

# SPORTS

4 | THURSDAY, JULY 15, 2010

THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

## THE LINEUP

### SPORTS ON TV

#### MLS

Seattle vs D.C. United  
8 p.m., ESPN2

#### BOOK HITS (AP)

#### NBA

### Nets hire Billy King as new GM

Billy King is the New Jersey Nets' new general manager.

King was hired Wednesday to replace Rod Thorn as the team's top executive, new owner Mikhail Prokhorov announced in a release. Contract terms were not immediately available.

"He has all of the qualities we've been looking for in a candidate: professionalism, good relations with the league, players and agents, and strong communications skills," Prokhorov said. "He will be an excellent fit with head coach Avery Johnson. Most importantly, Billy is ambitious. He wants to win. This is what I felt when I met with him and why he will be a strong addition to the Nets organization."

### Union prepares for potential lockout

Insisting that the NBA's financial projections "don't hold water," players' association executive director Billy Hunter says he's seen nothing to change his belief that a lockout is possible.

Hunter disputes economist Hunter David Stern's forecast of nearly \$400 million in losses this season, countering that the league's basketball-related revenues increased to their highest point ever in 2009-10.

The league's collective bargaining agreement expires next summer, and the sides remain far apart on talks for a new one, creating fears of the first work stoppage since 1998-99.

#### NFL

### Rogers reaches deal on gun charge

Cleveland Browns nose tackle Shaun Rogers has reached an agreement with prosecutors that could dismiss charges that he tried to carry a gun through airport security in April.

## THOUGHTS

#### NBA

### Nets regress with King hire

How do you fix a team that finished the regular season 12-70?

Apparently the New Jersey Nets think hiring one of the most inept general managers in recent memory is the fix.

Billy King ran the Sixers into the ground after the team reached the Finals in 2001. After the departure of team President Pat Croce in 2003, King took over the title of president and GM.

During his tenure he showed an inability to evaluate talent and a penchant for overpaying players (ie: Samuel Dalembert). King also traded Bruce Bowen and Larry Hughes for Toni Kukoc in 2001.

King hired bad coach after bad coach before being replaced by Ed Stefanski as the Sixers' GM in 2007.

The Sixers made the playoffs in the five season leading up to King's being named president and GM. The next four years, the team made the playoffs just once.

Good luck, Nets.

## TRIVIA

### MAJOR LEAGUE

**Q: In what year did the New York Yankees win their first World Series under George Steinbrenner?**

**Wednesday's answer:** Steven Gerrard made his Liverpool debut in 1998.

# Offense explodes in win

By Jake Kaplan  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

In his last start, Zack Von Rosenberg gave up just one run on two hits in five innings, but did not get enough run support to get his first win.

The 19-year-old State College Spikes opening day starter gave his team a similar performance Wednesday night. This time, however, they backed him up with plenty of offensive production.

The Spikes offense, coupled with another good performance by Von Rosenberg, propelled them to an 11-1 win against the Connecticut Tigers at Dodd Stadium in Norwich, Conn. It took six starts but Von Rosenberg, the 2009 sixth-round pick of the Pittsburgh Pirates, tallied his first professional win.

State College

Connecticut

State College (14-12) jumped on Tigers starting pitcher Brennan Smith early. Spikes first baseman Matt Curry and designated hitter Chase Lyles both had RBI singles in the first inning to give State College a 2-0 lead. Curry, who went 3-for-3 with two RBI in the contest, has now hit safely in each of his 11 games with State College.

Left fielder Pat Irvine helped add to the lead in the third inning with an RBI double. The next batter, third baseman Kelson Brown, singled home two more runs before catcher Miguel Mendez singled, chasing Smith from the game. Brown, who led the team with three RBI, would come around to score on a Kyle Saukko groundout before the inning was over, increasing the Spikes' lead to six.

Connecticut (13-13) got one run back in the bottom of the inning but State College scored three more in the fourth and two more in the sixth to give the Tigers a ten-run deficit they would not recover from.

The eleven State College runs



Steph Witt/Collegian

Kyle Saukko (left) connects with a pitch in a game earlier this season.

up on 13 hits would be more than enough support for Von Rosenberg, who went five innings and gave up just the one run on five hits. The 6-foot-5 right-hander mixed in five strikeouts and walked only one Tiger, improving his record to 1-4 and his ERA from 5.57 to 4.85.

Colton Cain, another 19-year-old, made his first appearance in a Spikes uniform since being called

up from the Gulf Coast League Sunday. He threw just one inning but allowed no hits and struck out two.

Casey Sadler, Teddy Fallon and Jason Townsend pitched an inning each to close out the game, combining to give up just one hit.

State College and Connecticut continue their series tonight at 7:05.

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# Baseball excited for Nebraska matchup

By Ryan Loy  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Penn State and Nebraska's baseball teams have combined for more than 6,000 games played and nearly 4,000 wins since both programs began playing more than 100 years ago.

Yet, the two programs have never faced each other on the diamond.

That should change in two seasons, when Nebraska begins competition as a member of the Big Ten.

The history the Cornhuskers have built while playing in the Big 12 has the Penn State players and coaches excited to face Nebraska and hopefully create a new rivalry.

## All-time Records

Penn State: 1,835-1,188-21  
Nebraska: 1,898-1,380-11

"Any time you get a new team that you weren't expecting, it's always fun," pitcher Ryan Ignas said.

"We like to play teams that are nationally known in the Big 12. When we went down and played Texas and Texas A&M we were pumped up."

Despite finishing 27-27 in 2010, Nebraska has been dominant during its time in the Big 12.

The Cornhuskers are second to perennial power Texas in number of Big 12 regular season and tour-

nament championships won. Nebraska has claimed three regular season and four conference tournament titles in 14 seasons of Big 12 play.

In addition to success in the Big 12, Nebraska made three appearances to the College World Series in the last decade (2001, 2002 and 2005).

With the Cornhuskers' past success in the Big 12, Nittany Lion first baseman Joey DeBernardis believes they may be a strong team in the conference once they begin play in the Big Ten.

"I definitely think they'll be up there [in the conference standings]," DeBernardis said. "They're a good team and coming from the Big 12, they've been playing good competition."

Baseball programs in the Big 12 have been generally strong in

recent seasons compared to the Big Ten.

The final NCBWA Rankings for 2010 had two Big 12 teams in the Top 25 — including No. 1 Texas — while two others received votes. No teams from the Big Ten even received votes in the poll.

Penn State pitching coach Jason Bell, who played and coached in the Big 12 at Oklahoma State, recently spoke with Nebraska assistant coach Dave Bingham.

Bell said Bingham shared the same feelings with the potential matchup as the Lions. Bingham believed Nebraska had a natural fit in the Big Ten and said the Cornhuskers were looking forward to the change.

Bell said there is no difference in the style of play between the two conferences, but he said Nebraska will have to adjust to a few differences in rules in the Big Ten.

The Lion coach mentioned the disallowance of over-signing players in the Big Ten — something that's allowed in the Big 12 — as one of the minor adjustments the Cornhuskers will face.

Over-signing allows programs to use money from potential draft picks for future scholarships before those prospects sign major league contracts.

The Cornhuskers have had their share of players advance to the professional ranks.

There are currently three Nebraska alumni in Major League Baseball and six others playing in AAA.

Former Nebraska outfielder Darin Erstad, who played professionally for the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim, Chicago White Sox and Houston Astros, was named to their coaching staff July 8.

Bell believes the rich history of Nebraska and alumni such as Erstad will help add to the reputation of Big Ten baseball.

"I think it's going to be great," Bell said. "It will do nothing but help the Big Ten as far as recognition."

"When you talk about getting more teams into regionals and getting national recognition, it's another name to lend a hand."

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Peter Tesonero/Collegian

Joey DeBernardis (right) slides into home in a game against Duquesne last season. DeBernardis and his teammates said they are eager to play Nebraska in 2011.

# Gonzalez traded to Braves in five-player deal

By Charles Odum  
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

ATLANTA -- The NL East-leading Atlanta Braves, looking to bolster their lineup for the second half of the season, acquired Alex Gonzalez in a swap of shortstops that sent Yunel Escobar to Toronto on Wednesday.

The Braves also traded left-hander Jo-Jo Reyes to the Blue Jays in the five-player deal while also adding left-handed minor league pitcher Tim Collins and minor league shortstop Tyler Pastornicky.

The 33-year-old Gonzalez is hitting .259 with 17 home runs and 50 RBIs. He is tied for fifth in the American League with 43 extra-base hits.

"He's an outstanding defensive shortstop and he's having a very

good offensive season," Braves general manager Frank Wren said. "We think he can improve our run production. He immediately leads our team in home runs."

Troy Glaus had 14 homers to lead the Braves at the All-Star break.

Escobar hit .299 with career-best totals of 14 homers and 76 RBIs last season. He has struggled this year, hitting only .238 with no homers and 19 RBIs.

"We feel that Yunel Escobar will absolutely turn it around," Toronto general manager Alex Anthopoulos said Tuesday.

"There's certainly an element of risk there, but we feel he has a very good opportunity to turn it around."

"I think if Yunel Escobar was doing what he did in the past, he's not available to us and this trade does not present itself."

Wren said Escobar could enjoy

his best years after leaving the Braves.

"He very well may," Wren said. "He's a talented guy. But for our ballclub we felt we needed to make some adjustments. It just wasn't happening here right now."

The Braves also took on more salary. Escobar is making \$435,000 this season. Gonzalez's salary is \$2.75 million; his contract includes a 2011 club option for \$2.5 million.

"Getting a guy we can control for a year and a half was important to us," Wren said.

Each shortstop is regarded as a strong defensive player.

"Alex may not be quite as flashy as Escobar, but he's an extremely solid shortstop," Wren said.

Wren said Gonzalez is expected to be with the team for Thursday night's game against Milwaukee.

"He's excited to be here and to be coming to a first-place team," Wren said.

The Braves have a four-game

lead over the New York Mets and a 4½-game lead over Philadelphia.

Atlanta outfielders Jason Heyward (thumb) and Nate McLouth (concussion) are on the disabled list. Heyward, who was voted an All-Star starter as a rookie, could return on Thursday.

"With the guys coming off the DL in the next week or so we think we have the ability to improve our ballclub and also sit back and see what our needs may be at the trade deadline," Wren said.

The Blue Jays, one game under .500, are 12½ games behind the New York Yankees in the AL East.

Anthopoulos said the Blue Jays "are not actively shopping" for players.

Reyes, 1-5 with a 5.70 ERA at Triple-A Gwinnett, has a 5-15 career record with Atlanta.

Kris Medlen's emergence as Atlanta's No. 5 starter pushed Kenshin Kawakami to the bullpen and further blocked Reyes' return.