

SPORTS

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SPORTS
IN BRIEFSeahawks
unexpectedly
waive Freoney

RENTON, Wash. — The Seattle Seahawks have made an unexpected roster move, waiving veteran defensive end Dwight Freoney just four games after signing him to help boost their pass rush.

Seattle made the roster move Tuesday but no corresponding move was announced.

Freoney was signed in late October to boost Seattle's pass rush after Cliff Avril was lost to a neck injury earlier in the season. Freoney had three sacks in his first two games, moving into 17th on the all-time sack list. But he did not record a tackle in each of his last two games.

Lewis, Urlacher,
Moss, Seymour
among hall
semifinalists

CANTON, Ohio — First-year eligibles Ray Lewis and Randy Moss are among 27 semifinalists for induction into the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

The hall said Tuesday that all ties for the 25th spot in the semifinals also advance.

Others in their initial year of eligibility who made this cut are Brian Urlacher, Richard Seymour, Steve Hutchinson and Ronde Barber.

Four previously eligible players made the semifinals for the first time: LeRoy Butler, Leslie O'Neal, Simeon Rice and Everson Walls. All others on the 2018 list have reached the semifinals in previous years.

Braves stripped
of 13 prospects,
Coppolella
banned for life

ATLANTA — The Braves lost 13 prospects and former general manager John Coppolella was banned for life by Major League Baseball on Tuesday for circumventing international signing rules from 2015-17.

Former Atlanta special assistant Gordon Blakeley, who was the team's international scouting chief, was suspended from baseball for one year by Commissioner Rob Manfred.

Sanctions imposed by Manfred leave the Braves unable to bargain at full strength for a top Latin American prospect until 2021.

Manfred said MLB's investigation determined the Braves funneled extra signing bonus money to five players in 2015-16 by giving the funds first to another player considered a foreign professional under baseball's rules and having the money redistributed to the other five. If the money had been counted for the other five, the Braves would have exceeded their pool by more than 5 percent and been restricted to signing bonuses of \$300,000 or under for international amateurs through June 15, 2019.

Sochi gold
medalist among 4
Russians banned
for doping

MOSCOW — Two more Russian athletes were stripped of their Olympic medals from the 2014 Sochi Games on Wednesday, leaving the United States as the country with the most medals.

Four Russians, all skeleton racers, were banned by the International Olympic Committee for doping, including men's gold medalist Alexander Tretyakov and women's bronze medalist Elena Nikitina.

Russia, which finished the games at the top of the medals table with 13 gold and 33 overall, has now been stripped of six medals based on evidence of a state-sponsored doping program in Sochi, including samples being swapped in the laboratory. Two of the six medals were gold.

— Associated Press



AP Photo/Elaine Thompson

Washington quarterback Jake Browning drops back to pass against Utah during Saturday's game.

Pac-12 North comes down to the
Apple Cup during Rivalry Week

By ANNE M. PETERSON
Associated Press

It's the final week of the regular season for the Pac-12, which usually means a bit of bedlam. The league hasn't disappointed this season, with two coaching vacancies already, along with some uncertainty atop the North.

First, the one absolute: USC (10-2, 8-1) has already clinched the Pac-12 South and has Thanksgiving week off after 12 unbroken weeks of play. That gives the Trojans a week to rest and heal before the league championship game on Dec. 1.

Up North, Washington State will clinch the division with a victory over Washington in the Apple Cup. The Cougars (9-2, 6-2) are coming off a bye for Saturday's game at Husky Stadium.

The Huskies (9-2, 6-2), ranked as high as No. 5 this season and at one point considered the league's best chance for a spot in the College Football Playoff, were eliminated from the race for the Pac-12 title when Stanford beat California 17-14 last weekend.

The Cardinal (8-3, 7-2) can earn the North's spot if Washington State loses. Stanford has already completed its conference season and hosts Notre Dame on Saturday — at the same time as the Apple Cup.

Coach David Shaw said the Cardinal are working on how much

UP NEXT: APPLE CUP

• Washington State Cougars (6-2)
at Washington Huskies (6-2)
• Saturday, 5 p.m. TV: FOX

the Apple Cup looms over their own game at Stanford Stadium.

"It's not going to be scrolling every two minutes during the game, that's for sure," he said, adding that he's still sure it will be announced from time to time for fans in the stadium.

Washington's chances at the league title diminished two weeks ago after a 30-22 loss at Stanford, but the Huskies rebounded last weekend with a late rally for a 33-30 victory over Utah at home.

"I hope this gives them some swag back," coach Chris Petersen said after the victory. "They don't have to play so tight. They don't have to play perfect to come back and win. Just keep playing."

The Pac-12 will not have a representative in the playoffs for the second time since the CFP system was introduced in 2014.

Other issues around the league for the last week of the regular season:

VACANCIES: As of right now, there are two head coaching vacancies in the Pac-12. Gary Andersen parted ways with the Beavers on Oct. 9, and Jim Mora was dismissed by UCLA following last weekend's 28-23 loss to

the Trojans.

Arizona State's Todd Graham has been on the hot seat but the Sun Devils (6-5, 5-3) became bowl eligible with a 40-24 victory at Oregon State. A victory over Arizona in the Territorial Cup on Saturday, and then a bowl win, could mean he'll stay in Tempe for at least one more year.

As a Power 5 conference, the Pac-12 can expect to lure some big names, but this season there are a number of high-profile vacancies, including Florida and Tennessee — not to mention the teams that are waiting out the season before dismissing their coach.

The Bruins job is probably the most attractive out West, with a rich tradition and a big market in sunny Los Angeles. But UCLA has not been to a Rose Bowl — on their home field — since 1998. Former Oregon coach Chip Kelly is often mentioned in connection with the job.

Oregon State is a tougher sell. The players have petitioned the school to give interim coach Cory Hall the job permanently, but it's more likely the Beavers will bring in a fresh perspective. Virginia coach Bronco Mendenhall said Monday that he is not interested in the job after rumors swirled this weekend.

Ideally, schools with vacancies hope to fill them by Dec. 20, which is the early period letter of intent day.

Olympic champion Gabby Douglas says team doctor abused her

Associated Press

Olympic champion gymnast Gabby Douglas says she is among the group of athletes sexually abused by a former team doctor.

Douglas, the 2012 Olympic all-around champion and a three-time gold medalist, wrote in an Instagram post Tuesday that she waited so long to reveal the abuse by Larry Nassar because she was part of a group "conditioned to stay silent."

Douglas included the revelation in an apology for comments made on social media last week that suggested women dress modestly to help prevent abuse. Douglas said her comments, which she later deleted, were taken out of context.

"I didn't view my comments as victim shaming because I know no matter what you wear, it NEVER gives anyone the right to harass or abuse you," Douglas wrote.

The 21-year-old Douglas is the latest high-profile gymnast to come forward against Nassar, who spent nearly two decades as the national team doctor for USA Gymnastics before being fired in 2015. Two-time Olympic medalist Aly Raisman wrote about alleged abuse by Nassar in her autobiography "Fierce," released earlier this month. Two-time Olympic medalist McKayla Maroney disclosed abuse by Nassar in October.

Jamie Dantzscher, a bronze medalist on the 2000 U.S. Olympic team,



AP Photo/Bebeto Matthews

U.S. gymnastics team member Gabby Douglas, pictured here at the Empire State Building in New York in 2016, says she is among the group of athletes sexually abused by a former team doctor.

was part of the initial wave of lawsuits filed against Nassar in 2016 following reporting by the Indianapolis Star that highlighted chronic mishandling of abuse allegations against coaches and staff at some of USA Gymnastics' more than 3,500 clubs across the country.

Nassar, 54, is accused of molesting several girls while working for USA Gymnastics and Michigan State University. He's facing similar charges in a neighboring Michigan county and lawsuits filed by more than 125 women and girls.

Michigan gymnastics doctor
pleads guilty to sex charges

Associated Press

LANSING, Mich. — A sports doctor accused of molesting girls while working for USA Gymnastics and Michigan State University pleaded guilty Wednesday to multiple charges of sexual assault and will face at least 25 years in prison.

Dr. Larry Nassar, 54, was charged with molesting seven girls, mostly under the guise of treatment at his Lansing-area home and a campus clinic. All but one of his accusers was a gymnast. He faces similar charges in a neighboring county and lawsuits filed by more than 125 women and girls.

Olympic gymnasts Aly Raisman, McKayla Maroney and Gabby Douglas are among the women who have publicly said they were among Nassar's victims.

Some of his accusers attended the hearing Wednesday in a packed Ingham County court-

room. Some were crying.

Nassar admitted to digital penetrating the victims and agreed that his conduct had no legitimate medical purpose and that he did not have the girls' consent.

The plea deal in Ingham County calls for a minimum prison sentence of 25 years, but a judge could set the minimum sentence as high as 40 years. In Michigan, inmates are eligible for parole after serving a minimum sentence. Sentencing was set for Jan. 12.

The girls have testified that Nassar molested them with his hands, sometimes when a parent was present in the room, while they sought help for gymnastics injuries.

"He convinced these girls that this was some type of legitimate treatment," Assistant Attorney General Angela Poviliatis told a judge last summer. "Why would they question him? Why would they question this gymnastics god?"



Dr. Larry Nassar

Miami
jumps to
No. 2 in
playoff
rankings

By RALPH D. RUSSO
Associated Press

Miami made a small but potentially significant move up to No. 2 behind Alabama in the College Football Playoff rankings on Tuesday night, with Clemson slipping one spot to three and Oklahoma holding at four.

Wisconsin and Auburn remained next up behind the top four in a week when the top half of the selection committee's rankings were mostly unchanged.

Georgia, Notre Dame, Ohio State, Penn State and Southern California followed in the same order as they did last week. Over the next two weeks, every team in the top nine will play another team ranked in the committee's top 25, including four games matching top playoff contenders.

The Crimson Tide will play at Auburn on Saturday to decide a spot in the Southeastern Conference championship on Dec. 2. The winner plays Georgia.

The Atlantic Coast Conference championship will match Clemson and Miami on Dec. 2, and Wisconsin and Ohio State play in the Big Ten championship.

Miami's move comes after rallying to beat Virginia last Saturday. Committee chairman Kirby Hocutt said Miami is showing characteristics of a championship team.

"When you get down the way Miami did to Virginia two times, once in each half, and you have the poise and the ability to come back and win in a convincing manner, that is special," said Hocutt, the Texas Tech athletic director.

The Hurricanes (10-0) play at Pitt Friday and now seem better positioned to get into the playoff even with a loss to Clemson, depending on how things play out in other conferences.

Central Florida came in at No. 15 and Memphis is 20th, the highest ranked teams from outside the Power Five. The American Athletic Conference rivals could meet in the league title game in two weeks if UCF beats USF on Black Friday, setting up a game that would likely send the winner into a New Year's Six bowl.