

SPORTS

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Tigers' Barbee heading to UTEP

By JIM MASILAK
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University of Memphis assistant Tony Barbee will be introduced within the next 48 hours as the new head coach at Texas-El Paso, a source close to the situation told The Commercial Appeal on Sunday.

This will be the first head-coaching job for the 35-year-old Barbee, who earned a reputation as one of the nation's top recruiters while spending the past six years on John Calipari's staff at the U of M.

The Indianapolis native will succeed Doc Sadler, who left UTEP after two seasons to become the head coach at Nebraska.

Barbee, who met with UTEP athletic director Bob Stull in Dallas on Saturday morning, was one of several candidates reported to have been considered.

Among them were UTEP assistants Tony Benford and Randall Dickey, Sam Houston State coach Bob Marlin, Texas A&M assistant Alvin Brooks, Kansas assistant Tim Jankovich, Texas assistant Rodney Terry and LSU assistant Butch Pierre.

Former Arkansas coach Nolan Richardson, a UTEP alum who has not coached since 2002, had been expected to meet with Stull on Sunday.

Instead, Stull has chosen to raid a conference rival for what will be his third basketball hire in five years.

As a result Barbee, who played for Calipari at UMass from 1989-93 before becoming his assistant at the U of M, will now get to match wits against his mentor when the Miners meet the Tigers in Conference USA play.

"He helped me build UMass as a player, and he's helped me build Memphis as a coach," said Calipari of Barbee, who served as an assistant at UMass and Wyoming before coming to the U of M prior to the 2000-01 season.

Barbee is expected to fly to El Paso today, with a possible late-afternoon press conference.

Please see **BARBEE, C2**



Russ Hamilton/Associated Press

Kevin Harvick played it smart, picking the right moment to pass Tony Stewart and going on to take the checkered flag at Watkins Glen Sunday.

'I took my chance'

Late pass gives Harvick surprising victory

By JOHN KEKIS
Associated Press

WATKINS GLEN, N.Y. — With a lot of skill and loads of luck, Kevin Harvick stole a road race at Watkins Glen International that seemed to be Kurt Busch's from the start.

Harvick, who moved into contention when Busch was penalized for pitting too soon midway through the 90-lap race, passed Tony Stewart with three laps to go Sunday and won the caution-plagued AMD at The Glen.

It was Harvick's first road win and his second victory of the year driving for resurgent Richard Childress Racing. And it was surprising because Stewart had won three of the previous four races at Watkins Glen.

"I knew my only shot to get him back was getting into (Turn) 1," said Harvick, who moved up one spot to third in the points standings. "I knew I was only going to have a couple of chances, so I took my chance, it stuck, and I went on by."

The pass was made coming out of

11th turn. Harvick outraked Stewart through the turn, edged past him on the front straightaway and completed the pass entering the first turn, a 90-degree right-hander. He then pulled away over the final two laps over the 11-turn, 2.45-mile layout.

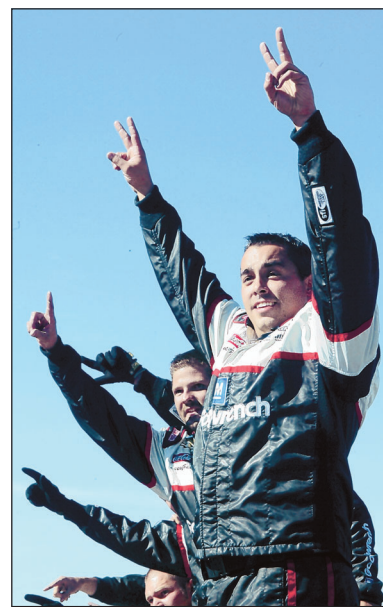
"I think I just overdrove the entries and exits, and he was good," said Stewart, who moved up two spots to seventh in the points race.

The race changed midway on an error by Busch's crew. Joe Nemechek spun off course and brought out a caution for debris. Busch, with instructions from crew chief Roy McCauley, entered the pits for tires and fuel in what would be his last stop. But he crossed the commitment line a split second before the pits opened and was forced to go to the rear of the field on the restart.

"Kurt, I don't know what to say. I'm about in tears," McCauley said over the radio. "I'm sorry, Kurt."

"I think I'm OK," Busch said.

He was, but not for long. Seconds after the race restarted, Busch was



Charlie Berch/Associated Press

Kevin Harvick's crew, including Matt Kreuter (right), celebrate after Harvick's win Sunday.

caught in a multi-car crash that also involved Matt Kenseth. Busch's No. 2 Miller Lite Dodge sustained front-end damage, and his chances for a victory vanished for good.

AMD AT THE GLEN

Driver	Car
1. Kevin Harvick	Chevy
2. Tony Stewart	Chevy
3. Jamie McMurray	Ford
4. Robby Gordon	Chevy
5. Carl Edwards	Ford

"We put ourselves in position for NASCAR to make a call, and it didn't end up in our favor," said Busch, who rallied into the top 10 but spun out on the final lap and finished 19th. "We're going to stand here and discuss it, but it doesn't do any good now."

The top 10 drivers in the standings qualify for the 10-race Chase, now in its third year. And Busch, 13th and fighting for the last spot with Greg Biffle, Kasey Kahne and Dale Earnhardt Jr., appeared set to make a big jump. Instead, he remained 13th, 172 points behind Earnhardt, who remained 10th after an 18th-place finish.

The top 10 in the standings will be reset in four weeks — after the 26th race of the season — into five-point

Please see **NASCAR, C7**

FOOTBALL TOUR '06 | LSU

It's clear: Tigers relying on Bowe

Offseason eye surgery helps receiver latch on

By RON HIGGINS
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It's hard enough to catch a JaMarcus Russell pass when you have 20/20 vision.

The LSU quarterback throws so hard sometimes that it seems like the laces on the football will become unraveled.

Now, try catching one of Russell's passes with slightly impaired vision. You either have to be crazy or Dwayne Bowe the last couple of seasons.

Granted, Bowe has made some big catches for the Tigers, such as hanging onto a Russell bullet for the game-winning touchdown against Alabama in overtime last season.

But there were a few times when he dropped balls that hit him between the Nos. 8 and 0 on the front of his jersey. Like against Auburn, when he muffed a TD pass in the end zone, and LSU missed a field goal on the next play.

"It seemed like passes were coming really fast at me," Bowe said.

LSU coaches first wondered if it was a lack of mental focus. Then, they realized it might be a lack of physical focus for someone who wears contacts.

In the offseason, Bowe underwent LASIK eye surgery. Everything is now crystal clear, and opponents have to be a little on edge. If Bowe has caught 89 passes for 1,413 yards and 14 touchdowns with blurry vision the first three years of his college career, what can he accomplish with improved vision?

"I can pick up passes a lot quicker," Bowe said. "The ball seems slow now."

Second-year LSU coach Les Miles said Bowe's physical presence (6-3, 217) and his ability to snag difficult catches over the smaller defenders gives a big target to all Tiger quarterbacks, especially Russell.

"Dwayne's 6-3 and JaMarcus is 6-6, so it's easy for the big quarterback to find that big target and get him the ball," Miles said.

Please see **LSU, C6**



Chris Desmond/The Commercial Appeal

Memphis University School quarterback Michael Park can drop back to pass with the best. But he doesn't live and die by throwing. His strength is managing the Owls' offense.

At MUS, don't say three-peat, for now

Offense lost talent, but has a winning QB

By COLIN DONOHUE
Special to The Commercial Appeal

Bobby Alston checks his watch. Only 45 minutes until the players trudge into the unrelenting heat for a late afternoon practice.

He returns to the keyboard, pecking away slowly before shifting his attention from the monitor to an assistant coach who has filled the entrance of his office door. As he turns in his chair to face his visitor, the Memphis University School head football coach has situated himself in a figurative — although almost assuredly unintentional — position.

His back now faces several shelves of mementos from seasons past, including the football celebrating last season's Division 2-AAA state championship, a 31-27 win against Christian Brothers High School.

It was the school's second consecutive title, and it's a victory Alston wants to leave behind him.

"What happened last year

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COMING TUESDAY

Scrapper resurgence: A new coach has brought a winning attitude to South Side.

doesn't have a whole lot to do with what's going to happen this year," Alston said. "Our guys have to forget about that. We didn't talk about repeating last year, we're certainly not talking about three-peating right now. That's a quick way to disaster, I think."

MUS was a dark horse in the race for the championship last season. But behind starting quarterback Michael Park, a bevy of skill players and hulking offensive linemen, and

Please see **MUS, C7**