

SPORTS BRIEFS

SPORTS

NBA Lockout Sends Calipari Globetrotting

By MICHAEL JAMES
DAILY NEWS SPORTS WRITER

Because of the NBA lockout, John Calipari has become a coach without a team. But he hasn't stopped coaching.

Usually at this time of year, the Nets' coach would be working out players and preparing for the upcoming season, but the work stoppage prohibits contact with his team. Calipari, who lectured yesterday at the Nets' summer basketball camp at River Dell High in Oradell, N.J., said he's been keeping busy scouting in Europe.

"The two trips I've made to Europe (were) to see the young players who are 18 and younger at the Eurocamp in Treviso, Italy, earlier this summer and I was at the 22-and-unders, which was in Sicily," he said. "(It was) just to get a little read on who's who in Europe, so when people come back and tell me who's who, I have an idea."

Calipari also said he did "six or seven" coaches clinics with Italian coaches, as well as sessions alongside Lute Olsen and Mike Fratello.

"I've been bouncing around, because I can't do anything (relating to the Nets) and I've been kind of

having a withdrawal from basketball because I can't have contact with any of our players," he said. "Normally, I would be working out players or flying to their cities to work out with them. That's what I enjoy most about coaching."

In anticipation of the lockout, Calipari worked out several Nets in June instead of his usual July 15 start date, and added he's confident the players are preparing for the season even without being under his watchful eye.

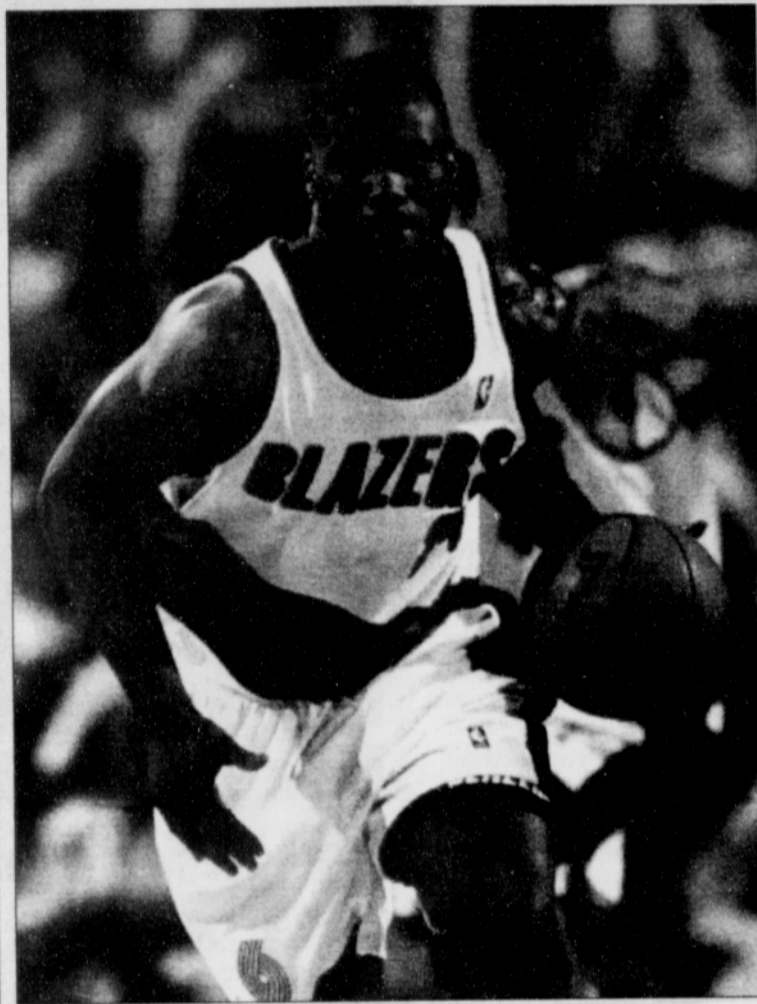
"Knowing our guys, the guys that we have, I know that their appetite has been whetted a little bit. I imagine our guys are working really hard right now," Calipari said. "I don't have any doubt that our guys are playing and training and preparing themselves."

And what does a coach do without a team?

"I'm exercising every day, I'm back to the weight training, so I'm lifting and running and I'm golfing a little bit more than I have in the past," he said. Coming off a season where he guided the Nets to 43 wins and their first playoff berth in four years, Calipari wasn't worried about the Nets being hurt by the layoff.

"When they tell us we're going to start, we'll be ready," he said.

Blazers Riding High



Isaiah Rider scored a season-high 30 points, 23 in the first half, to lead the streaking Portland Trail Blazers to a 106-91 victory over the Dallas Mavericks on Monday night. Damon Stoudamire added 18 points, Arvydas Sabonis had 15 points and 16 rebounds, and Brian Grant 10 points for Portland, which has won 10 of its last 11. Michael Finley's 21 points paced the Mavericks. Erick Strickland had 13 points and Gary Trent added 12 for Dallas.

Flutie makes NFL return with Bills

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Quarterback Doug Flutie, who has failed in two attempts to play in the NFL, has agreed to a contract with the Buffalo Bills.

Bills spokesman Scott Berchtold said the team reached an agreement with the 35-year-old Flutie late Friday afternoon. He will sign a contract sometime next week when he returns from a vacation in Hawaii.

The Buffalo News reported Friday that Flutie was to approve a two-year deal that would pay him a base salary of \$300,000, the minimum for an NFL veteran, and a signing bonus of about \$50,000.

Several incentive clauses — including individual statistical accomplishments and league-wide honors — could bring the total value of the contract as high as \$5 million over two seasons, the newspaper reported.

Jack Mula, the quarterback's agent, said Friday he would not comment on the financial aspects or the length of Flutie's contract.

The 5-foot-10 Flutie, the 1984 Heisman Trophy winner for Boston College, is due to return Monday to his home in Natick, Mass.

Bills coach Wade Phillips told Flutie by telephone last weekend he would have a chance to compete for the No. 1 quarterback position, the newspaper reported.

The team is expected to acquire at least one more quarterback through free agency or the draft to go along with Flutie and holdovers Todd Collins and Alex Van Pelt. Third-stringer Jim Ballard will be sent to the World League of American Football. A six-time MVP in the Canadian league, Flutie failed in previous NFL chances with Chicago and New England from 1986 through 1989.

Documents Show Ex-governor's Role in Gambling Deal

By JOANNA WEISS
NEWHOUSE NEWS SERVICE

BATON ROUGE, La. — In the bar overlooking the swimming pool at the Radisson Hotel, federal prosecutors say Edwin Edwards sat next to Edward DeBartolo Jr. 19 months ago and showed him a slip of paper. On it, the prosecutors say, was scrawled a figure: \$400,000.

That March 5, 1997, encounter sealed a fateful deal, according to court documents, between the former Louisiana governor and the California millionaire who owns the San Francisco 49ers football team. Investigators say

Edwards had long demanded money in exchange for influencing the Louisiana Gaming Control Board and securing DeBartolo a coveted riverboat-casino license. After years of resistance, DeBartolo had decided to pay. That day, DeBartolo says, he learned the price.

That scene, and other vivid descriptions of the dealings that won DeBartolo his license, is outlined in a seven-page court document federal prosecutors filed yesterday. It accompanied the plea bargain DeBartolo made in exchange for testifying against Edwards.

Three Investigations Launched Into Lewis-Holyfield Draw

By LARRY FINE

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Three separate New York State inquiries into the controversial Evander Holyfield-Lennox Lewis boxing decision were announced Monday.

Gov. George Pataki asked the New York State Athletic Commission to investigate the draw decision in Saturday's heavyweight title unification bout that appeared to most observers to have been decisively won by Lewis.

New York State Senator Roy M. Goodman, chairman of the New York State Senate Committee on Investigations, said his panel would hold hearings on the fight in New York City Thursday.

New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer said he was opening an inquiry into the controversial decision in New York City Friday.

A report in London's Daily Mirror newspaper Monday said the Federal Bureau of Investigation was launching a probe into whether the fight was rigged, but FBI officials in Washington would not confirm such an investigation.

The fight, intended to produce an undisputed heavyweight champion of the world, instead plunged the boxing world into controversy once again with some observers wondering whether the judging might have been rigged.

Judge Stanley Christoudoulou of South Africa scored the fight 116-113 in favor of World Boxing Council champion Lewis. American Eugenia Williams had Holyfield winning 115-113. Judge Larry O'Connell of Britain had it even, 115-115.

Holyfield retained his World Boxing Association and International Boxing Federation titles and Lewis kept his WBC crown.

The probe conducted by state athletic commission chairman Melville Southard Jr. is expected to take place over the next seven days. "The governor's concern is to insure that the public's confidence in the integrity of the matches is protected," said athletic commission spokesman Scott Trent.

Goodman's committee has investigated boxing before following the death of a boxer in the ring and spearheaded reforms in the sport.

"It's quite evident that something was bizarre in the ultimate decision," said Goodman, who attended the Madison Square Garden fight. Trent said he did not think the various probes would conflict.

"We want to get to the truth," he said. "Greater scrutiny and a closer look can only have the effect of revealing the truth in an expeditious manner, which we welcome."

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