

SPORTS
BRIEFS

BASEBALL

Jury deliberating
Mesa's fate

The fate of Cleveland Indians closer Jose Mesa, who stands accused of rape, is in the hands of a jury Tuesday. A Cuyahoga County (Ohio) jury of seven women and five men was given the case late Tuesday morning, one day after Judge Thomas Curran ruled that the panel may consider a lesser charge of gross sexual imposition.

BASKETBALL

NBA denies
point-shaving

The NBA this week blasted the credibility of a newly-published book about the Detroit Pistons 1989-90 championship team, denying the allegations of point shaving hinted by the authors. The book, "Money Players", claims some members of the Pistons were concerned about a point-shaving problem because two team members, Isiah Thomas and James Edwards, were losing large sums to gamblers that had ties to organized crime.

Hornets activate
Mason

Charlotte Hornets forward Anthony Mason, who missed seven games with a partially torn tendon in his right foot, was activated from the injured list, the team announced. The team's leading rebounder and second-leading scorer and playmaker, Mason had not played since March 21st with a torn plantar fascia tendon in his right foot, which runs from heel to toes beneath the arch.

Stiebing named New
Orleans hoops coach

As expected, the University of New Orleans Tuesday named Joey Stiebing as its new head basketball coach. The 34-year-old Stiebing has been an assistant for the past seven seasons at New Orleans, the last three under Tic Price, who left New Orleans to take the top post at the University of Memphis two weeks ago.

Taylor skips ahead

University of Michigan forward Maurice Taylor reportedly has decided to skip his senior season and enter the NBA draft. The Detroit News cited an unidentified source close to the Taylor family who claims that Taylor will make his decision public later this week. "He's going to be a much better pro than he was a college player at Michigan," the source told the newspaper in Tuesday's editions.

FOOTBALL

Ron Wolf signs
contract extension

Ron Wolf, the architect of the Green Bay Packers' first Super Bowl championship team in 29 years, was rewarded Tuesday with a three-year contract extension through 2002. Financial terms were not disclosed. The contract extension, the second for Wolf since he was named executive vice president and general manager on November 27, 1991.

TENNIS

Krajicek, Washington

Reigning Wimbledon champion Richard Krajicek of the Netherlands and third-seeded American MaliVai Washington emerged victorious in opening-round action at the \$405,000 Gold Flake Open tennis tournament in Chennai, India. Krajicek, who did not play in the Davis Cup loss to the United States this weekend, downed Thomas Nydahl of Sweden, 6-4, 6-4, while Washington, who lost to Krajicek in the Wimbledon final, got past Bulgarian Orlin Stanoychev, 7-5, 6-7 (6-8), 6-3.

SPORTS

CALIPARI'S 'APOLOGY' BAD AS ORIGINAL INSULT

Through Thursday (March 27), the Nets had won only 22 of 69 games and were already eliminated from the playoffs. You'd think things couldn't get any smellier. But the atmosphere surrounding the team turned even uglier this week when it became known that Calipari, upset at reporter Dan Garcia, called Garcia "a bleeping Mexican idiot" during an exchange in the parking lot outside the team's practice facility.

It was bad enough that Calipari used the pejorative phrase more than once. It was bad enough that Calipari said he would punch Garcia in the face "if you ever say that again," after Garcia said Calipari was acting like a five-year-old. It was bad enough that it took Calipari four days to issue an apology that oc-

curred only after the incident became public knowledge and meetings were held between the coach and the front office.

But what really raises the stench level is the organization allowing Calipari to apologize, but really not apologize. He didn't do it face-to-face with Garcia. He did it with the cameras rolling, reading from a statement, a statement so condescending it was in some ways worse than the original slur.

Whoever wrote it, and it can be presumed to be some empty head from the front office, should have been disciplined by the league along with Calipari, who was hit with a \$25,000 fine. How Calipari could read the statement with a straight face indicates he should have been up for an Oscar.

"I would like to apologize to Dan Garcia for my ill-advised attempt at humor and insensitivity for the remark," Calipari read. "In retrospect, I can understand how the remark could have been misinterpreted."

Is he serious? First of all, if he wanted to apologize to Garcia, he could have picked up the phone or talked to him in person. Man to man. Apparently, that must be difficult for this alleged leader of men. Garcia did receive a letter of apology from Calipari, but it was given to him by someone else.

Second, calling his comment an "ill-advised attempt at humor" is actually a pretty good joke. What's funny about calling someone an idiot, even if it isn't preceded by the person's nationality? I guess we

won't be seeing Calipari at any comedy club's open mike night soon. If he did, he'd probably just start asking everyone their ethnic background and then call them an idiot. Pretty funny stuff, huh?

Near the end of the incident, Calipari told Garcia he was sorry if the reporter felt the remark was insensitive and added if he couldn't take a joke, he wouldn't talk to him anymore.

The kicker, though, is the sensitivity Calipari expressed by acknowledging his understanding that the comment could have been misinterpreted. Misinterpreted? Where's the subtlety?

C'mon, Dan, you know that what Calipari really meant to say was that you're a brilliant Mexican and he was just kidding, don't you? C'mon,

Dan, where's your sense of humor? Give me a break.

This was no apology; it was a shameless attempt to try to shift blame to Garcia. He's thin-skinned and can't take a joke was the real message Calipari was sending.

Amazingly, though, there's more.

A day before Calipari's statement, which came prior to a Nets' home game against the Lakers, club president Michael Rowe had also read from a statement in response to questions about the incident. One part said, "The Nets' organization deplores any racial or ethnic remarks by any member of the organization or anyone else."

So, during the game against the Lakers, not long after Calipari's apology, the arena organist played "The Mexican Hat Dance."

TYSON-HOLYFIELD HEAVYWEIGHT
BOUT MAY 3RD IS OFF

The May 3rd heavyweight rematch between World Boxing Association champion Evander Holyfield and Mike Tyson is off, the head of the Nevada Athletic Commission said Tuesday.

Marc Ratner said that Tyson suffered a cut over his left eye in spar-

ring that required an undetermined number of stitches.

The injury was treated by plastic surgeon Dr. Barry Markham, Ratner said.

Don King Productions, which handles Tyson, has scheduled a news conference for 8 p.m. EDT at the

MGM Grand Hotel & Casino, which was supposed to be the site of the anticipated rematch, a hotel spokeswoman said.

Ratner said the conference was to announce the postponement of the fight, which could be rescheduled for June 28th.

SELIG ENDS BASEBALL GIVEAWAYS

Acting baseball commissioner Bud Selig finally made a ruling that will not be challenged by the Players Association. After three incidents of fans throwing promotional baseballs onto the field in the last week, Selig Monday ordered all major league teams to ban the free giveaway and suggested that fans be given the free baseballs as they leave the ballpark. In Milwaukee, the Brewers nearly forfeited their game with the Texas Rangers on Monday after fans at

County Stadium began throwing baseballs onto the field in the second inning, forcing two delays for a total of 30 minutes. Selig, the owner of the Brewers, was present at Monday's game at County Stadium.

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