

**Sports Briefs**

By The Associated Press

**O'Donnell hurting; Lipps cut again**

PITTSBURGH — With Neil O'Donnell's elbow still hurting, Mike Tomczak said yesterday he is prepared to begin the season as the Pittsburgh Steelers' starting quarterback.

Coach Bill Cowher, who has been struggling off O'Donnell's tendinitis as nothing more than a sore arm that would be fine in a few days, also questioned if O'Donnell can heal before the Sept. 5 opener against San Francisco.

Meanwhile, the Steelers reached the NFL's 60-man roster limit by yesterday's 4 p. m. deadline by waiving nine players, including veteran wide receiver Louis Lipps for the second straight season.

Lipps, the second-leading receiver in team history with 358 receptions, also was cut last year before hooking on briefly with New Orleans. Pittsburgh re-signed him last spring to be a third-down possession receiver, but he has missed most of training camp with recurring pulled hamstrings.

"It was a tough call, but we've got

some young guys at that position who can catch the ball and who are helping on (special) teams," Cowher said.

The Steelers also released nose tackle Garry Howe, tight end Russ Campbell, linebackers Elnardo Webster and Louis Cooper, wide receivers Darrick Owens and Leslie Shepherd and cornerbacks David Hargett and Cornell Holloway.

**Philadelphia send 19 players packing**

PHILADELPHIA — Pat Beach, an 11-year veteran tight end, was among 19 players released by the Philadelphia Eagles to meet yesterday's 60-player roster limit.

"These are tough days," Eagles coach Rich Kotite said Monday. "It's tough because of the way these kids worked, the dreams they had."

"I think we gave them an opportunity. But it's the reality of this business."

The Eagles also released tight end Mike McKenzie of Baylor; wide receivers Tom Garlick of Fordham, Bill Hess of West Chester, Reggie Lawrence of North Carolina State, Aaron Turner of Pacific;

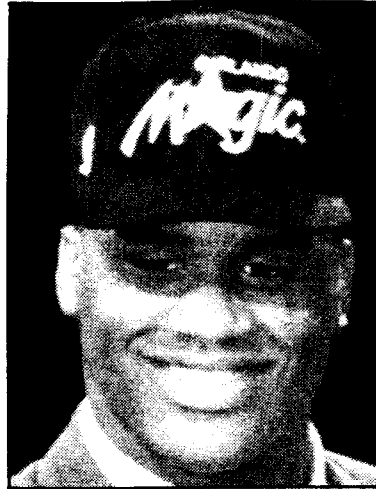
quarterback Preston Jones of Georgia; running back Aaron Emanuel of Southern California; and tackles Danny Britten of Boston College and Brandon Houston of Oklahoma.

Defensive players placed on waivers were tackles Curt Brown of North Carolina and Robert Presbury of Delaware State; cornerback Keita Crespina of Temple; linebackers Curtis Eller of Villanova and Jason Pohopek of Boston College; and strong safeties Tom Gerhart of Ohio University and David Roberts of Youngstown State.

Kicker Carl Petetti of Miami and punter Chris Schrock of Boston University also were released.

The Eagles also placed cornerback Derrick Frazier, a rookie No. 3 pick from Texas A&M, on the injured reserve list. Frazier, who suffered a torn ligament in his right knee in a July 31 exhibition game, will sit out the entire season.

The Eagles were granted a two-week roster exemption for wide receiver Fred Barnett, who signed on Saturday. Barnett is expected to be activated in time for Friday night's exhibition game in Cincinnati.



AP LaserPhoto

Shaquille O'Neal

**'Shaq' invades Japan**

TOKYO — Forget finesse. Forget subtlety. When Shaquille O'Neal met the Japanese media for the first time yesterday, the subject was breaking backboards.

And how to dunk. And just why it is that he's so big and tall.

"I've broken five backboards and fractured one," O'Neal, in Japan as part of a promotional tour for Reebok, told a standing-room-only crowd of mostly Japanese reporters. "And I plan to do it a couple more times."

The Orlando Magic center made good on that promise immediately afterward, much to the delight of a few thousand fans at Tokyo's Ariake Coliseum for the all-Japan 3-on-3 championship.

His first dunk in an exhibition game against a three-man Japanese company team proved too much for the rim, which hung limp and twisted as the crowd roared.

Officials switched the game to an adjacent court, where the rim held up for about 20 Shaq attacks. Each elicited a mass exclamation of "sugoi," or "awesome."

But if yesterday's news conference is any indication, many Japanese are still trying to get a handle on the game's finer points.

"What is the secret of dunking?" asked one reporter.

"You get over the rim and put the ball in," O'Neal replied, deadpan.

**FSU's Nance beats cancer successfully**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Six months ago, John Nance's college football career at Florida State appeared over.

Doctors feared they might have to remove Nance's collarbone to completely remove a cancerous growth in his left shoulder. He spent most of the spring undergoing radiation treatments at Shands Hospital in Gainesville after a benign tumor was removed.

On Saturday, the 262-pound senior will start at nose guard when top-ranked Florida State opens the season against Kansas in the Kickoff Classic.

"What an inspiration for us to have him back," Florida State defensive line coach Chuck Amato said.

Nance admits the illness hit him hard.

"It was very tough for me to accept," said Nance, who was sixth in tackles for the Seminoles last season with 60. "If they would've removed my collarbone, my career was over. It made me realize how quickly things can end."

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