

LOCAL

BASEBALL

Franklin baseball player honored for big week

Franklin College senior Nathan Roberts has been named the Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference Baseball Hitter of the Week after helping the Grizzlies go 3-1 in games last week.

A senior third baseman, Roberts was 7 of 13 (.538 average) at the plate, including two home runs and two doubles, with nine RBIs in the four games. He also scored nine runs.

Roberts is hitting .409 this season with 12 RBIs and 11 runs scored.

MEN'S TENNIS

Conference recognizes Grizzlies tennis player

Franklin College senior Robbie Hughes has been named the Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference Men's Tennis Player of the Week after helping the Grizzlies to a pair of conference wins last week.

Playing No. 1 singles and No. 2 doubles, Hughes was 3-0 in matches against Mount St. Joseph and Manchester.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

KNOXVILLE, Tenn.

Former Indiana All-Star suspended by Tennessee

Tennessee basketball players Anthony Passley, a former Indiana high school All-Star, and Jordan Smith were charged with possession of crack and suspended indefinitely from the team.

Passley, a redshirt transfer, and Smith, a walk-on, were arrested early Sunday, Knoxville police spokesman Darrell DeBusk said Monday.

Officers trying to clear traffic near a nightclub spotted a car on the sidewalk under a no-parking sign and approached to ask them to move, DeBusk said.

Officers found 15.2 grams of crack in the car and charged the pair with possession for resale, the police spokesman said. Passley also was charged with simple possession of marijuana, DeBusk said.

The 6-foot-5 Passley was a third-team AP All-State selection at North Central and was named to the Indiana All-Star team in 2004.

"I am very disappointed in these young men," Tennessee coach Bruce Pearl said. "Our players need to take their responsibility for being a role model seriously, and if they don't act responsibly they won't be playing at Tennessee."

LOUISVILLE, Ky.

Louisville's Padgett has successful knee surgery

Louisville center David Padgett underwent arthroscopic knee surgery in New York City on Monday to repair damage in his left knee.

Padgett averaged 11.8 points and 6.1 rebounds in 24 games for the Cardinals, but his season came to an end following a loss to Syracuse on Feb. 18.

Padgett originally hurt the knee in a preseason scrimmage in November, and the knee worsened as the season went on.

Louisville coach Rick Pitino pulled Padgett out of practice Feb. 20 and decided to end his season rather than risk further injury.

The Cardinals (18-11) open the Big East tournament Wednesday against No. 15 Pittsburgh (21-6) at Madison Square Garden.

NEW YORK

Connecticut back on top of AP men's top 25 poll

Connecticut and Villanova, the regular-season co-champions of the Big East, also were the top two teams in The Associated

RACING

CHARLOTTE, N.C.

Charlotte wins race for NASCAR Hall of Fame

NASCAR's first Hall of Fame will be built in downtown Charlotte, N.C., within miles of the garages and sprawling mansions that make the region an epicenter of the sport.

The selection of Charlotte for the site of the \$107.5 million hall ended a yearlong race featuring four other cities. The hall is expected to lure hundreds of thousands of NASCAR fans annually. Officials hope it will open in 2009.

"In the end, you look at what's going to be best in the long run," NASCAR chairman Brian France told about 1,000 people at the city's convention center Monday.

The remaining finalists were Daytona Beach, Fla., and Atlanta, Richmond, Va., and Kansas City, Kan., were eliminated earlier.

"As a guy, I'm disappointed. They decided to marry the girl next door," Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue said. "We had a lot to offer. It could have been a great marriage."

Charlotte's proximity to the heart of the sport was cited repeatedly by supporters.

Seattle's Alexander gets richer

Seahawks pay MVP instead of losing him

By TIM BOOTH

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

KIRKLAND, Wash.

Shaun Alexander wanted market value. The Seattle Seahawks responded with the richest contract for a running back in NFL history.

Alexander signed an eight-year, \$62 million contract Monday, keeping the NFL MVP with the NFC champions.

Alexander's agent, Jim Steiner, said that the contract includes more than \$15.1 million in guaranteed cash, through signing and other bonuses and 2006 base salary. The \$62 million total exceeds the eight-year, \$60 million contract LaDainian Tomlinson signed with the Chargers in 2004.

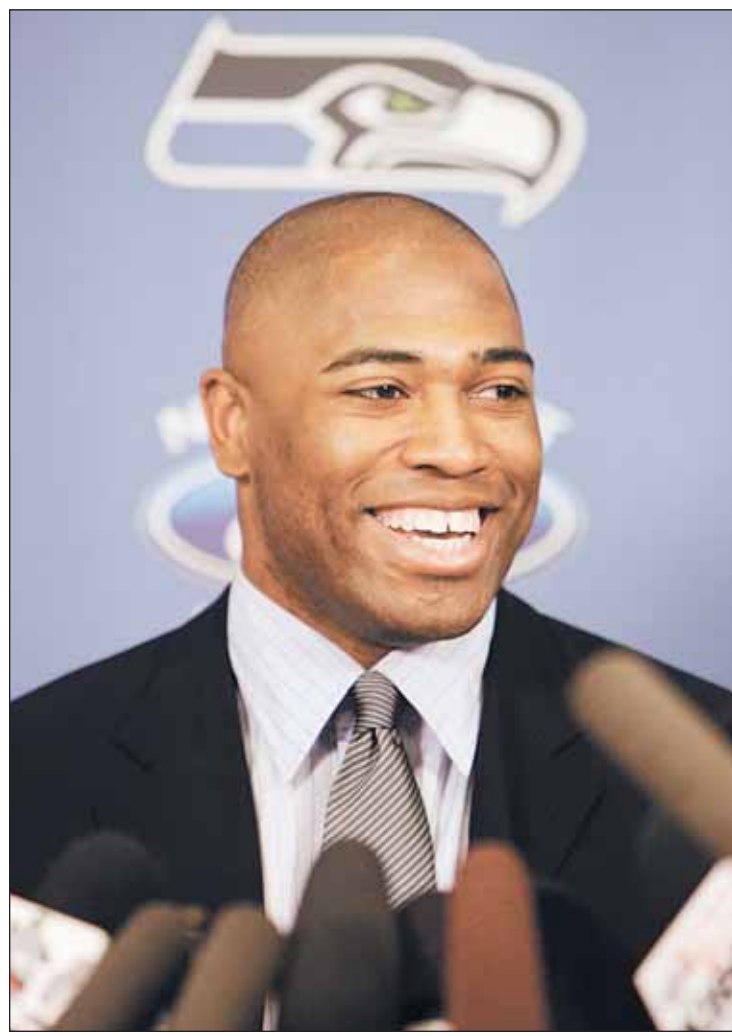
"This contract is truly a blessing. To be the highest (paid) running back ever is quite an honor," Alexander said during a news conference at team headquarters. "It's pretty good."

Always jovial, Alexander talked about making multiple Super Bowl trips with the Seahawks but also acknowledged he probably could have made more by leaving Seattle as a free agent.

"Everybody knew this is my city," Alexander said. "I wanted to play here, and my goal when I first got here was to do stuff Seattle had never seen before."

"It's really simple. When you have good people and everybody is going after the same things, it's easy to make the decision about coming in."

It also was widely assumed Alexander would command more than \$20 million in guarantees, given that last offseason, Seattle paid a \$16 million bonus to re-sign Pro Bowl quarterback Matt Hasselbeck and another \$20 million-plus in bonuses to keep perennial Pro Bowl tackle Walter Jones.



Seahawks running back Shaun Alexander, shown during a news conference in Kirkland, Wash., signed an eight-year contract with the team Monday.

Both Steiner and the organization declined to reveal the specific breakdown of the contract, but team president Tim Ruskell said the contract still keeps the Seahawks in good salary cap position.

Seattle was more than \$10 million under the cap before Alexander's deal. The uncertainty with the league's collective bargaining agreement and the twice-postponed deadline for free agency affected the timeline of the deal slightly, but not the terms, Ruskell said.

Alexander was designated the Seahawks' franchise player before last season and then signed a one-year deal for \$6.323 million.

In his first year with the

Arrington pleased to be leaving 'Skins

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON

LaVar Arrington played for five defensive coordinators in his first five years without a playoff game to show for it. He endured a lingering contract dispute with the owner. He didn't like the way the team handled his knee injury.



ARRINGTON

Then he got benched. A three-time Pro Bowl linebacker can only take so much, even if he had pledged himself forever to the team and had moved his family to the area. Arrington severed ties with the Washington Redskins late Sunday, agreeing to forgo \$4.4 million so he could become a free agent.

"Under the current situation, I don't see how it would be productive for me or for the Redskins for me to be there," Arrington said Monday. "I think it's obvious. Some people feel I'm full of drama. Some people feel the Redskins are like that. Who knows who's wrong?"

"It just seems we got to our current position in terms of me and the Redskins. It didn't seem like a comfortable fit."

Arrington's agent, Kevin Post, said that Arrington agreed to forfeit \$4.4 million of \$5.7 million in structured bonus payments due to him during the next two years. Arrington will receive the remaining \$1.3 million on April 1, while the Redskins get some savings under the salary cap.

"You can't put a price tag on principles and values," said Arrington, who nevertheless could recoup most, if not all, of the money in free agency.

● Swimmer

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1)

round the Manoa campus, which is only a few miles from Waikiki Beach.

"I love it. It's awesome," Sohn said. "The beach, the sand, it's awesome."

But being a Division I student-athlete isn't exactly a day at the beach, even in Hawaii.

An honors student, Sohn, 18, is an accounting major who plans to attend law school.

He's also focused on a swimming career that might lead to an athletic scholarship if his times improve. Between schoolwork and swimming, there isn't much time for fun in the sun.

"Normally, we go to the beach on the weekends," Sohn said by cell phone from Hawaii. "I don't really have a lot of time during the week, obviously, to go with practice twice a day on Monday,



After swimming as a walk-on this season, Center Grove graduate Jaime Sohn hopes to earn a partial athletic scholarship from the University of Hawaii.

Wednesday and Friday."

A distance specialist, Sohn swims the mile freestyle and the 500 freestyle. He occasionally swims the 200 freestyle and 200 backstroke.

Despite his walk-on status, Sohn competed in every home meet and often traveled with the team for away meets.

Because of its distance from the mainland, most of Hawaii's meets are home meets. Yet it's the one road trip most opponents

don't mind making.

"Most teams come out a couple of days early," Sohn said. "They're like, 'Hey, let's go to Hawaii.'"

Although he loves everything about the school and the swim team, Sohn admits being so far from home is sometimes tough.

Roughly a 12-hour flight from Indianapolis, Hawaii doesn't lend itself well to family visits. Sohn's family hasn't been to a home meet, and he has visited his

● Patient

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1)

fourth president. She joined the organization in January 2005 and is the second woman to serve as president. Under her leadership, the organization has enjoyed growth in community and corporate involvement.

For example, when recruiting volunteers for Big Ten tournaments, she found that many of the city's key business leaders were willing to help.

From bankers to law-firm part-

ners, more than 300 people donated time to help organize and plan the events. Williams was impressed by the support.

"That's civic pride and civic leadership at its best," she said. "It's not just about basketball, track and golf matches. It's about civic pride and economic leadership."

"We have to make sure the level and commitment of pride is carried through to the next generation and the next."

Williams cited the Solheim Cup as another glowing example of local corporate leaders stepping up to help stage a high-profile event.

Considered the premier international event in women's golf, the cup matches were played in September at Crooked Stick Golf Club in Carmel. More than 103,000 people attended. That figure shattered the previous Solheim Cup attendance record of about 100,000, which was set in 2003.

She regards the success of the cup as the highlight of her first year on the job.

"It was so unique and special," Williams said. "There was international flavor; extraordinary female athletes, a dynamic leader in Nancy Lopez and perfect weather."

"The way the community

embraced it was special. They not only went to the event, but people are still talking about it."

Besides bringing diversity to the major sporting events of the city, Indiana Sports Corp. also has helped the Indianapolis economy.

In its first 25 years, Williams said, the organization brought in \$3 billion in direct spending to Indianapolis. The goal is to keep the growth going, she said.

"When you have that kind of number, you've built a franchise," Williams said. "I think we have that here, and we can become a critical component to economic vitality at the city and state levels."

● Crowd

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1)

can't put into words what it means to me."

Mexico will start Baltimore Orioles right-hander Rodrigo Lopez.

"This Mexican team, they're not running out slop," Peavy said. "They've got a very good baseball team with a lot of proven major-league players on that roster."

"Rodrigo Lopez, his credentials speak for themselves. He's capable of shutting anybody out on any given day. He shut the Yankees out all the time, and that's basically the same lineup we've got."

The three Yankees on the U.S. roster — shortstop Derek Jeter, third baseman Alex Rodriguez and outfielder Johnny Damon — will be in the starting lineup today. Damon, though, will shift

ON TV

What: World Baseball Classic
When: Today
Televise games: Dominican Republic vs. Venezuela, 1 p.m., ESPN; United States vs. Mexico, 4 p.m., ESPN2

from center field to left, with Ken Griffey Jr. starting in center.

"We've faced him 100 times playing with Baltimore," Jeter said, referring to Lopez. "He's always been pretty tough. He knows how to pitch. He mixes it up."

Lopez was 15-12 last season with a 4.90 ERA. Despite a series of injuries, Peavy was 13-7 with a 2.88 ERA.

The U.S. players have repeatedly talked about the national pride and team camaraderie they have experienced since they gathered for their first workout on Friday.

"The boys just went together

and realized what a good time we're having and hired a photographer to sit there and take candid shots in the clubhouse," Peavy said. "This is something that you're going to remember the rest of your life."

Under rules designed to prevent the overuse of pitchers during what would normally be spring training, starters can throw no more than 65 pitches. Peavy is set to go three innings only, whether he reaches 65 pitches or not.

But the emotional young hurler does not plan to hold back.

"I'm going to let it all hang out for three innings," Peavy said. "What I've got to bring to the table, Mexico's going to get it (today)."

The U.S. lineup will lead off with Damon, followed by Jeter, Griffey, Rodriguez, designated hitter Mark Teixeira, first baseman Derrek Lee, catcher Brian Schneider, right fielder Randy Winn and second baseman Chase Utley.

Utley was 5 for 5 with a home run in the United States' 12-7 exhibition win against the San Francisco Giants on Sunday.

None of the players will go nine innings because it's so early in the year.

The United States is in a pool with Mexico, Canada and South Africa. The top two teams advance to the second round next week in Anaheim, Calif.

While this is the first U.S. squad to feature major-league stars in a significant international championship, there is little comparison to the U.S. basketball "Dream Team" that dominated the Barcelona Olympics in 1992.

The baseball competition is simply much better, with plenty of talent on the rosters of Mexico, Canada, Venezuela, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Japan and South Korea.

"For us to go out and guarantee a win in this thing would be stupid," Atlanta's Chipper Jones said.

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