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COLLEGES

Agent probe may target players

ATLANTA (AP)—A federal grand jury in Chicago will consider whether to indict athletes, as well as sports agents, on grounds of defrauding their colleges by signing contracts before their college eligibility had expired, the Atlanta Constitution reported.

Wire and mail fraud charges also could apply to the athletes, and unidentified sources quoted by the Constitution, in a copyright story in its Tuesday edition, said the Internal Revenue Service is conducting its own investigation.

Alabama basketball players Derrick McKey and Terry Coner are among the athletes who have been subpoenaed, the paper reported.

The investigation is into the business affairs of New York agents Norby Walters and Lloyd Bloom.

NCAA regulations forbid college athletes from entering agreements with, or accepting money from, any agent while the athlete has college eligibility remaining.

The grand jury's focus on the student athletes is "an unfortunate

spinoff of the Norby Walters scenario, and I think the U.S. attorney is all wet," said attorney Richard Zaroff, who represents Pitt linebacker Tony Woods.

"To try and prosecute the players in this case is without merit or consequence. Unfortunately, that's prosecutorial mentality."

The Constitution said 50 to 60 athletes who have had dealings with Walters' agency have been subpoenaed to testify in Chicago. The grand jury is expected to meet once a week during the next two months, possibly longer.

Subpoenaed athletes, the Constitution reported, include football players: Woods; Rod Woodson of Purdue; Ronnie Harmon of Iowa; Devon Mitchell of the Detroit Lions and formerly of Iowa; Jeff Atkins, Jerry Ball, Terence Mann and Ron Morris of SMU; Everett Gay, William Harris and Edwin Simmons of Texas; and Byron Linwood and Egypt Allen, Texas Christian, and Lou Brock Jr. of Southern California.

Harmon and Woodson were subpoenaed to appear Tuesday, the Constitution said.

The paper said athletes expected to be subpoenaed include Auburn running back Brent Fullwood, taken by Green Bay as the No. 4 overall pick in the NFL draft, and Clemson running backs Terrence Flagler and Kenny Flowers, who was the Atlanta Falcons' second-round pick in the draft.

Flowers' agent, Ken Burrough, said Flowers received about \$17,000 from Walters before and during his senior season, and efforts to reach a financial settlement with Walters have broken down.

Richard Glicko, Fullwood's attorney, said the running back received \$8,032 from Walters before and during his senior season.

The Constitution said the grand jury will determine whether to apply the Racketeering Influenced Corrupt Organizations statute, a broad federal law aimed at organized crime, to Walters, Bloom and the athletes.

PRO HOCKEY

Oilers' Coffey a 2-way threat again

By Bernard Fernandez
Knight-Ridder Newspapers

EDMONTON, Alberta—Throughout Paul Coffey's Catch-22 career, critics have assailed him for what he supposedly hasn't done instead of giving him credit for what he can do better than almost anyone else.

What the Edmonton Oilers' standout defenseman is best known for is a scoring prowess not seen from a National Hockey League defenseman since the heyday of the great Bobby Orr.

In a three-season span, from 1983-84 through 1985-86, Coffey percolated 385 regular-season points, including 138 last season.

But Coffey never was more of an offensive force than he was during the 1985 playoffs, when he had 37 points in 18 games and scored the go-ahead goal in the deciding game of the Stanley Cup final against the Flyers.

Still, Coffey was criticized in some quarters when he was voted

the NHL's outstanding defenseman in 1985 and again in 1986. The suggestion was that a defenseman whose principal strength is offense was somehow unworthy.

So what happened this season? Coffey, plagued by the lingering effects of a back injury, played some of the best defense of his seven-year career—and was criticized for a dropoff in points.

"Unfortunately, everyone uses the old cliché when it comes to Paul—if you don't score 100 points, you've had a bad year," Edmonton coach Glen Sather said Sunday after Coffey had a goal and an assist in the Oilers' 4-2 victory over the Flyers in the first game of the Stanley Cup finals.

Coffey didn't score 100 points this season, or even come close. He had 67 points in 59 regular-season games, and going into Sunday night's game he had managed one goal and four assists in 10 playoff appearances.

Oilers superstar Wayne Gretzky feels that Coffey is a victim of his

own high-powered image. "In the Detroit series, Paul played terrific defense," Gretzky said. "But he's an offensive-oriented defenseman, and he doesn't get the acknowledgment he deserves for his defense."

Coffey said his offensive slowdown is partly the result of the Oilers' less flamboyant style, partly the result of the back woes that turned him into a hesitant shooter.

"The injury slowed me up quite a bit," Coffey said. "I came back too early, missed 10 games, came back and missed another 10."

It pains Coffey that his contributions on defense went mostly unrecognized by the public while his shot was AWOL.

"But I suppose it's a natural reaction," he said. "When a player scores as much as I have in the past, people think that he can't possibly play good defense."

Hockey people know better. "Paul Coffey," Sather said, "is beginning to play like Paul Coffey can play."

PRO BASKETBALL

At last, Pistons' Daly has moment in the sun

By Charlie Vincent
Knight-Ridder Newspapers

DETROIT—Two months short of his 57th birthday—an occasion he would prefer to keep secret—Chuck Daly is in the midst of his greatest success as a coach.

From Punxsutawney [Pa.] High, to Duke, to Boston College, to Penn, to the Philadelphia 76ers, to the Cleveland Cavaliers, back to Philadelphia and then to the Detroit Pistons four seasons ago, Daly's rise has come in baby steps.

There have been setbacks, too. Like being fired as head coach of the Cavs after losing 32 of 41 games in 1982. Like not being allowed to break his Detroit contract to take over the 76ers in 1985. Like coming within a hair of being fired seven months later, when the Pistons were in a 2-12 slump.

I first met him in May, 1983, just a couple of weeks before Jack McCloskey announced that Daly would succeed Scotty Robertson as the Pistons' coach.

We sat in the lobby of the Franklin Plaza Hotel in Philadelphia, and Daly asked if I had come just to ask him about the Pistons' vacancy.

"Yes," I said. "You might be wasting your time, you know," he replied, indicating he was not at all sure he'd get the job.

He did get it, though, and in four seasons he has become only the second man to coach the Pistons to the playoffs four straight years. He has won more games than any other Pistons coach. He has won a higher percentage of games than

any of his 16 predecessors. He has the Pistons in the NBA's Eastern Conference finals against Boston, and, though Daly was only eighth in coach-of-the-year balloting, Detroit guard Isiah Thomas calls this his best coaching job.

"All the talents and personalities were more or less thrown into a soup at the same time, and he had to stir them up," says Thomas, referring to the additions this season of Adrian Dantley, Sidney Green, Kurt Nimphius and rookies Dennis Rodman and John Salley.

His players seem to like his coaching style: firm, but open to suggestion.

Bill Laimbeer, who also played for him in Cleveland, calls Daly "a players' coach. He realizes it is a players' game, not a coach's game."

NBA coaches must be one part teacher, one part psychologist, one part philosopher and one part disciplinarian. Thomas admires how Daly mixes those qualities.

"He's managed to keep 12 guys happy, but it's more than that. There's a concept of basketball he has had to get across. A selling job, to get 12 guys to believe in his concept and then to go out on the court and execute it."

Daly calls his years in Detroit the biggest success of his career.

"First, because I've really enjoyed the players. Secondly, because all of the years of coaching came to fruition."

"And," he added, with a laugh, "because I kept my job."

MVP

Continued from page 1

it. The Lakers selected Johnson first in the 1979 draft after winning a coin flip with the Bulls, who wound up with David Greenwood. Always more of a passer than a scorer, individual honors eluded him in the pros until now.

"I always thought I would never win it," Johnson said. "I didn't know what it took to win the award. I always felt I had to score more if I had a chance to win it. I wanted to win it, yes, as long as it was in the team concept. The championship is more important." Jordan scored more points. Bird

is arguably the game's greatest all-around player. But this time, nobody could make Magic disappear.

"I've always said this, and I haven't changed my opinion: Magic is the best player in the league," Bird said. "You can talk about Dominique Wilkins and Michael Jordan, but they're not Magic Johnson. Those guys are dunkers."

"If I had to take a player, there's no question who I'd take. Magic's head and shoulders above everybody else. He makes everybody better around him."

"He's 6-9, can post up, can take the outside shot, he can penetrate and he can make the assist. There's nothing Magic can't do. He's so far ahead of everybody else [for MVP], it's ridiculous."



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