



Diggs adds to Panthers' linebackers

Continued from page 1C
 The middle- and second-year player Thomas Davis into a full-time role gives Carolina speed and flexibility.
 "The good thing is there are so many good young players," said Diggs, who is in his sev-

enth year. That's going to help us all the way down the road, hopefully throughout the playoffs. There's depth and youth and freshness and it's going to be huge."
 Diggs' thoughts aren't far from the playoffs. After five

successful years in Green Bay, the Packers fell apart in 2005, dropping to 4-12 and all but conceding to rebuilding.
 "That's what it became up in Green Bay and that's definitely not the situation I wanted to be in," he said.

"Your NFL career is so short, if you can help it or somewhat control it, you really don't want to be in that situation because this season, mentally they're already saying they're rebuilding, so they're probably not going to do that well.

They've accepted rebuilding and it's an excuse why they're not going to do that well as opposed to a team with high expectations before snap one of any camp."
 Most important, Diggs likes the organization's commit-

ment to winning now.
 "It's kind of like buying a new house," he said. "You can tell almost immediately when you walk in the front door if you're going to buy it. It was a matter of walking in and feeling comfortable."

United States still a stranger on soccer's grandest stage

Continued from page 1C
 "We're here to get results and do well," he said. "The World Cup is an experience you want to enjoy. The guys are having a great time. There's no tension or anxiety within the team because of the security issues."
 Not so the opening game. U.S. players know well that years of work could be wiped out by just a few seconds of lapses against the Czechs, Italy and Ghana, all part of the United States' tough Group E.

Former congressman Jack Kemp, once an NFL quarterback, proclaimed on the floor of the House of Representatives: "Football is democratic, capitalism, whereas soccer is a European socialist sport."
 Twelve of the 23 U.S. players are based in Europe, several with big clubs, but many say they still encounter condescension from continental types skeptical of their new-world pedigree.

ABC and ESPN bought U.S. English-language television rights for the 2010 and 2014 World Cups for \$100 million, and Univision purchased U.S. Spanish-language rights for the next two tournaments for \$325 million.
 Corporate sponsors have amped up their support, with Nike erecting giant billboards in New York and San Francisco featuring Donovan, Clint Dempsey, Eddie Johnson and DaMarcus Beasley and the warning "BEWARE."

Comunale in Florence, Italy, that day to root on players he coached at the University of Virginia.
 "In a sense it was embarrassing how far behind we were," he said. "We didn't belong on the field."
 As host of the 1994 World Cup, the United States made it to the second round before losing to eventual champion Brazil. At the 1998 tournament in France, the Americans finished last, leading to Arena's hiring.

Herundolo on the right. Reyna anchors the midfield, where Beasley could flank him on either side, with Bobby Convey and Dempsey possible starters.
 Donovan and Brian McBride, who each scored two goals in 2002, are starters barring unforeseen injuries, and forward Josh Wolff or defensive midfielder Pablo

Mastroeni could get selected.
 Four years ago, the United States upset highly favored Portugal 3-2 in the opener, so the Czechs say they expect the Americans to play them tough.
 "They play fast soccer," midfielder Tomas Rosicky said. "We've seen what they're capable of."

"It's very difficult to lose the first game and expect to get through," Donovan said.
 Their battle for respect extends beyond the famous soccer grounds of Europe. In America, many sports fans remain unconvinced that soccer is worth their time.

"Until we've really proven ourselves on kind of the European stage, I think it will still be there," said goalkeeper Casey Keller, who plays here and lives in a German castle.
 Growth has been slow, but steady.
 Major League Soccer, launched in 1996, has 12 teams, with more planned.

Current coach Bruce Arena sat in the stands at Stadio

He is now the longest-tenured of the 32 World Cup coaches.
 Arena has plenty of lineup options, but won't divulge them. His defense appeared set, with Keller in goal, Lewis at left back, 6-foot-4 Oguchi Onyewu and Eddie Pope in the center, and Steve

Sting searches for consistency on boards, tempo

Continued from page 1C
 by a lot, so that was a big focus throughout the week in practice," Sutton-Brown said.
 "I think we understand as a team that for us to be successful, we've got to go inside

and outside. When we get the ball inside and they start doubling, we can go back outside and work the game that way and we're successful when we work together."
 Charlotte's early struggles

are linked to its difficulties on the boards and controlling tempo. With fewer second-chance opportunities or unable to stop opponents, the Sting fell three games below .500. The goal now is to use

its newfound commitment to rebounding as a springboard to the remainder of the season.
 "It (is) frustrating, but the one thing you can always do is rebound, and we weren't being successful in that area," Sutton-Brown said. "You see that we can do it and when you do it we are successful, so we know it has to be done for us to be successful."

Pontiac's Solstice adds excitement

General Motors has always touted its Pontiac division as the performance division, despite keeping the Camaro and Corvette in the Chevy brand.
 Cars like the CTO, Gran Prix, Grand Am and other names conjure visions of great and not so great vehicles. Still, this company once proudly boasted "We build excitement."

There's even less room in the trunk, which has enough space for the manually operated top but little else.
 Ah, but who buys a convertible for practicality? No one. The Solstice is a weekend toy that can pass for a daily commuter if you don't need the room. The 177-horsepower four-cylinder certainly will give you nice fuel economy and even a little giddy up. Press the gas and the engine responds nicely. There's a gurgling exhaust note that fits the car's sexy body. I wished for a bit more torque on steep inclines but that will be taken care of with a turbocharged engine in a few months.

The Solstice handles very well due in part to its rear-wheel drive configuration. The steering is quick and feels nicely weighted. The 18-inch wheels have a lot of stick-em but don't give a harsh ride. The four-wheel independent suspension is tuned more for sport, but doesn't penalize with a harsh ride.

Maybe the company needs to go back to that tag line. Its Solstice is something special with a capitol S.
 It's one of the most stylish convertibles of any brand in the past 20 years. Its wide stance and Italian stallion curves set the heart sputtering. Top up or down, this is a killer car.
 Open the door and get a bigger surprise — GM got the interior right. No Playskool dash to be seen. Nice pebbled surfaces, bright work around the gauges and clean classic lines make this a great place to sit.
 OK, maybe if you only sit on the driver's side. There's leg room for tall drivers but not passengers. Even short riders will wish for a few more inches. The seat has minimal adjustment for there is no back seat to intrude upon.

The handling isn't as sharp as a Mazda Miata but the Miata has never looked so sexy.
 If you want one of these you can get in with only \$20,490. If you want air conditioning, power windows, door locks and mirrors, antilock brakes upgraded radio and automatic transmission, fork over an additional \$7,500.
 That's still a bargain for such a sexy convertible.

WINFRED B. CROSS
 Test Drive



COCA-COLA "CITIZEN" OF THE MONTH
"Reggie Mobley"
Partner, Back to the Basics

Motto for Encouraging Children:
"You 'All' can succeed, just put in the work. Work with ethics and accountability, stay focused, and most of all apply yourself when doing homework."
 - Reggie

Our "Citizen of the Month," Reggie Mobley, is a native Charlottean with a great desire to help improve our community by working to improve the lives of our children. Reggie is on a mission and finds the best way to touch children is through what they like: Sports. If the basketball court is where to reach them, that's where Reggie is. As girls J.V. coach at West Charlotte High School, he has the opportunity to give life instructions to help mold them for the future while charting plays on the court. In addition, as part of the West Charlotte security team, he gets yet another chance to be a role model while giving instruction to following school rules. Taking his mission one step further, Reggie is a partner in the Back to the Basics year round sports program, and directs the summer basketball camp at St. Paul Baptist Church.

A 1984 graduate of Garinger High School, Reggie attended Central Piedmont Community College, joined the Navy in 1985, returned to the area to work as a Navy Reserve Officer and ended his tour of duty in 1996 as Petty Officer Third Class. His career path includes graphic art with Arts Engraving and driving for Federal Express. He joined CMS in 1989 as a bus driver and has since climbed the ladder of success. In addition, Reggie is employed part-time with Park and Rec in the Ray of Hope program at St. Paul Baptist Church.

Reggie is married to Annette Covington Mobley. They have two children, 19-year old Donte is a sophomore at Morehouse College, and 10-year old Devin attends Villa Heights Elementary School. The family are members of Mt. Zion A.M.E. Zion Church where Reggie is very active on the Steward Board, and sings on the Hymn, Mass and Men's choirs.

Best Wishes "Reggie" from
Coca Cola Bottling Company Consolidated of Charlotte

Hidden Valley Optimist Club
10th Annual Golf Tournament

All festivities will be held at the tradition Golf Club on June 23, 2006 with a captians choice format. The golf tournament is one of the club's major fund raisers

Individual Player \$65.00
 Tournament starts @ 8AM

All proceeds will benefit youth in the communities

The Perfect Film For Every Family!

DUMBO
 BIG TOP EDITION

New Edition includes:
 Learning a Trick, Watching Game Cards & More!

On DVD June 6!

GENERAL AUDIENCES
 Learn More About Dumbo's High-Flying DVD At DisneyDVD.com
 Distributed by Buena Vista Home Entertainment, Inc., Burbank, CA 91521 © Disney

FREE DVD to the 1st "5" New Advertisers