Drug program might reduce Vick's sentence

RICHMOND, Va.(AP) -Michael Vick left Virginia recently to enter a drug treatment program at a Kansas prison, a move that could reduce the former NFL star's 23-month sentence on a federal dogfighting conviction.

The suspended Atlanta Falcons quarterback is now at the U.S. Bureau of Prisons minimum security facility in Leavenworth, his attorney, Billy Martin, said.

"Mr. Vick hopes to participate in programs offered at that facility, including the Bureau of Prisons drug treatment program," Martin said in a statement.

Vick tested positive for marijuana in September

while he was on supervised release following his guilty plea. The residential drug treatment programs at Bureau of Prisons institutions take place in units set apart from the general prison population, lasting at least 500 hours over six to 12 months, according to Bureau of Prisons policy.

Upon successful completion of the program, nonviolent offenders may be granted up to one year of and behavior to determine if they are eligible for early release. If Vick was granted early release, he could be ready to play in the 2009 football season, though he is currently suspended without pay by the NFL.

"Mr. Vick looks forward to being reunited with his family upon completion of his sentence," Martin said. "He is hopeful that following his release he will have the opportunity to resume his career as a professional footcompanied by U.S. marshals when he left the Northern Neck Regional Jail on Monday morning, said Maj. Ted Hull of the Warsaw, Va., jail.

It was reported earlier that Vick planned to enter a drug treatment program at Leavenworth. Vick and three co-defendants raised pit bulls and trained them for fighting behind the property he owned in rural Surry County. Several dogs that did not perform well in test fights were pleaded guilty in August, admitting he bankrolled the dogfighting operation and helped kill six to eight dogs. He had been held at the Warsaw jail since he surrendered Nov. 19 in anticipation of his sentence.

Vick lost all his lucrative endorsement deals and still must contend with additional legal woes: He and co-defendants Purnell Peace, Quanis Phillips and Tony Taylor are facing state animal cruelty charges in Surry County. Vick's trial is set for April 2.

Channel suspended anchor Kelly for two weeks, effec-Kelly Tilghman for two tive immediately." Woods weeks for saying recently that young players who each other 12 years. She was wanted to challenge Tiger picked to host a club demon-Woods should "lynch him in a back alley."

Tilghman was laughing during the exchange Friday with analyst Nick Faldo at the Mercedes-Benz Championship, and Woods' agent at IMG said he didn't think there was any ill intent.

But the comments became prevalent on news shows Wednesday, and Rev. Al Sharpton joined the fray by demanding she be fired immediately. Golf Channel didn't know who would replace Tilghman in the booth this week at the Sony Open or next week at the Bob Hope Chrysler Classic.

"There is simply no place on our network for offensive language like this," Golf Channel said in a statement.

Tilghman became golf's first female anchor last year when the PGA Tour signed a 15-year deal in which Golf Channel broadcasts the first three events of the year, weekday coverage of all tour events, and full coverage of the Fall Series and oppositefield events.

The suspension ends in time for the Buick Invitational on Jan. 24, when Woods will make his 2008 debut.

Faldo and Tilghman were discussing young players who could challenge the world's No. 1 player toward at Kapalua when Faldo suggested that "to take Tiger on, maybe they should just gang up for a while."

"Lynch him in a back alley," Tilghman replied.

"While we believe that Kelly's choice of words was inadvertent and that she did not intend them in an offensive manner, the words were hurtful and grossly inappropriate," Golf Channel said in its statement. "Consequently,

HONOLULU (AP) - Golf we have decided to suspend and Tilghman have known stration with Woods in south Florida when he talked about new products from Nike Golf.

> Tilghman was helped when Mark Steinberg, Woods' agent at IMG, said it was a non-issue and considered the matter "case closed."

"Tiger and Kelly are friends, and Tiger has a great deal of respect for Kelly," Steinberg said recently in a statement released by Golf Channel. "Regardless of the choice of words used, we know unequivocally that there was no ill-intent in her comments."

Tilghman had said in a previous statement she apologized directly to Woods, and the immediate support from Woods' camp was critical.

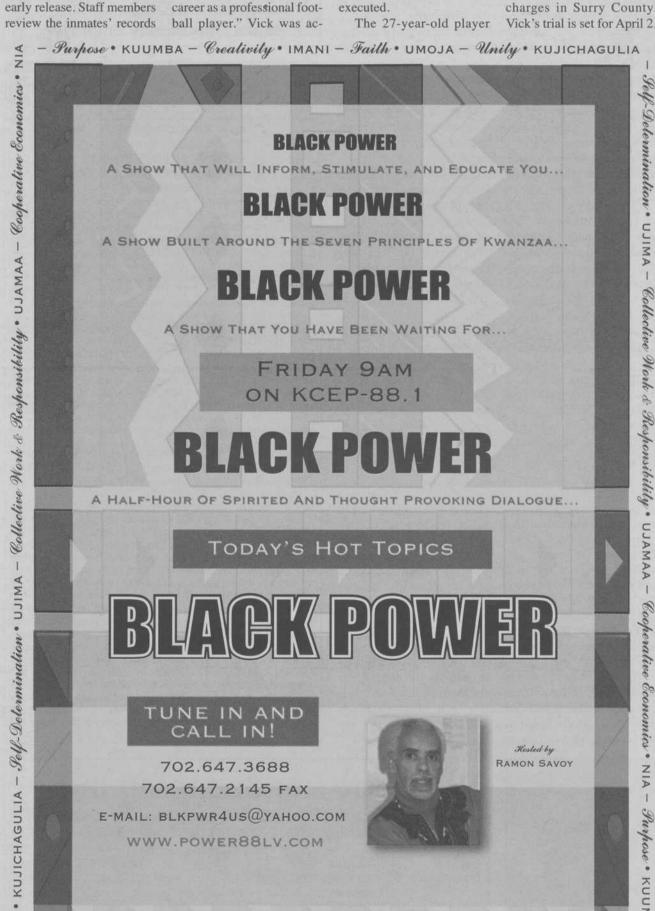
After Woods won the 1997 Masters at age 21 to become its youngest champion, Fuzzy Zoeller referred to him as "that little boy," and suggested that Woods not serve fried chicken or collard greens, "or whatever the hell they serve," at the Champions Dinner.

Woods, who had a different management team in his first full season, did not respond for three days to Zoeller's apology, and it took Zoeller years to recover from the fallout.

Tilghman's comment the end of Friday's broadcast made the rounds rapidly on TV shows such as CNN's Headline News, and it was prominently discussed on blogs and message boards on the Internet. It also was a topic on the practice range at the Sony Open.

"I'm sure Kelly wishes she never said that," Jim Furyk said. "I haven't spoken with Tiger, but I've been told that they've had their talk and they've discussed it. Any-

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