

SPORTS

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BASEBALL 3C • HOCKEY 4C • HIGH SCHOOLS 5-6C

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MLB PLAYOFFS

Beckett lifts BoSox

■ Boston's ace runs his postseason scoreless streak to 18 innings.

By Jimmy Golen
The Associated Press

BOSTON — Josh Beckett is Mr. Zero when October rolls around.

The MVP of the 2003 World Series pitched his second consecutive postseason shutout and, backed by a home run from David Ortiz, led the Boston Red Sox over the Los Angeles Angels 4-0 Wednesday night in their AL playoff opener.

INSIDE

■ Francis, Beckett retired 19 consecutive batters after a leadoff single, allowed just four hits and ran his post-season scoreless streak to 18 innings. The last time he pitched on such a stage, he blanked the New York Yankees to clinch the '03 Series for Florida.

Rockies beat Phillies in Game 1, Page 4C

The previous pitcher with consecutive postseason shutouts was current teammate Curt Schilling, who accomplished the feat with the Phillies in 1993 and Arizona in 2001. Christy Mathewson is the only pitcher with four postseason shutouts; Beckett tied Whitey Ford and Mordecai Brown with three.

"I was ahead of a lot of guys," Beckett said. "They've got a lot of guys, those guys that foul a lot of pitches off and I just didn't want to get wrapped up in trying to strike a lot of guys out, because those are the at-bats that end up killing your pitch count and you're out after 5-1-3 because you've got 120 pitches."

Ortiz, who eliminated the Angels with a 10th-inning, series-ending homer in the first round of the 2004 playoffs, homered off John Lackey. Kevin Youkilis set the tone with a homer in the first inning against the Angels ace.

The victory was Boston's seventh straight in the postseason over the California-Anaheim-Los Angeles Angels, having come back from a 3-1 deficit to win in the 1986 AL playoffs and then sweeping them in the 2004 best-of-five first round.

See **RED SOX**, Page 3C



AP photo

Red Sox pitcher Josh Beckett retired 19 consecutive batters after a leadoff single in Boston's 4-0 win over the Angels.

SCHEDULE

Boston leads 1-0

Friday

■ Los Angeles (Escobar 18-7) at Boston (Matsuzaka 15-12), 8:37 p.m.

Sunday

■ Boston (Schilling 9-8) at Los Angeles (Weaver 13-7), 3:07 p.m.

Monday

■ Boston (Beckett 20-7) at Los Angeles (Lackey 19-9), 9:37 p.m., if necessary

Wednesday, Oct. 10

■ Los Angeles (Escobar 18-7) at Boston (Matsuzaka 15-12), 8:37 p.m., if necessary

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL



Staff photo by Cindy Burnham

Mister Nance, a running back at Terry Sanford, was given his name so that he would always be given respect, his dad said. More, Page 6C

NAME GAME

Interesting monikers abound for Cumberland County's football players

By Michael N. Graff
Staff writer

Turn it up, DeeJay Parker. Here's to guys like you, whose names stand out in a field of nearly 500 Cumberland County football players.

They come in all sizes, short and long. Some, like Marq Morrissey-Adams and Kimani Bethune-Jones, come in three-for-two packs, thanks to hyphens. Now that's a value.

They even come in colors, like Derrick Green and Chris Gray.

Seventeen have two one-syllable names. It's so easy to say Sean Small, Chris Jones, Ken Short, Doug Vann, Kris Smith, Chris Gray, Chase Sapp, Tim Hobbs, James Dove, James Smith, John Hall, Ben Bell, Mike Marsh, Ben Neill, Trey Fields, Sam Laing and Joe Bush.

Then there's Monterio Rosanado of Gray's Creek. That's eight syllables and a cloud of dust.



While we're on the matter of the English language, c'mon over to E.E. Smith, where T'vell Villarreal and M'jipa Rosenberry are making apostrophes cool again. Just ask Te'velle

Williams at Pine Forest and D'Angelo Taylor at Terry Sanford.

There are dozens of Mikes and Johns and Jims, and even five Xaviers in the county.

But there's only one Gary Riggins. Not to be confused with Anthony Riggins. Neither has ever played for the Redskins.

Well, wait, maybe there are some celebrity ties here. Think Brett Simpson could be Bart's cousin?

Hold your britches, Levi Sparks. We'll get to you.

These kids are our future. Imagine the careers you can choose, Carlos Nurse. Or the places you can go, Tremale France.

Yes, there are so many great names around. But they grow up so fast. Joey Short is 6 feet tall. And Douglas Young is a senior this year. Sniffle. Sniffle.

But cheer up, Demontay Blue, the season's still young. Jordan Pleasant seems to be quite upbeat.

With good-hearted guys like Al Loving and Matt Truelove around, who can hold hate this football season?

INSIDE: The five best names in the region, Page 6C

NHL

Canes will be better served by looking ahead

RALEIGH — The big X painted at center ice of the RBC Center this season is there to commemorate the Carolina Hurricanes' 10th anniversary in the Tar Heel state.

INSIDE ■ Canadiens As noteworthy an accomplishment as that is, especially considering the team's awkward beginnings those first two seasons in Greensboro, it is quickly put into perspective by one line of small print on the cover of the Montreal Canadiens' media guide.



BRETT FRIEDLANDER

"One hundred years of history: 1909-2009," it reads. That's a pretty fair head start, even if you factor in the 18 seasons the franchise spent in Hartford as the Whalers before moving south.

So instead of looking backward at a history so comparatively short that a person with amnesia can still

remember it, the Hurricanes and their fans might be better served turning their attention ahead toward the future.

That means putting away all the old highlights that were dusted off and replayed on the scoreboard before and during their 2007-08 season opener against the Canadiens on Wednesday. Yes, even those joyous clips of captain Rod Brind'Amour triumphantly holding the Stanley Cup above his head.

The Hurricanes did enough re-living of that great moment last season and you see where

See **FRIEDLANDER**, Page 3C



AP photo

Goalie Cam Ward, left, and the Carolina Hurricanes opened their 10th anniversary season with an overtime loss Wednesday to the Canadiens.

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL NAME GAME

Constance Allen had been searching for a name throughout the first eight months of her pregnancy. But nothing sounded right.

Then, she sat down one afternoon 17 years ago with her husband to watch football.

Running up and down the field was a Los Angeles Raiders superstar named Allen — Marcus Allen.

"I knew nothing of football," Constance said. "I was just watching TV pregnant. And I needed a name."

HELLO
my name is
Marcus Allen
Running back, Pine Forest

breakthrough season at running back for the Pine Forest Trojans.

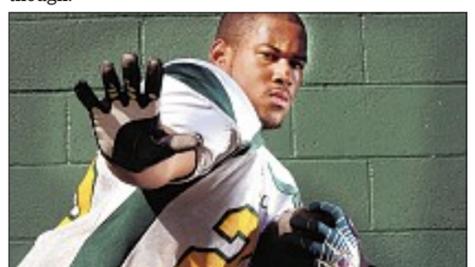
The young Allen had 321 yards and four touchdowns before an ankle injury sidelined him last week. He's following the lead of his father, Michael Sr., and brother, Michael Jr., who also played at Pine Forest.

At 6-foot-1, 220 pounds, he's about the same size as the Hall of Famer, who was 6-2, 210.

This Allen is too young to remember the playing days of the other Allen — who won the Heisman at Southern Cal in 1981 and retired from the NFL in 1997.

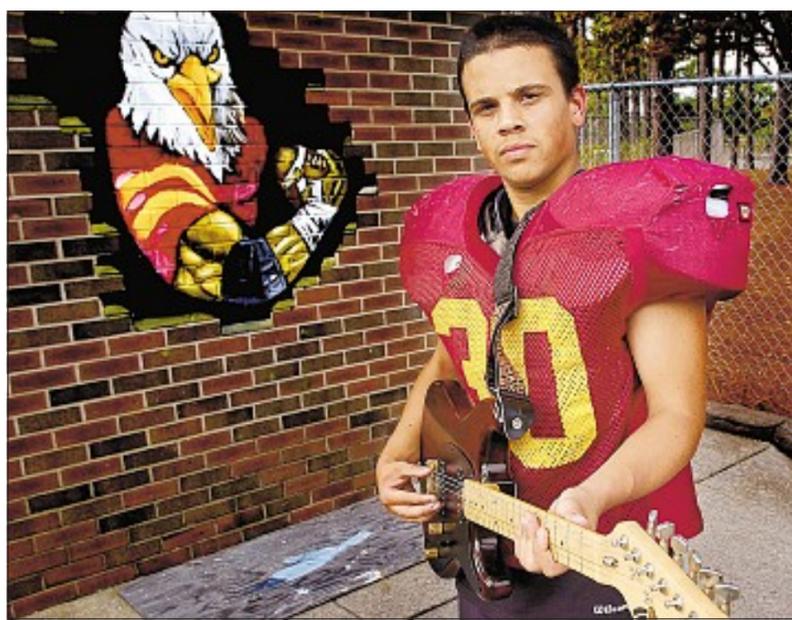
Still, if the kid had to pick a sports hero, he most certainly would pick Marcus Allen, right?

Not exactly. "LaDainian Tomlinson," the young Marcus Allen says, laughing. "I've heard about Marcus Allen, though."



Staff photo by Marc Hall

Pine Forest running back Marcus Allen



Staff photo by Cindy Burnham

Douglas Byrd linebacker Chris Vanhalen's favorite Van Halen song is 'Panama.'

Surely it's just coincidence, right? Chris Vanhalen. No way he has any ties to that "Runnin' with the Devil" crowd of rockstars.

Not exactly. Several years ago, Chris' dad, then Franklin V. Halex, was living in Arizona. He'd been a Van Halen fan as long as he could remember.

He was so crazy about the band, his friends thought he should make a personal statement.

"If you like Van Halen so much, why don't you just change your name?" they'd say.

So, Franklin thought about it. "I just said, 'If they let me do it, I'll do it,'" he said. "And they did."

He went through a legal name change.

HELLO
my name is
Chris Vanhalen
Linebacker, Douglas Byrd

Franklin V. Halex became Franklin Vanhalen.

Naturally, he passed the name to his son, Chris.

The son is not nearly as wild about the band as his father, but he's coming around.

"Yeah, I listen to 'em," said Chris, who plays at Douglas Byrd. "My favorite song is 'Panama.'"

Franklin's adoration for Van Halen started in the early 1980s, when he was living in Germany. He says he actually met David Lee Roth after a Monsters of Rock concert.

"I knew one of the roadies who worked for different bands," Franklin said. "I hung out with them and Motley Crue."

Here's something you never expected to see in this newspaper: Thomas Pope doesn't watch racing. Doesn't care much for it. He'd prefer a long day of practicing football over a short one watching those boring cars go around in circles.

That's right. Boring circles.

Before all the high-octane engines in the region start putting out and leaking tears, maybe this is a good time to clarify.

Thomas Pope is a senior quarterback at Clinton High School.

The other Thomas Pope — the one's who's covered racin' for nearly 30 years at The Fayetteville Observer — still believes a long Saturday night of gear-grinding is good for the soul.

Thomas Pope — the Clinton quarterback — never caught the bug.

"It's OK, I guess," he says. "But it's not one of my things that I get into."

The T.P.'s met for the first time after a Clinton game during the quarterback's sophomore season.

The reporter approached the player needing a quote. "Thomas Pope, I'm Thomas Pope," the reporter said. "Gotta minute for a couple questions?"

"I said, 'What? Excuse me?'" the quarterback said. "It was kind of weird."

HELLO
my name is
Thomas Pope
Quarterback, Clinton



Staff photo by Raul R. Rubiera

Thomas Pope the reporter (left) trades places with Thomas Pope the football player.

HELLO
my name is
Mister Nance
Running back, Terry Sanford



Staff photo by David Smith
Cape Fear's Jordan Beckham is a two-sport star.

Call him Mr., Mister. You will always address Terry Sanford's fullback properly, by gosh, even if that's not your intention.

That's exactly what his parents wanted when they named their son 17 years ago.

"His father told me, 'This is going to be our last child and if it's a boy I want to name him Mister,'" said Mister's mom, Amanda, recalling the conversa-

tion with Aaron. "I said, 'Why Mister?' He said, 'Because they're going to always have to give him respect.'"

Fair enough.

At 6-foot-2 and 210 pounds, Nance is a respectable figure on the field, too. He has gained 251 yards and three touchdowns already in 2007.

The only other place Nance has seen



the name is in The Color Purple, in which the main character, Celie, is married to a man she calls "Mister."

His real name is Albert, though.

In Nance's case, Mister means Mister. His full name is Mister Brandon Nance. He thought about going by Brandon growing up.

"But my friends started calling me by my first name," he said. "And I stuck with it."

Nance says, for now, he doesn't intend to be a teacher when he grows up — not even to get the thrill from hearing the double-meaning in his name at work every day.

Would they be calling him Mr. Nance? Or, Mister Nance?

Would it matter?

Must be tough to be a Beckham these days. The constant questions. People staring and wanting to talk. All you do is a kick a ball.

Yes, Jordan Beckham — what, you were expecting David? — has it rough out at Cape Fear High School.

"Are you related to David? Ha ha," friends will laugh. "It gets a little old," Jordan says. "But it's OK."

Jordan is only adding to his troubles by being a standout player on Cape Fear's soccer team.

Lately, though, he's finding a way to stand apart. He's become one of the area's best football kickers.

Jordan leads the Cape Fear region in field goals with five — including two longer than 40 yards.

Jordan, who has been playing soccer since he was 4, started kicking for the football team last year. He immediately fell in love with it.

HELLO
my name is
Jordan Beckham,
Kicker, Cape Fear

In fact, he has news that will shock anybody who mistakes football with futbol.

"I actually like football better," the junior says. "I think I have a better chance (at a college scholarship) in football."

Even if football does carry him to college, Jordan suspects he'll always hear snickers, as long as David Beckham is a cultural icon.

It could be worse. "He's really good. It's been great since he came over here," Jordan says of David. "He's definitely the best player in the U.S."

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InBrief

HOCKEY
Antz sign two
The Fayetteville FireAntz announced the signing of two defensemen on Wednesday. Mark Cole, 28, is a four-year veteran who split last season between Odessa and Memphis of the Central Hockey League, where he combined for two goals, 13 assists and 80 penalty minutes. The 6-foot-1, 204-pound New York native played the previous three seasons with the FireAntz's Southern Professional Hockey League rival Huntsville. Janne Saarenpaa, 25, is a 5-11, 180-pound Swede who played 30 games last season for Grums IK of his country's Division I league. He had one goal and 110 penalty minutes. This will be his fifth professional season. ■ **A suburban St. Louis high school hockey player collapsed** on the ice during practice and died later at a hospital. Adam Litteken, 16, and his Francis Howell Central teammates were warming up for practice Tuesday night at the Rec-Plex rink in St. Charles County when he collapsed, school officials said Wednesday.

MOTOR SPORTS
Franchitti makes it official
CONCORD — Dario Franchitti made his switch to NASCAR official Wednesday, signing a multiyear deal with Chip Ganassi Racing. The reigning Indianapolis 500 and IndyCar champion will replace David Stremme in the No. 40 Dodge beginning in 2008. ■ **Haas CNC Racing** announced today that the team has signed Scott Riggs for the 2008 Sprint Cup season. The car Riggs will drive next season (No. 66 or No. 70) will be determined at a later date. ■ **Earl Pearson Jr. of Jacksonville, Fla.,** has been declared the champion of the Lucas Oil Late Model Dirt Series after the final two events on the schedule were canceled. This weekend's races in Rome, Ga., and Woodstock,

Ga., were dropped after the tracks' promoter, Mike Swims, died Friday after a seven-year bout with cancer. Pearson finished the season with 5,555 points, 230 more than Scott James of Lawrenceburg, Ind. Steve Casebolt of Richmond, Ind., was third, followed by Donnie Moran of Dresden, Ohio, and Terry English of Benton, Ky.

MISCELLANEOUS
Grad rates up slightly
INDIANAPOLIS — Ever so slightly, graduation rates for men's Division I basketball, baseball and football players are continuing to rise. The NCAA released figures Wednesday tracking the graduation rates at 318 Division I colleges and universities for athletes who enrolled from 1997-2000. The overall rate for men and women in all sports remained at 77 percent, but the individual rates for the three poorest-performing groups of athletes — men's basketball, football and baseball — showed slight improvements for the second consecutive year.

From staff and wire reports

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