

Penn State’s Paterno Pulled Into Scandal

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) — Time and again, questions about an alleged cover-up of a sex abuse scandal at Penn State, circled back to one name: Joe Paterno.

Major college football’s oldest, winningest and perhaps most revered coach, was engulfed Monday in a growing furor involving former defensive coordinator and one-time heir apparent Jerry Sandusky, who was indicted on charges of sexually abusing eight boys over 15 years.

The Pennsylvania state police commissioner said Paterno fulfilled his legal requirement when he relayed to university administrators that a graduate assistant had seen Sandusky attacking a young boy in the team’s locker room shower in 2002. But the commissioner also questioned whether Paterno had a moral responsibility to do more.

On the Happy Valley campus and in the surrounding town of State College, some were even asking whether the 84-year-old coach should step down after 46 seasons on the sidelines.

Two Penn State officials, Senior Vice President Gary Schultz and Athletic Director Tim Curley, surrendered on charges that they failed to alert police to the complaint about Sandusky.

Defiant Carlos The Jackal On Trial In France

PARIS (AP) — A defiant and smiling Carlos the Jackal, one of the most dreaded terror masterminds of the Cold War, has gone on trial again — this time over four deadly attacks in France nearly three decades ago.

The 62-year-old Venezuelan, whose real name is Ilich Ramirez Sanchez, went before a special Paris court on terrorism-linked charges Monday. He is already serving a life sentence handed down for a triple murder in 1975.

Ramirez, who sowed fear across Western European and Middle Eastern capitals during the Cold War, is charged with instigating four attacks in 1982 and 1983 that killed 11 people and injured more than 140 others in France.

He has denied any role in the attacks. The trial is expected to last six weeks, and if convicted, Ramirez could face a second life sentence — the top penalty in France, which does not have the death penalty.

Wearing a blue jacket, graying beard and wavy hair brushed back, Ramirez smiled as he entered and then identified himself to the court as “a professional revolutionary” — striking a combative pose from the outset.

Elections May Be Test Of Electorate’s Mood

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Votes on immigration, union rights and President Obama’s health care law could hold hints of the American public’s mindset, four years into an economic downturn and one year from the presidential election.

Tuesday’s elections also include governors’ races in Mississippi and Kentucky that will point to political prospects for 2012, when an additional 10 governorships will be contested. In both states, the governors’ offices are expected to stay in the hands of incumbent parties, perhaps indicating that voters aren’t ready to abandon their loyalties.

But regardless of the ballot questions and key political races, most experts agree the most important factor in 2012 remains the stubbornly weak economy.

“If the economy were to turn around in the next year, that’s going to matter a lot more than what happens in ballot issues,” said political analyst Justin Buchler.

Lawmakers have tried to tie other issues, such as public employees’ union rights, to their states’ economic struggles.

Modest Economic Bill Clears Hurdle In Senate

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate voted overwhelmingly Monday to temporarily set aside its partisan standoff over President Barack Obama’s jobs plan and move toward giving a modest economic spark to two potent interest groups: veterans and businesses.

In a 94-1 roll call, senators voted to start debating a measure repealing a requirement that federal, state and many local governments withhold 3 percent of their payments to contractors. That bill has been lobbied by a wide swath of industry groups large and small and has no significant opposition.

By the time the Senate approves the legislation — perhaps later this week — Democrats planned to add language backed by both parties offering tax breaks to companies that hire veterans and providing vets with employment counseling and other job-hunting services.

Monday’s one-sided vote signaled that barring an unexpected twist, the Senate was likely to send the overall measure to the House, which returns from a recess next week.

The tax credits, up to \$9,600 for companies hiring disabled veterans who have been jobless at least six months, would represent the first — though tiny — piece of Obama’s \$447 billion jobs proposal to be approved by Congress, assuming Senate and then House passage.

Ex-Official Warns Of Cyber Weaknesses

WASHINGTON (AP) — America’s critical computer networks are so vulnerable to attack that it should deter U.S. leaders from going to war with other nations, a former top U.S. cybersecurity official said Monday.

Richard Clarke, a top adviser to three presidents, joined a number of U.S. military and civilian experts in offering a dire assessment of America’s cybersecurity at a conference, saying the country simply can’t protect its critical networks.

Clarke said if he was advising the president he would warn against attacking other countries because so many of them — including China, North Korea, Iran and Russia — could retaliate by launching devastating cyberattacks that could destroy power grids, banking networks or transportation systems.

The U.S. military, he said, is entirely dependent on computer systems and could end up in a future conflict in which troops trot out onto a battlefield “and nothing works.”

Clarke said a good national security adviser would tell the president that the U.S. might be able to blow up a nuclear plant somewhere, or a terrorist training center somewhere, but a number of countries could strike back with a cyberattack and “the entire us economic system could be crashed in retaliation ... because we can’t defend it today.”

Another Woman Accuses Cain

BY BETH FOUHY AND JACK GILLUM
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Leaving little to the imagination, a Chicago-area woman on Monday accused Republican presidential hopeful Herman Cain of making a crude sexual advance more than a decade ago when she was seeking his help finding a job.

“Come clean,” Sharon Bialek challenged Cain at a news conference in New York at which she described herself as “a face and a voice” to support other accusers who have so far remained anonymous.

Cain’s campaign swiftly denied Bialek’s account. “All allegations of harassment against Mr. Cain are completely false,” it said in a written statement.

Even so, Bialek’s nationally broadcast appearance on cable television marked a new and — for Cain — dangerous turn in a controversy that he has struggled for more than a week to shed. An upstart in the presidential race, Cain shot to the top of public opinion

polls in recent weeks and emerged, however temporarily, as the main conservative challenger to Mitt Romney.

Accompanied by her prominent lawyer, Gloria Allred, Bialek accused Cain of making a sexual advance one night in mid-July 1997, when she had travelled to Washington to have dinner with him in hopes he could help her find work.

She said the two had finished dinner and were in a car for what she thought was a ride to an office building.

“Instead of going into the offices he suddenly reached over and he put his hand on my leg, under my skirt toward my genitals,” she said.

“He also pushed my head toward his crotch,” she added.

Bialek said she told her boyfriend, an unidentified pediatrician, as well as a longtime male friend about the episode.

None of Cain’s other accusers has provided details as graphic as Bialek’s account. But Joel Bennett, an attorney who represents one of them, said her details were “similar in nature”

to what his client encountered.

Allred, a prominent sex discrimination attorney with Democratic ties, moved preemptively to blunt any attacks on Bialek’s motives. She described her client as a registered Republican, a single mother and a woman with a long and successful work history.

She also said Bialek “could have attempted to sell her story but chose not to do so,” and knew that by stepping forward, she would receive scrutiny.

Court records indicate Bialek had financial difficulties a decade ago when she filed for bankruptcy protection and reported \$4,500 in unpaid rent and \$13,000 in outstanding credit card bills.

Current property records show she owns a house on an acre of land in a Chicago suburb.

Some of Cain’s allies immediately made a target of Allred, a Democratic campaign donor, rather than focusing any anger on Cain’s accuser.

Georgia state Sen. Joshua McKoon, who has endorsed Cain, accused Allred of “carnival theatrics” fueled by a partisan agenda.

Jury Convicts Jackson Doctor

BY LINDA DEUTSCH
AP Special Correspondent

LOS ANGELES — Michael Jackson’s doctor was convicted Monday of involuntary manslaughter in the pop star’s death for supplying an insomnia-plagued Jackson with a powerful operating-room anesthetic to help him sleep as he rehearsed for his big comeback.

Dr. Conrad Murray sat stone-faced, his chin held high, as he heard the verdict that could send him to prison for up to four years and cost him his license to practice medicine. He was handcuffed and immediately led off to jail without bail to await sentencing Nov. 29.

The verdict marked the latest chapter in one of pop culture’s most shocking tragedies — the 2009 drug-overdose death of the King of Pop at age 50 as he was about to mount a series of heavily promoted concerts in London that he hoped would turn his career around after a slide prompted by child-molestation allegations and years of bizarre behavior.

A shriek broke the silence in the packed courtroom when the jury’s decision was read, and the crowd outside the courthouse erupted in cheers. Jubilant Jackson fans sang “Beat It” and held signs that read “Guilty” and “Killer.” Drivers honked their horns.

Members of Jackson’s family wept, and his mother, Katherine Jackson, said, “I feel better now.” His sister La Toya said she was overjoyed and added: “Michael was looking over us.”

Members of the jury were escorted from the building and not



MARK BOSTER/LOS ANGELES TIMES/MCT
Michael Jackson supporters square off with Conrad Murray supporter Willie Hampton, left, on the sidewalk outside of the Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center Monday where jurors are deliberating the involuntary manslaughter charges against Dr. Conrad Murray.

available for comment.

Defense attorney Ed Chernoff said later in the day the verdict was a disappointment and would be appealed. Asked how Murray took the verdict, Chernoff said, “he’s a pretty strong guy.”

Regarding Murray’s future, he said, “the keys to his handcuffs belong to the judge. We certainly would like to do anything we can to keep him from going to prison.”

The jury deliberated less than nine hours after a six-week trial that depicted Jackson as a tormented genius on the brink of what might have been his greatest triumph but for one impediment — extreme insomnia.

Jackson’s death marked the end of an incredible rise to fame from his humble beginnings in Gary, Ind. The tiny powerhouse singer and dancer with the magnetic smile enchanted audiences and elevated the Jackson Five to the top of the pop music world.

As a solo adult act, the self-anointed King of Pop sold out concerts and topped the recording charts with albums such as 1982’s “Thriller,” which remains the biggest-selling album of all time, with more than 100 million copies sold worldwide.

Consumer Borrowing Up In Sept.

WASHINGTON (AP) — Americans borrowed more in September to buy cars and attend college, but they charged less to their credit cards for a third straight month. The figures suggest that consumers are growing more cautious about taking on high-interest debt in a weak economy.

Total consumer borrowing rose by \$7.4 billion in September, the Federal Reserve said Monday. In August, it had fallen by the most in 16 months.

The September increase reflected a 5.8 percent increase in borrowing in the category that includes car and student loans. But the category that covers credit card purchases dropped 1 percent after larger declines in July and August.

Credit card use has sunk

nearly 19 percent since September 2008, the height of the financial crisis. For many consumers, adding debt with high interest rates is too risky when jobs are scarce, pay raises are few and unemployment has been stuck near 9 percent for more than two years.

“Households continue to prefer cash over credit as employment, income and wealth prospects remain feeble,” said Gregory Daco, principal U.S. economist at IHS Global Insight.

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