



AARON BORTON / Hays Daily News

Smith Center coach Roger Barta speaks with an official on the sideline of the 2007 Class 2-1A State Championship at Lewis Field Stadium.

COACH: Every year still 'special' for Barta

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"Every year is a special year, special kids," said Barta, who won his seventh state title overall at Smith Center, and has his Redmen on a 64-game winning streak. "We really got hit with a media blitz."

"I thought the kids handled it pretty well, the community handled it pretty well," Barta added.

It started with the New York Times story. Then it was like a wildfire.

"A guy - Joe Wray was his name - out of The New York Times, he came in here," Barta said. "You never know what a reporter is going to write; I thought he was a super guy, wrote a super article."

"It kind of took off from there; it wasn't so much about football, but about the community," Barta added.

In the penultimate game of the season, an overflow crowd at Hubbard Stadium watched Smith Center finally give up a touchdown, to St. Francis. Barta downplayed giving up a score.

"I've coached football 39 years," Barta said. "It's always the goal to shut the team out. This year, we knew somebody was going to score on us."

Barta added. Barta would be the first to tell you that his assistant coaches have played a key role in the team's success throughout the years. Dennis Hutchinson — who has been at Smith Center longer than Barta — coaches both the offensive and defensive lines. Hutchinson's son, Brock, is the defensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach. Tim Wilson coaches the line and defensive ends, while Mike Rogers coaches the defensive secondary and also is the running backs coach.

"I've been blessed with great assistant coaches, we've got great kids, our community supports our kids," Barta said.

St. Francis coach Tim Lambert, who was the starting quarterback on one of Barta's title teams, has found success running the same wishbone offense he learned at Smith Center. Lambert agreed that Barta's assistants are part of the Smith Center success story.

"It's his assistant coaches," Lambert said. "That's one thing I've learned from him: He said you've got to let your assistant coach — you can't do it all."

Senior lineman Brayton Gillen, one of three Redmen on the Super 11, said Barta puts it all together, year after year, inspir-

ing players to become better. "I attribute about all of it to Coach Barta," Gillen said. "He is a great coach, but even better, a great teacher."

If it was left up to him, Barta would just as soon not have had all the newspapers and TV stations buzzing about town this fall. But he reasoned if it helped get a player a chance to get more publicity, and get a chance to play in college, then he would do it. It must have worked, because at least eight seniors on this team plan on playing college ball.

"It was a national blitz," Barta said. "We told the kids to enjoy the ride. Part of the reason I went through it was to get the kids some exposure."

It's quieted down a little now. No national news media poking about.

But come late summer, it will be time to check out pads again. Time for another edition of Redmen football. Standout seniors will be gone. Somebody will take their place.

"We're going to start over again, I guess," Barta said. "We think they're ready to go. It's up to them."

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Prep wrestling tournament

- Houston Tournament Round 1: 125 - Nick Schwager, Great Bend, def Nathan Felder, Thomas More Prep Marian, 2-0... Kent Barman, Scott City... 103 - Junior Montanez, Garden City, wins by forfeit...

PICKS: Indian football all about tackling hard

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St. Francis coach Tim Lambert felt comfortable having Crabtree as the team's last line of defense, against both the run and the pass. "You just felt like weren't going to break a big one on you, with his tackling," Lambert said. "They weren't going to throw over the middle." Tackling — and tackling hard — is what the St. Francis defense is all about, Crabtree said. "We like to hit hard," the 6-foot-2, 185-pound Crabtree said. "That's what we pride ourselves on."

Lambert took pride in Crabtree's defensive honor, while the safety was happy somebody — anybody — was honored. "We're sure happy with the recognition he brings the program," Lambert said. "It's a tribute to him, his character, his work ethic. He's a great teammate — I don't think I can say a better thing about him," Lambert added. "It's just nice somebody getting recognized on the team," Crabtree said. "If it wasn't me, I would be extremely proud of whoever it was." Sports editor Randy Gonzales can be reached at (785) 628-1081, Ext. 137, or by e-mail at rgonzales@dailynews.net.

Ducks trade McDonald to Blues for 2 players

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP) — Andy McDonald, a key member of the Anaheim Ducks' Stanley Cup championship team last season, was traded Friday to the St. Louis Blues for Doug Weight, Michael Birner and a seventh-round pick in next year's NHL entry draft. McDonald, in the second year of a three-year, \$10 million contract, had 27 goals and 51 assists in 82 games last season, and played in his first NHL All-Star game. He has four goals and 12 assists in 33 games this season. The 30-year-old center played in 391 games with the Ducks after signing as a free agent before the 2000-01 season. "Andy McDonald has been a great contributor for us over the last few seasons, and we thank him for the tremendous work ethic and character he brought to our club," Ducks general manager Brian Burke said in a news release. "At the same time, we are pleased to add one of the most dynamic passers in the NHL today in Doug Weight."

Andy Pettitte admits briefly using HGH during 2002 season

NEW YORK (AP) — Andy Pettitte used human growth hormone to recover from an elbow injury in 2002, the New York Yankees pitcher admitted two days after he was cited in the Mitchell Report. Pettitte said he tried HGH on two occasions, stressing he did it to heal faster and not enhance his performance. He emphasized he never used steroids. "If what I did was an error in judgment on my part, I apologize," Pettitte said Saturday in a statement released by his agent. "I accept responsibility for those two days." On Thursday, Pettitte was among 86 players named by former Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell's investigation into steroids and performance-enhancing drugs. Pettitte had not commented publicly on the allegations. Pettitte asked the trainer he shared with Roger Clemens, Brian McNamee, to help him list with HGH while on the disabled list early in the 2002 season, the report said. McNamee recalled injecting Pettitte two to four times, Mitchell said. HGH wasn't banned by baseball until January 2005. "In 2002 I was injured. I had heard that human growth hormone could promote faster healing for my elbow," Pettitte said in the statement released to The Associated Press by agent Randy Hendricks. "I felt an obligation to get back to my team as soon as possible. For this reason, and

only this reason, for two days I tried human growth hormone. Though it was not against baseball rules, I was not comfortable with what I was doing, so I stopped. This is it — two days out of my life; two days out of my entire career, when I was injured and on the disabled list," he said. "I wasn't looking for an edge. I was looking to heal." Pettitte was not linked to steroids in the report, and said he never had never used them. "I have the utmost respect for baseball and have always tried to live my life in a way that would be honorable," he said. "If I have let down people that I care about me, I am sorry, but I hope that you will listen to me carefully and understand that two days of perhaps bad judgment should not ruin a lifetime of hard work and dedication. "I have tried to do things the right way my entire life, and,

again, ask that you put those two days in the proper context. People that know me will know that what I say is true," he said. The Yankees backed Pettitte. "Late this afternoon, Andy Pettitte advised us that he would be making a public statement. We support his coming forward," the team said in a statement. The 35-year-old lefty is 201-113 lifetime. He started his major league career in 1995.

Royals send right-hander Buckner to Arizona

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — The Kansas City Royals have sent right-hander Billy Buckner to the Arizona Diamondbacks for switch-hitting infielder Alberto Callaspo. Callaspo, 24, hit .215 with eight doubles and seven RBIs in 56 games last year for Arizona. He appeared mostly as a pinch hitter and split the season between the major leagues and Arizona's Triple-A Tucson team. In the Pacific Coast League, he hit .341 with 15 doubles, five home runs and 30 RBIs. "The addition of Alberto continues to increase the versatility on our team," general manager Dayton Moore said. "He is a young, tremendously skilled player with a great eye at the plate and very solid defensive skills at three infield positions." Buckner pitched 34 innings for the Royals last year and was 1-2 with an ERA of 5.29.

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