

SPORTS

The Columbus Dispatch

TUESDAY
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**Arena football won't return****The record book**

How the Destroyers fared in the Arena Football League since moving from Buffalo in 2004:

SEASON	RECORD	COACH
2004	6-10	Earle Bruce
2005	2-14	Chris Spielman
2006	8-8	Doug Kay
2007	7-9*	Doug Kay
2008	3-13	Doug Kay

*lost to San Jose SaberCats in ArenaBowl XXI

Lack of agreement among owners results in AFL suspending operations indefinitely**By Bill Rabinowitz**
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

For months, Destroyers managing partner Jim Renacci tried to forge a consensus among fellow Arena Football League team owners to revive the league.

Yesterday, Renacci acknowledged what had become apparent for a while: Consensus won't be reached, and the AFL won't be

coming back unless something unforeseen develops.

Renacci said the league has voted to indefinitely suspend operations. A formal announcement is expected within the next day.

Renacci had been in charge of trying to revamp the league's financial model. A 75 percent majority among the 17 remaining ownership groups was required to

pass any plan.

"The board has worked diligently for the last six to nine months, coming up with numerous plans to bring in front of the owners," Renacci said. "The board has not been able to get a supermajority to approve."

"At this point, we're suspended indefinitely until we come up with the next plan."

Given the exhaustive efforts to reach a consensus this year, it's doubtful any plan could meet the approval of at least 13 ownership groups.

"When you have 22 different owners in 17 ownership groups, it's very difficult to get a supermajority on most any plan," Renacci said.

It has been a stunning demise for the AFL, which seemed to be flourishing only a year ago.

But cracks began to surface when David Baker resigned as commissioner before last year's ArenaBowl. Owners did not hire a successor.

When the economic meltdown

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COMMENTARY**Jackets got right man in Tyutin**

Thirteen months ago, the Blue Jackets went after free agent Wade Redden, the most expensive defenseman on the market at the time. They went hard after him. Estimates were that the Jackets pitched a four-year contract with an annual worth of \$6 million. And they were prepared to go higher, in both term and salary. How much higher? We'll never know.

There is sweat and science and art in acquiring NHL players. There also is luck. After 13 months, the Redden deal finally can be analyzed — all of it, including the trade that resulted from his signing. How this thing has turned.

The Jackets wanted Redden for obvious reasons. He was 31 years old, still in his prime. He was good for 30 to 40 points a year, at least, and he had a soaring plus-minus rating. The Jackets wanted and needed a defenseman of his style and stature. They were trumped by the New York Rangers, who offered a six-year deal with an average annual worth of \$6.5 million.

Redden didn't even give the Jackets a chance to match. He signed with the Rangers on the first day of the free-agent season, July 1, 2008.

The next morning, Jackets general manager Scott Howson got a call from his counterpart in New York, Glen Sather. With Redden aboard, the Rangers needed salary-cap relief. They were looking to unload defenseman Christian Backman. Were the Jackets interested?

At that point, the Rangers had an annual total of \$32.68 million committed to five players — Redden, fellow defenseman Michal Rozsival, centers Chris Drury and Scott Gomez and goaltender Henrik Lundqvist. The salary cap for the upcoming season was \$56.7 million. Something had to give.

The Jackets weren't terrifically interested in Backman, but they did want defenseman Fedor Tyutin. Howson and Sather quickly assembled a deal and, on July 2, it was announced: The Jackets acquired Tyutin and Backman for forwards Nikolai Zherdev and Dan Fritsche.

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**MICHAEL ARACE**

NEAL C. LAURON | DISPATCH

A fumble recovery against Northwestern was a bright spot in an otherwise trying 2008 season for defensive tackle Doug Worthington.

Berry gets option to clear charge

A drug-possession charge against Ohio State freshman running back Jaamal Berry will be dropped if he completes a six-month diversion program.

That was decided Friday at a hearing in Miami-Dade County Court. Berry was arrested in his native Miami on June 11 and charged with felony possession of marijuana.

The charge later was reduced to a misdemeanor, which allowed Berry to suit up for the Buckeyes. Students charged with a felony cannot play sports while the charge is pending.

He has been in Columbus since late June. According to a diversion program official, out of town clients can complete an online drug course.

Last week, coach Jim Tressel said Berry would not be "held back" because of his off-field issues.

Although Dan Herron and Brandon Saine are OSU's top two backs, Berry is expected to compete for playing time this fall.

— Ken Gordon
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Worthington on the rebound**Senior tackle bounces back from arrest****By Tim May**
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

A year ago, Doug Worthington thought he had really blown it.

The Ohio State defensive tackle was just days away from the start of preseason camp going into his junior year. Big things were expected from the big man.

But in the early hours of a Saturday in July, Worthington was pulled over for speeding on campus and then found to be driving under the influence of alcohol. He registered a 0.095 percent on a Breathalyzer test; the legal limit in Ohio is 0.08 percent.

He knew there would be public fallout, and he knew coach Jim Tressel was not going to be happy.

"It was probably the hardest time in my life, a time when I needed a lot of people's help, and a lot of people stepped up and

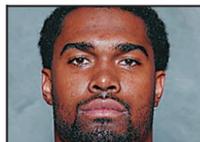
became good friends and teammates," Worthington said.

"But, yeah, last year at this time was super-difficult for me. Being in the position I am in at the moment is just a blessing."

With Ohio State practice set to open Sunday, there's a good chance that Worthington could be named a team captain before the season starts Sept. 5 against Navy. Tressel apparently considers him to be a leader; he took him along with safety Kurt Coleman and tight end Jake Ballard to the Big Ten media days in Chicago last week.

"I thought about that, and I think it shows a lot about what I did last season and in the off-season, trying to make people aware and trying to give back to the community, trying to help my

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"I had my head down a long time. I lost a lot of weight. I couldn't eat for about a week and a half. It was really hard for me emotionally and everything."

DOUG WORTHINGTON
on his situation at this time last year

Wide receiver Brian Robiskie, a former Ohio State Buckeye, takes part in drills during the Cleveland Browns' mini-camp in June.



TONY DEJAK | ASSOCIATED PRESS

BROWNS**Rookie receivers hope to lend hands****By Zach Swartz**
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

BEREA, Ohio — For five years, No. 80 belonged to one of the Cleveland Browns' top pass-catchers. Held by tight end Kellen Winslow as tightly as the football to his chest, that number has changed shoulders.

Winslow, traded to Tampa Bay in February, is out. Brian Robiskie, a Cleveland native and former

Ohio State receiver, is in. The new No. 80 looks as though he'll have a shot to make an impact, as well.

The Browns' receiving corps is in flux, and several players are out to secure new roles in training camp. Besides Winslow's departure, receiver Joe Jurevicius retired and Donte Stallworth was suspended indefinitely after he killed a pedestrian in Miami while driving drunk.

In their place, tight end Steve

Heiden had his first practice yesterday after recovering from a torn anterior cruciate ligament last season. Top returning receiver Brayton Edwards has spent his time in camp exercising on the sideline, reportedly because of a sore ankle.

It has opened the door for two rookies, Robiskie and Mohamed Massaquoi of Georgia. Both were

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