

Flutie loses parents on same day

THE SPORTS XCHANGE

Former NFL and Boston College quarterback Doug Flutie's parents died within an hour of each other on Wednesday morning. The Heisman Trophy winner wrote on Facebook that his father, Richard "Dick" Flutie, died of a heart attack in the hospital followed by his mother, Joan, who also died of a heart attack a short time later.

The couple had been married 56 years. "They say you can die of a broken heart and I believe it," Flutie wrote. "I would like to honor my parents for all that they did throughout my and my brothers' and sister's lives. My parents were always there for their children, from the days my Dad coached us as kids and my Mom would work the concession stands, through to this morning.

"The most important part of their 56 years of marriage was providing opportunities to their children. They were incredible parents and grandparents and my family and I will miss them both." Flutie starred at Boston College and went on to play in the NFL, the Canadian Football League and the United States Football League. His 12-year NFL career included stops with

the New England Patriots, Buffalo Bills, San Diego Chargers and Chicago Bears. Flutie now works as a broadcaster and is scheduled to be in the booth for Saturday's Boston College-Notre Dame game in Fenway Park. "Our hearts go out to the Flutie family, all of whom are in our prayers," Boston College tweeted Wednesday afternoon.

Houston Rockets head coach Kevin McHale reacts after a play against the Los Angeles Clippers in Houston, Texas, in March 2014. The Rockets fired McHale on Wednesday after the team made a stumbling 4-7 start to the season, replacing him on an interim basis with his assistant J.B. Bickerstaff.



TROY TAORMINA | USA TODAY VIA REUTERS

Rockets fire McHale after 4-7 start

THE SPORTS XCHANGE

The Houston Rockets fired head coach Kevin McHale on Wednesday after a 4-7 start this season. General manager Daryl Morey also announced that assistant J.B. Bickerstaff will take over as interim head coach. Houston hosts the Portland Trail Blazers on Wednesday night. "The team was not responding to Kevin," Morey said Wednesday. "There is no time in the West. "It's not just losing. It's not just 4-7. It's the way we're losing, by how much, by how the team is responding. It was tough. This is not something we take lightly. This is a decision we thought about a long time. We knew we were under the gun." The Rockets, with the league's second-worst defensive team, are currently on a four-game losing streak that

prompted a players-only meeting on Tuesday morning, following a 111-95 loss to the Boston Celtics on Monday night. "We were starting to address some of the issues that were the reason I was let go," McHale told the Houston Chronicle after his firing. "We just weren't playing with any juice, with any rhythm. We haven't been able to get the problems solved. We probably had more meetings in last six weeks than in my previous four years here. It wasn't working." The 57-year-old McHale signed a three-year contract extension last December, worth more than \$12 million guaranteed. McHale, a Hall of Fame player with the Celtics, was hired by the Rockets before the 2011-12 season. He was 193-130 overall with the Rockets, including three

straight trips to the playoffs and a loss in last season's Western Conference finals. All-Star guard James Harden is averaging 27.3 points for the Rockets, but he is shooting only 37.2 percent from the field and 26.2 percent on 3-pointers. Rockets players praised McHale during their playoff run last season, calling him a player's coach. "I felt like I was talking to an actual player," Harden said in May. "Obviously he's won championships so he knows what he's talking about. So my ears are just locked in and focused in on what he's saying." Rockets owner Leslie Alexander said he is disappointed in the team's performance so far this season. "The team was obviously not responding on offense," Alexander said. "On defense we weren't playing hard. It continued for a while. I've

never seen my team play as poorly and with less effort. I'm not attributing it to the coach. I had to do something." The general manager was asked if Bickerstaff, who is the son of former NBA head coach Bernie Bickerstaff, would be the coach for the remainder of the season. "J.B. is great with players, great with schemes, and he's been preparing for this his whole life," Morey told USA TODAY Sports. "He obviously has a great pedigree, and was critical to our winning over the last four years with Kevin. He architected the defense last year that was top 10 overall and top five when Dwight (Howard) played. Job One, really, is we've got to shore up our defense, and I believe J.B. can do it. "J.B. is the interim head coach and we believe in his ability to turn this around and lead us going forward."

Ortiz

Continued from Page B5

RBIs and a .284 lifetime batting average. He has hit 445 of his homers since joining the Red Sox in 2003. His 447 home runs as a designated hitter are the most in history. Ortiz stands third in franchise history in home runs behind Ted Williams (521) and Carl Yastrzemski (452). He ranks 27th on the all-time home run list, just one away from tying Hall of Famer Eddie Murray. "I'm really proud of what I had accomplished through the years," Ortiz said. "I'm very thankful for having fans like you guys who have supported me through my career. I wish I could play another 40 years to have you guys behind me, but it doesn't work that way." Ortiz led the Red Sox to three World Series championships in 2004, 2007 and 2013. He owns the best World Series batting average (.455), on-base percentage (.576) and slugging percentage (.795) for players in the Fall Classic. He was named MVP of the 2013 World Series. "It is difficult to adequately convey what David Ortiz has meant to the Boston Red Sox," Red Sox owner John Henry said in a statement. "For his teammates, he has been the one constant force underpinning what it means to play for this organization and making it fun. For the fans, he has been the one consis-



STEVE MITCHELL | USA TODAY | FILES VIA REUTERS

tent force behind three world championships, lifting all of us on his broad shoulders exactly when we needed it. For the community, he has been the hero providing leadership off the field in ways that consistently make a difference often completely unseen. And for those of us who have had the honor of knowing him all these years, he has been exactly what you hope to see in a man who has been the face of this organization. "As he concludes his illustrious career in this, his final season, we look forward to joining everyone in the game of baseball in showing him just how much Big Papi has meant to all of us." New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady said Ortiz will be greatly missed. "He's given all of our fans

so much reason to cheer," Brady said Wednesday. "He's been an incredible player. It'll be sad to see him go. I've got a lot of respect for him and the way that he's always brought a great leadership to his team. He's been a great example." Ortiz's base salary for the 2016 season is \$11 million, which became guaranteed in August when he reached 425 plate appearances in 2015. "David Ortiz transcends numbers, home runs, and wins," said Red Sox president Sam Kennedy. "He is one of the game's greatest players—and greatest champions — and he has been there for the city of Boston through thick and thin every step of the way. He has been a pillar of our team and a pillar of our city. We look forward to a final season of raising our heads to the sky look-

ing for his long ball, and watching him point to the heavens when he arrives home one final time."

Nominees sought for top lineman awards

Nominations are being accepted through Dec. 5 for the 2015 Frank J. Gaziano Memorial Offensive and Defensive Line-man Awards.

HIGH SCHOOL REPORT

The awards, the largest high school scholarships of their kind in the country, are presented to the top high school senior offensive and defensive linemen in the state based on their work on the field, in the classroom and in their communities. Two winners will receive \$5,000 each and a trophy, and four runners-up will receive \$1,000 each and a trophy. Last year's recipients were Zach Davis of Windham and Zordan Holman of Cheverus High School in Portland. The awards honor the memory of the late Frank J. Gaziano, who was a college All-American and professional football player before

founding National Distributors Inc. in South Portland. To qualify for consideration, an applicant must be a high school senior, have competed at the varsity level for a minimum of two years and have an exemplary record of positive athletic and nonathletic citizenship. The submission of a student essay and a game film featuring the applicant competing against his two toughest competitors also are part of the application process. The awards selection committee will choose finalists from across the state. The award and scholarship presentations to the Gaziano Award winners will be announced during a lunch at noon Saturday, Jan. 30, 2016, at the Augusta Civic Center. Players from all classes of Maine's high school football are eligible for the scholarship and are nominated by their coaches. For applications and nomination details, visit www.gazianolinemanawards.org.

MCI

Continued from Page B5

"We knew we needed to do it at some point, and we knew Mattanawcook was one of the top teams in our league," recalled Bertrand. "Even though we jumped out to a lead, we decided we were going to stick with it and work with them. We did some things differently, but we needed to get them some game reps because we saw some games coming up where we didn't feel like we were going to get that opportunity." While Oak Hill has the same record as MCI, fully half of its 10 victories have been decided by nine points or less. That includes the Raiders' 13-10 Class D South semifinal victory over Winthrop-Monmouth and their 21-20 survival of Lisbon in the regional championship game. "They've had to fight, fight, fight until the end in at least two of their playoff games," said Bertrand. "I know their Lisbon game went right down to the end." But does Oak Hill's frequency of close battles give it an advantage over an MCI team whose narrowest victory this fall was a 41-20 decision over Dexter in Week 7 of the regular season? Bertrand doesn't think so but said the ultimate answer

will come on the artificial turf of Morse Field. "We've talked about it all season," he said. "We knew that at some point in the season we're going to have to play four quarters of football, so we've worked to make sure our kids are ready for that both mentally and physically." That preparation has included creating pressurized practice scenarios involving time, downs and distance. "Certainly it's something that until you get a chance to do it in a game is an unknown," said Bertrand, "but I have every confidence in the world that our kids are ready to play four quarters of football if that's what it takes." Such confidence likely stems in great part from the team's collective mission since the first day of pre-season practices in August, to finish off a championship quest that came up a game short just a year ago. "We've got one goal in mind," said Bertrand. "We're proud to be LTC champions and Northern Maine champions, but it's not the ultimate goal. "This is something we want that we need to really work hard to get from them. We're playing the defending state champions, and they're not going to give it up easy, so we're anticipating four quarters of football, for sure."

UMaine

Continued from Page B5

ber of Team Grey at the 2015 USA Hockey Select 17 National Development Camp, where he registered four goals and three assists in five games. Gendron feels Pappalardo will give the Bears a scoring punch.

"There is no doubt in my mind that his overall sense and his instincts around the net will lead to an outstanding offensive career," said Gendron. The eligibility of all student-athletes is contingent upon admission to the University of Maine and compliance with all NCAA rules, including registration with the NCAA Clearinghouse.

Jarvis

Continued from Page B5

working at the golf course that year and turned pro in 2000. He received a degree in marketing from the University of Maine in 2001. "This is something I take

very seriously. We want to do some great things in New England as we have been for a long time. We have a lot of pride in our section, and that's what makes it so exciting. I'm being entrusted with the presidency among golf pros who are rich in tradition and want good things for the game in our region," he said.

Nickname

Continued from Page B5

The school sued the NCAA over the policy, but agreed in a 2007 settlement to retire the name and logo if it could not obtain support

from two namesake tribes. One tribe approved, but the second never voted. The university prepared to retire the name and logo, but state lawmakers in 2011 approved a law requiring the school to retain them only to repeal the law in a special session.

Nickname supporters then gathered enough signatures to force a statewide referendum. After intense lobbying on both sides, residents voted in June 2012 to retire the nickname and logo. The university went with no nickname as part of a transition.

GET A BETTER GRIP ON THE ROADS THIS WINTER!

\$10.00 Per Tire SNOW TIRE CHANGE OVER!

Tire pressure monitoring systems & special mounting requirements are an additional charge. Not to be combined with other offers. Expires 12/31/15 BDN

2015 GREAT WINTER REBATE

GET UP TO **\$80**

OCT 19TH - DEC 20TH, 2015

Complete Automotive Repair Service by ASE Certified Technicians!

NH LOCATIONS BRENTWOOD, NH, 361 Rte. 125, 603- 679-5840 CONCORD, NH, 84 Manchester St., 603- 225-8473 GILMANTON, Rte. 106, 603-267-7344 LACONIA, 125 Water St., 603-524-9030 LANCASTER, 76 Bridge St., 603-788-9899 LONDONDERRY, Rte. 102, 603-434-1536 PORTSMOUTH, 2909 Lafayette Rd., 603-436-4081	FREE WINTER CHECK-UP!	NH LOCATIONS NEWFIELDS, 66 Rte 108, 603-658-1160 SOMERSWORTH, 354 Rte 108, 603-692-5890 TAMMORTH, 1801 White Mtn Hgwy, 603-297-9100 ME LOCATIONS AUBURN, 150 Center St., 207-783-2251 AUGUSTA, 170 Riverside Dr., 207-626-0689 BANGOR, 9 Target Industrial Cir, 207-942-6338
--	------------------------------	---

Visit www.strathamtire.com to take advantage of our monthly coupon specials.