

High Fives

Giving you a week's worth of observations to discuss amongst yourselves

1 RAFFY WHO?: My, how Rafael Palmeiro has fallen. After collecting his 3,000th career hit earlier this season, he seemingly had his ticket punched for Cooperstown, despite what some pundits said at the time. Now look at poor Raffy. Not only is he caught taking steroids, he reportedly pointed the finger at teammate Miguel Tejada as the one who possibly gave

him a tainted vitamin. If there is one thing players despise more than a cheat, it's a rat. The Orioles this week told Raffy to just leave, don't bother showing up for the rest of the season. It's hard to see any club picking up Palmeiro for next year. Effectively, his career is over. And that sound you heard? That was the door to the Hall of Fame being slammed in Raffy's face.

2 HIGH DRAMA: Nothing better than what baseball fans will be treated to in the final eight days of the regular season. With division races and wild-card spots still open, several games each day are of increasing magnitude. A base hit here, an error there, could mean the difference between the postseason and getting out the golf clubs.

3 ROAD RAGE: NASCAR officials are in a tricky position after once again drivers go ballistic during a race last weekend. Helmet-tossing isn't an official Olympic event, but Robby Gordon could win the gold. Drivers' antics make for great TV, but at the same time officials need to get serious with severe penalties before somebody gets hurt.

4 ALMOST OVER: Just eight more days, and the Royals' season of torment will be over. This franchise is in such sad shape one wonders if the club will be in Kansas City much longer, what with the fans' apathy about the team. New ownership and a new general manager would be a start in reviving the team's fortunes, but that's not going to happen.

5 VISIONARY THINKING: Former Fort Hays athlete and coach Lynn Lashbrook (see story below) has a vision for the future of sports that is right on the money. He believes those in position of power in sports should lead the way in society, not merely mirror it. Through his online course, he hopes to effect change. — R.G.

Say what?

"Just about everywhere we go, a hurricane hits. You just can't believe it. What the hell is going on? It's like a black cloud. We may not be able to play in Baton Rouge if it hits like that." — New Orleans QB Aaron Brooks, on Hurricane Rita.

"They could have done that anywhere. They could have played that game in Baton Rouge. They could have played it in San Antonio and could have done the same thing. To play it in Giants Stadium, to give them another home game and to put us in a situation where we couldn't hear... It wasn't why we lost that game, but..." — Saints coach Jim Haslett, about playing a "home" game against the Giants in New Jersey.

"Everybody wants to play well on Saturday afternoon in front of 80,000 and on national television. But when you're in the hot summer sun and when you've got a chance to eat four pizzas and you don't go, that was the thing that made an indication this guy's really going to dedicate himself." — Miami coach Larry Coker, about Miami running back Tyrone Moss. He's 16 pounds lighter; even after adding a bit more muscle mass.

"I'm smart enough, I'm not just some gladiator or some moron who's going to do something stupid. I definitely take care of my body. I want to still be able to walk my kids to school when I'm not playing football. I'm always going to be smart about it." — New York Jets running back Curtis Martin.

"I don't know how he hit it. We were all talking about it after we came into the dugout. It's like fighting Ali. You make one little mistake, and he makes you pay. You realize, at some point, Barry's going to get you." — John Patterson, Nationals pitcher, who made a good pitch to Bonds, only to see it fly over the right-field wall for Bonds' 707th career homer and fourth in four games.

"That would lead me straight to a madhouse. I'm already ready for an asylum. That's how I feel. I wish my successor lots and lots of luck!" — Zeljko Obradovic, Serbia-Montenegro basketball coach, when asked if he would stay on as head coach after the reigning world champions failed to reach the quarterfinals of the European Championship.

Sports online poll

This week's question:

- What should Royals fans hope for?
 - ✓ Owner sells team
 - ✓ General manager is fired
 - ✓ Only 99 losses next year
 - ✓ Move the franchise
 - ✓ George Brett comes out of retirement
- To vote, go to www.hd-news.net on the Internet.

Last week's question:

- Which women's volleyball team will record the most wins this year?
 - ✓ Fort Hays — 31.7 percent (19 votes)
 - ✓ Kansas State — 26.7 percent (16 votes)
 - ✓ Hays High — 18.3 percent (11 votes)
 - ✓ TMP-Marian — 11.7 percent (7 votes)
 - ✓ Colorado State — 11.7 percent (7 votes)

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Where are they now?

Lynn Lashbrook teaches business of sports

By RANDY GONZALES
HAYS DAILY NEWS

If you have a passion for sports, Lynn Lashbrook has a job for you. Lashbrook, a Tiger athlete who graduated from Fort Hays State University in 1970, later came back to teach and coach at the school.

Lashbrook has been involved in sports management for more than 30 years and is the president and founder of Sports Management Worldwide. His online courses in sports management provide the skills for those seeking a career in sports, whether it be as a sports agent, sports business management, marketing or broadcasting — you name it.

"Online is a teaching revolution," said Lashbrook, who lives in Portland, Ore., where his company is based. "Nike has done a very good job in the shoe business. We think we have a chance to be the Nike of sports leadership."

In 1993, as the movie "Jerry Maguire" hit the theaters, Lashbrook started his sports agent firm, and soon had 20 NFL clients.

"I was inspired" by the movie, Lashbrook said. "The Internet was coming in. I thought I could teach people to be sports agents."

"I started the company with that one course," Lashbrook added.

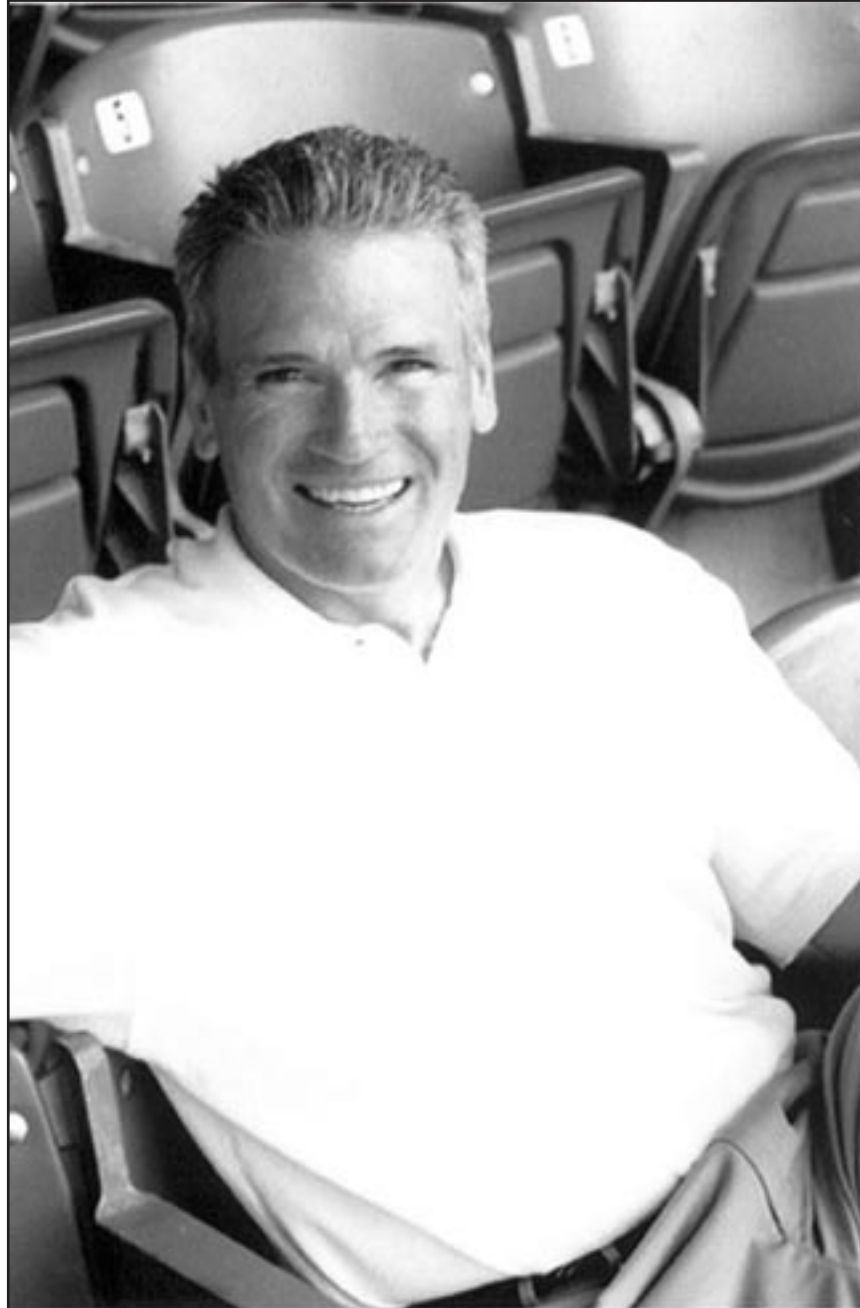
Students from around the globe take courses at SMWW, and degree credits can be earned.

"All you need is a computer," Lashbrook said. "I'm sold on online education."

Once a week during the eight-week course, students will have a live chat with fellow students, instructors and professionals in the field. For example, if you want to be involved in hockey management, ESPN's E.J. Hradek is available as an audio chat instructor. Same thing for ESPN's Rob Neyer in baseball, ESPN's Chad Ford in basketball and Brian Wheeler, the play-by-play announcer for the Portland Trail Blazers, for those interested in sports broadcasting.

SMWW's involvement doesn't end once the eight-week course has been completed. The company helps students with job placement, and has contacts with professional teams and colleges all across the country.

"We're most concerned about placement," Lashbrook said. "If you want



Courtesy photo

Former Fort Hays athlete, teacher and coach Lynn Lashbrook has his own sports management company in Portland, Ore.

to work for a sports team, (we) give you a skills set, (help) place you with a team."

The sports management side of the company is about a year old, and is growing.

"I hope we are the blueprint of sports leadership, an ethical compass," Lashbrook said.

Leadership is important to Lashbrook, who believes sports professionals at every level should seek to effect change.

"We need to say be a leader in society, not a reflection of society," Lashbrook said. "I have a chance to be a way to change the classroom. It's not about the teaching, but the learning."

Lashbrook, 56, learned his life lessons well while at Fort Hays. He arrived on campus as a 140-pound freshman from Kansas City, Kansas, but had three interceptions as a defensive back his freshman year against Southern Colorado while playing for Coach Wayne McConnell. The Tigers won the conference championship his freshman year.

"My foundation goes back to my days with Coach McConnell and Alex Francis," Lashbrook said. "I call it the Fort Hays factor: It's not where you go to school, but what you do with it."

Lashbrook said Fort Hays — spearheaded by President Edward Hammond's foray into electronic learning ahead of other institutions — is ahead of the game.

"Fort Hays is the perfect model of how to do it right in education," Lashbrook said. "I admire what (Hammond) has done as president."

While it's been seven or eight years since Lashbrook has been back to Hays, he still keeps in touch with family still in the area.

And, although it's been almost 30 years since a skinny kid from Kansas City-Wyandotte High School first arrived on campus, Lashbrook can still vividly recall coming to Hays, America.

Interstate-70 stopped at Russell back then, so Lashbrook took a two-lane road to Hays. He spotted KAYS Radio's headquarters, and thought it was a clothing store.

Just down the road, Lashbrook saw "two pillars and a cannon out front." Surely, this was Fort Hays. No, it was the gate to St. Joseph Military School.

Finally, Lashbrook made his way to the Fort Hays campus. Forsythe Library was being built, only Lashbrook thought a stadium was being erected.

Lashbrook still chuckles at the memory, then pauses.

"I think I've come a long ways," he said.

But Fort Hays, and Hays, America, will always be a part of him.

And, he learned something important early on.

"Al's Chickenette was the best place to eat."

On the net:

— www.sportsmanagementworldwide.com

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Names in the games

Wearing the 'C'

ARLINGTON, Va. (AP) — Jeff Halpern will serve as the Washington Capitals' captain, vice president and general manager George McPhee said Friday night at the team's Fan Fest event at the Ballston Common Mall.

Halpern, a Potomac, Md., native who played at Princeton, is the 12th captain in the team's 32-year history.

"Jeff has the talent, maturity and leadership to captain the Washington Capitals," McPhee said. "He carries himself well at all times and is respected by his teammates and the coaching staff. We believe he will be an excellent captain."

The 29-year-old center has 76 goals and 94 assists since joining the team in 1999.

"It's a very humbling experience," Halpern said.

Flight plans
BOSTON (AP) — No matter whether the Boston Red Sox

reach the postseason or not, David Ortiz is about to take off.

The Red Sox designated hitter, one of the leading candidates for the AL MVP award, will have an airplane named after him on Tuesday by low-fare carrier Song. The plane, a Boeing 757, will be named "Big Papi No. 34."

The carrier, an affiliate of Delta Airlines, is christening the plane in Ortiz's honor as it expands flights out of Logan Airport. Song has an affiliation with the Red Sox in which it flies patients from the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, a cancer treatment center for children, to spring training to see the team play.

Ortiz, a popular player on the defending World Series champions, was batting .300 heading into Friday night's game against Baltimore and was leading the AL with 46 homers and 140 RBIs.

Speaking Spanish
NEW YORK (AP) — Kansas City Chiefs tight end Tony Gonzalez and Hall of Famer Anthony Munoz are featured in the first

Spanish NFL spot with English subtitles.

They'll encourage young fans to play football in the public service announcement that will debut this weekend on ESPN's Sunday night and ABC's Monday night telecasts.

The commercials will also air during Sunday games in Week 4, including the San Francisco 49ers-Arizona Cardinals matchup in Mexico City.

Gonzalez led the NFL with 102 receptions last year and played in his sixth Pro Bowl. Munoz, an 11-time Pro Bowl selection, is the first player of Mexican ancestry elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame (1998).

TV gig
BURLINGTON, Vt. (AP) — The former coach of the Vermont men's basketball team is joining ESPN.

Tom Brennan said Thursday he had reached agreement on a two-year contract with ESPN to serve as a college basketball studio analyst.

Brennan will begin his new job on Dec. 7. ESPN spokesman Mike Hume said Brennan had not signed a contract, but expected the deal to be completed soon.

Brennan expects to work in the college basketball studio two days a week.

"It's going to be tremendously challenging," he told the Burlington Free Press.

Brennan retired after last season, which ended with a loss to eventual Final Four participant Michigan State in the second round of the NCAA tournament. The Cats won a school-record 25 games last year, including a third consecutive America East Conference title. They upset of Syracuse in the first round of the NCAA tournament.

Analyze this
STAMFORD, Conn. (AP) — OLN, the new cable TV home of the NHL, hired John Davidson as its lead analyst Wednesday. Davidson, a hockey broadcaster since 1983, was a goaltender for 11 seasons in the NHL, first

with the St. Louis Blues and then with the New York Rangers.

Davidson joins play-by-play announcer Mike "Doc" Emrick and studio host Bill Clement as part of the OLN team.

Double duty?
DENVER (AP) — Fresh off his game-turning touchdown in Denver's 20-17 win over San Diego, cornerback Champ Bailey said he isn't giving up on his hopes of getting into the end zone as a receiver, too.

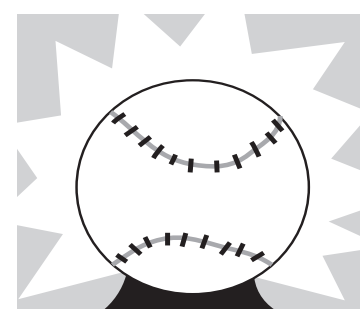
As always, Bailey was slated to get some chances on offense this season, but a hamstring injury that kept him out for much of the preseason limited his work.

But, he said, he hasn't forgotten.

"I always want to be doing it," Bailey said. "It's something I've enjoyed since I started playing football when I was seven or eight — catching the ball."

Bailey has four career catches, including one for the Broncos in the season opener against Kansas City last year.

Claire O. Voyant



Each week, the great Claire O. Voyant uses mystical skills learned among the ancients of the East — in other words from a bunch of old carnies in Florida — to predict the outcome of major events.

- The White Sox will blow the biggest lead in baseball history and fail to make the playoffs.
- The Indians will win the AL Central and be the team nobody wants to play in the postseason.
- The Yankees will have Red Sox fans on the ledge after once again winning the AL East.
- The Red Sox fans will come off the ledge after beating the White Sox in a playoff for the wild card.

- The Braves will win the NL East for what seems like the 100th straight time.
- The Cardinals, already in the playoffs, will lose in the first round.
- The Padres will be the first team with a losing record to make the playoffs, finishing 80-82.
- The Astros will win the wild card and with Clemens, Pettitte and Oswalt will be tough to beat.