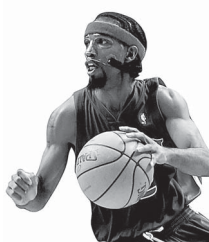


GamePlan

TODAY'S
BEST
BETS

Watch: NBA

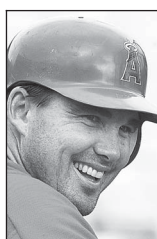
The Clippers take on Richard Hamilton, right, and the Detroit Pistons at Auburn Hills, Mich., on KTLA/5 at 4:30 p.m. On KCAL/9 at 5:30 p.m., the Lakers will try to slow down the red-hot Mavericks at Houston.



Watch: Hockey

The Mighty Ducks attempt to improve to 2-1 on their trip with a victory at Calgary on FSN2 at 6 p.m. while the Kings, 0-4-2 in their past five games, try to get a victory at Columbus at 4 p.m. at FSN.

TALK BACK



Salmon

'If we can get (Scott) Spiezio and (Tim) Salmon to join (Troy) Glaus and (Bengie) Molina in Toronto, perhaps we can change the team name to Anaheim Angels of Toronto.'

ROB ROHM
ORANGE



Talk to us

We want your comments on sports personalities, games and news. Please send your thoughts to sports@ocregister.com or fax to (714) 796-6765. Please keep comments to 25 words.

THE LINE

| NCAA basketball | | |
|--------------------|------|----------------|
| Favorite | Line | Underdog |
| at Connecticut | 11 | Syracuse |
| at Florida | 10½ | So. Carolina |
| at G. Wash. | 12½ | Dayton |
| at Mich. St. | 19 | Purdue |
| Boston College | 1 | at Wake Forest |
| Iowa | 5 | at N'western |
| at Okla. St. | 1 | Oklahoma |
| at Wisconsin | 5½ | Indiana |
| NBA | | |
| Favorite | Line | Underdog |
| at Detroit | 7 | Clippers |
| at Houston | 6 | Lakers |
| San Antonio | 7 | at Toronto |
| at Washington | 4 | Golden St. |
| at Indiana | 4½ | Portland |
| at New Jersey | 10½ | New York |
| Philadelphia | 5½ | at Charlotte |
| at Minnesota | Pk | Cleveland |
| at Milwaukee | 5 | Orlando |
| New Orleans-x | 5 | Seattle |
| at Phoenix | 8 | Memphis |
| at Denver | 6 | Chicago |
| x-at Oklahoma City | | |

TOP OF THE 2ND



PAUL SANCYA, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ON FURTHER REVIEW ...: The Seattle Seahawks need to find a better excuse than the officiating for why they lost Super Bowl XL to the Pittsburgh Steelers on Sunday.

It's a good time to go on vacation

Spraying to all fields, wondering if it's too late to schedule a vacation during the Winter Olympics:

- Let's just say I'm never ready to watch curling, cross country skiing or the biathlon.

All you need to tell me is when Sasha Cohen skates.

- Well, the Pittsburgh Steelers already can start complaining about lack of respect next season, because they're not even one of the top three favorites to win Super Bowl XLI in Miami.

According to the latest odds posted at the MGM Mirage Race & Sports Book in Las Vegas, the Indianapolis Colts and New England Patriots are the 4-1 co-favorites to win it all next season, followed by the Seahawks at 5-1, the Steelers and Panthers at 6-1, then the Chargers, Cowboys and Broncos at 10-1.

For locals who still like to live in the past, the Rams are 50-1, the Raiders are 60-1 and the 49ers are 100-1.

- Banner of the Day held aloft during the Seahawks rally at Qwest Field in Seattle on Tuesday: "Refs 21, Hawks 10."

Yes, there were some iffy calls in the Super Bowl, most of which went against Seattle, but the Seahawks didn't lose because of the officiating.

The guys in the striped shirts didn't force Seattle to mismanage the clock at the end of both halves, nor did they make quarterback Matt Hasselbeck throw a drive-killing interception or make Josh Brown miss two field goals.

San Francisco Chronicle columnist Ray Ratto summed it up best: "So the Seahawks got jobbed, did they? Cheated by the evil Zebras of Death, was it? Denied their destiny by seven men in ghostly shirts and knickers, you think? OK, fine. I mean, you're wrong, but don't let that get in the way of your good time."

- It certainly won't quiet the omnipresent conspiracy theorists that Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger went on national TV on Monday night and told David Letterman he didn't think he got into the end zone on the controversial bootleg dive that was ruled a touchdown on the field and upheld by video review.

But, remember, if Big Ben doesn't score, it's still 4th-and-inches, and Steelers coach Bill Cowher said he would have gone for the TD again. I'd take my chances with Jerome Bettis in that situation.

- By the way, who was the last player to get invited to appear on Letterman the day after producing a pathetic 22.6 QB "efficiency" rating in the Super Bowl?

Then again, Letterman also had Colts kicker Mike Vanderjagt on his show last month after missing a last-second field goal that would have

sent the Colts-Steelers playoff game into overtime.

- For some reason, the Mighty Ducks are the worst team in the NHL in games decided after regulation. The Ducks are 1-5 in four-on-four overtime and 2-6 in shootouts, including a 6-5 loss at Edmonton on Monday night during which they failed on all three shootout attempts.

Those 11 losses tie the woeful Pittsburgh Penguins for most losses in games decided after regulation.

If the Ducks had gained one more point in five of the 11 games, they would already be in playoff position as one of the top eight teams in the Western Conference.

- Going into the season, the prevailing opinion was that the Ducks would be one of the better shootout teams because of their skill players and goalie Jean-Sebastien Giguere.

It hasn't worked out that way. The Ducks have scored on only six of their 26 shootout attempts (essentially, penalty-shot breakaways from center ice) — a 23 percent success rate that ranks 22nd out of 30 teams.

Teemu Selanne (2 for 6), Andy McDonald (2 for 5) and Chris Kunitz (2 for 5) have two shootout goals apiece, and the rest of the team is a combined 0 for 10.

The division-leading Dallas Stars (8-0) are the only NHL team not to lose a shootout and lead the league with an impressive 70 percent success rate (16 for 23) on shootout attempts, with Jussi Jokinen (8 for 8) scoring in every shootout.

- A good reason not to read too much into fifth-ranked Cal State Fullerton being swept in its season-opening, three-game series at Stanford over the weekend: The 2004 Titans also were swept at Stanford to open the season and went on to win their fourth national championship in college baseball.

Never count out a George Horton-coached team. The Titans open their home schedule Friday night at Goodwin Field with the first of three games against UNLV.

- With four home games left on their conference schedule, UC Irvine (9-1 in the Big West, 13-9 overall) is in excellent position to grab one of the top two seeds in next month's Big West men's basketball tournament at the Anaheim Convention Center.

The top two seeds earn first- and second-round byes into the tournament semifinals, which means it will take only two victories for one of them to earn the Big West's automatic berth into the NCAA Tournament.

Ready for UCI vs. Duke in the first round of March Madness?

Ba-da-bing! From David Letterman, noted late-night wise guy, after the Super Bowl: "I'm furious. If Seattle had made those two field goals, missed the extra point and then scored a safety, I would have won the office pool."



RANDY YOUNGMAN
REGISTER
COLUMNIST

Plunkett's son faces assault charges

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ATHERTON • Jim Plunkett's son was arrested on sexual-assault charges and accused of choking a woman in the home of the former star quarterback.

James Plunkett Jr., 22, was arrested Saturday, two days after the alleged attack occurred, on suspicion of assault with intent to commit rape and inflicting injury, police said. Police have not identified the woman or explained her relationship with Plunkett Jr. But his lawyer, Chuck Smith, told the San Jose Mercury News the two were dating and his client plans to fight the charges. "The entire contact was consensual. Jimmy did not commit any crimes, and there was no sexual contact," Smith said.

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ON THE AIR TODAY

| Sport | Time | Event (D-delay; T-tape) | TV | Radio |
|---------------------------|------------|---|---------|------------------------------------|
| Boxing | 11 p.m. | Jose Luis Castillo vs. Rolando Reyes, lights. (T) | Show | |
| College basketball | 4 p.m. | Indiana at Wisconsin | ESPN | |
| | 4:30 p.m. | Boston College at Wake Forest | ESPN2 | |
| | 4:30 p.m. | Rutgers at Notre Dame | Classic | |
| | 6 p.m. | Syracuse at Connecticut | ESPN | |
| Golf | 10 a.m. | PGA European Dubai Desert Classic (T) | Golf | |
| Hockey | Noon | Kings at Minnesota (T) | FSN | |
| | 4 p.m. | Kings at Columbus | FSN | KSPN/710 |
| | 6 p.m. | Mighty Ducks at Calgary | FSN2 | XPRS/1090 |
| Horse racing | 11:30 a.m. | Trackside Live! Aqueduct | FSN2 | TVG |
| Motor sports | 10 a.m. | German Touring Car Series (T) | Speed | |
| | 2 p.m. | IHRA Motor City Nationals | Speed | |
| Outdoor sports | 10:30 p.m. | Winter X Games (T) | ESPN2 | |
| Pro basketball | 4:30 p.m. | Clippers at Detroit | Ch. 5 | KTLK/1150 |
| | 5:30 p.m. | Lakers at Houston | Ch. 9 | KLAC/570 KWKU/1220 KWKW/1330 |
| | 6:30 p.m. | Chicago at Denver | ESPN2 | |
| Soccer | Noon | FA Cup: Chelsea vs. Everton | FSC | |
| | 2 p.m. | Stuttgart vs. Werder Bremen (D) | FSC | |
| | 2 p.m. | Copa Libertadores: Nacional vs. UNAM Pumas | FoxE | |
| | 4 p.m. | Copa Libertadores: U. Catolica vs. Tigres | FoxE | |
| | 6:30 p.m. | Copa Libertadores: Cienciano vs. Chivas | FoxE | |
| | 8 p.m. | Korea Republic at Galaxy | | KBS/1230 |

For complete listings, please see TV Register. Satellite times might differ. Check with your service provider.

5 GAMES OUT

| Clippers | | | | | Lakers | | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Wed 2-8 | Fri 2-10 | Sun 2-12 | Tue 2-14 | Wed 2-15 | Wed 2-8 | Sat 2-11 | Mon 2-13 | Wed 2-15 | Tue 2-21 |
| DET | MEM | CHI | HOU | G.S. | HOU | MEM | UTAH | ATL | POR |
| 4:30 | 7:30 | 7:30 | 7:30 | 7:30 | 5:30 | 7:30 | 7:30 | 7:30 | 7:30 |
| KTLA/5 | FSN2 | FSN2 | FSN2 | FSN2 | KCAL/9 | FSN | FSN | FSN | FSN |
| Information: (323) 224-1448 | | | | | Information: (310) 426-6031 | | | | |
| Mighty Ducks | | | | | Kings | | | | |
| Wed 2-8 | Fri 2-10 | Sun 2-12 | Wed 3-1 | Fri 3-3 | Wed 2-8 | Sat 2-11 | Sun 2-12 | Thu 3-2 | Sat 3-4 |
| CGY | VAN | CHI | DET | MINN | CLM | CHI | DAL | MINN | CLM |
| 6:00 | 7:00 | 5:00 | 7:30 | 7:30 | 4:00 | 1:00 | 1:00 | 7:30 | 1:00 |
| FSN2 | FSN | FSN2 | FSN2 | FSN2 | FSN | FSN | FSN | FSN | FSN |
| Information: (877) 945-3946 | | | | | Information: (888) 546-4752 | | | | |
| UCLA basketball | | | | | USC basketball | | | | |
| Thu 2-9 | Sat 2-11 | Sun 2-19 | Thu 2-23 | Sun 2-26 | Thu 2-9 | Sat 2-11 | Sun 2-19 | Thu 2-23 | Sat 2-25 |
| WSU | WASH | USC | OSU | ORE | WASH | WSU | UCLA | ORE | OSU |
| 5:30 | 12:30 | 5:00 | 7:30 | 1:00 | 7:30 | 3:00 | 5:00 | 7:30 | 6:00 |
| FSN | KABC/7 | FSN | FSN2 | KCBS/2 | FSN2 | FSN | FSN | FSN | FSN2 |
| Information: (310) 825-2946 | | | | | Information: (213) 740-4672 | | | | |
| CSF basketball | | | | | UCI basketball | | | | |
| Thu 2-9 | Sat 2-11 | Wed 2-15 | Sat 2-18 | Thu 2-23 | Thu 2-9 | Sat 2-11 | Wed 2-15 | Sat 2-18 | Thu 2-23 |
| PAC | CSUN | LB ST. | E. Wash | UCSB | UCSB | CP SLO | UCR | Drake | UCD |
| 8:00 | 2:00 | 7:30 | 2:00 | 7:00 | 7:00 | 7:00 | 7:00 | 7:00 | 7:00 |
| ESPN2 | | | | KVMD | KVMD | | | | |
| Information: (714) 278-2783 | | | | | Information: (949) 824-5000 | | | | |
| CSF baseball | | | | | UCI baseball | | | | |
| Fri 2-10 | Sat 2-11 | Sun 2-12 | Fri 2-17 | Sat 2-18 | Fri 2-10 | Sat 2-11 | Sun 2-12 | Fri 2-17 | Sat 2-18 |
| UNLV | UNLV | UNLV | UCI | UCI | HAW | HAW | HAW | CSF | CSF |
| 7:00 | 6:00 | 1:00 | 6:00 | 6:00 | 8:35 | 8:35 | 3:00 | 6:00 | 1:00 |
| Information: (714) 278-2783 | | | | | Information: (949) 824-5000 | | | | |

Home - - Away

ALSO TODAY

- College swimming: Pacific Coast Swim Championships (Chapman), Belmont Plaza, Long Beach, all day
- Horse racing: Thoroughbreds at Santa Anita, first post 1 p.m.
- College baseball: Claremont-Mudd at Concordia, 2:30 p.m.
- Men's college volleyball: Cal State Northridge at UC Irvine 7 p.m.
- Men's college volleyball: UC Santa Barbara at UCLA 7 p.m.