

Sports

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NATIONAL SPORTS WRAP

FOOTBALL



BURRESS RETURNS TO GIANTS STADIUM AFTER SHOOTING

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — Plaxico Burress arrived at Giants Stadium on Tuesday facing the possibility his career with the Super Bowl champions could be over and he could land in jail after accidentally shooting himself in the thigh at a nightclub.

Burress was required to be at the stadium because he is on the active roster and injured.

Burress accidentally shot himself in the right thigh at a Manhattan nightclub over the weekend. Burress was charged with two counts of second-degree criminal possession of a weapon Monday, which could result in a prison sentence up to 15 years if he is convicted.

Police were still searching Tuesday for more answers from teammate Antonio Pierce and the hospital that treated Burress. Pierce was with Burress at the nightclub, and police want to know what the linebacker did moments after the shooting and whether he helped cover up what happened.

On Monday, Burress posted \$100,000 bail and was told by the judge that his next appearance won't be until March 31. In the meantime, the Giants and the NFL will have to make a decision about what to do with the wide receiver.

New York could suspend him again or deactivate him for Sunday's home game against the Eagles. The Giants could go as far as releasing Burress, but that would put a strain on the team's salary cap next season.

BUCS' D-COORDINATOR MUM ON TENNESSEE RUMORS

TAMPA — Although the Tampa Bay Buccaneers expect to have Monte Kiffin drawing up defensive game plans for the rest of the season, his future with them remains unclear.

Neither Kiffin or the Bucs have done anything to end speculation that the 68-year-old defensive coordinator has decided to leave the NFL to work for his son, Lane, the new coach at the University of Tennessee.

Bucs general manager Bruce Allen said there have been discussions before about the possibility of Kiffin leaving Tampa Bay to join his son. Head coach Jon Gruden said either way, Kiffin will be with Tampa Bay at least through the end of the season.

Under Kiffin's leadership, Tampa Bay's defense has allowed the fewest points in the NFL since 1997 and ranked in the top 10 in fewest yards allowed 10 of the last 11 seasons.

BASKETBALL



WADE SCORES 37 AS HEAT TOP WARRIORS IN OT THRILLER

OAKLAND, Calif. — Chris Quinn hit a tying 3-pointer with 7.1 seconds left in overtime, Michael Beasley stole the ensuing inbounds pass and made the decisive free throw, and the Heat pulled off a wild 130-129 comeback win over the Warriors on Monday night.

Jamal Crawford, who scored 40 points, missed a running jumper at the buzzer as the Warriors dropped their seventh straight game.

Udonis Haslem scored on a putback for Miami at the buzzer to force the extra session.

Miami's Dwyane Wade finished with 37 points and 13 assists, and Haslem and Shawn Marion each had 21 points.

— ASSOCIATED PRESS

By the numbers

The good, the bad and the ugly from the Knights' year

PADRICK BREWER
Editor-In-Chief

The recently finished 4-8 season for the UCF Football team was not the worst record in history, nor was the average attendance of 39,596.

But that doesn't mean that the season was pretty.

UCF head coach George O'Leary is not Mike Leach, the offensive guru for Texas Tech, but O'Leary has had offensive success in his previous 11 years at the collegiate level.

Before this season, the fewest yards an O'Leary team averaged per game was 278.9 in 2001, his last season with Georgia Tech. In every other season, his teams averaged at least 334 yards per game, and five averaged more than 390 yards per game.

But this season was different. With injuries and a unit made of young, inexperienced and even some unqualified players, the UCF offense sputtered and struggled in almost every game.

But the Knights were a different team on the other side of the ball. The offense has to be thankful that at least the defense stepped up as one of Conference USA's elite units, or the 2008 season could have been much worse.

Here is a breakdown of the season by the numbers; (all figures as of Nov. 29):

Offense

Excluding plays and drives that were kneeldowns to end a half or special teams plays, UCF ran 757 plays in 160 drives.

Of those plays, 144 went for zero yards or negative yards, or about 19 percent.

Of the 160 drives, 38 were for zero yards or negative yards, almost 24 percent.

All of that meant that for almost every five times the Knights snapped the ball, they would either go nowhere or go backward.

UCF averaged 229.1 yards per game, which was the worst by far in the country and one of the worst in recent memory.

It was worse than all but four teams from the Football Championship Series, worse than all but six teams in Division II and worse than all but 11 teams in Division III.

In the past 10 years, only South Carolina in 1999 (228.64), Baylor in 2000 (221.82), Rutgers in 2002 (214) and Temple in 2006 (215.67) have had worse yards per game averages in the Football Bowl Subdivision than the 2008 Knights.

The Knights should feel lucky that they won four games this season with that low of a yardage total. Those other four teams combined for a record of 4-42.

In fact, 46 players in the FBS averaged more total offense per game than the entire UCF team did.

PLEASE SEE SCORING ON A9

98 Combined total tackles for a loss, making UCF defenders fifth in the country

42 Wide receiver Brian Watters' number of catches, totalling 594 yards



SARAH RODGERS / CENTRAL FLORIDA FUTURE
Wide receiver Brian Watters led the Knights with 594 yards, the second-fewest yards for a team-leading receiver since UCF joined the Football Bowl Subdivision in 1996.

24

Percent of UCF drives that went for negative or 0 yards

88 Sophomore Blake Clingan single-season record of punts

366

Total return yards by the defense

39,596 Average attendance of home football games



RAYMA JENKINS / CENTRAL FLORIDA FUTURE
Whether it was from dropped passes, poor quarterback play or an inconsistent running game, the Knights finished the 2008 season with the lowest offensive yards per game average among the 119 FBS squads.

Men's Basketball

Knights fall in Cancun finale

Lose to winless Morehead State

RYAN BASS
Staff Writer

The word comeback seems to be the theme for the UCF Men's Basketball team at the Cancun Challenge in Mexico, as it mustered another one in its game on Sunday against Morehead State.

Unfortunately, what hasn't been the theme for the Knights (3-3) is the word finish, and that's exactly what they didn't do with their comeback on Sunday, falling to the Eagles 71-65 after miscues on a couple of late possessions.

It was the Eagles' first win in seven games this season.

The Knights used their full-court press defense to cut

GET YOUR FACTS STRAIGHT

WALK THROUGH THE VALLEY

The Knights lost their first-ever meeting with Morehead State on Sunday. It was the Knights' first loss to a team that is in the Ohio Valley Conference since being beaten, 63-58, by Tennessee-Martin on Dec. 15, 2002. The Knights' all-time record versus the 10 current members of the OVC is 12-13.

BACK HOME

By the time of this Saturday's game against South Florida, the Knights will have spent the past 20 days without a game in Florida. It is the team's longest streak without a game in this state since 2003, when games at Campbell, Gardner Webb and Niagara separated UCF home games by 24 days.

SCOREBOARD

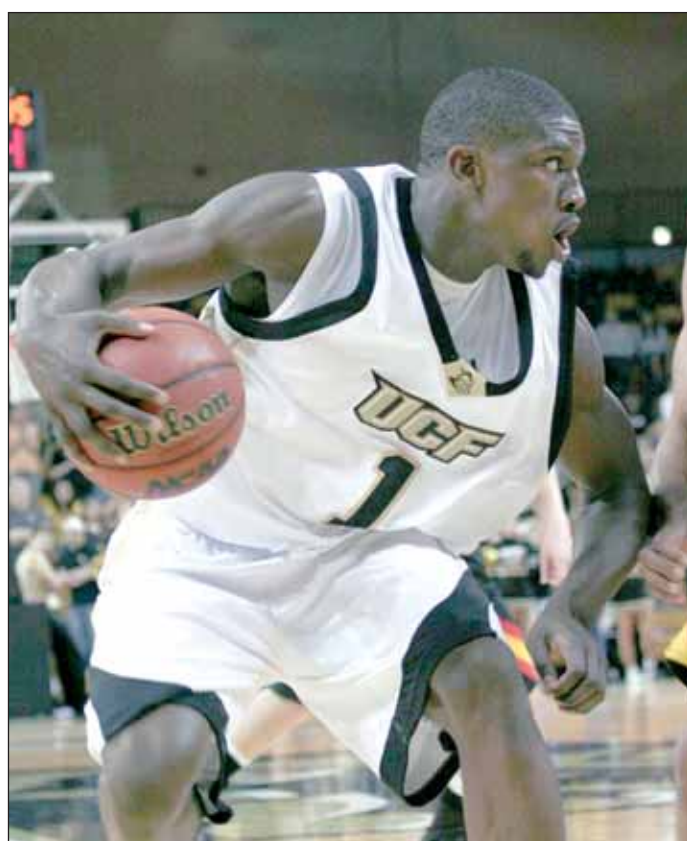
71-65
Morehead State vs. UCF

into a 14-point deficit. They used a 9-2 run, sparked by a couple of steals and two Taylor Young free throws, to

eventually come within two points with less than a minute to play. Young made 1-of-2 free throws to cut the lead to 65-63, but Jermaine Taylor missed a 3-pointer, and the Eagles' Cecil Brown knocked down a pair of free throws to put the game away.

Taylor registered a double-double with 22 points and 10

PLEASE SEE SHOOTERS ON A9



COREY MAYNARD / CENTRAL FLORIDA FUTURE
The Knights couldn't pull out a win against Morehead State despite a double-double from senior guard Jermaine Taylor. He finished the contest with 22 points and 10 rebounds.