

Sad sports sagas story of 2012

By Tim Reynolds
AP Sports Writer

Jerry Sandusky will spend the rest of his life in prison, Penn State football played under NCAA sanctions and Joe Paterno died.

Lance Armstrong abandoned his fight against doping allegations. Roger Clemens won his court battle, despite lingering skepticism over whether he used steroids. The impact of early-stage dementia forced Pat Summitt to step down from her coaching perch.

And in so many cases, off-the-field news overshadowed what happened on it:

- In State College, Pa., where the Sandusky mess at Penn State destroyed lives and radically changed the face of a proud football program.

- In Washington, where Clemens emerged from court a winner, after a mistrial the first time around on charges he lied to Congress about performance-enhancing drug use.

- In Kansas City, Mo., where Chiefs linebacker Jovan Belcher shot and killed his girlfriend, then drove to the team's facility in the Arrowhead Stadium complex, thanked his coach and general manager, and turned the gun on himself.

- In Austin, Texas, where the news broke that Armstrong decided to give up his long fight against doping charges, saying "enough is enough," but acknowledging no wrongdoing. The move began a swift fall from the cyclist's spot as cancer-fighting sports hero in the public eye. And though he maintains he was victimized by a "witch hunt," Armstrong still was stripped of all seven of his Tour de France victories.

"We must create a culture in which people are not afraid to speak up, management is not compartmentalized, all are expected to demonstrate the highest ethi-

cal standards, and the operating policy is open, collegial and collaborative," Penn State President Rodney Erickson said the day the NCAA levied massive sanctions against the Nittany Lions, including a four year postseason ban.

Sure, there were amazing moments to remember and savor. Michael Phelps became the most decorated Olympian in history, adding to his enormous swimming haul with six more medals at the London Games, where the United States topped the winning charts once again. Usain Bolt became the first man to win the 100- and 200-meter dashes at consecutive Olympics, Eli Manning and the New York Giants reigned supreme in the NFL. San Francisco stormed its way to the World Series title, the Los Angeles Kings hoisted the Stanley Cup (no telling if any other team will anytime soon) and LeBron James and the Miami Heat silenced doubters by winning the NBA title.

Yet in a year like this, such times of achievement and triumph seemed few and far between.

Take March 21, for example. That was the day when Tim Tebow was traded by Denver to the New York Jets, a huge story simply for the Tebowmania factor — and one that wasn't even the biggest in the NFL that day, not with the announcement that New Orleans Saints coach Sean Payton would serve a yearlong suspension for his role in the bounty scandal.

Try Aug. 15, when baseball got to experience a rarity — Felix Hernandez pitching the first perfect game in Seattle Mariners' history — and an all-too-common occurrence, that being someone testing positive for something, in this case San Francisco's Melky Cabrera basically forfeiting any shot at the MVP or the NL batting title by being suspended 50 games following a positive test for testosterone.



JUDY ROGERS/Golden Plains High School
Kynndra Rush went in for a layup against the St. Francis Lady Indians. Rush, a freshman at Golden Plains High School, scored 18 points for the junior varsity Lady Bulldogs, leading them to a 2-0 record heading into the holiday break.

Junior varsity wins

By Judy Rogers
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The Golden Plains High School junior varsity girls overpowered the St. Francis Lady Indians with a 47-15 win in three quarters of basketball in Rexford.

The Lady Bulldogs pumped in 17 points in the first quarter of action Dec. 18 while the defense held the Lady Indians scoreless. The Lady Bulldogs extended their lead to 29-0 before the Lady Indians found the basket with 2:26 remaining in the second quarter and put in 6 consecutive points. The Lady Bulldogs answered with another 4 to lead 33-6 at the end of the quarter.

The Lady Bulldogs continued to play hard in the second and added another 16 to their side. In the third and final quarter, the Lady Indians added their final 9 and the Lady Bulldogs added 14. The gave the Golden Plains girls their second win of the season.

Freshman Kynndra Rush had a breakout game with 18 points for the Lady Bulldogs. Taylor Todd, Kaycie Clapp and Tayler Petersen each added 6 points each, Paulita Ramirez and Maddy Walz 4 each, Ana Bermudez 2 and Rachael Ritter 1.

The girls are on break for the holidays before seeing the Brewster-Triplains Lady Titans at home Friday.

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