Nebraska To Turn Spring Game Over To Young Players

BY ERIC OLSON AP Sports Writer

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Nebraska fans who want to get a good look at quarterback Taylor Martinez and running back Rex Burkhead better show up on time for Saturday's annual Red-White Game. The way coach Bo Pelini sounded

this week, the Cornhuskers' offensive stars and other top players might have their pads off by the second quarter.

The spring game, according to Pelini, is really about giving second- and thirdstringers an opportunity to show what they can do in front of a big crowd. About 70,000 fans are expected.

"You're going to have a lot of young guys out there who haven't been in that situation before," Pelini said. "At the end of the day, it's about execution. We're not going to be blitzing all over the place and running a bunch of intricate things offensively. We're going to be very nuts and bolts and let our guys play fast and hard and have some fun."

The spring game has evolved into an event where stars of past Huskers teams come back to see old friends and gladhand fans, and visiting recruiting prospects watch from the sideline and take in a game-day atmosphere.

Special guests are recognized on the field during breaks, and assistant coach Ron Brown leads the annual Drug Free Pledge for kids at halftime. It's basically a celebration of all

things Big Red.

The scrimmage, of course, is at the center of it all. Pelini said he'll figure out

how long it lasts based on how many plays are run in the first half. A running clock will be used at some point in the second half.

The coaching staff will divide the players evenly between the Red and White teams. A few players will rotate in and out for both teams because of personnel shortages at some positions.

"We're looking to be as basic as we possibly can be and still get a good evaluation of the guys and how they execute the base things," Pelini said.

Pelini said he hadn't made a final decision on whether to allow quarterbacks to be tackled to the ground, though he was leaning that way.

Martinez, the starter for two seasons, probably will play about one quarter. Pelini said Martinez's quick exit isn't just

to minimize the risk of injury. The coach said he wants to get a good look at top backup Brion Carnes and reserves Ron Kellogg, Tyson Broekemeier and Bronson Marsh.

The coaching staff already knows what Burkhead can do, so Ameer Abdullah and Aaron Green figure to get most of the carries before less-experienced backs enter the scrimmage.

The Huskers have been decimated by injuries on the line, but first-year coordinator John Papuchis said he's excited to see how his linebackers and secondary perform after strong spring performances.

"I hope you see tremendous effort," Papuchis said. "I hope you see a lot of energy. I hope you see guys flying to the football and trying to create turnovers,

gang tackling. Saturday's going to be a little bit vanilla for us, defensively. We're not going to call a whole bunch of our defenses that we've worked on throughout the course of spring ball. But with that being said, I want to see technique, energy and effort."

Though the players know it's a scrimmage, the atmosphere should get the competitive juices flowing, receiver Tim Marlowe said.

"Having 70,000 fans there to cheer us on and having the Tunnel Walk brings more excitement so guys will be a little more pumped up," he said. "The speed of the game will be a lot faster. It'll be fun to make some plays."

Center Cole Pensick said, "If you're a competitor, you love it."

Judge Approves Reorganization Plan For L.A. Dodgers

WILMINGTON, Del. (AP) - A bankruptcy court judge in Delaware gave his approval Friday to the Los Angeles Dodgers' plan to sell the team for \$2 billion.

U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Kevin Gross' approval of the Dodgers' reorganization plan came at the conclusion of a two-part morning and evening hearing he called a "doubleheader." The decision allows the team to exit bankruptcy.

The reorganization plan is based on Dodgers owner Frank McCourt's agreement to sell the team for \$2 billion to Guggenheim Baseball Management, a group that includes former Los Angeles Lakers star Magic Johnson. Mark Walter, chief executive officer of the financial services firm Guggenheim Partners, will become the controlling owner, and the team will be run by former Atlanta Braves president Stan Kasten.

Both Kasten and McCourt were in court Friday. The sale is set to close by April 30, the day McCourt is to make a \$131 million payment to former wife Jamie as part of their divorce

"All the organization's goals in the reorganization cases have been achieved. We look forward to returning all of our attention to Dodger baseball," the team said in a statement following the hearing.

The Dodgers entered bankruptcv in June 2011 during a bitter dispute with Major League Baseball. At the time, baseball Commissioner Bud Selig refused to approve a new TV deal with Fox Sports that the team was counting on in order to make payroll and keep the franchise sol-

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) - Ernie Bowman re-

ceived his devastating diagnosis last summer: Stage IV prostate cancer with a prognosis of two months to live. Doctors asked the former Giants infielder

whether he even wanted to undergo treatment or

On Friday, the 76-year-old Bowman arrived at

son by competing in the Midwest Regionals, held at the University of Minnesota Aquatic Center. VAST finished 23rd in the 59team small-squad division, led by third place finishes from Maddie Lavin and Madisen Martinez. Lavin's third place finish came

MINNEAPOLIS — Nine members

of the Vermillion Area Swim Team

finished the 2012 short-course sea-

in the girls' 11-12 year-old 100-yard butterfly (1:08.51). She also sev-enth place in the 500-yard freestyle and fifth in the 200-yard individual medlev

Martinez finished third in the girls' 11-12 year-old 50-yard breaststroke (33.92).

Also in the meet, Anna Van Holland set seven personal bests, highlighted by an 18th place finish in the girls' 9-10 50-yard freestyle. Kaitlin Todd finished ninth in the girls' 15-18 200 breaststroke and 11th in the 200 freestyle. Jacob

Krier finished seventh in the boys' 15-18 200 freestyle. Lexie Malimanek placed sixth in the girls' 11-12 500 freestyle, seventh on both the 200 freestyle and 100 butterfly, and eighth in the 200 individual medley.

Vermillion Swimmers Finish 23rd In Midwest Regional Also for VAST, Anna Hackemer competed in two individual events and two relays, highlighted by a personal best of 1:03.01 in the 100 freestyle. Hunter Lavin competed in two events, setting a personal best in the boys' 9-10 50 breaststroke. Kyleigh Moran set three personal bests on the weekend

> The fouresome of Martinez, Lavin, Malimanek and Van Holland claimed seventh in the girls' 12under 200 medley relay. Todd, Martinez, Moran and Hackemer finished 14th in the girls' 18-under 200 medley.

Gaylord Perry Helps Ex-Teammate With Cancer

just let things take their course.

AT&T Park for San Francisco's home opener and 50th anniversary celebration of the 1962 World Series team with a far brighter outlook — he might have 10 or more years left thanks to Hall of Famer pitcher Gaylord Perry's big assist. "I feel so good now. I'm so happy to be here," Bowman said before the Giants hosted the Pittsburgh Pirates. "I used to get as good an ovation as anybody. I love the fans here. I'm a country boy from Tennessee. It's amazing to me I even got to come to California and play in the World Series.

Softball

have a lot to offer," Klyse said.

"Their mental edge and the en-

ergy they bring is what makes

separates them from other

"That mental game is what

Menke was only in trouble

one time in the first game, when

sixth inning with a home run by

Lindsey Boyd. With two runners

on and one out, the Coyotes were

USD led off the bottom of the

unable to edge closer.

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them so good.

teams.'

Perry last fall reached out to the Baseball Assistance Team to help cover medical costs for Bowman, who played parts of three major league seasons and wound up 27 days shy of earning a full pension. Now, Bowman's monthly co-payments of nearly \$900 are covered for chemotherapy, radiation and other costs. He will have another chemo session later this month and has

Bowman played a total of 165 games for the Giants from 1961-63, finishing as a career .190 hitter with one home run, two triples and four doubles, 10 RBIs and 33 strikeouts. He also stole one base. Bowman never earned more than \$12,000 a year as a utility infielder.

Yet Perry is quick to point out, "He stopped so many line drives for me," that this is the least he could do for a longtime friend. Perry has been to visit Bowman, too.

Brees: Vitt 'Obvious Choice' To Take Over Saints

NEW ORLEANS (AP) - Drew Brees, the unquestioned leader in the New Orleans Saints' locker room, calls Joe Vitt "the obvious choice" to take over as interim head coach while Sean Payton spends the entire 2012 season serving a suspension for his role in the club's bounty system.

Vitt was suspended six games in the scandal that remains under in-Saints have not yet announced how his responsibilities will be divvied up during his absence for the first chunk

'Joe Vitt is one of the most reduring the regular season is undeniable in our locker room."

Vitt, 57, has worked in the NFL since 1979 and joined the Saints as part of Payton's very first staff in 2006. During the 2009-10 Super Bowl championship season, Brees spoke glowingly of Vitt's leadership abilities, recalling a speech during which Vitt said players and coaches who win championships together walk together forever in history, regardless of where their individual careers may take them.

"He is the obvious choice and the best choice," Brees said. "I believe I speak for our entire team when I say we believe in him as much as he believes in us.'

The Saints had consulted retired coach Bill Parcells, Payton's mentor from their days together in Dallas, while trying to figure out how to move on in Payton's absence. The club eventually decided to make the appointment from in-house, with general manager Mickey Loomis emphasizing the need for maintaining as much continuity as possible for a team seeking its fourth straight playoff appearance.



The decision gives Saints players a measure of certainty and direction as the Monday opening of the offseason training program approaches.

Safety Malcolm Jenkins said the Saints, being a veteran team, are not all that concerned about a possible lack of continuity when Vitt misses the start of the season.

"The biggest part is really (from) now all the way through training camp because that's how you're going to set the tone with our goals and how we're going to practice," Jenkins said. "Once the season starts, we'll be able to carry ourselves for a little while. ... We do a great job already with self-governing and guys stepping up and taking their leadership roles. The biggest piece is going to be Drew. There's going to be a lot on his shoulders, and the other leaders on the team because the players have to take a lot of responsibility and burden on themselves."

Receiver Lance Moore added that players like and respect Vitt not just as a coach, but as a communicator and motivator.

"He's extremely excitable and can speak to people and make them want to run through a wall for them," Moore said. "That's the fiery guy, and he gives the energy when he speaks. When he speaks, people listen. I think it's a good fit for us.

Still looming are possible punishments for between 22 and 27 current and former Saints defenders that the NFL says participated in the crunchfor-cash bounty system that disgraced former Saints defensive coordinator Gregg Williams has apologized for running for the previous three seasons. An NFL report has said the system paid off-the-books bonuses for hits on targeted players that knocked them from games or left them needing help off the field.

ners are entered to run Boston tills year. That does not necessarily mean they will all compete however. Tracy Hellman, head track coach at Augustana College, is entered to run his second Boston Marathon but will sit out because of iniury. Even though a Boston experience is almost certain to be a major highlight of any runner's career, it does not usually represent the end. Johnson is already registered to run the New York City Marathon next November and also sees more races on the horizon. Whatever happens on Monday, it will surely be an experience that the 25,000 athletes, some world-class and profession runners, others just regular citizens who enjoy the sport, will never forget.

at the University of Minnesota Aquatic Center. Qualifiers included (front) Lexie Malimanek, Hunter Lavin, Maddie Lavin, Madisen Martinez, (back) Anna Van Holland, Jacob Krier, Kaitlin Todd, Kyleigh Moran, Anna Hackemer and Head Coach Mike Moran.



vestigation by the NFL, and the

of the regular season, but Brees hardly seems bothered by that. spected coaches I have ever been around," Brees said in an email to The Associated Press on Friday. "His ability to lead this team in an uncertain time throughout this off season and for whatever term we have him

undergone eight biopsies for his inoperable can-

"Gaylord's a good man. He saved my life," said Bowman, who still lives in his native Johnson City, Tenn., about 45 minutes away from Perry's North Carolina home. "They took me on like I was a Hall of Famer. I was important to them."

Bowman is hardly a well-known former Giant like Perry or fellow Hall of Famers Willie Mays, Willie McCovey or Orlando Cepeda. The Giants lost the '62 Series in heartbreaking fashion — in the deciding Game 7 to the New York Yankees.

game, three coming to Daly.

with two outs, and two more

runs in the seventh.

NDSU padded its lead with

three runs in the sixth inning, all

Broders brought in a run for

"We didn't play too well at all,

Perry began his efforts in September, then attended the B.A.T. banquet in New York this past January and made sure Bowman was still in the mix for aid.

"We're supposed to help our fellow people out," Perry said. "I was just so blessed I knew the people who could do it. I just called and told them his story. I had to call two or three times, and it got done. This program is to make sure we don't lose anybody in the system."

the third, Brea Konz hit a 2-run single, pushing the lead to 4-0. The Coyotes got on the scoreboard in the fourth with a solo homer by Daly, one of five hits Menke surrendered in the second

> 'This year, because we're not eligible for anything, we're working on just fighting with each team and trying to win each series," Klyse said. "Right now, we're not looking too much at the big picture."

> at noon.

While NDSU is ranked No. 11 in the latest mid-major softball poll and is seeking yet another league championship, the Coyotes are still feeling their way through their first year in the Summit League.

The two teams conclude the weekend series today (Saturday)

You can follow Jeremy Hoeck on Twitter at twitter.com/jhoeck

Boston

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Mount Marty's head track and field coach Randy Fischer competed in the 1984 edition of the race, placing in the top 100 with a clocking of 2:24.

"There was a brutal head wind that day, it was not an enjoyable day to run," the former Olympic Trials qualifier with a 2:19 marathon PR said.

Also competing on Monday will be Elk Point resident Shelia Beermann, as well as former Sioux Falls Lincoln standout, Thomas Madut of Mitchell.

Madut was an All-American in the marathon at the NAIA Outdoor Track and Field Championships two years ago while competing for Dakota Wesleyan University

A total of 30 South Dakota run-

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Both of NDSU's big hits came

with two outs in an inning, both

off the bat of Cristina Borek. The

senior hit a 2-run double in the

third and added a 2-run home

run in the fifth inning — all the

more hits together," Daly said.

"Those clutch hits are big. But I

Menke struck out 10 Coyote

"What we need to do is string

support Menke would need.

batters in the 4-hitter.



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