

SPORTS

Story ideas?

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Tuesday, March 14, 2017

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Section B

SPRING TRAINING

Tim Tebow gets 1st hit for Mets, singles vs Marlins

Former UF football star finally ends hitless streak

By **BILL WHITEHEAD**
Associated Press

PORT ST. LUCIE — Tim Tebow has gotten his first hit for the New York Mets.

The former NFL quarterback singled Monday in an exhibition game against Miami Marlins left-hander Kyle Lobstein.

Tebow was hitless in his first eight at-bats in spring training before his opposite-field single on a 2-2 pitch leading off the bottom of the fifth inning. He was then erased on a double-play grounder.

Playing left field, the former Heisman Trophy winner made a head-first diving catch in the second inning to rob Justin Bour of a hit.

Tebow batted eighth, and his appearance in the lineup was a surprise. On Friday, manager Terry Collins said there were no plans to bring back the 29-year-old Tebow after his second start.

But the Mets needed players because of the World Baseball Classic and multiple split-squad games and decided to have Tebow join them from their minor league camp.



COURTESY

New York Mets' Tim Tebow stretches out before batting practice at the team's complex in Port St. Lucie back in Sept.

WINTER SPORTS



FILE

Sophomore Kacey Carter has emerged as one of the best lifters around the state.

NO PAIN NO GAIN

Kacey Carter wins LCR girls weightlifter of the year

By **KAYLA LOKEINSKY**
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FORT WHITE — She can bench over 200 pounds, is a reigning weightlifting state champion, and she's only a sophomore. With mental and physical strength and the title to match, Kacey Carter is the Lake City Reporter's Fort White Girls Weightlifting Player of the Year.

Carter made history this past weightlifting season, earning Fort White's first ever girls weightlifting state title and the school's first state title in girls sports. However, while lifting at the state meet in Ocala last month, she wasn't sure if she would walk away with the title.

"I knew I had a chance, but when I won it I was pretty surprised because I wasn't doing as well as I'd hoped with bench," Carter said.

Carter benched a 215 and had a clean-and-jerk of 205, which allowed her to clinch the state title.

This was Carter's second trip to states in two years. She finished in second place during her freshman year, and this year she was able to take that first place win.

Carter decided to try weightlifting after a former softball teammate



COURTESY

Fort White's Kacey Carter poses with her first-place medal after winning the school's first girls state title.

persuaded her to try out. Although she had lifted weights before, she had never done so competitively. Even she had no idea how talented she would become in the sport.

"I really didn't expect it," Carter said. "I didn't even think I would be that strong."

Fort White girls weightlifting coach Dan Marsee said he knew from the beginning that Carter would shine on the platform.

"She had a lot of natural talent and a lot of potential," Marsee said. "We got her in eighth grade and we knew she was going to be special."

Carter helped lead the Lady Indians to a district and regional championship the past two seasons. Since her premiere at the state meet in 2016, she has

improved, jumping from a 190 to a 215 bench press and from a 180 to a 205 clean-and-jerk.

Her increase in strength is attributed to the hours of work she puts into her training, during both the regular and off seasons.

"She puts a lot of time and effort in year-around," Marsee said. "She has a lot of passion and drive and it shows on the platform."

Carter's father, Ed Carter, also credits his daughter's teammates and coaches for her success in the sport.

"She's surrounded by a group of girls who really push her hard and who do a great job," Ed Carter said.

Ed Carter said he is not only proud of his daughter's success but also

CARTER continued on 2B

NASCAR

Busch-Logano brawl brings buzz to the Cup

By **MIKE CRANSTON**
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — The introduction of stage racing has so far provided the intended effect of spicing up the NASCAR Cup Series.

But nothing beats a good old-fashioned brawl to get everyone buzzing.

Martin Truex Jr. wasn't immune. After taking advantage of Brad Keselowski's mechanical

issues to sweep all three segments and take Sunday's race at Las Vegas Motor Speedway, Truex came into the media center and was asked about the Kyle Busch-Joey Logano pit-road brawl.

"Who won?" Truex asked reporters.

Told that Busch ended up with a bloody forehead, Truex wanted details. "Haymaker swings?"

NASCAR continued on 2B

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Florida says its popular pick to get upset in NCAA tourney

By **MARK LONG**
Associated Press

GAINESVILLE — Although Florida is a top-four seed playing two hours from home, the Gators feel like an underdog heading into the NCAA Tournament.

Coach Mike White even acknowledged Monday that his team is a popular pick to get upset in the opening round of March Madness.

"Everybody's saying it," White said. "There might be reason to believe it."

Florida (24-8), which fell three spots to No. 20 in the final Associated Press college basketball poll of the season, has lost three of its last four games and hasn't figured out how to play without center John Egbunu. Senior Kasey Hill looks lost at times and has more turnovers (19) than assists (13) in the six games since Egbunu's season-ending knee injury. Fellow guard Canyon Barry has scored seven or fewer points in four of those games, including two scoreless outings. Devin Robinson, who reached double digits in 12 of Florida's first 14 games this season, has become wildly inconsistent on that end of the floor.

And Justin Leon and Kevarrius Hayes, guys expected to fill Egbunu's role inside, have been barely noticeable of late.

So the fourth-seeded Gators might just be vulnerable when they step on the floor against 13th-seeded Eastern Tennessee State (27-7) in Orlando on Thursday.

"I hope it helps our guys," White said. "It doesn't bother me at all. I don't care. If I were in the same position ... I might pick the same thing. They're really good and 13s have upset 4s. I've been a part of one."

GATORS continued on 2B



COURTESY

Kicking and screaming

The 12U CYSA rec team, ThunderSquad, recently took first-place in its group for winter season and posted an undefeated (7-0) record. Pictured are Kiera Tracy (front row, from left), Ansley Williams, Ethan Revis, Bergen Cobb, Abraham Ayon, Jonathan Pineda, Landan Boyette. Bryer Carrico (back row, from left), Kasandra Brantley, Morgan Cranford, Noah Rosell, Dalton Carwile, Connor Bass, Allison Matsubara.

