

SPORTS

Police investigate alleged Tyson sex assault

BIG BEAR CITY, Calif. (AP) - Authorities are investigating a woman's allegation that former heavyweight champion Mike Tyson sexually assaulted her at a rental home last week.

The woman contacted the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department on Tuesday and alleged she was sexually assaulted by Tyson a week earlier at a Big Bear City home he rents during training, sheriff's spokesman Chip Patterson said Friday.

There was no arrest and "we have not determined whether there was criminal

wrongdoing," Patterson said.

Details from the alleged assault July 16 weren't disclosed. The woman was examined at a hospital afterward, but those findings also weren't disclosed, Patterson said.

"A female adult made an allegation to the sheriff's department that she had been sexually assaulted by Mike Tyson," Patterson said. "What we have at this point is an allegation that is being investigated."

Tyson, 35, who was in Phoenix, hasn't been interviewed.

"We are seeking to interview him,"

Patterson said. "There have been discussions with his attorney. We have not identified him as a suspect."

Tyson attorney Darrow Soll denied the allegations and said his client would cooperate with investigators.

"We believe the allegations are false and we look forward to working with the sheriff's office to resolve the investigation as quickly as possible," Soll said from his Phoenix office. Tyson was quoted by the New York Post as saying: "I'm not aware of any allegations."

Shelly Finkel, Tyson's New York adviser,

said, "From what I understand, in the end, Mike will be shown to be innocent."

Earlier this month, Tyson apologized to a Big Bear Lake store owner for walking out of the shop with \$25 worth of candy. The store owner reported what happened to the Sheriff's Department, but it later was determined to be a misunderstanding, Patterson said.

Tyson served more than three years in an Indiana prison after being convicted in 1992 of rape and other charges. He has repeatedly fought abuse claims from women, including his first wife, actress Robin Givens.

Sanders retires from football, baseball career in limbo

ASHBURN, Va. (AP) — A year ago, Michael Westbrook was in awe of new Washington Redskins teammate Deion Sanders.

"It took a while for me to get over Deion Sanders, the first couple of days I was going against him," Westbrook said. "I asked him for his autograph mid-route one time. He thought it was funny. After a while, I got to slap him around like everybody else."

Now the Redskins are adjusting - financially and otherwise - to life without Sanders, who retired Friday rather than report to the first day of training camp Sunday at Carlisle, Pa.

In a deal reached with the team, Sanders agreed to return just \$500,000 of his \$8 million signing bonus, according to a league source speaking on condition of anonymity. The bonus was part of a seven-year, \$56 million



Washington Redskins cornerback Deion Sanders (21) tries to elude the tackle of Dallas Cowboys wide receiver Wane McGarity during last year's rivalry game. (AP Photo/Pat Benic)

contract signed a year ago, which means Sanders will count \$5.7 million against the Redskins salary cap next season.

Still, his retirement will save the Redskins \$3.5 million this season, making it easier to sign first-round draft pick Rod Gardner and second-round selection Fred Smoot. Coach Marty Schottenheimer said Satur-

day that negotiations with the two rookies are "ongoing," and he has also said he wants to sign a veteran safety and perhaps a pass-rusher to add some much-needed depth.

"It doesn't necessarily indicate that we're going to go out and start signing players," Schottenheimer said. "We've got some players we're going to bring in and work out, which is our cus-

tom, but I don't know if we'll sign them. We are not flush with money, let me put it that way."

Running back Ki-Jana Carter, defensive lineman Michael Bankston, cornerback Darrien Gordon and defensive end Dorian Boose are scheduled for workouts Sunday.

Several Redskins said they weren't surprised by Sanders' announcement, having felt that his desire to play football wasn't there any more. At the end of last season, Sanders seemed more excited about a players'

checkers tournament he organized than he was about the team's disappointing season.

And, while Sanders' talent will be missed, the Redskins are still deep at cornerback. Champ Bailey is coming off a Pro Bowl season, and 41-year-old Darrell Green will battle Smoot for a chance to reclaim the starting job he lost when Sanders was signed.

"People are underestimating Darrell Green," Westbrook said. "Darrell's going to surprise some people. He's still a great

player. He's probably still the fastest guy on the team."

Redskins fans never quite warmed to Sanders, who was sometimes portrayed as a mercenary from the evil Dallas Cowboys. Sanders wasn't close to many of his teammates - although defensive lineman Kenard Lang said Prime Time wasn't exactly aloof.

"Everybody has their own cliques," Lang said. "He talked to people. He wasn't a loner, with his own box of popcorn and Coke and sitting in the corner. He wasn't like that."

Catholic cardinal backs black church

CHICAGO (AP) - A Roman Catholic cardinal is supporting a predominantly black parish on the city's South Side in its battle to join a mostly white athletic conference.

Cardinal Francis George, the archbishop of Chicago, said that St. Sabina Catholic Church's demands for joining the Southside Catholic Conference are "legitimate and necessary ... to assure respect for all those playing."

Last month, the conference rejected St.

Sabina's membership application because some parishes were worried about the safety of children traveling to the church for games.

The conference later voted to admit St. Sabina, but several coaches said they would forfeit any games played at the church, prompting the Rev. Michael Pflieger to pull St. Sabina out of the conference.

The league has about 5,000 players and sponsors football, basketball, soccer and golf for students in grades five through eight.

Rodman won't pay arbitrator's award

SANTA ANA (AP) — Calif. - Former NBA player Dennis Rodman is refusing to pay an arbitrator's \$225,000 award to an actress-model who claims he raped her.

"We've demanded a trial," said Rodman's attorney Christopher Branch. "The arbitrator's award was excessive and does not reflect the evidence."

Tina New sued Rodman for \$10 million last August. She claims she met Rodman in August 1999 at a Newport Beach bar, and that she turned down an invitation to a party from a man who said he was Rodman's bodyguard.

Either Rodman or New could have rejected the arbitrator's award, made on July 19.

According to New's lawsuit, after she left the bar someone kidnapped her and took her to Rodman's Newport Beach home, where she was forced to drink an unknown liquid that caused her to fall asleep. She claims that when she awoke, Rodman ripped off her clothing and raped her.

Rodman, 40, has denied the charges.

A district attorney's spokeswoman said no charges would be filed unless prosecutors receive evidence of a crime.

New, who appeared on the TV series "Baywatch," was a prosecution witness in the murder trial of her ex-boyfriend, who was sentenced to life in prison without parole for the 1997 murder of his wife.

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