

Free agency tough on fans, but don't hate on LeBron

These might be my last words before fans in the San Antonio/Hill Country area tune me out forever, but I'll say them anyway: LeBron James is all right in my book.

I didn't say he's perfect, and his career brings up broader points of criticism I have for the NBA. On the same topic I also have things to praise, many of which involve the five-time champion San Antonio Spurs.

Back to James for a moment – since his admittedly regrettable “Decision” in 2010 and the promise of championship after championship, I've tried but haven't found much reason to hate on him. He's played basketball, stayed out of trouble, taken criticism after tough times and not allowed it to deter his desire.

I read his letter regarding his choice to return to Cleveland, as I'm sure you have, and I understand his reasoning. I'd argue he's going into a more uncertain, less stable situation in Cleveland than if he stayed in Miami. Sure, there's incredible potential among Cleveland's roster of young guns, but very little of it has been realized.

Haters may say James quit on Miami and jumped ship for hopefully greener pastures. The approach required for James' latest move, though, is one acknowledging how much work will be required to win just one championship, not two, not three, etc. And as James said in his letter, he knows it might take several years.

What was most discouraging about James' free agency journey was the aftermath I saw and heard in the days after James signed with Cleveland. “The dominos are falling,” said various national media outlets. Sure enough, marquee names and key role players are going every which way as teams scramble to assemble rosters for next season.

This year hasn't been too bad. The biggest names, like Carmelo Anthony, Dirk Nowitzki, Dwyane Wade and Chris Bosh have all stayed put this year. Many lower-tier players are still shuffling around, though.

It makes me sad to know today's players really are dominos. Quickly fading are the days of guys staying with teams for life. At least for the Spurs, that approach is still proving successful.

While this indoctrinated Lakers fan (see photo on page 2B) doesn't approve of all the choices Kobe Bryant has made throughout his career, I can at least appreciate seeing one player stay in my team's uniform during my childhood and young adult days.

When I discovered the game of baseball as an elementary-aged child living in Atlanta, Chipper Jones became my third baseman. It was difficult watching him ride into the sunset in 2012. And as a 49ers fan clearly an era past the franchise's glory days, I'm still hoping a few players can lead the team to the promised land and remain 49ers mainstays for years to come.

Shifting back to basketball, the NBA might be the league that suffers most from free agency madness – I found only 17 active players who have spent their entire careers, minimum six seasons, with the same team.

While James can't say he stuck with the same team his whole career, I hope he stands by his letter and raises his family well in Cleveland. Maybe a few fans will even find it in their hearts to take James back and consider him a part of the Cleveland and Ohio community.

This area is fortunate to have players who are obviously welcomed as part of the community. I hope these kids are sporting



► Chris Derrett
Sports Editor

See **LeBron**, page 2B

Medina ISD hires two new coaches

Bobcats announce new basketball and six-man football coaches

By J.D. Moore

Online Editor

jd.moore@dailytimes.com

Medina ISD will have new coaches for six-man football and basketball this upcoming season.

Mark Coley will be the new six-man head coach, while Josh Talley will serve as head basketball coach and assistant

six-man coach.

The news was first reported by J.R. Alexander of KRVL.

Coley, the 2012 Chuck Moser Football Coach of the Year, comes from Abilene Christian Schools, where he coached the 2012 six-man football TAPPS state champions. He also won the 2005 championship as defensive coordinator for the schools.

Coley, the 2012 Dave Campbell's Texas Football Private School Coach of the Year, has had career stops in Houston at Eisenhower High School and New Caney High School, serving as head coach of their 11-man football teams.

Talley, who comes to Medina from rival Paint Rock ISD, is a former high school athlete who has experience in coaching both basketball and football.

His wife will also be joining Medina ISD as a teacher.

Both coaches were away at football coaching camps and were unavailable for comment.

Jack Cockrill, Medina ISD superintendent, said the hires were “fantastic” for the district, and also said he was excited to see how the six-man football program will evolve.

Big 12's best

TCU's Fields, Baylor's Petty lead preseason awards

IRVING, Texas (AP) — Baylor senior quarterback Bryce Petty and TCU defensive end Devonte Fields have been tabbed as the Big 12 preseason players of the year.

It is the second consecutive year that Fields and a standout offensive player from Baylor have been the league's top preseason picks.

The league released its preseason All-Big 12 teams Wednesday as selected by media members who cover the conference.

Petty set 17 school records last season as the Bears won their first Big 12 title and played in their only BCS bowl. Petty was the Big 12 offensive player of the year after passing for 4,200 yards and 32 TDs with only three interceptions. He also ran for 14 scores.

Bears running back Lache Seastrunk was the preseason offensive player of the year last season, then led the Big 12 in rushing with 1,177 yards and 11 touchdowns as a junior. But he bypassed his senior season for the NFL, and was a sixth-round draft pick by Washington in May.

Fields had only four tackles without a sack while playing only three games last season. He missed the season opener and parts of two other games for an unspecified violation of university and team rules before a season-ending foot injury that required surgery.

Oklahoma State receiver Tyreek Hill was tabbed as the preseason newcomer of the year. Hill transferred from Garden City Community College where he made 32 catches for 532 yards and six touchdowns, and ran for 659 yards and five scores as a sophomore.

After transferring to Oklahoma State in the spring, he helped Oklahoma State men to the Big 12 indoor track and field championship. He won the 200 meters and was second in the 60 meters.



PRESEASON ALL-BIG 12 SELECTIONS

OFFENSE		
Position	Player	College
WR	Antwan Goodley	Baylor
TE	EJ Bibbs	Iowa State
OL	Spencer Drango	Baylor
OL	Cody Whitehair	Kansas State
C	B.J. Finney	Kansas State
OL	Daryl Williams	Oklahoma
OL	Le'Raven Clark	Texas Tech
WR	Tyler Lockett	Kansas State
QB	Bryce Petty	Baylor
RB	Shock Linwood	Baylor
RB	Malcolm Brown	Texas
PK	Michael Hunnicutt	Oklahoma
KR	Tyler Lockett	Kansas State

DEFENSE		
Position	Player	College
DL	Ryan Mueller	Kansas State
DL	Chucky Hunter	TCU
DL	Devonte Fields	TCU
DL	Cedric Reed	Texas
LB	Bryce Hager	Baylor
LB	Ben Heeney	Kansas
LB	Eric Striker	Oklahoma
DB	Zack Sanchez	Oklahoma
DB	Sam Carter	TCU
DB	Quandre Diggs	Texas
DB	Karl Joseph	West Virginia
P	Spencer Roth	Baylor
PR	Levi Norwood	Baylor