

Jones, Golic Jr. Have Notre Dame Dads On Mind

SOUTH BEND, Ind. (AP) — Notre Dame wide receiver T.J. Jones has plenty on his mind as he prepares for the talented Alabama secondary he'll face in the BCS championship game Jan. 7 in Miami.

Still, he can't help thinking about his late father, Andre, who died in June 2011 at age 42 after suffering a brain aneurysm. The elder Jones played on Notre Dame's 1988 national championship team, and T.J. grew up hearing stories about his dad's coach, Lou Holtz. His godfather is Raghib "Rocket" Ismail, the team's star receiver and kick returner, and he stays in touch with many of his father's Fighting Irish teammates.

T.J. keeps his dad's championship

ring at home because his mother is afraid he would lose it at school. He hopes to place his own right next to it.

"Before I came here, we used to always talk about how cool it would be if we both won the national championship, especially if we won it at Notre Dame, once I committed here in high school," Jones said after practice Thursday. "So I definitely have a more personal tie-in with what it means than somebody else might."

Jones isn't the only Irish player following in his father's footsteps. He's also one of several members of the nation's top-ranked team who have overcome obstacles and setbacks to make it to college football's

biggest stage.

Last year, Mike Golic Jr., whose father was a star defensive tackle for the Irish in the early 1980s and currently co-hosts a morning talk show on ESPN, had been unable to win a starting job on the offensive line. As a graduate student this season, his hard work and determination changed that.

Golic said there were times when he struggled to go on, but his dad was always there with encouragement and advice.

"You have to stay sharp," he said his father told him. "You have to stay ready. If I wasn't ready when my number was called, then I'm letting everyone else down as well as myself."

Staying ready and being accountable for what I was responsible for in my role on the team at that point, was his message to me."

Golic said he appreciates how tough it will be to protect quarterback Everett Golson from Alabama's swarming pass rush, but he's confident.

"They're big, strong, talented college football players," Golic said. "Fortunately for us, we go against big, strong, talented guys every day in practice, on our defense. Our defense is built very similar to theirs — a lot of very talented guys, big bodies, who

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BASKETBALL | HIGH SCHOOL

'Dogs, Cavs Score Wins

Irene-Wakonda, VH Boys Record Home Victories

CREIGHTON, Neb. — Rebecca Eggerling scored 18 points as the Creighton Lady Bulldogs edged Bloomfield 52-51 in girls' basketball action Thursday night in Creighton, Neb.

Paige Mitteis and Jessica Gragert added nine points apiece for Creighton (2-5), which led 34-22 at halftime and 41-33 after three quarters.

No stats were reported for the Queen Bees (2-5), who play in the Crofton Holiday Tournament on Dec. 28-29.

Creighton hosts a tournament on Dec. 28-29

BLOOMFIELD (2-5).....	13	22	33	51
CREIGHTON (2-5).....	16	34	41	52

Bon Homme 50, Irene-Wakonda 47

WAKONDA — Bon Homme defeated Irene-Wakonda 50-47 in girls South Dakota basketball action Thursday night.

Karlee Kozak led Bon Homme (2-5) with 14 points, four steals and two assists. Selsey Sutura and Kody Kritz each had nine points in the victory.

Caitlin Hinshed led Irene-Wakonda (0-5) with 17 points and four rebounds. Kyleigh Melstad recorded eight points and three rebounds. Dana Schenk netted three points and nine rebounds.

Bon Homme will travel to Menno on Saturday. Irene-Wakonda will host Winner on Saturday.

BON HOMME (2-5).....	18	25	36	50
IRENE-WAKONDA (0-5).....	15	31	38	47

Viborg-Hurley 57, Tripp-Delmont-Armour 39

VIBORG — Abby Hora scored 22 points Thursday night to lead the Viborg-Hurley Cougars in a win against the Tripp-Delmont-Armour Nighthawks in Viborg with a score 57-39.

Angie Lee and Hannah Jorgensen each scored eight points in the win, while Val Sunderland had 10 rebounds. Hora also had five steals and Lee had seven rebounds and five assists.

For the Nighthawks, Hannah Just lead with 10 points and six steals and Kelli Betterman had nine points, seven rebounds and four assists. Rebecca Brown scored nine points and LaNae Fuerst had five rebounds.

Viborg Hurley will participate in the Parkston Classic on Friday, and Tripp-Delmont-Armour will face Mitchell Christian in Tripp on Jan. 3.

TRIPP-DELMONT-ARMOUR (0-7).....	10	21	34	39
VIBORG-HURLEY (5-1).....	15	28	41	57

Platte-Ged. 67, Freeman 48

FREEMAN — Platte-Geddes defeated Freeman 67-48 in South Dakota girls basketball action on Thursday night in Freeman.

Josie DeGroot led Platte-Geddes (4-1) with 23 points and 16 rebounds. Kelly Knudson added 14 points, 12 assists and nine rebounds.

Dina Soulek led the way for Freeman (1-3) with 26 points and six rebounds. Nicole Saare dished six assists in the loss.

Platte-Geddes will host Lennox on Jan. 3. Freeman will travel to Canistota on Friday (today).

PLATTE-GEDDES (4-1).....	19	43	53	67
FREEMAN (1-3).....	14	26	37	48

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Menno defender Christina Herrboldt, 32, pressures Clara Koerner of Freeman Academy during the first quarter of their game Thursday night in Freeman. The Lady Wolves scored a 33-24 victory, but information from the game was not reported.

JEREMY HOECK/P&D

Barea, Wolves Snap Thunder's 12-Game Streak

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — J.J. Barea ended Oklahoma City's 12-game winning streak almost all by himself.

Playing with the tenacity that made him so important to the Mavericks' run to the title two years ago, Barea scored 14 of his 18 points in the fourth quarter to lift the Minnesota Timberwolves to a 99-93 victory over the Thunder on Thursday night.

Kevin Love had 28 points, 11 rebounds and seven assists and Nikola Pekovic had 24 points and 10 rebounds for Minnesota. But it was Barea who was the key, scoring 12 straight at one point for the Wolves to hold off the team with the best record in the league.

Kevin Durant had 33 points, seven rebounds and six assists and Russell Westbrook had 30 points, 11 rebounds and nine assists for the Thunder, who had not lost a game since Nov. 23 at Boston.

That it was Barea, and not the Olympian Love or the sensation Ricky Rubio who was chiefly responsible was the biggest surprise of all.

Barea didn't join the Timberwolves until training camp had already started last season, then languished through the first injury plagued year of his career. Finally healthy, he's getting back to the super pest that helped the Dallas Mavericks to the title two

Minnesota Waives Josh Howard After He Tears ACL

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Just when Josh Howard appeared to be carving an important niche in the NBA for himself again after battling back from a torn ACL in his left knee, the 32-year-old forward is right back where he started.

The Timberwolves waived him Thursday after an MRI revealed a torn ACL in Howard's right knee. He was injured Friday at New Orleans. The team initially hoped he would be able to return this season, but as usual for these hard-

luck Wolves, the news could not have been worse.

"I feel really bad for him," coach Rick Adelman said before the Wolves hosted the Oklahoma City Thunder. "He worked so hard to bring himself back. It's just a shock."

Howard was brought in last month after Chase Budinger tore the meniscus in his left knee. He averaged 6.7 points and 3.3 rebounds in 11 games this season, emerging as a valuable defender

on the perimeter against bigger guards and small forwards.

With Howard out, Andrei Kirilenko is Adelman's only real option to guard the aggressive small forwards and shooting guards that are too big for Luke Ridnour and JJ Barea to handle. Adelman said the Wolves are looking for someone to bring in. Free agent Michael Redd, who has suffered through his own series of knee injuries in the last few years, could be an option.

He had a scintillating debut last Saturday, throwing no-look passes between his legs and looking as if he'd never left. But it's been slower going in the ensuing two games. He was a non-factor in a loss in Orlando on Monday and had trouble getting going again against the Thunder.

His handle wasn't nearly as sticky as usual and he was thwarted every time he tried to penetrate, then could be seen winning in pain after an awkward landing on a shot in the second quarter. Coach Rick Adelman immediately pulled him, but Rubio was able to return in the second half.

Playing the part of Rubio on Thursday night was Shved, the Russian rookie with the flair for the dramatic. After two rough

College: Late Three, Utah State Run Sinks South Dakota Women

LOGAN, Utah — A three-pointer by Devyn Christensen with 10 seconds left lifted Utah State past South Dakota 70-69 on Thursday at the Dee Glen Smith Spectrum.

Christensen's trey capped off a 19-4 Aggie (3-8) run over the last 5:27. She scored 11 of her 25 points during that span. Jenna Johnson added 16 points to USU's total, while Jennifer Schlott tallied 12 points.

South Dakota (5-7) lost despite a record setting 32 offensive rebounds and holding a 63-26 advantage in total rebounds. USD did not grab the rebound off a missed three-pointer by Christensen with 23 seconds left, which set up the game winning basket moments later.

Tempestt Wilson scored a season-high 18 points for the Coyotes, while Nicole Seekamp added 14 points. Margaret McCLOUD recorded her second-straight double-double with 16 points and 10 rebounds, while Lisa Loeffler grabbed a career-high 10 rebounds and added six points.

The Coyotes led by 14 points with 6:47 left in the game, but Utah State shot 8-for-11 the rest of the way and held USD to one basket over the last five minutes. The lone basket was a Wilson three-pointer with 2:27 remaining to make it 69-65.

South Dakota will next play at Boise State (5-5) on Saturday at 1 p.m.

College Men

DUKE 76, ELON 54: DURHAM, N.C. (AP) — Mason Plumlee had 21 points and 15 rebounds, and No. 1 Duke beat Elon 76-54 on Thursday night for its 100th straight nonconference win at Cameron Indoor Stadium.

Ryan Kelly added 14 points, freshman Rasheed Sulaimon had 13 and Tyler Thornton hit a pair of key 3-pointers 30 seconds apart that helped the Blue Devils (11-0) pull away.

Playing on back-to-back nights, Duke counted on its defense to pick up an offense that was off on more open shots than usual. Duke shot 43 percent but forced 17 turnovers and turned them into 19 points while holding the Phoenix to just five offensive rebounds.

No. 2 MICHIGAN 93, EASTERN MICHIGAN 54: ANN ARBOR, Mich. (AP) — Tim Hardaway Jr. had 17 points and a career-high seven assists to help Michigan rout Eastern Michigan.

The Wolverines (12-0) are off to their best start since winning the first 16 games of the 1985-86 season.

The Eagles (6-4) have lost two straight since beating Purdue.

VALPARAISO 89, IUPUI 69: VALPARAISO, Ind. (AP) — Ryan Broekhoff scored 17 points, leading five players in double figures, to help Valparaiso beat IUPUI 89-69 on Thursday night.

Broekhoff had nine rebounds, one shy of a double-double. Matt Kenney had 15 points and six assists. Kevin Van Wijk had 15 points. Ben Boggs had 12 and Bobby Capobianco had 10.

Valparaiso led 40-38 at halftime. Valparaiso (8-4) shot 50 percent from the field for the game, while the Jaguars shot 45 percent. The Crusaders had 23 points off IUPUI turnovers.

John Hart led the Jaguars (4-10) with 18 points. Donovan Gibbs had 11 points and seven rebounds. Greg Rice had 11 points, and Ian Chiles added 10.

WALSH | PAGE 9A



CARLOS GONZALEZ/MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE/MCT
Minnesota Vikings kicker Blair Walsh (3) celebrates after making a field goal in the third quarter at the Edward Jones Dome, last Sunday in St. Louis, Mo. The Minnesota Vikings defeated the St. Louis Rams, 36-22.

Walsh Kicking Up A Storm In Minnesota

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. (AP) — Adrian Peterson has been a threat to score from anywhere on the field this season, the kind of performance that makes a fan hold his breath every time he touches the ball.

Blair Walsh hasn't been quite that dynamic. But as soon as the Minnesota Vikings cross mid-field, they know they're in his range. And the rookie kicker has been so good that no breath holding has been necessary.

Walsh was named NFC special teams player of the week on Wednesday after he kicked five field goals, including three of 50 yards or more, in a victory over the Rams. He hit from 50, 53 and 51 yards to tie an NFL record for most field goals of at least 50 yards in one game.

"I love him," Peterson said. "Ever since training camp, I've seen him kick a 60-yard field goal. Maybe 65, 70 (in practice). I mean, this kid is pretty good. He's been big for us all season. Whenever it's 50-plus, I'm thinking, 'It's good.'"

That's a lot of faith to have in a kicker who struggled as a senior at Georgia. But the Vikings saw some mechanical issues that they thought they could fix, so they invested a sixth-round draft choice in Walsh and then said goodbye to rock-solid veteran Ryan Longwell in favor of the unproven rookie.

It's hard to imagine it turning out much better. Walsh is 29 for 32 on field goals this season, including a perfect eight for eight on kicks of 50 yards or longer, which is an NFL record. His 117 points are a franchise record for a rookie, surpassing Randy Moss's brilliant first year in 1998. His 47 touchbacks also are a franchise record and the fourth-best total in the NFL this season.

"I don't have time to reflect on it or look back," Walsh said with a shrug. "I'm a firm believer that if you get too high on yourself you're going to set yourself up for a hard fall."

The Vikings have relied almost exclusively on Peterson to move the ball on offense this season. Their pass offense is ranked last in the league and quarterback Christian Ponder has had an incredibly difficult time making big plays through the air. When the offense sputters, as it often has, Walsh has been there to bail them out time and again.

His latest rescue job came at the expense of his more celebrated rookie classmate Greg Zuerlein. He doesn't have a cool nickname like Zuerlein's "Legatron" — Blairwolf is the closest he's come to liking a suggestion. But he certainly has the leg. Walsh drilled kick after kick, including a 51-yarder with 5:31 to play that essentially ended any hope of a Rams comeback.

"It's unbelievable," Ponder said on Wednesday.