

U.S. narrowly escapes fiscal cliff

BY: CARL YIN

On the first day of the new year, the House and Senate passed a resolution to avoid the "fiscal cliff" after weeks of intense negotiation between the two parties.

The resolution was agreed to in the Senate two hours before the Jan. 1 deadline, and later passed in the House at 11 P.M.

The most integral parts of the compromise were to set a budget for the 2013 year and extend the Bush-era tax cuts for most Americans.

The fiscal cliff is vernacular for the scenario the country would have faced had a resolution not been passed. Automatic budget cuts would have kicked in and significant tax increases from the expiring Bush-era tax cuts would have put a burden on the U.S. and global economy, with the potential of bringing on another recession.

It was speculated that if an agreement had not been

passed, global stock markets would have experienced drops.

As news of the fiscal cliff agreement spread, the NASDAQ and Dow Jones shot up more than 2% the next day. Asian markets, which were open during the announcement of the agreement, rapidly shot up after news spread.

The added security that taxes will not increase significantly and US government spending will not slow down fueled the surge in investor confidence and general stock prices.

The fiscal cliff resolution is hailed as a victory for President Barack Obama by most news sources. One of Obama's campaign promises, raising taxes on the wealthy, was effectively put into place by the compromise.

Bush-era tax cuts will expire this year for the top 1% of America: households that make over 450,000 dollars and individuals who make over 400,000 dollars. Though Obama campaigned for

increased taxes for the upper 2% of America, this is still a significant step for future tax raises, as this is the first time in more than two decades that taxes have been raised.

Furthermore, government spending was raised to a rate of 24.4 percent of GDP, which is the highest ever seen in this country since World War II. This goes along Obama's vision of increased spending to revitalize the economy.

Even with the successful bipartisan efforts of the Democrats and Republicans, many are still angry about the resolution. Specifically, Northeastern states have expressed their disappointment in Congress, mainly House GOPs, for delaying relief for areas struck by Hurricane Sandy earlier this year. New Jersey Governor Chris Christie called the delay "disappointing and disgusting", and repeatedly criticized Congress, in particular Speaker John Boehner.

NHL lockout ends

BY: CARL YIN

NHL players and team owners finally came to a compromise on a new collective bargaining agreement (CBA) on Jan. 6, marking an end to the lockout.

The old CBA expired in September, which was written after the 2004-2005 lockout of the NHL. It took players and owners over 100 days to come to such an agreement, which primarily dictates the amount of money players will receive for the upcoming years.

Because of the length of the lockout, the NHL season will have to be shortened this year from 82 games to around 50 games, and events such as the Winter Classic and the All-Star Game will most likely be cancelled.

As the CBA deal becomes finalized, teams can start their preparations for the start of the season. Preseason camps are expected to start the weekend of Jan. 11-13, which will help players get in shape and acquainted to playing again after a long summer.

Official games are expected to start soon: league officials

told teams to get ready to play by Jan. 19.

The Carolina Hurricanes, the state's NHL team located in Raleigh, is projected to do well this season. Many local fans have long awaited this season's beginning, as the Hurricanes made some big moves after this offseason. The Hurricanes traded for Jordan Staal, the younger brother of Captain Eric Staal, and is expected to play a major role for the Hurricanes this season. Also signed was offensive star Alexander Semin, who was claimed off the free-agents list. Semin was signed to a 1-year, \$7 million contract, but has faced criticism in his last few seasons for his subpar play.

One concern that the NHL faces after a lengthy lockout is the morale of the fans, who are clearly angered that unsuccessful negotiations from the players and owners have cut the season short. Attendance will be effected, but it is not known whether the effect will be negative or positive. After the 2004-2005 season lockout, attendance rose for all but eight teams in the league. This year,

Sports news outside the bubble

NFL tragedies, NBA, Heisman, Messi

BY: STEVEN LIAO

Catching up on the latest sports stories outside of the NCSSM Bubble...

Tragedies strike in the NFL

Jovan Belcher, a starting linebacker for the Kansas City Chiefs, killed his girlfriend on Dec. 1, 2012, Cassandra Perkins and then killed himself.

After a heated argument in the morning after Belcher returned from another woman's house, Belcher shot Perkins in her mother's presence. He then left and arrived at the Chief's practice facility with a gun to his head.

There, he confessed to general manager Scott Pioli and head coach Romeo Crennel, who tried to persuade him to drop the gun, that he had killed his girlfriend. After thanking both men and asking them to take care of his three-month old daughter, Zoey, whom he

fathered with Perkins, Belcher knelt by a car and shot himself. He was twenty-five years old.

The Chiefs won their second game of the season the next day. They also planned a fund for Belcher's daughter Zoey.

The following Saturday, Cowboys practice squad player Jerry Brown died in a car crash with intoxicated driver and fellow teammate John Brent. It was a week of tragedies in the NFL.

Stories of a young NBA season

Just over one month into the NBA season, several issues in the NBA have generated media attention.

The San Antonio Spurs were fined \$250,000 for resting Tim Duncan, Tony Parker, Manu Ginobili, and Danny Green against the Miami Heat on Thursday, November 29. Of the four rested players, only

Ginobili does not start and all play significant minutes.

The Miami Heat game was the last game in a ten-day, six-game road trip for the Spurs. The Spurs were preparing to face the Western-conference leading Grizzlies the following Saturday.

Although the Spurs had employed similar star-resting tactics in the past, they had never done so only a month into the season.

The Los Angeles Lakers are also a hot topic due to their early season struggles. Twenty games into the season, the Lakers are 15-19, a surprise due to their offseason acquisitions of center Dwight Howard and point guard Steve Nash.

After starting the season 1-4, the Lakers made changes by replacing head coach Mike Brown with former Knicks coach Mike D'Antoni. Speculation on causes for the disappointing start includes the Laker's misfit for D'Antoni's fast-paced scheme and injury situations with Pau Gasol and Nash.

Finally, the New Orleans Hornets are expected to change their mascot to the Pelicans as soon as next season. The current "hornets" mascot is a carryover from the Charlotte Hornets, where the organization was originally located.

New owner Tom Benson, who also owns the New Orleans Saints, purchased the Hornets in March.



Lionel Messi celebrates after one of his many goals this year. Courtesy of IBN Live

the Cotton Bowl.

Historic moment for the Heisman trophy

On Dec. 8, 2012, for the first time in college football history, the Heisman trophy, given to the most outstanding player in college football, went to a freshman, Texas A&M quarterback Johnny Manziel.

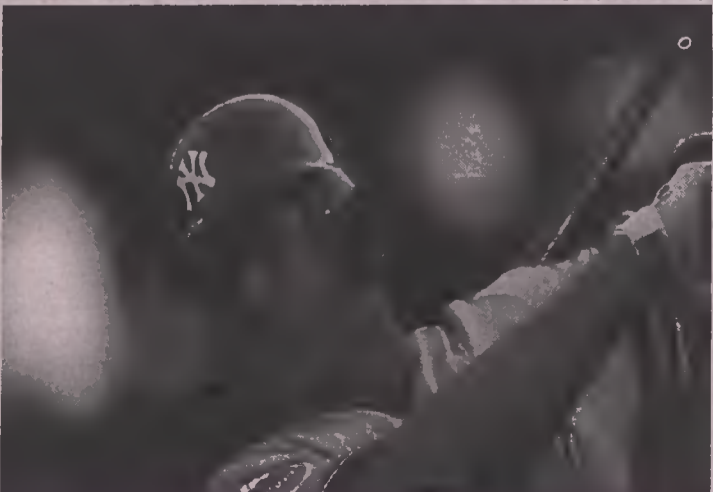
Manziel, a redshirt freshman who turned twenty earlier this December, beat out fellow quarterback Colin Klein from Kansas State and linebacker Manti Te'o from Notre Dame.

Manziel's accomplishments include breaking the SEC single-game record for most offensive yards in a game not once but twice and beating Cam Newton's record for most total yards in a season by an SEC player. Manziel led the Aggies to a 10-2 record and to a victory against Oklahoma in

Lionel Messi breaks long-standing record

Lionel Messi, the 25 year old Argentine forward for FC Barcelona, recently broke a record set by legendary striker Gerd Müller in 1972. After scoring two goals against Real Betis on December 9th, Messi became the record-holder for most goals scored in a year. With half of December left, Messi has already scored 91 goals this year.

In 2012, Messi became the all-time top scorer for Barcelona, was awarded the UEFA Champions League top scorer award for the fourth year in the row and even became the father of a baby son, among other accomplishments. Breaking Müller's record would cap off an excellent year for Messi.



Alex Rodriguez is being carefully observed after incidents in past seasons. Courtesy of WNYC