

CAPITALS

Ovechkin lifts Capitals past Rangers for fourth straight win

By SIMMI BUTTAR
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK | Alex Ovechkin is so good he scored Sunday's winning shootout goal without putting the puck in the net.

Ovechkin finished Washington's fourth straight victory with one unusual play, and Braden Holtby made 22 saves in the Capitals' 3-2 victory over the New York Rangers.

The 33-year-old Ovechkin was skating to his right in the fourth round of the tiebreaker when Rangers goalie Alexandar Georgiev threw his stick at the puck, knocking it away from the star winger. Ovechkin was credited with the



Washington forward Alex Ovechkin was awarded the game-winning goal in a 3-2 shootout victory Sunday when New York Rangers goaltender Alexandar Georgiev threw his stick at the puck and knocked it away from the Capitals' star.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

goal after a review.

"I know 100 percent it's a goal," Ovechkin said. "I was surprised of the first reaction of the referees. It was nice we have replay."

Carl Hagelin and Andre Burakovsky scored in the first period for Washington, which moved two points ahead of the Islanders for first place in the Metropolitan Division. The Islanders lost at home to Philadelphia later Sunday.

Holtby said he knew it was over right after Ovechkin's play in the shootout.

"Once it happened, I thought it was going to be a goal," he said. "Right away, I thought they'd call it instantly. I'm not sure what the delay was. It's a rule, he

would have had a wide-open net if he didn't do that. They made the right call and we came out with a big win."

Capitals forward T.J. Oshie, no stranger to shootout success, was surprised by the ending.

"It's a first for me," Oshie said. "It's a crazy way to win. If he doesn't throw (it) you've got to imagine, a guy like O is putting that in the back of the net. It's a crazy way to win, but we'll take it"

Pavel Buchnevich and Ryan Strome scored for New York. The Rangers lost their fourth in a row, including all three on their homestand.

Georgiev made 37 saves. He stopped Ovechkin on a breakaway in overtime.

Nationals
low-balling
Harper is
phony news

If we are to believe the Philadelphia Bryce Harper, the D.C. Bryce Harper never wanted to leave Washington.

So why isn't he still a Washington National?

"When I was in D.C., I didn't want to go anywhere else," Harper told reporters Saturday afternoon at his introductory Phillies press conference in Clearwater, Florida. "I didn't want to

be part of two organizations or anything like that. That just didn't work out for me."

Apparently, the decision to leave Washington after seven seasons was made by somebody else — the Philadelphia Bryce Harper, I guess. The D.C. Bryce

Harper was an innocent bystander.

"Didn't work out" sends the message that this was somehow beyond his control — that Harper, 26, had no choice but to leave Washington. Give him credit — he's got the Scott Boras party line down pat, a victim of the cheap and insincere Lerner family, the Nationals' owners who embarrassed Harper with an offer that was fair until Boras got the deal he and Harper wanted from the Phillies.

Then somehow, the Nationals' offer became offensive.

This is a fairy tale, a dark one Boras spread throughout hours and days following the news Harper had reached a 13-year, \$330 million contract with Philadelphia. This compared to Washington's woeful 10-year, \$300 million offer made in late September that, according to those buying the Boras tale being pitched privately, was an illusion — that it was really an offer with so much evil "deferred" money that was in reality worth about \$180 million.

Except this wasn't true — not even close.

USA Today reported in late January that the deferred money put the real dollar figure of the Nationals offer at about \$284 million — a figure that is much closer to the truth, according to sources.

But it serves Boras' purposes to tear down the Nationals offer — to make it seem small — once the deal with Philadelphia was made public. The further distance in the amount between what Harper could have had to stay in Washington — where, let us remember, he professed his heart was at the end of last year — and what he took to play in Philadelphia, the more successful Boras and Harper would look.

The timing of the campaign plays to that strategy. There were no such leaks about the devalued Nationals offer until it suited Boras' purposes. Actually, when the Boras camp leaked the news about Washington's \$300 million offer in late September, it helped them. The Nationals' offer out there in the conversation gave Boras and Harper a

» see LOVERRO | B11

THOM
LOVERRO

WIZARDS

STRETCH DRIVE



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington forward Jabari Parker dunks over Minnesota guard Josh Okogie Sunday. The Wizards won, 135-121.

Wizards top
Timberwolves to
begin final monthBy ADAM ZIELONKA
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

With the playoffs fading further and further out of their vision, the Washington Wizards needed another win to start off the final month of the regular season right.

The final push began Sunday when the Wizards beat the Minnesota Timberwolves 135-121 at home. Washington broke away late after neither team held a double-digit lead for almost three quarters.

All five Wizards starters scored at least 13, with Bobby Portis posting a team-high 26 and Bradley Beal adding 22. Jabari Parker came off the bench for 22 points on 9-of-13 shooting. Karl-Anthony Towns led Minnesota with 28 points and 10 boards.

The Wizards avoided losing for the sixth time in the last seven games.

Beal scored 12 in the opening 12 minutes to get things moving, and the Wizards held a 40-36 lead after one quarter. Neither team ripped off a long run throughout the first half, but the Timberwolves managed to swing the score to 64-62 in their favor by halftime.

In the half, 52 of the Wolves' points came in the paint, with Towns (8-for-11, 17 points) leading the way.

But Portis scored eight quick points in the opening minutes of the second half, and the Wizards found a foothold. In the final seconds of the third quarter, Sam Dekker made the play of the game by grabbing a steal at the sideline and whipped a behind-the-back pass upcourt to Parker to score. Minnesota made no real threat at a comeback in the fourth.

Before the game, coach Scott Brooks was asked where he hopes the Wizards will be in a month's time.

"Definitely what you hope for going into this month is we continue to put together some good games and start winning some of these close games," Brooks said. "April 11, we're talking about our first round and getting together as a staff ... We've still got 20 games to figure that out."

NFL

Combine also test of a player's job-interview skills



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington State running back James Williams held mock interviews with his fiancée before meeting with NFL teams.

By MATTHEW PARAS
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

INDIANAPOLIS | Rye Hewett is a special education teacher by training, but she can do a pretty convincing impression of an NFL executive or a sports reporter when necessary.

For years, she's been randomly firing questions at her fiancé, James Williams, to help prepare the Washington State running back for the NFL.

The couple, Williams said, can be

anywhere when the grilling begins.

"She's real good at doing it," Williams said.

Those mock interviews proved helpful last week when Williams met with actual NFL teams at the scouting combine. Beyond 40-yard dash times and three-cone drills, the league's annual combine, which concludes Monday, is viewed as the ultimate job interview for players hoping to be drafted in April.

And like any job interview, prospects can come rigorously prepared

— leaving teams to judge whether a potential draft pick is being genuine or is just well-prepared.

"I don't believe they're rehearsed as people say," Redskins president Bruce Allen said.

"Anybody can fool anybody for 15 minutes," Denver Broncos coach Vic Fangio said.

Interviews range from the informal to the formal. For the latter, teams are

» see NFL | B11

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Maryland struggles down stretch in loss at home to Michigan

By DAVID GINSBURG
ASSOCIATED PRESS

COLLEGE PARK | Playing with intensity and emotion after being cut down to size in defeat, Michigan used a strong performance from its relentless starting lineup to remain in the hunt for the Big Ten title. Ignas Brazdeikis scored 21 points, Jon Teske had 11 points and 10 rebounds, and No. 9 Michigan pulled away from 17th-ranked Maryland in a 69-62 victory Sunday. The Wolverines (26-4, 15-4) clinched a double-bye in the conference tournament and still have chance to overtake first-place Purdue. Michigan, the defending Big Ten Tournament champion, must win its finale at Michigan State and hope the Boilermakers lose at least one of their last two. “The regular-season championship is a prize for most programs that have any history in this (conference),” coach John Beilein said. “That’s the prize. Michigan, we haven’t won it that many times.” After losing at Penn State on Feb. 12 and at home against Michigan State a



Maryland guard Darryl Morsell drives against Michigan forward Isaiah Livers in the first half Sunday. The Terrapins fell, 69-62, for their first Big Ten home loss this season.

week earlier, the Wolverines found their roots with a big win at Maryland. Michigan trailed 43-41 before Isaiah Livers hit a 3-pointer, Zavier Simpson popped a jumper and Jordan Poole made a layup during a five-minute span in which the Terrapins struggled offensively. A 3-pointer by Brazdeikis made it 51-45, and Simpson added a desperation running hook in the final seconds of the shot clock for an eight-point lead with 4:38 left. Bruno Fernando had 12 points, 10 rebounds and a career-high six blocked shots for Maryland (21-9, 12-7), which fell to 7-1 at home in Big Ten play. Freshman Jalen Smith scored 11 and three others chipped in with 10, including leading scorer Anthony Cowan, who went 4 for 15 from the floor and missed his first five attempts from beyond the arc before finally connecting with 1:26 remaining. “The guys that we count on offensively just didn’t play particularly well tonight, but give (the Wolverines) credit. They were great defensively,” coach Mark Turgeon said.

Simpson had 12 points and 10 assists, and Poole scored 12 for Michigan. The Wolverines were without senior guard Charles Matthews, who missed a second straight game with a sprained right ankle. He ranks third on the team in scoring at 12.8 points per game. Notorious for its slow starts this season, Maryland bolted to a 6-0 lead and held a 22-16 advantage before the Wolverines went on a 12-2 run over the final seven minutes of the first half. In the duel between the centers, Teske had eight points and seven rebounds before halftime and Fernando scored six points, all on dunks. The Wolverines went up 35-30 before Smith made three straight baskets to put Maryland back in front. The Terps are heading in reverse after losing at Penn State on Wednesday before dropping their first conference game at home. They’ve got one game left to right the ship. “I think we got better today,” Turgeon said. “I know it sounds crazy, but we got some really good looks against a long, athletic, fast, bouncy team.”

SOCCER
Arriola, Acosta help DC United shut out Atlanta United

Luciano Acosta scored and assisted on Paul Arriola’s goal to help D.C. United beat defending champion Atlanta United 2-0 on Sunday night in the MLS opener for both teams. D.C. United is unbeaten in its last 11 regular-season matches.

Arriola opened the scoring in first-half stoppage time. Wayne Rooney’s corner kick was deflected by Acosta toward the near post, where Arriola,

who started in front of the net before looping around multiple defenders, first-timed the finish. Acosta took a pass from Lucas Rodriguez and, from well outside the box, ripped a right-footer between two defenders that froze goalkeeper Brad Guzan before skipping past him to make it 2-0 in the 58th minute. Rodriguez, a 21-year-old Venezuelan, made his MLS debut after signing with D.C. United on loan from Estudiantes de La Plata. Bill Hamid had two saves for his fourth shutout in his last five regular-season starts.

PGA
Mitchell gets his first PGA Tour win, taking Honda Classic

PALM BEACH GARDENS, FLA. | Keith Mitchell made a 15-foot birdie putt on the final hole Sunday to win The Honda Classic for his first PGA Tour victory.

Mitchell closed with a 3-under 67 to finish at 9-under 271 at PGA National, a stroke ahead of Brooks Koepka and Rickie Fowler. Mitchell was tied for the lead after 36 holes, and was tied for second going into Sunday. He birdied four of his final seven holes for his first win as a pro — including stints on the Web.com and Latinoamerica tours.

All he had to do for that victory was hold off two of the game’s best in Koepka and Fowler. Koepka shot a 66, and Fowler a 67. They both made birdied the 18th, and Fowler had a huge charge late to get to 8 under — with three birdies in his final four holes, including a 45-footer on the 17th.

AUTO RACING
Logano holds off Keselowski for victory in Las Vegas

LAS VEGAS | Joey Logano held off teammate Brad Keselowski on Sunday to win the NASCAR Cup Series race at Las Vegas Motor Speedway.

Logano drove his Team Penske Ford to his 22nd career victory and his first of the season, narrowly answering Keselowski’s last-lap passing attempt down the stretch. Logano had never won a Cup race in Vegas in 11 tries during his first 10 full-time seasons, although he won an Xfinity Series race at the track in 2017.

The first race under NASCAR’s full new rules package produced a caution-free event that still had some exciting action upfront, including a couple of wild restarts after the two segment breaks.

From wire dispatches and staff reports.

PRO CALENDAR			
HOME GAMES SHADED	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
			Philadelphia Flyers 7:30 p.m. NBCSN FM 106.7
			Dallas Mavericks 7 p.m. NBCW AM 1500

LOVERRO
From page B12

bottom line to work with — a figure to present a starting point to bidders. The Nationals’ offer did Boras and Harper a favor. Another part of the misinformation campaign is this notion that the Nationals never came back with another offer — even when Boras, with Harper accompanying him, made his annual December trip to Ted Lerner’s Palm Springs home to try to bilk the owner out of money his baseball people did not want to spend. This time, it didn’t work. Why would Washington make another offer when Boras and Harper never came back with a counter to the \$300 million offer? That is not how negotiations work — negotiating against yourself. Boras and Harper had more than two months from the time they received the Nationals’ offer until when Washington began spending in a different direction with their signing of free agent pitcher Patrick Corbin to a six-year, \$140 million contract in early December to come back to the Nationals with a counter offer. They never did. I keep referring to Boras and Harper together, because Harper is far from innocent in this fake news campaign. Remember, as Nationals third baseman Anthony Rendon, another Boras client, put it so well in his talk to the media two weeks ago in spring training about his contract year and facing free agency, Boras works for them, not the other way around. Harper continued his sad story at Saturday’s press conference about how he was driven from Washington when he, for all intents and purposes, said

Harper wants to bring title back to Philadelphia

By ROB MAADDI
ASSOCIATED PRESS

CLEARWATER, FLA. | Bryce Harper sounded like a typical Philadelphian talking about a goal every Phillies fan will endorse.

“I want to be on Broad Street on a frickin’ boat or bus or whatever it is and hold a (World Series) trophy over my head,” the six-time All-Star said after putting on his new No. 3 jersey Saturday.

The Phillies are counting on Harper to help them win only the third championship in franchise history. Philadelphia gave Harper a 13-year contract, the largest deal in baseball history at \$330 million. His arrival has fans scurrying to the box office. The team said 180,000 tickets were sold in less than two days after the agreement was reported Thursday afternoon.

“He’s a magnetic personality and he plays the game with his heart on his sleeve and Philadelphia loves that,” Phillies owner John Middleton said. “They love people who leave a little skin on the grass.”

Negotiations took far longer than expected, but Harper and his agent, Scott Boras, insisted an opt-out clause was never a hold up. Boras said Harper was his first client to instruct him not to seek one.

his departure was fueled by media and fan speculation that he would leave Washington someday — as if it was spoken into existence. “From Day 1, when I got drafted, it was all about, ‘He’s going to the Yankees,’” Harper said. “He’s going to the Dodgers. He’s going here. He’s going



Philadelphia Phillies outfielder Bryce Harper practiced for the first time with his new teammates Sunday in Clearwater, Florida.

“I wanted to be able to dig my roots somewhere through the ups and downs of the team and the organization,” Harper said.

Harper chose No. 3 instead of the No. 34 he wore for the Washington Nationals because Hall of Famer Roy Halladay was the last player to wear No.

34 for the Phillies. He said he’s enjoyed playing in Philadelphia and spoke to former Phillies outfielder Jayson Werth, who was his teammate in Washington for several seasons. “You’ll always be remembered for winning and what better place to do it than Philly,” Harper said.

Scott Boras, the clock is ticking on your departure from the moment you arrive. Unless, of course, if you really didn’t want to leave. ● *Hear Thom Loverro on 106.7 The Fan Wednesday afternoons and Saturday and Sunday mornings.*

NFL
From page B12

only allowed to meet with a player for 15 minutes. Informals don’t have a time limit, but they’re typically just one-on-one interviews compared to a group of coaches and executives. Eastern Michigan’s Maxx Crosby, for instance, said he met with a New England Patriots scout for an hour.

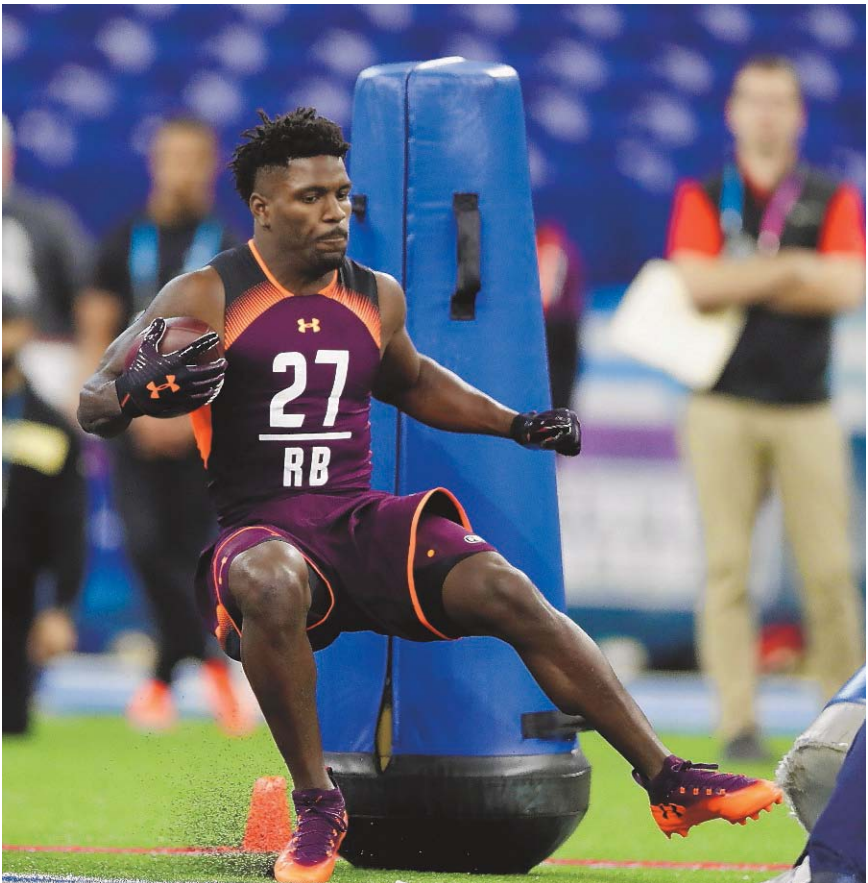
Regardless of the format, many players spend hours trying to prepare themselves for the questions they may face.

Left tackle Tyler Roemer spent six hours one day with a few consultants at EXOS, a training center in Phoenix. There was a lot to go over. One trainer briefed Roemer on everything that could be asked — going as far as to give the 20-year-old a packet of 50 questions.

The lessons don’t end there, either. Prospects are also coached up and given advice on how to answer. “Short and sweet and straight to the point,” Roemer said he was told.

In linebacker D’Andre Walker’s case, the Georgia product talked with a number of former general managers to discuss what he should expect. How did that happen? Well, that’s what agents are for — Walker’s agent arranged the meetings.

Some players have to be ready to address their baggage. Last year, Roemer was first suspended and later removed from San Diego State. Teams wanted to know exactly what happened, he said. “When I did my interview prep, I told them that I would tell any team that’s willing to talk to me that I would tell them personally because I don’t feel like it is something that needs to be discussed publicly,” Roemer said. “I can clarify it wasn’t failed drug tests. It



Washington State running back James Williams said that even when his fiancée wasn’t asking him questions he tried to envision scouting combine interview scenarios.

wasn’t anything anybody in the media has proclaimed.

“It was just a difference of opinion with my coach. That’s about it.”

So, how do NFL teams tell if a player is being authentic?

Fangio relies on a classic method — using his “gut” to sift through answers. The same goes for Cleveland Browns coach Freddie Kitchens, though he will

test players by showing them their film and asking about specifics. If the player says they’re supposed to be doing one thing on a particular play and the film shows something different, then that’s a red flag.

“You’ll be wondering, ‘Who the hell do you think you’re talking to?’” Kitchens said.

Failing to be accountable is a sure-fire

way to tank an interview, Redskins coach Jay Gruden said. Gruden wants players to own up to moments in their life — especially if the instances have been well-documented.

“There’s been a couple (players) in the past that have killed themselves in these 15-minute interviews,” Gruden said. “Not many.”

Teams at the combine are well-known for pushing the boundaries — resorting to unconventional, and occasionally controversial, tactics to see how a player will respond. In 2016, cornerback Eli Apple told reporters an Atlanta Falcons coach asked him if he was gay.

This year, UNC-Charlotte’s Nate Davis said he went in for a handshake in a team meeting, only for him to be punched in the chest. “He was like, ‘You have a soft chest,’ and I was like, ‘OK’ and we just kept it going,” the offensive linemen said.

Roemer found his training for the process helpful, saying the questions he faced were “spot on” for what he was told. Williams, too, said he could predict the questions ahead of time.

Not every player goes through a formal training process to be prepared for interviews at the combine. Alabama’s Christian Miller said he was comfortable with his past media training to know how to address questions, as well as observing his father, a local television anchor in South Carolina.

But some can’t help but think about it. Even when Williams’ fiancée wasn’t asking him questions, the running back tried to envision scenarios in down moments.

“I been preparing myself,” Williams said. “I’ll go over it in my head whenever I don’t have anything, right before I go to sleep I look up in the sky and think about it.”

Under Dorsey, Browns are punchlines no more

L ike Eliza Doolittle in “My Fair Lady,” Cleveland was a guttersnipe, one of the league’s most raggedy franchises for nearly a quarter-century before John Dorsey showed up as Professor Henry Higgins.

The Browns didn’t know how to speak or act properly. They didn’t know how to be elite, or at even look the part. They were straight-up laughingstocks, national objects of scorn and ridicule.

Kind of reminds me of another NFL team, one that plays nearby but not in Baltimore.

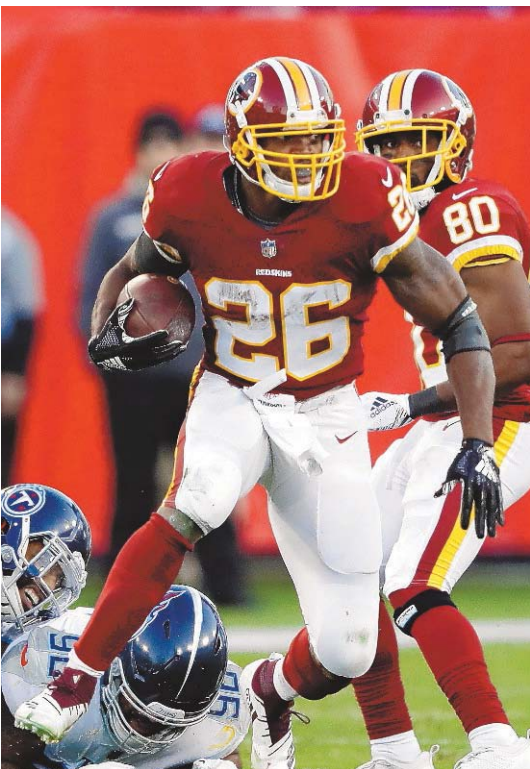


DERON SNYDER

Dorsey began transforming the Browns as soon as he was hired in December 2017, cutting wideout Kenny Britt within the first 24 hours. Cleveland won more games (seven) in Dorsey’s first year at the helm than it won in the three previous seasons combined (four).

First Dorsey had to clean up after the previous regime. He traded three players during the 2018 draft and traded three more before Week 1. Then he began applying lipstick to his new project, using the No. 1 overall pick on quarterback

» see SNYDER | B15



ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Washington Redskins re-signed running back Adrian Peterson Wednesday to a two-year, \$8 million deal. Peterson ran for 1,042 yards last season.

REDSKINS

Peterson returns after emerging as team leader
Brown, McGee cut to free up cap space

By MATTHEW PARAS
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The Washington Redskins were busy Wednesday — bringing back a familiar face and releasing two players to free up more than \$8 million in salary cap space. Washington re-signed running back Adrian Peterson to a two-year, \$8 million deal and cut linebacker Zach Brown and defensive lineman Stacy McGee.

The Redskins and Peterson were both interested in a reunion, given the 33-year-old ran for 1,042 yards in 2018 — his best season in years. Peterson joined Washington last August after second-rounder Derrius Guice suffered a season-ending torn ACL. But Peterson quickly emerged as the team’s new starter and provided

leadership, especially when Alex Smith went down with a broken leg.

In December, Peterson said he wanted to return and “finish on a better note” with the Redskins.

“I feel like we have a great group of guys here, all the adversity we faced here and how guys continued to come to work and really stay focused,” Peterson said. “It shows a lot about this team, this locker room, the coaches surrounding us as well, so that’s something I would love to be a part of.”

At \$4 million per year, Peterson received a substantial raise from his old contract, worth \$1 million for one year. Peterson, who turns 34 later this month,

» see REDSKINS | B15



IN THE MIX

YouTube made McClung a hoops star before he put on his first Hoyas jersey

By MATTHEW PARAS | THE WASHINGTON TIMES

To Webb Wellman, creating a basketball mixtape is an art. And last year, Mac McClung was the perfect subject to capture.

Then a content creator for BallisLife, a popular YouTube channel featuring basketball highlights, Wellman was responsible for crafting McClung’s senior year mixtape. At the end of the season, Wellman had 200 to 300 clips of McClung imported into his editing software.

He carefully spent the next few days — not hours, days — assembling the right footage and music to produce a viral video.

The end result — a four-and-a-half-minute video filled with explosive dunks, crossovers, and celebrations — amassed more than a million views. BallisLife dubbed the Virginia teenager the “most exciting player in America.”

“He’s such a freak athlete,” Wellman said.

A year later, McClung, now a freshman guard at Georgetown, is getting ready for his first Big East Tournament on Thursday when the Hoyas take on Seton Hall. In the past,

» see GEORGETOWN | B15



ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTOGRAPHS

NATIONALS

Nationals add Sipp to face rival lefty hitters

By HOWARD FENDRICH
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WEST PALM BEACH, FLA. | The Washington Nationals are counting on Tony Sipp to give them something they think will matter a lot in the NL East: a lefty reliever to go after lefty hitters in late-game situations.

Nationals general manager Mike Rizzo said Wednesday that the team and Sipp agreed in principle to a deal, pending the successful completion of a

Southpaw reliever agrees to deal

physical exam. Rizzo did not disclose the financial terms, but a person familiar with the contract told The Associated Press that Sipp is guaranteed \$1.25 million and the agreement includes a mutual option for 2020. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because nothing had been finalized.

“We think he’s a really good value for us. It was time for him to

sign, and we have opportunities for him. This is one of the places he wanted to be, because he’s got a chance to win and he’s been used to that,” Rizzo said. “He was a guy that we were monitoring.”

Sipp would get a \$1 million salary this year, and the contract includes a \$2.5 million mutual option for next year, with a \$250,000 buyout. There are not any performance bonuses.

This move gives Washington’s rebuilt bullpen someone to use in a key spot against left-handed batters — such as Bryce Harper, the former Nationals slugger who joined the NL East rival Philadelphia Phillies as a free agent for \$330 million over 13 seasons. Sipp and Harper have never faced each other.

Other key lefty bats in the division include Freddie Freeman with the Atlanta Braves, and Robinson Cano with the New York Mets.

» see NATIONALS | B15



ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Washington Nationals agreed to a one-year deal Wednesday with former Houston Astros left-handed relief pitcher Tony Sipp.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Georgetown's Akinjo voted Big East freshman of the year

NEW YORK | Georgetown guard James Akinjo was voted freshman of the year Wednesday.

Akinjo is averaging 13.3 points and 5.4 assists per game.

Marquette guard Markus Howard is the Big East player of the year after



leading the conference in scoring and helping the Golden Eagles to a second-place finish in the regular season.

Jay Wright, who guided Villanova to its fifth regular-season conference title in six seasons, was named Big East coach of the year for the sixth time.

The 5-foot-11 Howard was averaging 25 points per game entering the Big East tournament, which began Wednesday night at Madison Square Garden.

Wright led Villanova to a 22-9 record after losing four players off last season's national championship team to the NBA draft.

George Washington tops UMass in Atlantic 10 tournament

NEW YORK | Terry Nolan Jr. scored 20 points, including six in overtime, to lead George Washington to a 68-64 win over UMass in the opening game of the Atlantic 10 tournament on Wednesday.

Maceo Jack added 19 for the No. 12 seed Colonials (9-23), which will play fifth-seeded George Mason in the second round Thursday. The Patriots swept the regular-season series against George Washington.

Keon Clergeot scored 25 points, Carl Pierre had 12 and Rashaan Holloway finished with 11 for No. 13 seed UMass (11-21).

Unlike the only regular season meeting — which the Colonials won 79-67 — what transpired Wednesday at the Barclays Center was taut throughout. Nolan opened the overtime with a 3 and George Washington a five-point lead with three minutes left after Justin Mazzulla made two free throws.

Massachusetts drew even at 63-all with 39 seconds to play after a Clergeot layup and a Sy Chatman putback on consecutive possessions.

Nolan's layup 12 seconds later gave the Colonials the lead for good. On the ensuing possession, Pierre made 1 of 2 free throws but Mazzulla knocked down two foul shots, and Nolan added another to seal the win.

AUTO RACING

Stewart headlines nominees for NASCAR Hall of Fame

CHARLOTTE, N.C. | Three-time NASCAR champion Tony Stewart headlined the six new nominees eligible for induction into the NASCAR Hall of Fame.

Stewart joined Neil Bonnett, a popular member of the "Alabama Gang," two-time Xfinity Series champion Sam Ard, former Daytona 500 winner Marvin Panch, short-track racer Jim Paschal and mechanic Red Vogt as the new nominees.

Kirk Sheldermidine, crew chief for four championships with Hall of Famer Dale Earnhardt, was dropped from the ballot after only one year. There are 20 nominees and five are elected each year.

NFL

Court reinstates late Hernandez's murder conviction

BOSTON | Aaron Hernandez's murder conviction was reinstated Wednesday in a sweeping ruling from Massachusetts' highest court that does away with the legal principle that made the former NFL star innocent in the eyes of the law after he killed himself in prison.

The Supreme Judicial Court unanimously found that the legal rule that erased Hernandez's conviction is "outdated and no longer consonant with the circumstances of contemporary life." It ordered that Hernandez's conviction be restored and that the practice be abolished for future cases. The ruling does not affect past cases.

Hernandez was convicted in 2015 of killing semi-professional football player Odin Lloyd. Two years later, the 27-year-old killed himself in his prison cell days after being acquitted of most charges in a separate double-murder case.

From wire dispatches and staff reports.

PRO CALENDAR

HOME GAMES SHADED	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		Charlotte Hornets 7 p.m. NBC-W AM 1500	Memphis Grizzlies 7 p.m. NBC-W+ AM 1500
	Philadelphia Flyers 7 p.m. NBC-W FM 106.7		Tampa Bay Lightning 7 p.m. NHLN, NBC-W FM 106.7

CAPITALS

Vrana bringing much more to Capitals than goal scoring

By ADAM ZIELONKA

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

PHILADELPHIA | There was little time for Jakub Vrana to celebrate reaching 20 goals for the season, because the 21st came so soon after.

The 23-year-old Czech scored the Washington Capitals' first two goals Tuesday night before they let the Pittsburgh Penguins take the game, 5-3. When Vrana scored No. 20 for the first time in his young career, linemate T.J. Oshie collected the puck for the official for Vrana to keep, the Washington Post reported.

Why was Oshie the one to retrieve it? It seems Vrana didn't place much stock in the milestone.

"I don't really know what it means," Vrana said Wednesday, after the Capitals held practice ahead of Thursday's game against the Philadelphia Flyers. "I go into season and try to score as much goals as I can. It definitely doesn't mean anything for me to stop."

A possible translation for that: You ain't seen nothing yet. In just his second full NHL season, he's on pace for 24 or 25 goals; if he catches fire, it could be more.

But Vrana is far from a one-trick pony this year. He's one of Washington's best skaters both with and without the puck. He has 22 assists to go with his 21 goals, also a career-high in progress. He's one of only three Capitals to play all 70 games thus far.

On top of all that, Oshie said that "despite his offensive numbers," defense is where he's seen Vrana's biggest growth.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington Capitals forward Jakub Vrana has a career-high 21 goals and 22 assists. Vrana is one of only three Capitals to play all 70 games thus far this season.

"Since last year, toward the end of the last half of the year, we saw his defensive play growing and through that I think creates more offense," Oshie said. "He gets himself into better spots so when (opposing teams) do turn the puck over, he can use his speed and make a difference out there."

For example, Vrana scored both his goals Tuesday from the right circle, an unusual spot for the left winger. Both times, he found a lane to get open during a Washington zone entry; the first happened just seconds after a Sidney Crosby puck giveaway that allowed the Capitals to transition.

REDSKINS

From page B16

will likely have to split carries with Guice and Chris Thompson, but both he and coach Jay Gruden said they felt like a rotation could work.

For Brown and McGee, the Redskins reportedly had tried to trade both players in recent days, though ultimately failed to find a team willing to take on either of them.

By releasing Brown, Washington will save \$5.75 million in 2019 — though his release carried \$3 million in dead money. Cutting McGee, on the other hand, will free up \$2.275 million.

Both moves were expected as

Washington had just \$9 million in cap room for next season, according to Over The Cap, before Brown and McGee were released.

"It was fun DC," Brown posted on his Instagram. "Y'all showed mad love to your boy. Thanks for everything. Time to start a new chapter."

Last season, Brown had numerous incidents with the coaching staff. The 29-year-old first blasted his coaches on Twitter in November, a day before the Redskins' game against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. He later lost his starting job to rookie Shaun Dion Hamilton — leading him to tell reporters he saw the "writing on the wall" about his future with Washington.

Brown's release comes just a year

after the linebacker re-signed with the Redskins on a three-year, \$24 million contract. The Redskins initially signed him to a one-year deal in 2017, and Brown was a pleasant surprise that season. He had the ninth-most tackles in the NFL with 127. After the season, Brown revealed he spent most of the year dealing with a torn oblique — something he said he regretted trying to play through. The linebacker said he suffered the injury in training camp.

McGee joined the Redskins in 2017 as a free agent, signing a five-year, \$25 million contract. Last year, he was used mostly in a reserve role — appearing in just eight games. He missed the first half of the season with a groin injury.

The Redskins have had a productive

offseason so far. Besides Wednesday's moves, Washington traded for quarterback Case Keenum and signed safety Landon Collins to a six-year, \$84 million deal. Those moves became official Wednesday.

Washington might not be done, either. The team reportedly wants to re-sign safety Ha Ha Clinton-Dix, who was acquired midseason in a trade with the Green Bay Packers.

Elsewhere in the NFL, running back Le'Veon Bell announced he will sign with the New York Jets (four years, \$52 million). The Baltimore Ravens were also active — landing safety Earl Thomas (four years, \$55 million) and running back Mark Ingram (three years, \$15 million).

SNYDER

From page B16

Baker Mayfield and acquiring wideout Jarvis Landry via trade. The first draft class also included cornerback Denzel Ward and halfback Nick Chubb, who along with Mayfield all won Rookie-of-the-Week awards at least once.

Don't look now, but Eliza Doolittle suddenly is smoking hot.

Through Dorsey's latest masterstroke — acquiring superstar receiver Odell Beckham — Cleveland has become the chic, sexy pick to turn the most heads, perhaps all the way to the AFC title game.

Apparently, this is what can happen when a competent and accomplished professional is placed in charge of football operations.

He can use addition and subtraction to build his roster and paint a bright outlook. He can actually say "we're close" without the room convulsing in laughter. He can make a difference.

Dorsey understands that you can't

dress up without fine clothing, and teams can't look their best without fine talent.

"I'll come straight out with it," Dorsey told WKNR-850 the day after he was hired. "The guys who were here before, that system, they didn't get real players. As Bill Parcells would always say, 'You are your record.' ... That's the truth-teller in this thing. And I'm going to do my darnedest to get players."

His offseason haul includes halfback Kareem Hunt, edge rusher Olivier Vernon and defensive tackle Sheldon Richardson, each expected to have a significant impact on the Browns' fortunes. And despite sending a first- and third-round pick to the Giants, Dorsey still has eight picks at his disposal for next month's draft.

Between winning, winning the off-season, and winning off the field, only the first one matters. The Browns have a long way to go before being fitted for rings, even though many observers are ready to crown the team today, considering the likelihood that AFC North

stalwarts Pittsburgh and Baltimore will regress.

The Browns have new life and a bounce to their step since Dorsey came aboard. His aggressive moves — especially selecting the hyperconfident Mayfield — have energized the franchise and the fanbase. Finally moving on from former coach Hue Jackson officially sealed the old era, and the team responded by winning five of their last seven games.

What a joy for long-suffering Cleveland fans. Their faith was only good for fake hope and false starts previously. Now, it's paying off in legitimate relevancy and national acclaim. Instead of only having the draft to look forward to, they can look forward to the Browns' first postseason appearance since 2002.

Yes, life is good for a change in the Dawg Pound. But ...

What if, after parting ways with general manager Scot McCloughan, Washington continued down the "competent and accomplished professional" track for its personnel chief?

What if, instead of insanely

returning Bruce Allen to the throne (doing the same thing and expecting different results), the team hired Dorsey?

What if the executive who attended high school in Annapolis was making his left, daring moves for the team that plays 25 miles away?

We'll never know what might've happened with Dorsey calling the shots in Ashburn. But Cleveland liked its chances after evaluating Dorsey's track record with Green Bay and Kansas City. Now he's working his magic for a franchise that's been as forlorn and woebegone as any.

The moral of the story is clear: Your present condition isn't necessarily a life sentence. The right person, with the right touch and requisite aptitude, can turn a ragamuffin into royalty.

Imagine that. All Washington needs is its own Professor Higgins.

● *Brooklyn-born and Howard-educated, Deron Snyder writes his award-winning column for The Washington Times on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Follow him on Twitter @DeronSnyder.*

GEORGETOWN

From page B16

the tournament would have been the perfect opportunity for a freshman star to make a name for himself on the national level.

But thanks to the popularity of his mixtape on social media, McClung is already well-known. He was a name before arriving on the Georgetown campus, despite hailing from Gate City, Virginia, population 2,000.

"If you were to see him in the streets, he's not overwhelming," Wellman said. "He's a 6-foot-2 kid and he's a white kid. ... He fed into the show. Mac enjoyed the people talking, not expecting too much from him and then him overdelivering and making sure they felt his effect when the game was over."

'The era we live in'

Patrick Ewing knows what it's like to be heavily recruited. The Georgetown coach was once the top recruit in America and schools were desperate to land him before he committed to the Hoyas in 1981.

Ewing's recruitment, though, happened long before mixtapes were invented. What does he think of this generation?

"That's just the era we live in," Ewing said. "So you have to embrace it."

It would be misguided to say McClung, a three-star

for a left-handed reliever after releasing Sammy Solis last weekend.

Solis agreed to a minor-league contract with the San Diego Padres.

"They really want that lefty matchup guy and I think you look around our division now and each team really has at least one or two big (lefty hitters),"

Nationals closer Sean Doolittle said. "Unfortunately, he is going to have his work cut out for him. Welcome to the NL East. Here's Harp. Here's Freeman. Here's Cano."

The 35-year-old Sipp is entering his 11th season.

He has a 25-20 career record with a 3.67

ERA and 513 strikeouts in 482 2/3 innings spanning 580 appearances for Cleveland, Arizona and Houston, all in relief.

Last season with the Astros, Sipp was 3-1 with a 1.86 ERA, holding lefty hitters to a .191 batting average. That was his final season of an \$18 million, three-year contract.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION AND GRAPHIC ROBERT COHN; ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTOGRAPHS

THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY: ROOTS OF BAILEY'S HALL-OF-FAME CAREER PLANTED IN WASHINGTON

By MATTHEW PARAS
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Twenty years ago, long before iPads were readily available and plays could be dialed up at any time, Darrell Green would insert cassette tapes into a VHS player to watch film. Sitting next to him inside the Redskins' practice facility on these occasions was fellow cornerback Champ Bailey.

The two men were at opposite stages of their careers. By then, a 39-year-old Green was winding down his NFL journey — three years away from retirement, with two Super Bowl titles already to his name. Bailey, by comparison, was the seventh overall pick in that year's draft — a highly regarded rookie with still much to prove.

But at 7 a.m. every Wednesday and Thursday, Green and Bailey pored

over tape.

Green had been tasked by then-defensive backs coach Tom Hayes with imparting the wisdom of almost two decades of NFL experience to the rookie, who was now sitting attentively next to the player he'd idolized growing up.

They reviewed every receiver they would face that week. And as the season went on, the two men realized they shared a disciplined approach to

a game they both loved.

"The unspoken premise was that we were better than them anyway," Green said, "but we also (knew) that we've got enough wisdom and humility ... that we've gotta understand what their capabilities are, what their strengths and weaknesses are."

That confidence, born of ability and preparation, was key to Green's success in the league — and it turned out to be a defining element

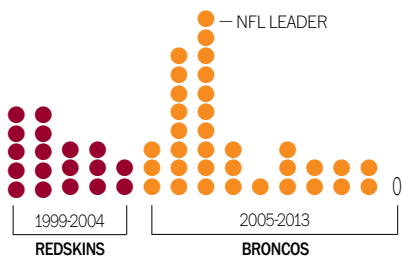
of Bailey's 15-year career as well. On the field, Bailey suffocated opposing wideouts with incomparable physical skills and an acute understanding of the game.

Bailey commanded respect from quarterbacks and receivers, and when he broke up a pass, made a game-saving tackle or ball-hawked one of his 52 career interceptions, he rarely gloated

» see **BAILEY** | B9



INTERCEPTIONS BY SEASON: 52 TOTAL



THE 2004 OFFSEASON TRADE



The Denver Broncos signed Bailey, 25, a 5-year veteran, to a seven-year, \$63 million deal. The deal also included a second-round pick for the following season that became running back Tatum Bell.



The Washington Redskins signed Clinton Portis (right), 22, and a two-year veteran, to an eight-year, \$50.5 million deal. The Pro-Bowl caliber ballcarrier was added to plug into newly rehired coach Joe Gibbs' run-heavy offense.



THEY SAID IT

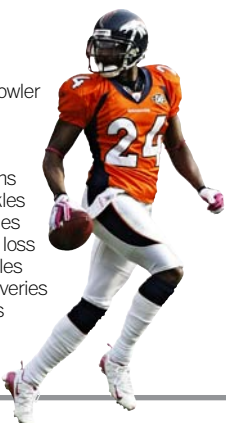
"You knew he was headed for greatness."
— TOM HAYES, REDSKINS DB COACH IN 1999

"He wakes up competing. He goes to sleep competing. He's always got a plan."
— FRED SMOOT, TEAMMATE FROM 2001-03

"He certainly built his foundation (in Washington)
— DARRELL GREEN, TEAMMATE FROM 1999-2002

CAREER

- 15 seasons
- 12-time Pro Bowler
- 3-time All-Pro
- 215 games
- 212 starts
- 203 deflections
- 908 total tackles
- 812 solo tackles
- 42 tackles for loss
- 7 forced fumbles
- 6 fumble recoveries
- 4 touchdowns



Nationals fix bullpen with pocket change

Washington Nationals fans can breathe easy — the owners of their baseball team have likely secured the fat wallet award again this season with their reluctance to add payroll of consequence — and reward — at the trading deadline.

General manager Mike Rizzo does what Rizzo does well with his deadline deals — compete.



THOM LOVERRO

He managed to add three relievers — Daniel Hudson from the Toronto Blue Jays and Hunter Strickland and Roenis Elias from the Seattle Mariners. They will make the Washington bullpen better.

Then again, 42-year-old Fernando Rodney made this bullpen-by-prayer better.

At the same time, the team

» see **LOVERRO** | B9



ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTOGRAPHS

The Nationals' acquisition of relievers Roenis Elias (left) and Hunter Strickland from the Seattle Mariners on Wednesday will make their bullpen better. But at the same time, the Nationals didn't make any splashy bullpen additions like the Braves.

TENNIS

D.C. native Baptiste impresses at Citi Open

By RINA TORCHINSKY
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Budding young tennis talent and D.C. native Hailey Baptiste has been coming to see the Citi Open at Rock Creek Park Tennis Center for years — but she admits she "never really bought tickets." She started training at the facility when she was four — she used to sneak in through a back gate.



Baptiste

There was no sneaking into the Citi Open this year. The 17-year-old wild-card player was on center stage earlier this week when she bumped off the No. 2 seed Madison Keys in the first round of the tournament. It was Baptiste's first Women's Tennis Association win.

"Half of the match I couldn't

» see **TENNIS** | B9

REDSKINS

Norman loose after offseason of thrill-seeking, charity

By **STEPHEN WHYNO**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

RICHMOND | Josh Norman flipped the switch from a whirlwind offseason to a “see ball, get ball” approach at training camp.

That’s way different from Norman’s “see bull, jump over bull” summer.

Unwilling to sacrifice outside interests and eager to make a difference off the football field, the Washington Redskins cornerback might be the most interesting man in the NFL. A year after competing on ABC’s “Dancing with the Stars,” Norman flew with the Blue Angels, took in a Champions League soccer match, ran with the bulls in Pamplona, donated to an immigrant detention center and financed the construction of a youth facility in his hometown.

“It showed I can tackle anything, literally. But at the same time, I might run out of the way of it,” Norman said. “It’s all fun and games. ... I feel so loose and relaxed just because I’ve been through a roller coaster offseason.”

Video of Norman leaping over a bull stood out from the typical player Instagram posts featuring offseason workouts. It has been the subject of plenty of barbs, like coach Jay Gruden joking that



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Redskins cornerback Josh Norman donated to the Humanitarian Respite Center in McAllen, Texas, in June. Among other activities, Norman also flew with the Blue Angels and jumped over a bull while running with the bulls in Pamplona, Spain.

he knew the bull wouldn’t hit Norman because he avoids contact.

“I spoke to his dad and I said I wasn’t really a great fan of the dancing the year before, but now I like the dancing,” Redskins President Bruce Allen said. “Dancing with a woman versus dancing with a bull, I thought was a better idea for a summer project. But that’s Josh. I can’t wait to see what he comes up with

next year.”

For all the fun Norman has, Gruden doesn’t want people to forget that the 31-year-old spends plenty of time and money trying to make the world a better place.

“Josh is a man of the world,” Gruden said. “Josh has experienced more things in his life at his young age than most people have in their whole life. Obviously,

BAILEY

From page **B10**

— excellence was expected.

This weekend, the former Redskin will be rewarded for his dominance when he’s enshrined in the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio. A first-ballot Hall of Famer, Bailey made 12 Pro Bowl appearances — a record among defensive backs.

Four of those came in Washington, but there is little doubt that when Bailey dons the traditional gold jacket Saturday, he’s being honored primarily for his time with the Denver Broncos — the team the Redskins traded him to for running back Clinton Portis in 2004.

That deal, a rare marquee player swap, is regarded as one of the most interesting in NFL history. Yet it also arguably overshadows Bailey’s five years in Washington.

“I do feel like his time as a Redskin gets overlooked,” said Fred Smoot, Bailey’s teammate from 2001 to 2003. “This was the time he cemented himself as one of the best. This is how Champ became one of the best.”

“His name was made in Washington,” said Shawn Springs, who replaced Bailey in the Redskins secondary. “His legacy was sealed in Denver.”

A corner worth drafting

If it’s easy to forget Bailey’s time in Washington now, the cornerback certainly wasn’t overlooked by the Redskins’ front office and coaching staff in the months leading up to the 1999 draft.

Then-general manager Charley Casserly had the Georgia prospect ranked as his best player in the draft.

“There was no doubt in our minds that this guy could be a top corner in the league,” Casserly said.

“You knew he was headed for greatness,” Hayes said.

The process for the Redskins to land Bailey, however, turned out to be much more complicated. That year, Washington had the fifth pick but traded down in a deal with the New Orleans Saints. Casserly had an agreement with Chicago to move back up to No. 7 to take Bailey. But at the last-minute, the Bears wanted more.

“They stick it to me now and want another third,” Casserly said. “So now I say, ‘OK, do we give them the third or do we stay at (12)?’”

“We decided we wanted Champ Bailey.”

‘Wakes up competing’

It was Bailey’s third day of his rookie training camp when he was finally figured out. After spending the first two days flummoxed over Bailey’s length, Washington’s receivers discovered that, essentially, the 22-year-old had a go-to move he kept repeating.

Hayes and Green approached him with a message: “Don’t do the same thing all the time.”

Bailey’s response set a standard in his career. He quickly adjusted his game. Those around Bailey say he was a fast learner, picking up concepts and applying them without a problem.

“He would get it (right away),” Green said. “We would just laugh.”

In addition to their film sessions, Green and Bailey spent a portion of practice separated from the rest of the team. This was by design as the coaching staff wanted the two to bond — allowing them to discuss football, marbles or whatever. Green says it was the only time in his 20-year career that he had that relationship with a player.

Bailey’s effort in practice translated to games. In his first season, the Redskins had 10 wins and won the NFC East — in part because of a strong year from the rookie. Bailey tallied five interceptions, three in a game against Jake Plummer and the Arizona Cardinals. They even won a playoff contest and advanced to the NFC Divisional Round.

When Smoot joined the Redskins in 2001, he soon discovered Bailey’s “very fiery side.” Though the cornerback was quiet, he was ultracompetitive — so much so that during meetings, Smoot and Bailey would draw plays on paper with the intention of beating one another. Smoot would draw an offensive play, while Bailey responded with a defensive one to counter.

That’s just who Bailey was, Smoot said.

“He wakes up competing,” Smoot said. “He goes to sleep competing. He’s always got a plan. He’s one of those guys

we wouldn’t recommend that for our players and we want them to keep out of harm’s way. Josh is a unique man, and he has done a lot of great work other than jumping over bulls. He has done a lot of charitable work that people don’t know about and great things for the community. I applaud Josh and the way he lives his life.”

Norman is far from a one-trick pony during his time away. His Instagram page is a tapestry of everything from a video of climbing into the cockpit of a Blue Angels plane to photos of him donating \$18,000 to an immigrant detention center and looking over plans for the Josh Norman Teen Center in Greenwood, South Carolina, which he considers his greatest feat to date.

“I’m always about helping, man, in any way I can,” Norman said Tuesday when asked about his donation to the detention center. “That’s why we’re here. I feel life if you have it and you see there’s a need, then you do (it). What am I going to use it for? I feel like what I’ve been blessed with, I try to give back in multitudes because I feel like people need it the most. What do I need it for? I can always make more.”

Thrill-seeking and making an impact in different communities — getting as

who are very methodical in the way he does things.”

The trade

Green thought Bailey would be the heir apparent.

For 20 years, Green was the face of the Redskins’ defense. He knew the torch would be passed at some point, and when Washington drafted Bailey, Green embraced it. He considered Bailey the future. So Green was shocked that the Redskins dealt the cornerback in March 2004 to Denver.

Reminded of the specifics of the trade 15 years later — Bailey and a second-round pick for Portis — Green cut off the reporter to make sure he had heard correctly.

“Wait a minute, wait a minute, wait a minute,” Green said. “You’ve got to back up: You mean to tell me we gave them Champ AND a second-round pick?”

That’s correct.

Green broke out into laughter. “Oh my goodness,” he said. “Maybe I knew that, but I did not remember that.”

So why did the Redskins trade Bailey? How could they have possibly let a future Hall of Famer go? Sure, Portis was a solid player — he spent seven seasons with Washington — but was that really worth it?

Then-Redskins general manager Vinny Cerrato, now a Baltimore sports radio host, says the issue came down to money. Bailey needed a new contract and the two parties disagreed on the cornerback’s value.

“I remember Dan (Snyder) and I met with his agent a couple of times and he just wanted a lot of money, a lot of years,” Cerrato said. “It was just — We just felt like for where we were at, it was just too much to invest in one player.”

The Redskins were coming off a 5-11 season and had hired Joe Gibbs for his second stint as coach. Months before the 2003 season, Bailey reportedly turned down a nine-year, \$55 million contract to stay with Washington.

The Redskins’ thinking went like this: They could have Bailey or four other players capable of starting.

Washington received interest from various teams about Bailey, including the New York Jets, though the discussions didn’t gain much traction. That is, until

far away from football as possible — is Norman’s preferred way of preparing for the season. He doesn’t feel the need to train all offseason to be ready to go when he gets back to work.

“I know how to turn the switch on and turn the switch off,” Norman said. “A lot of people don’t have that ability. So they have to do certain things for a long period of time, but for me, when it’s go time, it’s go time, let’s suit it up. Let’s get it going. When I’m not, then I’m not. Trust me.”

Trust Norman because it’s working. He had three interceptions and three forced fumbles in a strong 2018 season and has flashed similar ball-hawking moves early in training camp. With safety D.J. Swearingin gone and replaced by Landon Collins, Norman could get the opportunity to be more vocal on the field and inside meeting rooms.

Picking up where he left off last season, Norman looks free and loose early in camp going into his fourth season with Washington.

“I think he always plays free. That’s a good thing,” Gruden said. “I think he’s making plays on the ball, which is exciting. It’s always been his forte. ... When he’s around the ball, the more times around the ball, better it is for us.”

NBA

Wizards fill out Brooks’ coaching staff

The Washington Wizards announced four new hires for Scott Brooks’ coaching staff, including Dean Oliver, an analytics expert who has front office experience but is new to the coaching ranks.

Jarell Christian, who served as the Capital City Go-Go’s coach in their inaugural G League season, was named an assistant coach for the Wizards. Ryan Richman was promoted to Go-Go coach in his place.

The Wizards also hired Mike Longabardi and Corey Gaines.

TENNIS

Teenager McNally reaches Citi Open quarterfinals

Teenage qualifier Caty McNally has reached the quarterfinals of the Citi Open. The 17-year-old beat fellow American Christina McHale 6-3, 1-6, 6-3 on Thursday. McNally hadn’t won a main draw WTA match until this week.

Also Thursday, Camila Giorgi rallied to beat Rebecca Peterson 3-6, 6-3, 6-4. Zarina Diyas upset fifth-seeded Lesia Tsurenko, 6-4, 6-4.

On the men’s side, College Park native Frances Tiafoe lost to third-seeded Daniil Medvedev 6-2, 7-5. Sixth-seeded Marin Cilic topped ninth-seeded Felix Auger-Aliassime 6-3, 6-4. Kyle Edmund came back to beat Jo-Wilfried Tsonga 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 to move on. Peter Gojowczyk upset eighth-seeded Milos Raonic, 6-4, 6-4. Norbert Gombos topped def. Miomir Kecmanovic, 1-6, 6-3, 7-6 (4).

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Hokies’ defensive coordinator to step down after season

BLACKSBURG, VA. | Virginia Tech’s Bud Foster says the upcoming football season will be his final as an assistant coach.

Foster has been the Hokies’ defensive coordinator since 1995. His 33 years on staff makes him the longest tenured assistant coach in the country at the same school. His teams led the nation in total defense in 2005 and again in 2006 .

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

Eight given bans after Reds-Pirates brawl

NEW YORK | Pittsburgh pitcher Keone Kela was suspended Thursday for 10 games, Cincinnati reliever Amir Garrett for eight and Yasiel Puig for three after Tuesday’s furious brawl between the Pirates and Reds.

Three players on each team were suspended, and all elected to appeal. Reds manager David Bell was suspended six games, and Pirates manager Clint Hurdle was penalized two games.

From wire dispatches and staff reports.

PRO CALENDAR

HOME GAMES SHADED	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	Arizona Diamondbacks 9:30 p.m. MASN2 FM 106.7	Arizona Diamondbacks 8 p.m. MASN2 FM 106.7	Arizona Diamondbacks 4 p.m. MASN2 FM 106.7
			Philadelphia Union 7:30 p.m.
	Seattle Storm 10 p.m. NBATV		Phoenix Mercury 6 p.m.

TENNIS

From page **B10**

even feel my legs,” Baptiste said after Tuesday’s match. “It was amazing, like, having everybody in the crowd cheering for me. I knew every other person in the crowd, so it felt really good.”

Vesa Ponkka, the senior director of tennis at the Junior Tennis Champions Center in College Park, was one of the familiar faces in the stands. Baptiste started

training at that facility when she was about six, and Ponkka has watched her grow into a mature teenager.

“I was very impressed with how poised she was,” Ponkka said. “How her mental game was excellent.”

Baptiste, who now trains in Orlando, spent about nine years at the JTCC. The facility was a breeding ground for young talent, producing tennis standouts like Washington Kastles star Frances Tiafoe and Olympian Denis Kudla.

“Frances was looking up to Denis Kudla,

and got that belief system that, ‘If I work hard, I can do it,’ Ponkka said. “Then, of course, Hailey grew up with Frances ... When Frances had his breakthrough then I’m sure that Hailey had that, ‘Hey, if Frances can do it, then I can do it.’”

And now, the youngest players at the JTCC are looking up to Baptiste, too.

“It’s great for the little kids to see that, hey, you can play in the highest level if you work hard enough,” Ponkka said.

Baptiste lost in the round of 16 Wednesday night to Kristina Mladenovic of France,

with a small hometown crowd in the stands. The match marked the end of Baptiste’s Citi Open run but proved to her that she belongs on the professional court.

“Just knowing I can compete at this level, that I’m right there with all the top players,” she said after Wednesday’s match. “Just got to keep pushing myself to get better and, like, fix little things.”

Baptiste, now ranked No. 287, said she will play next week at the National Hard Courts in San Diego for a chance at a wild-card spot in the U.S. Open.