NOVEMBER 10, 2017

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Air plant may bring 400-500 new jobs

Bombardier reveals jobs data for expected Mobile facility

Lawrence Specker
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According to a new regulatory filing from Bombardier, a proposed aircraft assembly line in Mobile could create 400 to 500 direct jobs in the area, and would represent an investment of hundreds of millions of dollars.

Airbus and Canada-based Bombardier announced in October that they had agreed to form a partnership to build Bombardier’s C Series passenger jets. Airbus CEO Tom Enders said, “We intend to build a second Final Assembly Line in Mobile, Alabama, serving U.S. customers.”

Many details of how that will play out were unclear at the time and remain so a month later. A timetable for construction hasn’t been revealed, nor have financing arrangements for the project.

The publicly available portion of Bombardier’s recent filing with the U.S. International Trade Commission doesn’t answer a lot of questions, but it provides some projected numbers.

According to the document, “current Bombardier estimates predict that the agreement with Airbus, if approved, would create over 3,000 permanent jobs in the United States ... The breakdown of 1,900 to 2,450 permanent jobs is as follows: 400 to 500 direct jobs, 550 to 700 indirect jobs, and 1,000 to 1,250 induced jobs.”

Direct jobs would be people employed by the assembly plant, and indirect jobs would be people working for companies that provide materials or services to the plant. Jobs created as those people spend money in the community are induced jobs.

The filing additionally estimates that establishing “the necessary C Series facilities” would create 1,900 direct jobs, 1,000 indirect jobs, and 3,000 induced jobs during construction.

The filing adds that “According to estimates by Bombardier, the creation of those facilities would contribute over $300 million of foreign direct investment into the United States.” A Montreal Gazette story on the filing interprets that as meaning that Bombardier plans to spend $300 million to build the assembly line. Attempts to reach a representative of Bombardier for additional detail were not immediately successful.

When the project was first announced, the general impression in Alabama was that, essentially, Airbus planned to build another assembly line beside its existing one.

“There is no greater example of confidence than when a company of Airbus’ caliber decides to reinvest in Mobile,” Mayor Sandy Stimpson said at the time. “Airbus choosing Mobile to grow its new market and to build a second Final Assembly Line exemplifies our strong partnership. It was that strong partnership that brought Airbus to Mobile in the first place.”

Likewise, U.S. Rep. Bradley Byrne issued a statement saying he wanted to “share my deep appreciation with Airbus for their continued investment in Mobile and our community.”

Enders himself said “we have a lot of experience in setting up a Final Assembly Line in Mobile, Alabama, it can be done in a relatively short period of time.”

If the latest news seems to suggest it’s more a Bombardier facility than an Airbus factory, that impression, too, may be premature. The reality is likely somewhere in between. The acronym that Alabama might need to get familiar with is CSALP: C Series Aircraft Limited Partnership.

According to Bombardier’s 2016 financial report, it closed a $1 billion (U.S.) investment deal with the government of Quebec in June of that year. Quebec got a 49.5 percent equity stake in CSALP, which was created to assume “the assets, liabilities and obligations of the C Series aircraft program.”

Bombardier said in October that when the Airbus deal closes, Airbus will have a 50.1 percent interest in CSALP. Bombardier will own about 31 percent and Quebec will hold 19 percent. Airbus reportedly paid no cash for that stake, but will “provide procurement, sales and marketing, and customer support expertise” to the project.

“As far as I understand, this would be a partnership between Airbus and Bombardier to build the C-Series aircraft,” said Kristi Tucker, director of communications for Airbus Americas.

Tucker said Thursday that the reason many details haven’t been clarified is simply because they haven’t been worked out yet. And they likely won’t be until the Airbus-Bombardier partnership gets regulatory approval, which could happen late next year.
Get next superintendent right, Alabama board of education told

By: Trisha Powell Crain

Alabama state board of education members better get this next state superintendent appointment right, interim state superintendent Dr. Ed Richardson told board members Thursday at their work session in Montgomery.

"I'm the fourth superintendent in 19 months," he said. "That's a recipe for disaster." Richardson served as state superintendent from 1995 until 2004, and was appointed in September to serve as interim after Michael Sentance resigned.

Sentance had been on the job barely one year. Sentance replaced Dr. Philip Cleveland, who served as interim after Dr. Tommy Bice retired in March 2016.

Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey, who serves as president of the state board of education by virtue of her position, agreed with Richardson, telling board members, "This is about the most important thing we're going to do at the board. Period. Having four superintendents in two years is no mark of achievement."

Richardson said it takes five years for a state superintendent to build the credibility to be successful, and the board must choose wisely.

Ivey presented board members with a draft resolution, outlining a process that starts immediately with Ivey crafting a request for proposal, or RFP, for a search firm to guide the process. The RFP will be released after the board's Dec. 14 meeting with a proposed due date of Dec. 27.

Using a firm ensures the applicant pool remains confidential, she said. Only the names of the finalists that will be interviewed by the board would be released to the public.

Board members conducted their own search in 2016, resulting in the appointment of Sentance.

Ivey established a committee to score the RFP's, appointing herself as chair, and asking current board Vice President Stephanie Bell, R-Montgomery, Dr. Cynthia McCarty, R-Jacksonville, and Dr. Yvette Richardson, D-Birmingham, to serve on that committee.

The committee will score the RFPs, choose the firm with the highest score, and have a contract with the chosen firm signed prior to the Jan. 11, 2018, board meeting. Ivey said she expects the search firm to attend that Jan. 11 meeting to talk with the board about next steps.

Board members had no questions about Ivey's recommendation. "Sounds good to me," board member Jeff Newman, R-Millport, said. "Excellent plan."

Richardson told AL.com he would agree to a contract extension through the end of May, or whenever the next superintendent takes office. His current interim superintendent contract runs through Dec. 31.
After the meeting, Richardson said the board could have a hard time attracting qualified candidates given the news coverage of the board’s actions in the past year. "I'll have to admit," he said, "with all this turmoil going on, it's not an attractive item, I can't deny," but hopes that by the time the job is posted next January, progress can be shown, which will help attract a candidate.

During the board's work session, Richardson walked board members through a presentation of the basic set of skills that, he said, "are absolutely critical for the next person to be successful."

At the top of the list? "This person needs to have experience managing large, preferably public, governmental organizations," Richardson said. Not only that, he said, but that person needs to be able to produce the "measurable positive results" that prove past successes.

Richardson pulled no punches in his presentation, calling out bureaucracies for creating silos, educators for dodging hard decisions, and the department of education for not being responsive to local school districts.

Here are other skills Richardson said the next superintendent must have:

- experience interacting with a wide variety of people, including state lawmakers, other government officials, the public, and the business community,
- possessing a wide range of knowledge about educational trends and existing programs,
- an understanding of how education in Alabama is delivered,
- the ability to make effective use of her time and make timely decisions.

Richardson was particularly critical of board and department leadership's lack of interaction with state lawmakers in the past three or four years with respect to budget and education policy issues.

Richardson said he would give them a zero or a one as a grade.

Richardson advised the board about their proper role, telling the board it's their job to set goals, and those goals must be set high. "Our biggest enemy has been and remains low expectations," he said. "And people will readily achieve low expectations."

Richardson referred many times to the poor reputation public education has in Alabama, referring to low test scores and validating complaints the business community has voiced about student outcomes.

Ivey thanked Richardson for his candor and agreed with him, saying, "Truly the sentiment for public education is not at the level it ought to be. Our achievement is not, in student learning, as high as it ought to be."

Plan 2020, the most recent strategic plan approved by the state board, set goals, but has not been updated since Bice left.
Throughout the presentation, Richardson referred to the next superintendent as "she," telling board members he chose to do so instead of saying "he or she" each time and because "he' got preference for years." Alabama has never been led by a female state superintendent.

The only female to serve in that capacity was current state department General Counsel Juliana Dean when she served as "proxy" in April 2016 after former superintendent Dr. Tommy Bice retired and prior to Dr. Philip Cleveland being appointed as interim.

Richardson said he expects he will be serving as state superintendent through the 2018 legislative session, which begins Jan. 9.
Malfunctioning freezer prompts evacuations of 3 University of Alabama buildings

By: Jonece Starr Dunigan

UPDATE at 11:21 p.m.: A malfunctioning freezer storing potentially hazardous liquid prompted the evacuation of three buildings on the University of Alabama campus on Thursday, officials said.

Spokesman Chris Bryant said emergency responders were called to Shelby Hall, which houses more than 70 research laboratories, at 4:30 p.m. The building was evacuated and people were diverted from the area as responders evaluated the situation. UA Alerts informed individuals to avoid the area.

Around 5:30 p.m., a second alert was sent out stating the situation was under control. As a precaution, the neighboring Science and Engineering Complex Building and the McMillian Building were also evacuated.

Both university and city response teams collaborated to remove the chemical from the building. The chemical was taken to a nearby lot on campus, where it was destroyed with a small, controlled combustion around 9:20 p.m.

Bryant said no one was hurt during the situation and that no damage was done to the building.
TPD probes fan confrontation

Video of incident at football stadium went viral

By Stephanie Taylor
Staff Writer

The Tuscaloosa Police Department is conducting an internal investigation into an incident between a TPD officer and a smoking Alabama football fan that went viral online.

In a video circulated widely online since Saturday night, a woman can be seen holding a lit cigarette in the officer's face before he drags her from her seat in Bryant-Denny Stadium.

Lt. Teena Richardson, a TPD spokeswoman, wouldn't say whether the woman was charged or escorted from the stadium because the matter is under investigation.

In the video, the patrol officer appears to ask the woman to extinguish her cigarette. She holds it in his face before he pulls her from her seat, first by grabbing her wrist and later by pulling from under her arms.

The woman sits on the ground, holding onto her seat and resisting the officer's attempts to make her leave with him.

Smoking is not allowed at the stadium, or anywhere on campus, after the University of Alabama implemented a smoke-free policy in 2015.
Bust honors late UA grad who served in Afghanistan

By Ed Enoch
Staff Writer

Mark Forester's nephews played on a bench in the Office of Veteran and Military Affairs at the University of Alabama on Wednesday as a crowd that was packed into a hallway waited to see the memorial bust of their uncle, a 20-year-old Air Force Combat controller killed in combat before they were born.

The boys' father, Thad Forester, helped unveil the bust of his younger brother, a UA alumnus assigned to the Air Force's 21st Special Tactics Squadron as a combat controller. He was killed in action on Sept. 29, 2010, while trying to aid Army special-forces medic 1st Sgt. Calvin Harrison, a teammate who also died during the mission in Urugan Province, Afghanistan.

"It is pretty awesome," Thad Forester said, reflecting on the portrait.

Mark Forester, the youngest of a family of six from Haleyville, felt called to serve after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. The bust will be on display in UA's Office of Veteran and Military Affairs in Houser Hall.

The bronze was sculpted by retired Marine Col. Lee Busby, who joined Thad Forester for the unveiling. Busby worked with Thad Forester to capture the likeness of his younger brother.

Busby has been sculpting busts of Alabama's combat deaths from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, drawn by their stories and faces.

"I got a lot out of it too, though," Busby said on Wednesday as he was congratulated on his work.

Among the Forester family members attending the unveiling was Mark Forester's father, Ray Forester, who wore a pin on his lapel with the picture of his son in Afghanistan and the message "the price of freedom."

"I'm glad they have him in his red beret. He was proud of that beret," Ray Forester said of his son's role as an elite combat controller.

The Office of Veteran and Military Affairs dedicated a painted portrait of Forester wearing his beret in 2012 when it opened, said Alex Bynum, assistant director of military and veteran affairs.

"We have 'Where Legends are Made' at Alabama," Bynum said. "Mark Forester was a legend that was made at this institution and a legacy that our veterans, service members and dependents have lived strong for the entire five years the Office of Veterans and Military Affairs has existed."

The painting, along with photographs of Forester in Afghanistan and as he was training, hang above the bronze. The university has around 700 veterans on campus and more than 1,000 students using the G.I. Bill to attend UA, Bynum said.

"It is examples like Mark that really set the tone for what our students strive for," she said.

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Tuscaloosa paves way for self-driving cars

William Thornton  wthornton@al.com

The next decade could see the biggest advances in transportation since the invention of the automobile, and Tuscaloosa is getting there a little faster.

By the middle of next year, 85 dedicated short-range communication radios, or DSRCs, will be installed in traffic signals in Tuscaloosa and Northport. The first 50 are going this in fall. They have been paid for by the University of Alabama.

The DSRC radios are technology that analysts expect will pave the way for autonomous automobiles, or self-driving vehicles.

Bharat Balasubramanian is the executive director of the university's Center for Advanced Vehicle Technologies. He says there are "a wealth of applications" connected to the DSRC radios.

The radios are designed to interact with vehicles which have corresponding DSRC units. The technology does not currently appear in most standard vehicles, but is projected to become more ubiquitous over the next few years.

Balasubramanian, who came to the university after serving as a vice president of research for Daimler, said the technology can lead to roadways with improved safety, better traffic flow and better fuel economy.

He presented a scenario from the near future recently at a Birmingham automotive conference.

An ambulance threads through traffic, sending signals to other vehicles ahead of it and allowing traffic to flow around it. A DSRC radio inside the ambulance signals traffic lights ahead to change, which allows the ambulance to continue on through intersections and other vehicles to stop. Other uses include a red light warning within a vehicle, similar to current collision warnings.

The DSRC units being installed will not be able to retain or gather any personal information. However, information gathered about traffic will be used by faculty, staff and students to study signal phase and timing. This data can eventually lead to interaction between vehicles and signals.

The project will involve the university's Center for Advanced Vehicle Technology, the University Transportation Center, the Center for Advanced Public Safety and the Alabama Transportation Institute.

With the development of 5G technology, eventually GPS will be able to locate vehicles on the road within one to two centimeters. That will means constant updates of weather, traffic and road conditions for drivers and passengers, construction zones and other possible impacts on travel.

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation have challenged every state to install at least 20 DSRC radios by 2020.

Tuscaloosa Mayor Walt Maddox, said the data will help the community. "Not only will it aid in personal convenience, but it could also help keep businesses on schedule and further transportation research," he said.
Businessman donates $1.5M to UA law school

Money from Culverhouse will endow a chair of constitutional law

Staff report

A Florida businessman and attorney has given $1.5 million to endow a chair of constitutional law at the University of Alabama School of Law.

The gift is the latest by Hugh F. Culverhouse Jr., whose father, Hugh F. Culverhouse Sr., is the namesake of the Culverhouse College of Commerce and a graduate of the law school. The gift will establish the Hugh F. Culverhouse Jr. Chair in Constitutional Law and serve as a foundation for a center for constitutional studies.

“Mr. Culverhouse has proven himself a committed friend and supporter of the law school,” UA President Stuart R. Bell said.

Culverhouse’s gift was inspired by his love of the Constitution, experiences as an attorney and his respect for the school’s Dean Mark E. Brandon.

“My love comes from being a trial lawyer since 1975 and seeing the document live in my work as a federal prosecutor and as a federal criminal defense attorney,” he said. “As I matured, I realized the importance of the Constitution in providing checks and balances in governing this nation. This document is ever moving in its interpretation and yet never moving in its principles.”

Culverhouse has donated more than $7 million to the business college as well as $2.5 million to the Crimson Tide Foundation, the fundraising arm of University of Alabama Athletics.
UAB highlighted in 2017 Sustainable Campus Index

By: Tiffany Westry Womack

The University of Alabama at Birmingham has been highlighted in the 2017 Sustainable Campus Index for water conservation, recycling and reuse, and effective rainwater management practices.

The 2017 Sustainable Campus Index, a publication of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education or AASHE, highlights innovative and high-impact initiatives from colleges and universities.

“It’s very rewarding to have the opportunity to work at an institution that places such a high emphasis on sustainability,” said Matt Winslett, director of Facilities Management. “UAB’s water recovery efforts have been some of the most rewarding projects I have been a part of to date.”

UAB’s Water Reuse and Recovery Program emphasizes year-round water conservation through a network of tanks and piping to capture and reuse groundwater and condensate from heating and cooling systems. In 2016, UAB saved about 76 million gallons of water and more than $600,000.

The system consists of three central cooling plants and multiple cooling towers that are linked via a network of underground piping. Water from the plants is cooled to 45 degrees Fahrenheit. The heat is removed from the water through evaporation within the plant’s cooling towers, and the water is then piped into buildings to provide air conditioning. Afterward, the water is warmed to 55 degrees Fahrenheit, creating condensate that forms on the air handler coils as it leaves the buildings.

The condensate is collected, filtered, cleaned and pumped across town to UAB’s district chilled water plant’s cooling tower through the underground chilled water-return line. This both conserves water use and reduces the volume of municipal drinking water that must be purchased for cooling. The cold, mineral-free, distilled water also contributes to lower water treatment costs, as well as the input energy required in the cooling process.

“UAB’s feature in this report shows its significant leadership and commitment to advance sustainability,” said AASHE Executive Director Meghan Fay Zahniser. “We are excited to recognize UAB for working to secure a thriving, equitable and ecologically healthy world through its comprehensive sustainability efforts.”

In 2016, UAB earned a rating of “Silver” in the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System or STARS program, for its efforts in public engagement and innovation. STARS is a self-reporting sustainability evaluation tool developed by AASHE. The system measures and encourages sustainability in all aspects of higher education.

The STARS program is the most widely recognized framework in the world for publicly reporting comprehensive information related to a college or university’s sustainability performance.
New UAB ROTC training facility groundbreaking is Nov. 10

By: Shannon Thomason

A groundbreaking ceremony for the new Reserve Officers Training Corps training facility at the University of Alabama at Birmingham will be held at 9 a.m. Friday, Nov. 10.

UAB has hosted ROTC programs for more than three decades, in partnership with the U.S. Army. The new 12,800-square-foot ROTC training facility, expected to cost $3 million, will be located at 828 Eighth Court S. It will include three classrooms, nine offices, an 1,860-square-foot auditorium, storm shelter, supply and storage space, a cadet lounge/library, a cadre lounge, women’s and men’s locker rooms, a gym, and an engagement skills trainer room for simulated combat. Work is scheduled to begin this month and is expected to be completed for fall semester 2018.

The project architect is Charles Williams & Associates, Inc. The general contractor is Argo Building Company, Inc.

Self-parking for the groundbreaking will be available at the site. UAB President Ray Watts and Senior Vice Provost Suzanne Austin will host the event.
Defense Intelligence Agency leader brings team to UAH campus to talk about careers

By: Jim Steele

U.S. Army National Guard Maj. Gen. Harry Miller brought a team from the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) to speak with students at The University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH) on Friday, Nov. 3 about careers at the DIA.

"It is a team and it is a family," said Miller, who is the mobilization assistant to the DIA’s director and who has a 37-year military career, as he spoke at the event coordinated by the UAH Office of Career Services. "If you want to become part of something that’s bigger than yourself, then we’re what you’re looking for."

DIA employs 16,500 people and 74 percent of the agency’s employees are civilians. In addition to posts in Washington, D.C., half the agency’s employees work in a wide variety of locales including over 140 countries. The agency is tasked with providing foreign intelligence from multiple domains to the U.S. military.

"We’re heavily engaged on a global level," said Miller, who is the principal advisor to the DIA director regarding the effective integration and employment of Reserve forces supporting the DIA from across the services. He also serves as the director of the Reserve Integration Office and as a special assistant to the DIA director.

Miller formerly served as the commander, 42d Infantry Division, New York Army National Guard. He is a Special Forces officer with assignments in Germany; Fort Bragg, N.C.; Fort Lewis, Wash.; the New Hampshire National Guard; Arlington, Va.; the New York National Guard; Washington, D.C.; and two deployments to Operation Iraqi Freedom. He has commanded at the company, detachment, battalion and division levels.

DIA has seven internship programs and also entry-level employment opportunities to which Miller and the DIA team introduced UAH students during the session at the Charger Union Theater and a career fair held immediately afterward in the Charger Union.

DIA operates across domains including space, air, cyberspace, surface and subsurface, Miller told the students. The agency’s scope of operations includes the strategic, operational and tactical domains of U.S. defense, he said.

"What’s really cool about it is that you have the opportunity to interact and impact at all these levels," Miller said.

The team accompanying Miller from DIA included the DIA lead recruiter; career development officers; the chief of technology operations for the director of operations, science and technology; and an employee of the Missile and Space Intelligence Center.

"UAH students will benefit by networking with Maj. Gen. Miller and his team and gaining insight into the DIA’s candidate selection process," said Candace Phillips, Career Services senior coordinator. "UAH is one of very few schools in the region they are visiting and we are honored to host them."

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The Office of Career Services strives to connect students to opportunities that will lead them to lives as successful alumni, Phillips said.

"It's no secret that experiential learning is a catapult to your career," Phillips said. "Students that participate in internships and co-ops have a very high placement rate at graduation. In turn, the DIA has an over 90 percent conversion rate of interns to full-time hires. That percentage is a testament to the work the students are engaged in and something we are excited our students can take part in."
Pearl's on thin ice, and it may be cracking

Coach under fire after report he isn't cooperating with school's investigation

Kevin Scarbinsky

Maybe Bruce Pearl can survive this storm. Maybe he and his employer can settle their differences and go back to business as usual. And maybe, when Pearl's time in his current job comes to an end, the next Auburn head basketball coach will be Chuck Person.

Of course, the idea of Person becoming head coach is preposterous. Not long ago, the idea of Pearl needing a replacement would've been nonsense, too, but things have changed on the Plains.

Short of some mighty fancy lawyering, the fired Person will never be able to return to his old school without a clever disguise. From the moment the feds fingered Auburn's associate head coach in an alleged bribery and conspiracy scheme that touched college basketball from coast to coast, a larger question loomed:

What would it mean for Pearl?

Would his potential liability be limited to the NCAA's head coach responsibility legislation, which is emphasized in his Auburn contract? Would FBI, NCAA and in-house investigations dig up anything beyond the original charges of Person taking bribes to steer Austin Wiley and Daniel Purifoy to a financial adviser while sharing some of that money with their mothers?

Would Auburn stand behind its head coach?

On Thursday, Pearl tried to make his regular press conference before Friday's season opener seem as normal as possible, but there's nothing normal about Auburn basketball at the moment beyond its familiarity with self-inflicted drama.

AL.com sources familiar with the situation have said that Pearl's on thin ice and the ice may be cracking beneath his feet.

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SCARBINSKY

FROM B1

When ESPN reported Wednesday evening that, according to its sources, Pearl’s job may be in jeopardy because he was “refusing to cooperate” in Auburn’s internal investigation, it may or may not have been a completely accurate appraisal of the situation. It did seem to be a clear shot across the coach’s bow.

Pearl’s camp would have nothing to gain by leaking word of his own alleged insubordination. Auburn would, if it were interested in floating a trial balloon to try to influence public opinion before the eventual dismissal of a popular head coach.

In Thursday’s press conference, Pearl wouldn’t address the notion that his job may be in jeopardy, but there are people close to Auburn who believe that the relationship between him and the administration is near the breaking point.

Given that the season begins Friday night in the Auburn Arena against Norfolk State, it would seem incumbent upon the university to correct any public misconception about Pearl’s standing with his employer. To this point, the university has said nothing, using the ongoing federal investigation as a justification for its silence.

That’s unfair to the staff, the players and the fans who still believe Pearl will find a way to make Auburn basketball relevant, despite the disappointing results of his first three seasons. This situation goes beyond the traditional friction between the Auburn basketball coaching staff and the Auburn compliance department that goes back to the days of Cliff Ellis at least. Tony Barbee, who preceded Pearl, complained about that friction not long after he got the job.

The federal case against Person has taken the tension to a new level, which is understandable. What’s harder to justify is Auburn failing to respond to that ESPN report saying the school itself has put Pearl on notice. Unless there’s fire behind the smoke. What’s not in dispute is the cloud over this program, this season and this head coach.

Not long after Person’s arrest, Auburn President Steven Leeth expressed his belief that the only issue here was a rogue assistant coach.

“I think it says clearly that they don’t think there’s some structural problem or some broader problem at the university, that this was an isolated individual,” Leath told ESPN. “I don’t think anybody else knew. I don’t think there’s any indication at Auburn that anybody else knew about this.”

Now would be a good time for the president to update his assessment of his basketball program and the man in charge.
Federal Probe

Suspended Auburn assistant basketball coach Chuck Person was indicted Tuesday on federal fraud, bribery and conspiracy charges.

Auburn's Chuck Person indicted by federal grand jury

Assistant coach being prosecuted as part of larger investigation of college basketball

James Crepea jcrepea@al.com

Auburn assistant basketball coach Chuck Person and co-defendant Rashan Michel were indicted on six charges by a federal grand jury in New York on Tuesday, according to court documents.

Person, who is facing six charges for fraud, bribery and conspiracy, is accused of receiving $9,300 in bribes from a federal cooperating witness, who has since been identified as former Pittsburgh-based financial adviser Marc Blazer.

The indictment states Person, Michel and others "participated in a scheme whereby bribes were solicited from and paid by a financial adviser and business manager to Person ... and such bribe payments were facilitated by Michel. In exchange for the bribes, Person agreed to exert, and did exert, his influence over student-athletes under his control to retain the services of the bribe-payers once the athletes eventually entered the NBA."

"Chuck Person did not commit a crime and we're confident he'll be vindicated after a jury hears all the evidence," Person's attorney, Michael Tremonte of New York-based Sher Tremonte, said Tuesday.

Auburn suspended Person without pay that day and he later appeared in court on Oct. 10 and released on $500,000 bond.

Person and Michel were among 10 men arrested by the FBI on Sept. 26 as part of a joint investigation with the U.S. Attorney's Office into what it believes is "criminal influence of money" in college basketball. The charges and accusations largely mirrored criminal complaints filed against the men when they were arrested. Indictments have been returned against three other assistant coaches — Emanuel Richardson of Arizona, Tony Bland of Southern California and Lamont Evans of Oklahoma State.

For the indictment, Person and Michel must forfeit "any and all property, real and personal, that constitutes or is derived from proceeds traceable to the commission of said offenses, including but not limited to a sum of money in United States currency representing the amount of proceeds traceable to the commission of said offenses."

According to the federal complaint, Person told Blazer he gave $11,000 to the mother of "Player-1" and $7,500 to the mother of "Player-2" and Michel claimed to give $5,000 to the mother of "Player-2."

On Thursday, Auburn announced it was indefinitely sitting forward Daniel Purifoy and center Austin Wiley, who are believed to be "Player-1" and "Player-2," respectively, due to "potential eligibility issues" with their connection to the case against Person. It's unclear if or when Wiley or Purifoy will be able to play college basketball again.

Wiley, Purifoy, and their mothers, Vickie Orr de Waukeisha Williams-Blevins, respectively, have not returned messages from AL.com. Auburn offered full refunds to season-ticket holders following Person's arrest and approximately 200 fans sought them, though coach Bruce Pearl said they were later resold.

Person's wife, Carmen, filed for divorce a day after he was arrested. He did not appear at an initial hearing for the divorce case last month in Auburn, during which the case was ruled confidential.
**UAB**

**Expectations high as Blazers open season**

AL.com reports

UAB opens its 2017-18 schedule Friday against Jacksonville with eight upperclassmen on its roster, including senior big men William Lee and Chris Cokely.

That wealth of talent set the bar high for the Blazers in Robert Ehsan's second season as head coach. UAB was picked by the league's coaches to finish second in Conference USA behind reigning champion Middle Tennessee State.

UAB defeated Morehouse College 84-69 in its only exhibition game this season. Storylines heading into the season include:

**Lee and Cokely go out with a bang**

The Blazer duo each earned preseason All-Conference USA honors after strong performances last season. Lee, a 6-foot-9 forward from Plantersville, led the Blazers with 13.2 points and 6.7 rebounds per game, and led the league with 80 blocks to earn Defensive Player of the Year honors. Cokely averaged 12.1 points, including three 20-point games, and 6.0 rebounds. "Chris can really be a dominant force for us in the low post and he has demonstrated that time and again during his first three seasons at UAB," Ehsan said. "He can score in so many different ways, and that's what makes him so effective in our offense."

**Nick Norton returns to lineup**

UAB suffered a major blow early last season when point guard Nick Norton suffered a torn ACL just 15 minutes into the season opener.

The former all-conference performer returns this season to provide stability at the point guard position. Norton, an Illinois native, averaged 8.5 points and 5.1 assists as a sophomore.

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**Momentum**

UAB athletics received a boost this fall by the successful return of football – the Blazers have qualified for a bowl berth. With expectations high for the basketball team headed into the season, will they be able to capitalize on the renewed popularity throughout the city of Birmingham?

**How good is MTSU?**

The Blue Raiders went 31-5 — 17-1 in conference play — and reached the second round of the NCAA Tournament, upsetting fifth-seed Minnesota before falling to Butler. Leading scorer JaCorey Williams is gone, as is Reggie Upshaw Jr. (14.5). But Giddy Potts (15.3 ppg) returns to lead the Raiders, who were picked by coaches to win C-USA this season.

**2017-18 SCHEDULE**

**UAB vs. Jacksonville**

Where: Friday, 7 p.m.
Where: Bartow Arena; Birmingham
Online: CUSA.TV

11-13 Chattanooga
11-16 Lemoyne-Owen College

**Cayman Islands Classic (through 11-21)**

11-20 Richmond (in Grand Cayman Island)
11-21 TBD (in Grand Cayman Island)
11-20 TBD (in Grand Cayman Island)
11-26 Mississippi College
11-30 Memphis (Bartow Classic)
12-5 at Troy
12-9 at Auburn
12-16 Alabama A&M
12-20 New Orleans
12-23 Mississippi Valley State
12-30 Middle Tennessee
1-4 at Florida Atlantic
1-6 at FIU
1-11 Southern Miss
1-13 Louisiana Tech
1-18 at Western Kentucky
1-20 at Marshall
1-25 UTEP
1-27 UTSA
2-1 at Charlotte
2-3 at Old Dominion
2-8 North Texas
2-10 Rice
2-15 at Louisiana Tech
2-17 at Southern Miss
2-24 at Middle Tennessee
3-1 Marshall
3-3 Western Kentucky
Blazers hope to parlay wins into success on recruiting trail

With junior college transfers taking up much of roster, Bill Clark needs to attract prep talent

Some left. Some came back. A few even stayed.

Following the disbandment of the UAB football program in December 2016, an entire team was separated but brought back to little months later.

There were different options available for the displaced Blazers with upperclassmen continuing elsewhere while others chose not to return after being picked from the Magic City by various teams looking to add depth.

Those who stayed, led by head coach Bill Clark, saw to rebuilding a program from scratch with local talent and a bevy of junior college transfers. That strategy has UAB bowl-eligible in its first year back from self-imposed exile.

The veterans lead a defense that is seventh in the conference but boasts a plus-nine turnover ratio. The local talent has produced a 1,000-yard true freshman running back in Spencer Brown, while JUCOs fill the depth chart especially on offensive line and at receiver where the top six are all transfers.

Many veterans will leave after this season, and the majority of the JUCO players will follow the year after. Clark will need to aggressively pursue prep talent as JUCOs comprise almost two-thirds of the UAB roster, a business model that has been proven to be unsustainable long-term in college football.

But with the product on the field improving and national attention paid to Birmingham in the wake of on-field success, there is reason to believe Clark can build on a recruiting class that currently sits at eighth in Conference USA according to the 24/7sports composite rankings.

"We had some recruits in this weekend and they said everywhere they went they saw family, and that's my goal," Clark said. "Hopefully, that's something, whether it's fans, whether it's recruits, whether it's all these people coming together for one thing. I would think it's something people would want to a part of." Senior linebacker Shaq Jones always wanted to be a part of it. Although he had decided where he was going post-shutdown, he did not hesitate to return when he got the call that UAB was back.

"This is a place we want you to be," he said. "It's more than just about football here. We're a family and you can ask any recruit that's been through here, they'll say the same thing." Jones is instrumental in motivating himself and teammates when hosting recruits during the season. It's a point of pride for him and sees it as a team-duty to help secure the future stability of the program.

"We just take each one and love them as if they were already a part of this team and one of our brothers," he said. "It's worked out pretty well for us, we've got some good guys committed now and we had guys who came in last year who are playing with us right now." The new early-signing period is a little more than a month away — a 17-hour window beginning December 20th — and the Blazers have more to play for after exceeding numerous expectations on their way to a 6-3 record.

The biggest needs will likely be on the defensive side as the offense should return all but one starter. Clark and his coaching staff are at a crucial juncture of the rebuild and securing a strong finish on the recruiting trail will help to keep expectations attainable.

"I always have high expectations but it's probably better than I hoped," Clark said. "You have to temper it a little bit or you won't make it. I feel like we're playing for all these people, and it's pretty neat. I can only imagine how more special it gets."
Same goal, new culture

Crimson Tide women’s basketball team loaded with experience, talent entering new season

By Drew Hill
Special to The Tuscaloosa News

The roster is the same. So is the goal: Make it to the NCAA Tournament.

A season ago, Alabama women’s basketball coach Kristy Curry took the Crimson Tide to places it hadn’t been in a very long time. Alabama won 20 games for the first time since 1999, beat rival Tennessee twice, finally conquered the team’s road woes and reached the WNIT quarterfinals for the first time in 15 years. It was still missing the perfect ending.

“From the moment we walked in here over 1,200 days ago the goal was to take this program back to the NCAA Tournament and it was a mess,” Curry said. “No one is criticizing that, or finding an excuse with that. But, the progress that we’ve made, I can tell you that I’m extremely proud of everyone.”

If there’s any year for Alabama to get over the hump and into the NCAA Tournament, it’s this one. Curry’s first recruiting class she signed at Alabama is one season away from moving on. Six seniors and two star transfers headline one of the deepest and most experienced teams Curry has been around in her coaching career. She knows it’s the last chance she’ll have with this group intact, and she would hate for them to come up just short of the ultimate goal.

“I want to see this team be the first team to put that NCAA Tournament on a banner because there’s not been a group of people that I’ve ever, ever been around that have worked any harder or been more committed to trying to do everything the right way,” Curry said. “It’s a mission I’m on relentlessly now for the next four months, and it has been since the moment they walked in the door.”

Along for the entire ride with Curry has been fifth-year senior Ashley Williams, a player who Curry said she could co-write a book with because of all their experience together. The forward led the Crimson Tide in rebounding last season with 5.7 per game, and has played a crucial part in building the culture that Curry hoped to establish in her first five years on the job.

“I don’t think this season is any different,” Williams said. “We still have the same group of people, and we’ll add our transfers in some SEC season. So, I think it will be the same.”

The Crimson Tide returned every player from a season ago, throwing out the need to compensate for a loss in a statistical category this preseason. In addition to all the returnees, transfers Amber Richardson and Jasmine Walker will be eligible to play for the Crimson Tide in December. Walker, a Florida State transfer, was 2016 Alabama Miss Basketball and was rated the No. 33 player in the 2016 class by ESPNW. Richardson, an N.C. State transfer, was rated the No. 9 wing and No. 72 overall recruit in the class of 2015 by ESPNW.

The wealth of experience is an ideal situation for Curry, who can push her players further towards self-improvement and away from distractions of adjusting to college life. Freshman forward Aijah Copeland is the only player who hasn’t played at the college level.

On offense, Hamah Cook and Meo Knight should once again be the Crimson Tide’s top scorers after averaging double-digit points last season. Cook, a senior, was also Alabama’s top shooter from the outside, making 35 percent of her 3-point shots.

Junior Shaquiera Wade, perhaps the most athletic player for the Crimson Tide, will likely be the Crimson Tide’s best two-way player. Wade excels at creating steals and finishing as a slasher on the offensive end. With just three juniors on the roster, she will be first in line to take over as a leader next season.

Also expected to make noticeable improvement are sophomores Ashley Knight and Jordan Lewis. Last season Knight set the Alabama single-season blocks record, finishing second in the conference in blocks per game. The 6-foot-5 sophomore struggled at the free-throw line at times, but Curry has bragged about her efforts to improve in that area this offseason.

Due to ankle injuries, it is not expected that Lewis or senior Quaniecia Bolton will play in the first game of the season against Alabama A&M. Expect senior point guard Alana Da Silva to see increased playing time in Lewis’ absence.
STARTING FROM THE BOTTOM

Season has nowhere to go but up after offseason marred by nationwide scandal that hit hard

John Marshall  Associated Press

College basketball is better than ever on the floor. Scoring is up, star players fill every corner of the country and fan support is sky high.

Off the floor, it has an image problem.

A federal probe this summer uncovered the dark underbelly of college basketball, revealing a web of bribes and kickbacks from shoe companies funneled toward recruits. The arrests of 10 people, including assistant coaches at four prominent schools, cast a shadow over the sport heading into the 2017-18 season — and likely beyond.

"It's a big egg on a lot of our faces," Utah coach Larry Krystkowiak said. "It kind of speaks for the entire entity, and we're part of it."

The federal investigation led to the arrests of assistant coaches from No. 3 Arizona, No. 10 Southern California, Oklahoma State and Auburn, along with an Adidas marketing executive. The probe has taken down No. 16 Louisville coach Rick Pitino and athletic director Tom Jurich, and more shoes could drop as the investigation digs deeper.

The teams in the crosshairs — Miami is also among them — will play with uncertainty; whether its players will remain eligible, if the investigation will reach all the way to the head coach, if NCAA sanctions are on the horizon.

The other major programs, particularly those with high-end recruits, could be looking over their shoulders all season to see if they will become ensnared.

"You have to eliminate the clutter and understand the class has to be tight," Arizona coach Sean Miller. "You have to talk to people, but only we know what happens on a daily basis in our program."

On the court, Miller has the type of team that could end his Final Four-less run. The Wildcats have a solid core of experienced players returning from last year's Elite Eight team — preseason All-American Allonzo Trier among them — to go with a stellar recruiting class, highlighted by athletic big man Deandre Ayton.

There are plenty of deep, talented teams capable of making a run to San Antonio.

Duke is the preseason No. 1 for the second consecutive season with senior Grayson Allen back and the addition of Marvin Bagley III, coach Mike Krzyzewski's latest one-and-done wonder.

Michigan State's Tom Izzo always seems to get the most out of his team in March and has plenty to work with this season, playing with a stacked deck bolstered by the return of preseason All-American Miles Bridges.

No. 4 Kansas has reloaded and is gunning for Big 12 title No. 14 in a row. So has No. 5 Kentucky, but you knew that already. Coach John Calipari is never without a roster full of future NBA players.

Defending national champion North Carolina lost a lot from a year ago, but the return of point guard Joel Berry II was huge for the Tar Heels, even if he will miss the start of the season after breaking his hand punching a door.

"We're not defending (the national championship) because it's not the same team playing against the same teams, but we're the only team that can go out and say we could do this a second year in a row," Tar Heels coach Roy Williams said.

Don't count out the mid majors, who have been major players since Butler reached consecutive Final Fours from 2010-11.

Gonzaga reached the title game a year ago and took the Tar Heels to the wire. The Zags lost a lot from that team but came in at No. 18 in the AP preseason poll and coach Mark Few has another talented group.

This year it could be Wichita State. Coach Gregg Marshall, who has spurned offers from other schools to remain in Wichita, has his entire starting five back and a stronger schedule — for NCAA Tournament seeding purposes — after the Shockers' move to the AAC.

"My job got better in terms of the profile of the league and the opportunity to get in the NCAA Tournament," Marshall said.

Don't forget about the freshman. Every year seems to bring bigger, more athletic players straight out of high school, and this season is no exception.

Bagley is 6 feet, 11 inches of do everything, making a good Duke team even better. Same thing with Ayton, though at 7-1, 260 pounds. Kentucky has five high school All-Americans.

The best of the bunch could be Missouri's Michael Porter Jr. He's 6-10, can shoot, score off the dribble, is a preseason All-American, the projected No. 1 NBA draft pick and has been compared to a young Kevin Durant. He's going to get plenty of shots in Columbia, too.

"He's long and fast and skilled, got tremendous feel, I.Q.," Florida coach Mike White said. "He's going to be a really good player."

The 2017-18 season will be filled with them. Whether they'll be enough to pull the sport from under the dark cloud hanging over it remains to be seen.
Sexton to sit out opener for Tide

Freshman point guard will serve one-game suspension

By Cecil Hurt
Sports Editor

The University of Alabama won’t be at full strength when it opens its 2017-18 men’s college basketball season against Memphis on Friday — but it will at least start with a sense of relief.

The Crimson Tide learned Thursday afternoon that freshman point guard Collin Sexton would not be eligible for the game against the Tigers but that his NCAA-imposed hiatus would last only one game and that his eligibility would then be restored in time for Tuesday’s home opener against Lipscomb.

"Collin Sexton will sit out of Friday’s season opener against Memphis to serve a one-game suspension for a violation of NCAA rules," Alabama director of athletics Greg Byrne said. "He will be eligible for competition in the team’s home opener on Tuesday versus Lipscomb. We appreciate the NCAA’s efforts to reach a timely resolution of his eligibility."

Sexton’s name appeared in connection with an ongoing FBI investigation into college basketball as the subject of a meeting between former UA administrator Kbbie Baker, a representative of a potential financial advisor and Sexton’s father. Sources indicated to The Tuscaloosa News the Sextons had to pay restitution for one meal as a condition for the players’ reinstatement.

The immediate concern for UA, despite its relief, is the fact it will be facing Memphis without four potential starters — Sexton and injured players Braxton Key (knee), Riley Norris (hip) and Ar’Mond Davis (knee) whose injury may sideline him “indefinitely,” according to UA head coach Avery Johnson.

Memphis will also be experimenting with its lineup. Only two scholarship players return to coach Tubby Smith’s Tigers, who will have 10 newcomers on the roster.

See SEXTON, C2

Alabama vs. Memphis

When: 5:30 p.m. CT
Where: Alumni Hall, Annapolis, Md.
TV: CBS Sports Network
Radio: 102.9 FM

See next page
Alabama will likely have several new faces in the playing rotation due to injuries.

Freshman guard John Petty is a likely starter and freshman swingman Herb Jones could start as well. Sophomore Dazon Ingram will be the point guard, backed up by senior Avery Johnson, Jr. On the inside, Alabama will rely on junior Donta Hall and 6-foot-10 Ohio State transfer Daniel Giddens. In last Monday’s exhibition win over UAH, Giddens led the team with 17 points, 10 rebounds and five blocked shots.

Whether we are successful or not, it won’t be for a lack of effort,” Johnson said. “We still have a lot of versatility.”

Reach Cecil Hurt at cecil@tidesports.com or 205-722-0225.
Johnson: No word from NCAA on Collin Sexton's status

By: Cecil Hurt

University of Alabama basketball coach Avery Johnson said the Crimson Tide was ready to head to Maryland on Wednesday even though it had received “no update” on the status of freshman guard Collin Sexton from the NCAA.

UA opens the 2017-18 season with a neutral site game against Memphis in Annapolis, Md., on Friday but is awaiting word on its petition to reinstate Sexton’s eligibility. Johnson also had no comment on whether Sexton would accompany the team to Maryland in anticipation of a favorable ruling on Thursday or Friday, an option that UA has considered.

“When we have an update, I will give it to you guys,” Johnson said.

Earlier in a Wednesday media session, Crimson Tide point guard Dazon Ingram noted that UA had been practicing as if Sexton would be available, but quickly added that “practice” since UA declared Sexton ineligible had consisted of only one walk through.

Johnson also said injured players Braxton Key, Riley Norris and Ar’Mond Davis would be out, indicating Key would be out for around four weeks after surgery on a torn meniscus in his left knee and that Norris might be back when Alabama plays at the Barclay’s Classic in Brooklyn, N.Y., in two weeks.

Johnson added Alabama was still optimistic going into the opener with Memphis.

“Whether we are successful or not, it won’t be for a lack of effort,” he said. “We still have a lot of versatility.

“I come from an environment (in the NBA) where you play over 100 games a year. In that environment, you never know who’s going to be available to play from game to game. So from that standpoint, this doesn’t faze us.”
'Coach Avery is a great coach': Bama's latest basketball signee raves about program's future

By: Josh Bean

What made Sacred Heart senior Diante Wood become the latest in-state basketball star to pick the Crimson Tide?

Two words: Avery Johnson.

Johnson - the former NBA point guard and head coach who's entering his third season as Alabama's basketball coach - clearly impressed Wood during the recruiting process. Wood also said the relationship he built with Alabama assistant coach Antoine Pettway, dating back to the teen's eighth-grade season, also made a big impact.

"I just like what Coach Avery is building in that program," Wood said. "He is getting a lot of top recruits to come there. And coach Pettway, I've known him since my eighth-grade year. He's been recruiting me since then."

Wood picked Alabama over Auburn, Colorado State and South Florida, and he joins an Alabama program that added two-time Mr. Basketball John Petty from Mae Jemison in Huntsville, Pelham's Alex Reese and Hale County's Herb Jones this year.

Wood said he played AAU basketball with Petty and Jones and played against suspended freshman point guard Collin Sexton last year. Wood visited Alabama last month and said he spent time with Jones.

"Herb, he basically just told me that Coach Avery is a great coach and everybody loves him and I'd love playing for him to and how I won't regret playing for him," Wood said.

Wood also considered Auburn, but essentially eliminated the Tigers after assistant coach Chuck Person's arrest and subsequent indictment in an FBI probe in college basketball corruption.

The week leading up to National Signing Day was stressful, Wood said, but he seems confident in his decision.

"When I signed, it took a weight off of my shoulders," he said.

Sacred Heart has won the last three AHSAA Class 1A championships, thanks to the presence of Wood and former teammates Kevion Nolan and D.J. Heath. Nolan and Heath graduate last year, with Nolan at Samford and Heath at Canisius, and that leaves Wood to carry a bigger burden this season.

Wood is also the two-time reigning 1A Player of the Year.

"For my senior season, I'm just trying to make history and have a four-peat," said Wood, as the Cardinals open the season Monday against Faith Christian and then play defending Class 7A
champ Mountain Brook on Tuesday. "I'm trying to get a third MVP of 1A and I'm trying to go for Mr. Basketball."

Wood can chase all those goals without worrying about recruiting. He's heading to Alabama.
UA status cloudy at the moment

One of Avery Johnson's many positives as the University of Alabama's head basketball coach has been his willingness to play a strong non-conference schedule, building his team and his team's brand simultaneously.

You have to wonder, though: would Johnson have been quite so ambitious if he had known that two of the key components of the 2017-18 Crimson Tide would be in limbo on Nov. 9 with the first challenge—a neutral site game against Memphis—just three days away? This isn't expected to be a vintage Tiger team but any club coached by Tubby Smith will be a tough out, especially when your most versatile frontline player is on crutches and one of your illustrious freshmen is still waiting (as of Tuesday night) for the NCAA to respond to Alabama's request for his reinstatement.

The situation for Braxton Key is pretty straightforward. He had surgery on a torn meniscus in his left knee on Tuesday (sharing a hospital photo via social media). Recovery times vary but it's probably fair to say that it would be a very nice Christmas present if Key could be back in action (and playing shape) in time for the SEC opener on Dec. 30. That's on top of Riley Norris' sore hip and Ar'Mond Davis ailing knee, which hasn't allowed him to practice and may keep him out indefinitely. That's a hospital list that rivals Nick Saban's linebacker roster in ailments.

The situation surrounding Collin Sexton remained more vague on Tuesday. As with any NCAA-related matter, there's a degree...
of uncertainty. That became cloudier on
Tuesday when ESPN
ran a lengthy rehash of
the Sexton case, rely-
ing largely on the federal
indictment that was
released on Sept. 29. The
ESPN story correctly
noted that the school had
declared Sexton ineli-
gible and held him out of
a Monday night exhibi-
tion game. But a link to
the story on Twitter said
"the NCAA had declared
Sexton ineligible," which
brought quick denials
from Sexton's brother
Jordan on social media
and from sources at
Alabama, who said on
Tuesday night the insti-
tution was still awaiting
word out of Indianapolis.

The effects were obvi-
ous on the court in the
UAH exhibition, with
the Crimson Tide staff
clearly having to make
adjustments to a playing
rotation that had fea-
tured Sexton and Key in
prominent practice roles.

The good news was
that some players did
step up. Daniel Giddens,
the 6-foot-10 transfer
from Ohio State, was
a factor in the paint on
both ends of the floor.
Freshman Herb Jones
showed signs of being
able to play the defen-
sive stopper role, put-
ting the squeeze on UAH
scorer Chandler Ward
in the second half.

There's no way of
knowing if Sexton will
be reinstated in time
to play Memphis.

In his absence, Dazon
Ingram has to be an
alpha dog. He seemed to
come around to that in
the second half, which
helped the flow. Also,
the Crimson Tide is
going to have to shoot
better than 14 percent
from 3-point range and
50 percent from the
foul line, regardless of
who Johnson puts on
the floor. Sexton and
Norris could help that,
but John Petty is going
to be the prime player in
that department (Alex
Reese is still developing
but that is an interesting
dimension to his game.)

Alabama isn't going
to back down, not
from Memphis or Min-
nesota or Arizona.

The talent is still there
to compete and more
could be back on the ross-
ter before long. Johnson
probably doesn't regret
diving into the deep end
of the pool -- even if the
water is a bit chillier than
expected at the moment.

Reach Cecil Hurt at
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Alabama victorious in exhibition game

UA men’s basketball defeats Alabama-Huntsville, 74-65

By Cecil Hurt
Sports Editor

The University of Alabama men’s basketball team started slowly but never grew shorter on Monday night, wearing down the Alabama-Huntsville Chargers in a 74-65 exhibition victory on Monday night.

The outcome was overshadowed by the absence of four Alabama players, three due to injury and a fourth, more notably, due to an NCAA-related issue. UA declared freshman guard Collin Sexton, whose name has been connected with an FBI investigation into college basketball corruption, ineligible and chose to hold him out of the game when it did not receive notice of his reinstatement prior to tipoff.

Alabama head coach Avery Johnson said following the game that Sexton’s status had changed “not in the last 24 hours but in the last eight hours.”

Braxton Key, Riley Norris and ArMond Davis missed the game due to injury. Johnson announced after the game that Key, a sophomore forward and one of the Crimson Tide’s top returning players, would undergo surgery for a meniscus tear in his left knee on Tuesday.

The sudden absence of Sexton and Key seemed to hamstring Alabama in the early going.

“It was a big effect to have those guys out, but we just had to play hard,” said Crimson Tide point guard Dazon Ingram. “I learned that we ain’t got no quit in us.”

The Crimson Tide overcame an early 13-point deficit thanks largely to the inside play of sophomore transfer Daniel Giddens, who scored 17 points, grabbed 10 rebounds and blocked five shots.

“I was a little jittery at first, being back out there after a year,” said Giddens who sat out as a transfer last season. “But I kept competing and things were better.”

“Some of those points we missed, at our level, those are layups,” UAH coach Lennie Acuff said. “In this game, they got blocked. The kid from Ohio State (Giddens) blocked a couple. That’s the problem we have in these games, their length. In the second half, when they were playing Giddens and (Donta) Hall, Ingram and Petty, they were huge. But I think they learned a lot from playing us and we certainly learned a lot from playing them.”

Alabama took the lead for good when an Ingram jumper with 8:38 remaining gave the Crimson Tide a 50-49 lead. UA was able to pull away slightly by the end despite making just three of 21 3-point shots and 13 of 25 free throws in

See ALABAMA, C4
ALABAMA

Continued from C1

the game.

Giddens was joined on
double figures by freshmen
Herb Jones and John Petty,
who each scored 14 points.
Avery Johnson Jr. put up 10.
UAH forward Justin Ward led
all scorers with 29 points, 24 of
those coming in the first half.

The Crimson Tide will open
its regular season in Annapo-
lis, Md. against Memphis on
Friday night as part of the
Veterans Classic. Tipoff for
that game is scheduled for 5:30
p.m. CT.

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Sexton held out of exhibition game

By Cecil Hurt
Sports Editor

University of Alabama freshman guard Collin Sexton was held out of the Crimson Tide's Monday exhibition game after being declared ineligible by the institution. Alabama head coach Avery Johnson said Monday night that the school had acted on information it had received "in the last eight hours."

Alabama applied for Sexton's reinstatement upon ruling him ineligible but had not received notice of his reinstatement on Monday and chose not to play him in the exhibition.

See Sexton, C4

Collin Sexton prepares to shoot the ball in a game against Carleton on Aug. 9, 2017. [PHOTO BY ROBERT SUTTON]

Sexton

Continued from C1

UA officials gave no reason for the decision to declare Sexton ineligible but the freshman was identified by The Tuscaloosa News as one of the players mentioned in an FBI investigation into college basketball coaches and administrators accepting illegal payments. Former Alabama associate athletic director Kobia Baker reportedly received cash from a financial adviser's representative in exchange for his influence with Sexton's family.

"The NCAA informed us late this afternoon that Colin (sic) Sexton has not had his eligibility reinstated by the NCAA," Alabama athletic director Greg Byrne said in a prepared statement on Monday.

"We don't have any further information at this time, but we will continue to cooperate with the NCAA and work toward a resolution that results in Colin's (sic) timely reinstatement.

"While we are disappointed, the right decision was to err on the side of caution for tonight's exhibition game."

Sexton, a McDonald's All-American selection and a projected 2018 NBA draft choice, was at the Monday night game but was not in uniform.

Reach Cecil Hurt at 205-722-0225 or cecil.hurt@tuscaloosanews.com.
UA soccer earns NCAA bid

For third time in program history, team will compete in NCAA soccer tournament

Zach Fidel
Special to The Tuscaloosa News

Coach Wes Hart walked into the locker room 30 minutes before the start of the selection show for the NCAA soccer tournament. He was trying to remain calm, but he couldn’t help but pace back and forth.

On Monday it was announced that the University of Alabama soccer team received a berth in the NCAA soccer tournament. The team will be playing at Clemson. The date and time has yet to be announced. This is only the third time in program history that the Crimson Tide has gotten into soccer’s big dance.

For coach Hart, he knew before the season started he knew that his team had the potential to make it to the tournament.

“We knew we had the talent going into the season that we were going to have a good shot at making the tournament,” Hart said. “But there’s so much more that goes into play. We were fortunate to end the season on a very strong note.”

When it was announced that the Crimson Tide made it to the tournament, there were no bigger cheers than from seniors like Kat Stratton and Celia Jimenez Delgado. They have waited four years for this.

“This means a lot for us and our fans. Two years ago we were literally sitting at an RPI of like 200 and to see how far we have come is amazing,” Stratton said. “To come that far in such a small amount of time is huge.”

Captain midfielder Jimenez Delgado has yearned to play in college soccer’s biggest stage. She already has World Cup experience being a part of the 2015 Spanish National Team. Jimenez Delgado said she thrilled that she will be ending her college career knowing she helped lead her team to a berth in the NCAA tournament.

“I want to play in that game so bad, I want to start preparing today,” Jimenez Delgado said. “I honestly told myself that before I graduate from Alabama, I want to make it to the NCAAs, so this is super special for me.”
ALABAMA

SI report: Tide players were paid for autographs in ’09

Allegations not expected to have any impact on ’09 title

Michael Casagrande mcasagrande@al.com

A new report from Sports Illustrated alleges Alabama football players accepted cash for autographs signed before the 2009 national title game win over Texas.

The story details how memorabilia collectors got the players to sign footballs and other items for a few hundred dollars. The amount paid to players wasn’t high — some got as little as $20 to $40, per the SI report — while others like defensive back Marquis Johnson got $200 and defensive lineman Terrence Cody got $400 to make special inscriptions, SI reported.

The story states others including quarterback Greg McElroy signed the items but didn’t accept money. In a phone interview with AL.com, Johnson denied that he ever accepted money from the memorabilia collectors.

“First and foremost,” Johnson told AL.com, “I didn’t take any money, man.”

Former Alabama defensive back Marquis Johnson denies a report he was among players who accepted money for autographs in 2009. File

Bollinger and Cliff Panezich were the two who got signatures from Alabama football players before playing Texas in the BCS title game following the 2009 season. Panezich told SI they encountered Johnson outside the dorm where Alabama players lived. He signed a few footballs, Panezich said, but wanted money for more.

Johnson said he remembers people offering money for things but he never took it.

“I would never risk my career with Alabama,” Johnson told AL.com. “I was about to get drafted man. I’m good. I was having the best year of my life. I would never jeopardize my family or my situation. That’s just not even me.”

The biggest question from the report is: Would this impact the national title win in the Rose Bowl?

According to NCAA rules, the statute of limitations for making allegations covers four years. There are exceptions including “a blatant disregard for certain fundamental rules (recruiting, extra benefits, academics, ethical conduct),” according to the NCAA website. This situation, even if proven true, does not seem to rise to this level.
FSU suspends Greek life after alcohol death

By Joe Reedy
The Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Florida State University indefinitely suspended its 55 fraternities and sororities Monday after the alcohol-related death of a freshman pledge and cocaine charges for another fraternity member.

University President John Thrasher didn’t say how long the suspension will last.

“This pause is needed to review and reflect on the loss of a young life and to implement serious changes,” Thrasher said. “For this suspension to end, there will

See GREEK, A5

In this photo taken Nov. 3, 2017, Florida State University’s Pi Kappa Phi fraternity house near the FSU campus in Tallahassee, Fla. [JOE RONDONE/TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT VIA THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]
GREEK

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need to be a new normal for Greek life on campus. They must participate in that culture."

Florida State is at least the third university this year to suspend Greek life because of alcohol-related tragedies. After the February hazing death of 19-year-old Timothy Piazza, Penn State suspended fraternities and sororities from holding social activities during the spring semester. Louisiana State had a one-month suspension and continues to ban alcohol at Greek parties after the hazing death of 18-year-old Maxwell Gruver in September.

At Florida State, Andrew Coffey, a pledge at Pi Kappa Phi, died Friday after he was found unresponsive following a party. Police said there were indicators that alcohol may have been a factor, but authorities were waiting for the results of an autopsy before determining a cause of death. Tallahassee Police Chief Michael DeLeo said they are still investigating.

On Monday, 20-year-old Garrett John Marcy, a member of Phi Delta Theta, was charged with the sale and trafficking of cocaine. Marcy was arrested by Florida State University police and booked into Leon County jail, where his bail was set at $75,000.

"I just feel like for whatever reason, the message is not getting through," Thrasher said. "Unfortunately we've got to take steps with our students, to make sure this never happens again.

Students were surprised about the announcement and were still trying to get information on how this affects their organizations going forward.

"I was very surprised that they are doing something about it. I think hazing is a problem and alcohol is the basis of a lot of their events," said Abygail Stickman.

Freshman Lila Pullo, who was supposed to be initiated into Delta Gamma sorority, did not agree with the decision to suspend all Greek organizations.

"For me and a lot of the people who are entering we're all pretty upset because we are trying to get the reputation back up," she said. "Most of the organizations getting in trouble are fraternities. If they did end Greek life the atmosphere on campus will go down a lot."

John Armstrong, who served as president of Florida State's Beta Theta Pi chapter in 1998, said he had mixed feelings about Monday's announcement.

"Unfortunately, there has been a rash of instances similar to this, so I can understand the reason for the response," Armstrong said. "I hope that it's a short-lived response."

Armstrong said there's more to fraternity life than just drinking and partying.

"It might be a good idea for people to take a step back and reflect on what values we truly want to portray in the Greek system," Armstrong said.

During the suspension, the only events Greek life members can conduct are meetings with the university or their national chapter. They also cannot have any organized participation in homecoming activities, which are scheduled for next week.

"It will be more tame and not as festive as it usually is because there are a lot of floats during the parade and competitions during the week," said Rachel Humphries, who is a Florida State student.

Students will be allowed to remain as residents in their fraternity or sorority house. Thrasher also banned alcohol at all student organization events during the suspension.