



SPORTS

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Things expected to return to normal with Hurricane Irma moving further from GB

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With the threat of Hurricane Irma moving further away from Grand Bahama and The Bahamas at large, it appears things will go back to normal as of today.

Based on weather reports, Grand Bahama Sports Complex is expected to return to their normal operational hours today.

As for other events on the island, the Grand Bahama Amateur Softball League is expected to resume next weekend. They will resume depending on the passage of Hurricane Jose.

There were no other notable sporting events scheduled.

However, softball pioneers are still on the ball in hopes of getting their Benefit One-Pitch

Softball Tournament going. The tournament was originally scheduled to take place on September 17, but the committee will convene to discuss a later date.

The tournament will be in aid of softball Hall of Famer Greg Christie, who is in need of an urgent medical procedure.

There is a registration fee per team that is due by September 13.

The divisions of play include Church, Corporate and 45 and Over.

Fees must be submitted prior to the start of the game.

There was no word as to when primary and high school sports would commence.

As things become clearer, weather-wise, word will be given.

There was also no word given on soccer and rugby.



GRAND BAHAMA SPORTS COMPLEX.

Women's basketball scene demands greater attention

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The high profile and talent deep status of the preeminent high school basketball tournament in the country puts the Hugh Campbell Classic in a class by itself. I venture to say that no high school sporting event rivals the excitement and euphoria that come with the Hugh Campbell event.

On Monday past, at the Kendal Isaacs Gymnasium in New Providence, when Grand Bahama's Tabernacle Baptist Falcons were crowned Hugh Campbell Champions for the seventh time, the reaction was beyond the sports landscape in the country. Over its 35 years of existence, the tournament that pits the best of Bahamian male high schools' teams against each other has transcended being purely a sports happening.

It has become a national affair of great interest.

Presently, the Falcons can claim the title of being the best

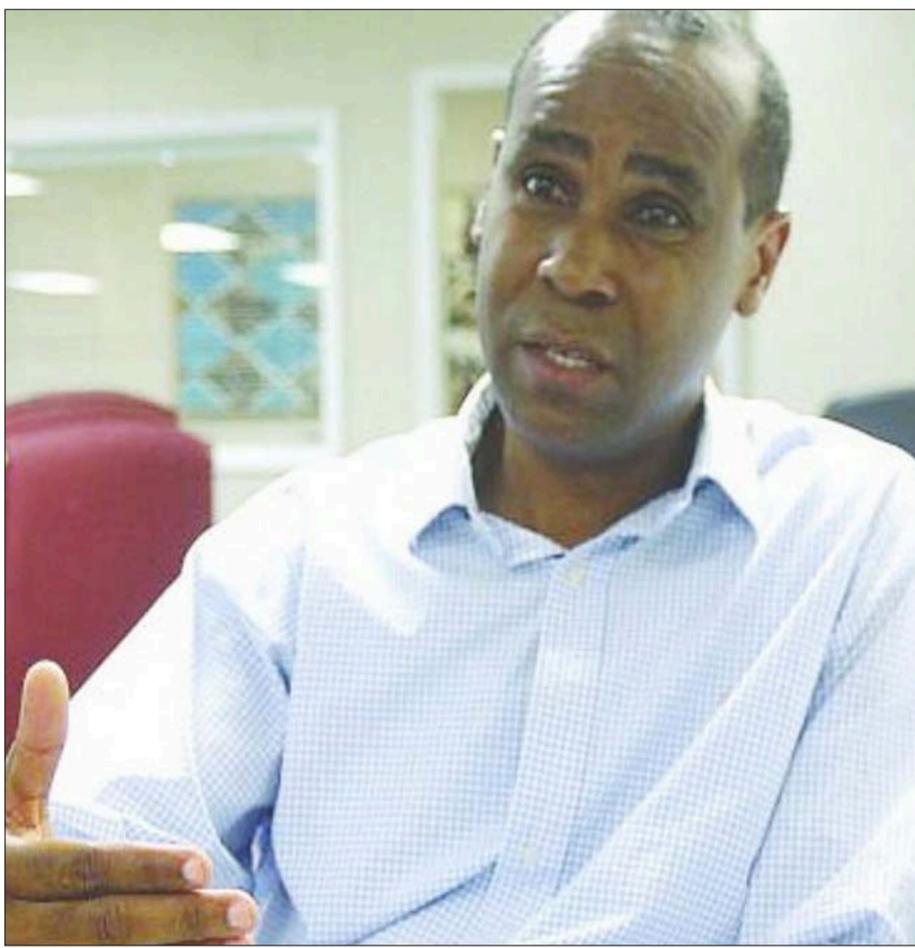
high school franchise in Bahamian high school basketball history.

However, with all of the focus on the male version of high school basketball, I point out that on the same weekend the Hugh Campbell extravaganza was going on in the capital island, in Grand Bahama, at the St. Georges' Gymnasium in Freeport, excellent female basketball players were showcased.

Yes, Coach Gladstone "Moon" McPhee, with his associates, organized the 17th Annual HOYTES Geneva Rutherford Women's Basketball Tournament.

The Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture, Dr. Daniel Johnson was present as the special honoree. He saw the potential. In attendance also was National Sports Director Tim Munnings; as well as National Sports Academy Senior Officer Rupert Gardiner.

What they witnessed was a display of quality basketball beyond expectations. Admittedly,



EVAN WISDOM

many of the players were raw around the edges, but there were those who we must build on and help to maximize the amazing talents which rival, on a per capita basis, that of their male counterparts.

Evan Wisdom, the Senior School Sports Officer in the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the architect of the modern After School Sports Program, should have been in the house for the high school women's tournament. No doubt, he would have come to a firm conclusion that a national high school women's basketball tournament should be a high priority item on his agenda.

He wasn't there, but I know how passionate he is about high school sports advancement. Wisdom is thus challenged to begin the process to elevate basketball of the fairer sex model, into his after school sports program for the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

To note that the Bahamian women's basketball scene demands the appropriate attention at this point in time, is an understatement.

How about it Mr. Wisdom?

I propose gender equality in sports!

To respond to this column, kindly contact Fred Sturup at sturup1504@gmail.com

Sports Scope

By Fred Sturup



Houston returns to football as Harvey recovery continues

KRISTIE RIEKEN
AP Sports Writer

HOUSTON (AP) — With all eyes on the tunnel leading under the stands, J.J. Watt emerged. He raised a Texas flag skyward before screaming "let's go," sending NRG Stadium into a frenzy.

Watt and the Houston Texans opened their season Sunday against the Jacksonville Jaguars, giving the area ravaged by Hurricane Harvey and its flooding a much-needed distraction from the harsh reality of life in the wake of the storm.

Watt has become the celebrity face of the recovery from Harvey after raising a staggering \$31 million in the two weeks since it devastated not only Houston but much of southeast Texas. He addressed fans in a video message played on the big screens before Sunday's game as images of the flooding flickered alongside the defensive end.

"Let's start this season off right and show what Texans are made of," Watt said in the video, drawing a huge roar from the crowd.

Before the national anthem, fans were asked to pause for a moment of silence for the victims of Harvey as well as those in the path of Hurricane Irma, which was hitting Florida on Sunday.

Louie Galvez, an Iraq veteran, tailgated before Sunday's game with a group of friends and fam-



HOUSTON TEXANS defensive end J.J. Watt (99) is introduced to the crowd prior to an NFL football game against the Jacksonville Jaguars, Sunday, September 10, 2017, in Houston. (AP Photo: David J. Phillip)

ily outfitted in matching shirts that read "Houstrong." Galvez was glad to get away from the job of replacing carpet and sheet rock in his suburban Houston home after it was hit by Harvey's floodwaters.

"We're taking a break from what actually happened, the re-

ality," he said. "We're going to watch our Texans. We're going to support them all the way ... it gives us a little bit of hope. As well as they do is how we feel we might do in life."

As Galvez prepared for the game he had an eye toward Florida, worried about the fate of

friends and relatives in Jupiter and Jacksonville as Irma approached.

"This is bigger than football," he said. "We know exactly what they're going through. We feel their pain."

The Texans honored first responders for their work during

Harvey, and hosted many of them at Sunday's game. Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner, chief of police Art Acevedo and fire chief Samuel Pena were on the field during introductions and fans were asked to remember Steve Perez, an officer who drowned in Harvey's flooding on the way to work.

"Football definitely matters in a time like this because it takes our mind off what is actually happening to us right now," fan Steve Beckholt said. "This gives us a little bit of a release, a little time to not focus on the damage, not focus on everything else and just focus on a little bit of team, a little bit of community."

Pati Cream, a Texans fanatic who is known simply as "The Horns," wore a hat topped with bull horns and a bobblehead of Watt which held a sign that read: "Harvey Relief Houston, \$30 million J.J. Watt." She's part of an organization called the "Super Fan Alliance" that connects fans from around the league. In the days after Harvey struck, fans in the cities of every team and even some in Mexico reached out offering help.

Donations from fans of all 32 teams piled in and resulted in the arrival of several semi-trucks filled with supplies to help those affected by the storm.

"The outpouring has been overwhelming," she said. "It's just mindboggling to me. It's been incredible. We haven't

asked for anything."

The group collected 250 cases of water, 300 blankets and 1,000 tote bags to help the Houston area. But that shipment hasn't been able to get to town, stuck in Tampa, with Irma expected to strike there.

"I told them: 'hunker down and if you guys need it, open the trucks and use the stuff,'" Cream said. "We're in recovery. We're OK."

Things for Cream have been so chaotic in the days since the storm that many times she "couldn't have told you what day it is." But on Sunday, as she squins on her shirt twinkled in the sun and her eyes filled with tears while talking about the generosity of strangers, it was game day. The pain of the past two weeks was nothing compared to the pride she felt about how the community has bonded.

"If you don't live in Houston and you don't know Houston, you need to come down here, because this is how people are," she said. "We're compassionate. We pull together."

And Galvez wants those outside the area to know that Sunday's return to normalcy was only a flicker of how Houston is going to bounce back.

"We're not going to let Harvey knock us down," he said. "You can come and try to do what you want to do, but we're from Texas and we're ready for anything."