

NATIONAL SPORTS WRAP

BASEBALL



Fifteen felonies is the new count on Bonds

Barry Bonds was charged in a new indictment Tuesday with 15 felony counts alleging he lied to a grand jury when he denied knowingly using performance-enhancing drugs and that he hampered the federal government's doping investigation. Major League Baseball's career home run leader originally was indicted in November by a federal grand jury on four counts of perjury and one count of obstruction of justice. On Tuesday, a grand jury handed up a superseding indictment charging Bonds with 14 counts of making false declarations to a grand jury in 2003 and one count of obstruction of justice. "Barry Bonds is innocent," the player's lead attorney, Allen Ruby, said. Ruby said Bonds will appear in court to plead not guilty to the new charges.

TENNIS



Henin retires from women's tennis

Justine Henin retired from tennis Wednesday, an abrupt ending to a short and successful career in which she won seven Grand Slam singles titles and leaves while ranked No. 1. "I thought long about this," Henin said, her voice cracking and eyes watering. "I started thinking about it late last year. I was at the end of the road. I leave with my head held high." Henin has been ranked No. 1 since Nov. 13, 2006, except for a seven-week period last year when Maria Sharapova held the top spot.

GOLF

Annika Sorenstam also calls it quits

Calling her decision one she'd "been thinking about for a while," Annika Sorenstam, whom many consider to be the greatest golfer in LPGA history, said Tuesday she will retire after the season. The 37-year-old Swede ends an LPGA Tour career in which she has won 72 tournaments to date and delivered a defining moment when she teed it up against the men on the PGA Tour. "I have made a decision to step away from competitive golf after this season," she said. "Obviously this was a very difficult decision for me to make because I love this game so much. But it's the right one." Her final event will be the Dubai Ladies Masters after the LPGA Tour season ends. Tiger Woods called Sorenstam "the greatest female golfer of all time." Sorenstam hinted at retirement the past several seasons, saying she wanted to devote more time to her growing business and to start a family. "I've done a lot, and I am satisfied in a lot of things," Sorenstam said. "I've achieved so much more than I ever thought I could."

— ASSOCIATED PRESS

TAKING CHARGE



UCF Baseball interim head coach Craig Cozart just wants to look forward and focus on the rest of the season, not the controversy that surrounds his mentor and former UCF coach.

MEET BASEBALL'S NEW HEAD COACH

BRIAN MURPHY
Sports Editor

On May 1, Craig Cozart was named UCF Baseball's head coach. It had been a moment that he had strived for since graduating from the university in 1996. He has spent his entire adult life as a part of the Knights — four years as a player and 12 more as a coach. Now, he had finally gotten his chance to lead them. It should have been a day to cherish, celebrate and remember.

Instead, it was just a footnote to one of the most controversial stories in UCF Athletics.

Cozart was named the Knights' interim head coach the same day that former head coach Jay Bergman was fired due to accusations of sexual harassment on baseball equipment manager Chris Ryhce. Immediately, Cozart was handed the responsibility of replacing his mentor, a man whose name is attached to the stadium that the Knights call home and one of the most successful baseball coaches in NCAA Division I history. Also, he needed to find a way to focus a team which still had 10 games remaining in its regular season and the goal of a conference championship.

"The weirdest thing was [May 5] walking in here and seeing Coach Bergman's door was open, but his furniture was gone," Cozart said. "You can imagine what effect that has. It's tough... But, you've got to focus on what you can control at this point, and the only thing we can control is what happens on the baseball field."

As a pitcher for the Knights from 1993-1996, Cozart led UCF in wins for two consecutive seasons in 1995 and 1996. Cozart finished his career second all-time in school history with 24 wins. He was drafted in the 45th round of the Major League Baseball draft by the Atlanta Braves in 1995, and again in the 28th round by the San Francisco Giants in 1996, yet Cozart decided to forego the professional ranks to begin his coaching career.

He was a student assistant coach in 1997 before being given the role of full-time assistant coach in 1998. More specifically, Cozart was handed the duties of pitching coach. In that time, he has seen 21 pitchers whom he coached on the Knights drafted by Major League Baseball.

Cozart said that when word began to spread that something might happen to Bergman, he got very nervous due to the uncer-

GET YOUR FACTS STRAIGHT

IN HIS PREVIOUS LIFE

Before being a part of the UCF Baseball coaching staff, he was a pitcher for the program from 1993-1996. He finished his career with the second-most wins and fourth-most strikeouts in the history of UCF.

PREPPING FOR THE PROS

Cozart has been the Knights' pitching coach since 1998 and has seen 21 pitchers that he coached end up as draft picks by Major League Baseball. In 2004, former Knight Matt Fox was drafted in the first round by the Minnesota Twins.

MORE FROM 2004

Under Cozart's guidance, Fox and Kyle Bono helped the Knights end the season with the nation's 10th-best earned run average.

FIRST OF MANY?

Cozart got his first win as a Division I head coach on May 4 with a 12-1 UCF victory at No. 27 Tulane. With the help of six runs in each of the first two innings, the Knights locked up their third win against a ranked opponent this season.

Softball heads to NCAA tourney

ZACH PARDES
Staff Writer

The UCF Softball team is demanding respect, and respect is what it is getting.

After defeating No. 9 Houston 4-2 to claim a Conference USA Championship title on Saturday, the Knights are receiving some national recognition, acquiring a program-record 14 votes in the USA Today National Fastpitch Coaches' Association Division I Top-25 Poll. That number of votes put UCF at No. 29 in the nation.

Along with the new poll rankings, the Knights learned that they will face rival South Florida in the opening round of the NCAA Tournament at the Gainesville Regional on Friday.

Host and No. 1 overall seed Florida and Georgia Tech will also be making an appearance at the Gainesville Regional.

"It's exciting," UCF Softball head coach Renee Luers-Gillispie said. "I wish we had been sent someplace else besides going back up to Gainesville, though. But we haven't been able to play South Florida or Florida this year, so it's kind of a good setting for us to knock those two teams off."

UCF is 1-8 all-time against the Bulls, who knocked the Knights out of the 2005 Gainesville Regional.

The Knights secured its lone victory of the all-time series between the two teams in 2006 on a two-hit, 11-strikeout performance by pitcher Allison Kime. She will start against the Bulls.

"I think the girls will be ready for [USF] just because we haven't seen them in two

PLEASE SEE **UCF** ON A8



THE UCF Softball team will begin play in its first NCAA Tournament since 2005 on Friday. The Knights will begin tournament play against the South Florida Bulls.

UCF takes on Tigers in regular-season finale

RYAN BASS
Staff Writer

Coming into the final home-stand of the regular season, opposing scenarios lie on the line for the UCF Baseball team and its opponent, Clemson.

The Knights (31-22 overall, 8-16 in Conference USA) will open the weekend series looking to start a winning streak heading into next week's C-USA tournament while the Tigers look to keep an important streak alive.

Clemson, 27-25-1, needs to win the series, which takes place Thursday through Saturday at Jay Bergman Field, in order to extend its consecutive NCAA tournament appearances to 22 straight seasons. The Knights know that it's going to be a challenge if they want to be the ones that put an end to that streak.

"It's good that we get an opportunity to face a power team like that," outfielder Chadd Hartman said. "We feel we have a good chance and can



UCF pitcher Mitch Houck had a rough Sunday against UAB. He allowed six runs in 1.2 innings. The Knights hope for less outings like Houck's this weekend versus Clemson.

put up a good game, just like we did against Rice [on April 25]. We're just going to come out and give it our best shot and see what we can do."

The Knights know they cannot afford to lose a game in the final series of regular season play. Last year, the Knights picked up two wins against Marshall during the last three games of the regular season,

but were blown out in the third game. That lackluster play carried into the tournament.

"We're not going to do what we did last year," interim head coach Craig Cozart said. "We're going to continue this momentum."

In order for UCF to go into the tournament on a winning streak, the starting rotation has to show some consistency over

NEXT GAME



Tonight, 6:30 | Jay Bergman Field

the final three games. UCF will need quality starts out of projected starters Kyle Sweat, Mitch Houck and Mitch Herold.

In his last two starts against Tulane and UAB, Sweat allowed 13 runs on 24 hits in eight innings of work.

Houck has also been inconsistent over his last two starts, throwing a complete game with no earned runs against Tulane and then giving up six runs and walking three batters in an inning and two-thirds against UAB.

Herold, on the other hand, allowed only three runs in two starts against Tulane and UAB, including a two-hit shutout over seven innings against the Blazers last weekend.

"We stressed [finishing the season strong] a lot," Cozart said. "The emphasis is definitely to continue to build. Even though it's the last series of the year, that doesn't mean you can't improve, and that's what we want to do. We want to be hitting on all cylinders, be confident and be feeling good."

In order to go into the conference tournament on a roll, the pitching staff will have to contain the Tigers' offense, which has averaged 14 runs over its last two ball games.

Part of that containment will have to include slowing down shortstop Stan Widmann, who is hitting .500 with six RBIs over his last two contests, including a multi-homer game his last time out against the College of Charleston.

Ben Paulsen, Wilson Boyd and Doug Hogan also need to be kept in check, as they have been the heart of the Tigers lineup this season. Paulsen, Boyd and Hogan have hit a

PLEASE SEE **KNIGHTS** ON A8