

NATIONAL SPORTS WRAP

BASKETBALL



NBA REF SENTENCED TO 15 MONTHS BEHIND BARS

NEW YORK — Disgraced ex-NBA official Tim Donaghy admitted that he'd brought shame on his profession Tuesday as a federal judge sentenced him to 15 months behind bars for a gambling scandal that still has the league on the defensive.

U.S. District Judge Carol Amon sentenced Donaghy to prison time along with three years of supervised release, saying he'd let the sport down by taking thousands of dollars from a professional gambler in exchange for inside tips on games — including ones he refereed.

Defense attorney John Lauro asked Amon to give his 41-year-old client probation, saying the ex-official was a gambling addict who destroyed "the career he loved" and needed treatment, not incarceration. Donaghy also had sought to make amends by revealing "the good, the bad and the ugly" about the league's officiating, the attorney added.

In the end, Amon refused Donaghy's plea to stay out of prison, though she imposed a penalty that was not as tough as the 33 months he could have received. Donaghy must surrender to prison on Sept. 23.

BASEBALL

RAYS WIN RUBBER MATCH VERSUS BLUE JAYS, 3-2

TORONTO — Carlos Pena hit a home run, Edwin Jackson won back-to-back starts for the first time since April and the Tampa Bay Rays defeated the Toronto Blue Jays 3-2 on Wednesday afternoon.

The Rays won for the fourth time in six road games after losing seven straight away from home earlier this month.

Jackson (7-7) gave up two runs and seven hits in five innings. He walked two and struck out three.

Four Tampa Bay relievers each worked a scoreless inning to preserve the victory. J.P. Howell pitched the sixth, Grant Balfour struck out a pair in the seventh, Dan Wheeler handled the eighth and Troy Percival wrapped it up in the ninth for his 23rd save in 25 opportunities.

It was the 347th save of Percival's career, tying him with Randy Myers for eighth on the all-time list.

Making his major league debut, Blue Jays right-hander Scott Richmond (0-1) allowed three runs and seven hits in 5 1/3 innings.



BRAVES TRADE TEIXEIRA TO ANGELS FOR TWO PLAYERS

ATLANTA — The Los Angeles Angels already have the best record in baseball. That didn't stop them from making a bold move two days before today's non-waiver trade deadline.

With their sights set firmly on the World Series, the Angels pulled off a blockbuster deal Tuesday, acquiring slugging first baseman Mark Teixeira from the fading Atlanta Braves.

Los Angeles sent first baseman Casey Kotchman and minor league pitcher Steve Marek to the Braves, who raised the white flag on this season after a rash of key injuries.

Los Angeles went into Wednesday night's game against Boston with an 11 1/2-game cushion in the AL West, by far the most commanding lead for any first-place team. But the Angels were more concerned with setting up a roster that can go all the way in October.

Teixeira is making \$12.5 million and will be eligible for free agency after the season.

He is batting .283 with 20 home runs and 78 RBIs.

— ASSOCIATED PRESS



A recap of the UCF sports that defined the semester

BRIAN MURPHY
Sports Editor

There was not much of a break this summer for the Knights. A variety of news was made throughout UCF Athletics, so with the anticipation of a crowded slate of fall sports rising by the day, let's take a look back at what we've experienced over the past three months.

Baseball

One of the biggest — and infamous — events this summer occurred during spring final exam period: The firing of UCF's longest-tenured coach, Jay Bergman.

Bergman, who had served as the Knights' head coach for 26 seasons, was fired May 1 amid accusations of sexual harassment on a male equipment manager. Bergman has strongly denied the allegations.

Pitching coach Craig Cozart took over as the interim coach of the Knights, who still had 10 games to play in their 2008 regular season. UCF finished the regular season at 4-6 under Cozart and was quickly eliminated in the Conference USA Championship.

Cozart was one of many who interviewed in June for the role of head coach. On June 12, former LSU associate head coach Terry Rooney got the job. In his introductory press conference Rooney said: "I know what this

program is, and I know what this program needs. And I'm what this program needs right now."

Rooney completed the construction of the Knights' brand-new coaching staff July 24. As for Cozart, he was named the head coach at High Point University on June 27, and two coaches from UCF's 2008 squad joined him.

Softball

After only three seasons in Conference USA, the Knights won a C-USA Championship. They capped their championship with a 4-2 win over Houston on May 10. Freshman Tiffany Lane, who went 3-for-4 with a home run and three RBIs in the title game, was named tournament MVP.

The Knights earned the No. 2 seed in the Gainesville Regional and advanced all the way to the regional final against the Florida Gators, the nation's top-ranked team. Behind a flawless pitching performance from Allison Kime, the Knights beat the Gators 1-0 on May 18 to force a winner-take-all showdown later that day. The Gators gained revenge and advance to the College World Series with a 10-0 triumph that was called after five innings.

Football

Less than two months removed from the Ereck Plancher tragedy, the UCF Football team had to deal with the news that senior cornerback Johnell

Neal had been shot. Neal, a three-year starter for the Knights, was reportedly shot several times in the arm and chest with an assault rifle while standing outside in front of his family's home in Baton Rouge, La., early in the morning of May 9.

Neal arrived at a local hospital in stable condition as none of his wounds were considered life-threatening.

TV station WAFB in Baton Rouge reported that police arrested 23-year-old Emmanuel Davis on May 9, 19-year-old Gregory Jermaine Robinson on June 18 and Stanley Grigsby on July 15, and charged them all with, among other crimes, attempted first-degree murder.

Neal returned to Orlando this summer to start work on a second undergraduate degree after graduating with a degree in criminal justice May 2. He is also currently participating in team practices and is scheduled to be starting for the Knights when their season begins Aug. 30.

The Knights were picked by Conference USA's head coaches to repeat as East Division champions July 16, but that prediction may be hampered with the reprimand of two Knights this summer.

Fullback Ricky Kay was suspended from the team on June 23 after he was charged with a

PLEASE SEE UCF ON A7



BRIAN MURPHY
Sports Editor

Stay up late for USA

Certain words have come to describe the long history of the Olympic Games: Gold. Champion. Nationalism. Stanozolol.

But for the 2008 Beijing Olympics, protests have been the soup du jour. China's occupation in Tibet, several workers dying during the construction of Olympic stadiums, workers upset about factory layoffs and farmers angry about land confiscation — everybody's got issues as the games' opening ceremonies are about a week away.

I am certainly sympathetic to the causes, but maybe they are just all upset because they don't live in the Eastern time zones, where this edition of the Olympics will be at their best: 3 a.m.

If you are reading this, you are probably a college student and a sports fan. I could make further assumptions of who you are, but I'll stop there for simplicity.

You should know by prior experience that there are few events in this world more special than live, middle-of-the-night sports. You are up late anyway, head buried in books and about to explode after learning about z-scores, chi-squares and ANOVAs. If only there was something on TV to at least have in the background; the soothing noise of athletic competition.

But at 3 a.m., you are left to make due with the eighth edition of that evening's Sports-Center and infomercials from people trying to sell you a set of knives and the latest male enhancement product. Oh, enthralling.

But fear no more — the Olympics are near! NBC and its vast families of networks will be beaming out an average of 212 hours a day out of 12 sources. Between NBC and its standard cable channels, such as MSNBC, CNBC, USA, etc., competition will be available for most days for 23-and-a-half hours per day. The only Olympics-free time will be between 4:30 and 5 a.m. EDT.

That's perfect! That gives you a decent half hour for you to take care of all of life's secondary chores — eating, bathing, getting fresh air — before locking yourself back inside to see if USA Basketball can rebound from its third-place finish in Athens at the 2004 Olympics. By the way, Kobe, LeBron and company can be seen live on USA at 2 a.m., on Aug. 14. Watch to see if they can beat always-feisty Angola.

There's something unique about watching sports in the dead of night. It's something new and unusual, seen as an exciting treat. It kind of follows the same line of reasoning behind sex in public places.

But here, you'll never get caught. It'll just be you, your TV, and Cuba v. China women's volleyball early in the morning of Aug. 13.

So clear the slate; you've got nothing to do for the next three weeks. Your biggest concern will be to see if swimmer Michael Phelps can win seven gold medals. Your biggest math problem will be expanding Tyson Gay's 100-meter dash time out to 40 yards.

Root for whatever country you like. But, most of all, just enjoy the sports at a time in which you should be sleeping.