in preparation for the NFL Combine. "He is going to blow the Combine up," Barnes said. "He is not a hard worker; he is a relentless worker." Barnes and Parker have not represented a No. 1 NFL Draft pick before, but have represented many top five NFL Draft picks over the years and are regarded as skillful contract negotiators.

29. IRL APPEARS FOCUSED ON PBR'S RANDY BERNARD IN CEO SEARCH

The IRL's search for a CEO has narrowed to **RANDY BERNARD**, who is currently PBR CEO. Sources close to the search said Bernard is considering an offer to run the IRL for a salary in the high six figures annually. Bernard has not committed to the IRL but is believed to be close to a decision. He has been the PBR's CEO since '95 and was integral in the '07 sale of the organization to Spire Capital Partners, a private equity firm. IMS Corp. President & CEO **JEFF BELSKUS** has been searching for someone to run the racing league since the departure of **TONY GEORGE**, and other candidates have included Just Marketing Founder & CEO **ZAK BROWN** and Indianapolis Super Bowl

Host Committee Chair **MARK MILES** (*Michael Smith, SportsBusiness Journal*). SPEEDTV.com's Robin Miller noted Bernard "met with IRL/IMS officials and members of the Hulman-George family last week," though a source indicated that "nothing had been officially signed" (*SPEEDTV.com, 1/27*).

30. CATCHING UP WITH NEW WNBA COO CHRISTINE GODLESKI

The WNBA has operated without a COO since May '05, when **ANN SARNOFF** resigned from the position, but the league has filled that leadership void with **CHRISTINE GODLESKI**, who worked her first full day for the league on Monday. Godleski previously worked for ESPN for 12 years, most recently as VP & GM for ESPN Outdoors. After leaving the network in '06, she remained busy, working as a consultant for various companies, as well as volunteering to teach in Tanzania, where the proximity to Mt. Kilimanjaro inspired her to climb the mountain in late '06. Godleski took time out from her busy schedule earlier this week to chat with Staff Writer Erik Swanson about her new role, the challenges of leading ESPN Outdoors and her experiences in Africa.



WNBA COO
Christine Godleski

Favorite vacation spot: Tanzania. I spent a couple months living in Moshi

Must-visit Web sites: WNBA.com, ESPN.com

Favorite sport to follow besides WNBA: Football -- especially college football

Most memorable sporting event you've attended: '09 WNBA Finals

Q: What will your primary responsibilities be with the WNBA?

Godleski: I'm going to focus on the day-to-day league operations, executing the key league events -- which would be things like the WNBA All-Star Game, the WNBA Draft and the Inspiration Award -- and then just supporting the league and the teams in all of the revenue-generating opportunities. The details of that will still remain to be seen, because I've been here a day and a half.

Q: Are you taking on these responsibilities from someone else, or are these needs that weren't being met already?

Godleski: As I understand, the last COO was here in 2005, so this is a newly created role at this point in time for the league.

Q: What are the biggest growth areas you see for the league?

Godleski: The league certainly has come off a great season. They have had attendance and viewership increases, so we would look to continue to use that success model for growth in that perspective. And then just the popularity of the sport -- there are so many passionate fans out there and also youth that play basketball, so to continue to tap into that and really bring the best product we can to those fans.

Q: What inspired you to join a property like the WNBA after spending much of your career in media?

Godleski: Since they've had such a great success and track record, and obviously being at ESPN and having had exposure to the NBA and as of late the WNBA, just watching that success. It's certainly looking at it from a different angle, but still tied to that passionate sports fan.

Q: You spent several years after leaving ESPN as a consultant. What did that work consist of mainly?

Godleski: It was a variety of companies that I serviced, really just focusing on their revenue-generating or business efficiency. Pretty similar to what I'll be doing here for the WNBA. I did that for a number of clients, everything from small projects to large projects, including clients like the Wall Street Journal and some post-production houses, etc.

Q: What were the biggest challenges you faced leading ESPN Outdoors, one of the network's less familiar properties?

Godleski: Well, on an average day if someone had a choice to spend time selling an NFL spot or a fishing and hunting spot, guess where they spent their time? (Laughs) We certainly had a lot of management support. ... There was a lot of passion, a lot of support, and we really saw television hours increase. But our goal was continuing to get everyone excited about that passion, so we would do things like bringing them out to an event and letting them experience it. From a sales side, a lot of New Yorkers weren't as familiar with those sports, so they were excited to get out and see what it was like. But just keeping it top-of-radar when we were fighting against some big sports like NBA and NFL.

Q: Tell me about your experience summiting Mt. Kilimanjaro.

Godleski: I took the Machame route. There are several routes, and it's not the Coca-Cola route, which is the quickest one up the mountain. It's typically a six-day climb. There were certainly days where you think, "This is never going to happen," as you look up and you see the peak of the mountain. And then as you get cold and tired and cranky, someone is there to literally push you along if you need, and you start to see the top and you see people getting up there, so you think, you know what, I'm not coming back for a long time so I can do this.

Q: And were you already in Tanzania at this point?

Godleski: I was. I spent about five or six weeks volunteering at a preschool, working with six- and seven-year-olds and getting them ready for their primary school education. And trying my best Swahili, which was not good! (Laughs)

Q: Did your climbing interest stem from your ESPN Outdoors work, or vice versa?

Godleski: I would say my climbing interest stemmed from looking up the mountain every day and saying, "Wouldn't that be great to go up there," because where I lived I could see it. And I've just always had a passion for challenges and adventure, and this was something that seemed to be a great challenge and adventure. ESPN Outdoors certainly helped me work and enjoy my challenges and passions at the same time, so they probably led to each other.

Q: Do you plan any additional climbs in the future?

Godleski: I don't have any on the radar, because I'm going to be spending a lot of time with the WNBA getting up to speed on everything. I have a lot of learning to do, it's only day two. ... So not in the immediate future, but I certainly wouldn't rule it out.

Q: Are there any big stories or trends in other sports that you're keeping an eye on?

Godleski: Obviously, I'm excited about the NBA All-Star Game in Dallas this year. I think we'll also just be taking a look around to see what other leagues, how they're doing and what experiences they've had and how that may play into some of the work we're doing here at the WNBA.

FiLife.com President & GM **EZRA KUCHARZ** was named CBS President of Local Digital Media, where he will oversee local online media strategy for the 36 CBS Radio news, talk and sports stations, as well as CBS' 29 television stations. Kucharz founded online sports media company Total Sports in '95 (*RADIOINK.com, 1/26*)....Disney named **RICHARD BATES** Senior VP/U.S. Government Relations (*CABLE FAX DAILY, 1/27*)....MSG appointed **ROBERT POLLICHINO** Exec VP & CFO, **LAWRENCE BURIAN** Exec VP, General Counsel & Secretary and **JOSEPH LHOTA** to the newly created position of Exec VP/Administration. Each one will report to President & CEO **HANK RATNER** (*MSG*)....FS South and SportSouth named Cox Enterprises Media Marketing Manager **JACKIE WARNER** Account Exec (*FSN*).

EXECS: The Browns named Packers Dir of Football Administration & Communications **MARK SCHIEFELBEIN** VP/Football Operations (*Browns*)....Illitch Holdings announced **KAREN CULLEN** will move from her current role as VP/Corporate Communications to a "senior advisory role with the Illitch companies," effective February 1. **THOMAS PYDEN** will succeed Cullen as VP/Corporate Communications (*Illitch Holdings*)....Ogio, a manufacturer of performance gear bags and packs, announced **TONY PALMA** will serve as CEO. Previously, Palma was CEO of Easton Sports for 14 years (*Ogio*)....CONNECT announced Pro Basketball HOFer **BILL WALTON** will serve as Exec Chair of the company's new Sports and Entertainment Innovation initiative (*CONNECT*)....Learfield Sports named **CHRIS HAND** Account Exec for its Univ. of Alabama Crimson Tide Sports Marketing. Most recently, Hand was at Nashville-based Citadel Broadcasting where he served as General Sales Manager and then Dir of Sales (*Learfield*)....Fordham Univ. named **KRISTIN DUFFY** Assistant SID (*SPORTINGNEWSTODAY.com, 1/27*).

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

32. NAMES IN THE NEWS

U.S. District Court Judge **RICHARD SULLIVAN** Tuesday rejected "all claims" made by former MSG and MSG Network President **BOB GUTKOWSKI** that he gave Yankees Chair **GEORGE STEINBRENNER** the "idea for the YES Network." Gutkowski, who was seeking "at least \$23[M] in damages," said that in "meetings held over the course of several years, he suggested that Steinbrenner start his own television network and that Steinbrenner promised Gutkowski he would run the network or be part of it." Sullivan "focused on the vagueness of the oral agreement that Gutkowski said he had with Steinbrenner," and he also ruled that Gutkowski "'alleges no plausible facts' to support his claim that Steinbrenner never intended to deliver on his promises." Gutkowski's attorney, **NEAL BRICKMAN**, said that he is "analyzing whether to appeal the decision" (*N.Y. TIMES, 1/28*).

POLITICAL BEAT: In Boston, Shanahan & Goldstein cite sources as indicating that Red Sox Senior Advisor of Baseball Projects **JEREMY KAPSTEIN** is "considering running for office in his native Rhode Island, perhaps for governor after Republican **DONALD CARCIERI** finishes his second term" in January '11 (*BOSTON GLOBE, 1/28*)....Reports have indicated that Pistons President of Basketball Operations **JOE DUMARS** is "being pursued by power brokers in the Democratic Party to run for governor" of Michigan. Dumars yesterday said in a statement, "I am flattered by and very much appreciate those who strongly believed I would make a formidable candidate and an effective governor for the state. But I am not a politician and do not have plans to run for public office" (*FREEP.com, 1/27*).

LEGAL PROCESS CONTINUES: In Toronto, Morgan Campbell reports Univ. of

Kentucky (UK) P **JAMES PAXTON** yesterday filed an appeal in Kentucky court, "drawing out a lawsuit against the school his lawyer says is extorting him." UK in October ruled that Paxton "couldn't play until he agreed to speak to an NCAA investigator" about an investigation stemming from the NCAA's "uncertainty regarding Paxton's amateur status because of his relationship with" MLB player agent **SCOTT BORAS**. But Paxton "refused to sit down with the NCAA and sued the school for the right to return to the field." Paxton "argued that forcing him to talk to the NCAA violated his rights under the school's student code and Kentucky's state Constitution." The appeal "means a new set of judges will review" the decision to deny Paxton a temporary injunction to play this season, and Paxton's attorney, **RICK JOHNSON**, is "confident they'll have an answer before UK's baseball season begins" on February 19 (*TORONTO STAR*, 1/28).

NAMES: The Univ. of Kansas' athletic department yesterday made public new football coach **TURNER GILL**'s five-year, \$10M deal, which "makes him the fifth-richest coach in the Big 12 conference." Gill will "earn an annual base salary of \$229,900 in addition to an annual media payment of \$1,770,100." If Gill "coaches all five years of his contract, he will receive a retention payment of \$500,000," and if he is "terminated without cause, he will receive \$100,000 for each year that he coached." Gill also is "eligible for



Gill's Five-Year, \$10M Deal With Kansas Makes Him Fifth Highest-Paid Coach In Big 12

incentive payments that could total as much as \$400,000 in any one year" (*K.C. STAR*, 1/28)....Nuggets G **J.R. SMITH** yesterday "beat an agreed-upon deadline by just eight minutes to make a 'good faith' down payment on a debt owed to" Houston-based attorney **RUSTY HARDIN** and avoid a lawsuit (*HOUSTON CHRONICLE*, 1/28)....Mariners GM **JACK ZDURIENCIK** yesterday was named the recipient of the '09 Andrew "Rube" Foster AL Exec of the Year award, with Rockies GM **DAN O'DOWD** the NL recipient. The awards will be presented Saturday at the 10th annual Legacy Awards at the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in K.C. (*Tacoma NEWS TRIBUNE*, 1/28)....Retired golfer **ANNIKA SORENSTAM** has been named the Honorary Chair of the '11 U.S. Women's Open. Sorenstam will host an exhibition during the week of the championship (*USGA*)....Former NFLer **EMMITT SMITH** will "appear on a new alternative series 'Who Do You Think You Are?' premiering" March 5 at 8:00pm ET on NBC. The series "gives viewers an up-close and personal look inside the family history of celebrities" (*DALLASNEWS.com*, 1/27)....The **ZAC BROWN BAND** will "perform at the 32nd annual Budweiser Shootout" February 6 at Daytona Int'l Speedway. The group will "perform a pre- and post-race concert and the national anthem" (*Daytona Beach NEWS-JOURNAL*, 1/28).

The Back Of The Book

33. AVID SPORTS FANS MORE OPTIMISTIC ON IMPROVED ECONOMY DURING Q4 '09

During Q4 of '09, sports fans of all levels were more optimistic than at the beginning of the year that the economy would improve, according to data from ESPN Sports Poll, a

service of TNS Sport. Avid sports fans were more optimistic than any other group during Q4, and they were the only group that peaked during the final months of '09. Below are response levels from each quarter last year, detailing whether optimism about the economy is improving (*ESPN Sports Poll*).

ARE YOU OPTIMISTIC THAT THE ECONOMY WILL IMPROVE?

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
U.S. total	51.5%	59.7%	57.2%	57.3%
Not a sports fan (0)	44.1%	53.2%	44.6%	47.5%
Light sports fan (1-3)	45.5%	56.8%	53.0%	52.8%
Casual sports fan (4-7)	52.6%	60.3%	61.3%	57.3%
Avid sports fan (8-10)	56.9%	63.5%	59.9%	64.2%

Classified Advertisements

34. CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

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35. SBJ IN-DEPTH: DIGITAL/BROADBAND/WIRELESS

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