

# HOUSTON PROMOTES MAJOR APPLEWHITE TO HEAD COACH

**HOUSTON:** The University of Houston didn't end up needing to go far in replacing head coach Tom Herman.

Major Applewhite, who served as Herman's offensive coordinator the last two seasons, was promoted to the job on Friday. It will be the first head coaching job for the 38-year-old Applewhite.

"We had our sights set on a focused competitor who has demonstrated success and possesses a deep connection to college and high school football in the great state of Texas," Houston athletic director Hunter Yurachek said. "As this process was completed, it was clearly evident the only individual to offer our position to was Major Applewhite and he was

indeed the right man to lead our program." Herman recently left Houston to become the coach at Texas after two years with the Cougars and there was speculation Houston might hire Alabama offensive coordinator Lane Kiffin. Instead, Houston went with Applewhite, a Louisiana native who nonetheless has deep ties and familiarity with Texas.

"Living in the best state for high school football is a true blessing and advantage for our program and I cannot be more thankful for the support of our outstanding high school coaches from throughout the state," he said.

The Cougars meet San Diego State in the Las Vegas Bowl on Dec. 17. Applewhite

steps into a program that has had lot of success in the last 10 years and has become a launching pad for coaches. Art Briles went 34-28 with a Conference USA title at Houston from 2003-07 before moving on to Baylor. Kevin Sumlin went 35-17 from 2008-11 before leaving for Texas A&M. Herman went 22-4 with an American Athletic Conference championship in 2015 and was perhaps the hottest coaching commodity during his two-year tenure at Houston. Under Applewhite's direction, the Cougars gained more than 500 yards 11 times and passed the 600-yard mark four times. The offense piled up 40 points 12 times and scored at least 50 points five other occasions in the past two seasons.

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## EXPLOSIVE PASSING

"It's no coincidence that the success UH football has achieved over the past two seasons happened with Major Applewhite running our offense," Houston President Renu Khator said. "His energy and creativity are responsible for one of the most explosive passing games in college football and I am confident that as our head coach he will continue our upward trajectory as a nationally relevant athletics program."

Applewhite spent seven seasons as an assistant at Texas before joining Herman's staff. He was the co-offensive coordinator

in his last four seasons with the Longhorns after working as assistant head coach for the first three seasons. The running backs had plenty of success under Applewhite's guidance with their best season coming in 2011 when the group combined for 2,300 yards rushing and 23 touchdowns. A year later the team's running backs combined for almost 2,000 yards rushing.

His time at Texas wasn't without problems. Applewhite was disciplined in 2009 for what Texas called an "inappropriate" conduct with a student trainer on a bowl trip. Applewhite's pay was frozen for a year and he was ordered to undergo counseling. He was later promoted to offensive coordinator.—AP

## WAKE FOREST OUTLASTS DENVER TO REACH NCAA SOCCER FINAL

**HOUSTON:** After a frustrating first half that saw his team stymied by a resilient Denver defense, Wake Forest coach Bobby Muuss' message to his team was to keep going.

"If we're enjoying playing, we'll be victorious tonight," Muuss said. Following a dominant second half and overtime, Ian Harkes broke in the 102nd minute and Wake Forest beat Denver 2-1 in double overtime Friday to advance to the College Cup title game.

Wake Forest (19-3-2) will face Stanford in the championship today. Stanford beat North Carolina 10-9 on penalty kicks after the teams failed to score in regulation and two overtime periods. The Demon Deacons reached the championship game for the first time since winning the 2007 title.

Harkes calmly slotted his low finish past goalkeeper Nick Gardner into the bottom corner to cap an impressive Demon Deacons counter attack. Wake Forest had plenty of opportunities to seal the victory prior to Harkes' goal, outshooting Denver 14-2 in the second half and overtime.

"I didn't really expect it to be off the counter-attack," Harkes said. Wake Forest's Jon Bakero opened the scoring in the seventh minute. Bakero took possession from Denver defender Graham Smith 30 yards from goal in the center of the field, turned to his right and delivered a curling effort past Gardner.

Trailing for only the fourth time this season, the Pioneers (20-1-3) responded 10 minutes later. Graham Smith sent a lofted pass over the defense to forward Andre Shinyashiki, who pounced on a rebound to equalize after his first shot was saved by goalkeeper Alec Ferrell. It was Shinyashiki's team-high ninth goal of the season.

After halftime, Muuss credited his team for settling the game down and taking control.

"They're tight games," Muuss said. "No one wants to make mistakes. I thought they did a really great job of staying compact."

The Pioneers outshot Wake Forest 5-4 in the first half, 5-4, but the Demon Deacons settled the game down and took control from the start of the second half.

"I think there was a little bit of frustration today," Harkes said. "We need to settle the game down. In the first half, it was a lot of back and forth."

The Demon Deacons had the best chances in the second half. Bakero took a cross from the right wing and hit a shot off the crossbar, while Harkes had a shot in the final minute go straight at Gardner.

The winner in the second overtime came off the counter-attack following a Denver corner kick. Bakero turned past a defender near midfield and started a 3-on-1 counter with Harkes to his right. "There was just one defender there and I took a big touch," Bakero said. "I tried to take him to the left to create space for Ian." The loss was Denver's first of the season and first since losing to SMU in the NCAA Tournament last season.

"I'm really proud of my group," senior midfielder Sam Hamilton said. "I think we took the program to a place it's never been, which is not an easy thing to do. We built a belief for the program to feed off of."

Muuss coached and recruited Denver's Jamie Franks to play for the Demon Deacons in 2005 as an assistant. Muuss then took his first head coaching job in Denver in 2007. Franks joined his former coach's staff and became the head coach of the Pioneers when Muuss moved to Wake Forest.

"We had a moment before the game underneath the tunnel that was special," Franks said. "He's my mentor." — AP



**DETROIT:** Columbus Blue Jackets center Alexander Wennberg (10), of Sweden, knocks the puck away from Detroit Red Wings defenseman Niklas Kronwall (55), also of Sweden, during the first period of an NHL hockey game Friday, in Detroit. — AP

# BLUE JACKETS WIN FIFTH STRAIGHT OVER RED WINGS

**DETROIT:** Brandon Dubinsky scored a tiebreaking goal in the second period and the surging Columbus Blue Jackets won their fifth straight game, 4-1 over the Detroit Red Wings on Friday. Lukas Sedlak got his first NHL goal for the Blue Jackets, who have earned at least a point in 12 of their last 13 games. Cam Atkinson contributed a short-handed goal in the first period for Columbus. Dylan Larkin's power-play goal in the second was the only scoring of the night for the Red Wings. Sergei Bobrovsky had 32 saves for the Blue Jackets. Sam Gagner scored into an empty net with 13.9 seconds remaining. Detroit goalie Petr Mrazek was pulled in favor of Jimmy Howard after Sedlak's goal made it 3-1 in the second.

## DUCKS 3, SHARKS 2

Hampus Lindholm got his first goal of the season with 5:38 remaining, helping Anaheim beat San Jose after blowing a two-goal lead. Goals by Brent Burns and Kevin Labanc brought San Jose back after Rickard Rakell and Antoine Vermette scored in the first period for Anaheim. The 22-year-old Lindholm held out this season before signing a six-year contract extension in late October. He didn't play his first game until Nov. 9 and got his first goal in 15 contests. Jonathan Bernier had 22 saves for the Ducks and withstood a frantic final attack after San Jose pulled its goalie with 2 minutes left. Martin Jones stopped 29 shots for the Sharks.

## RANGERS 1, BLACKHAWKS 0

Nick Holden scored 55 seconds into overtime, Antti Raanta made 26 saves against his former team and the New York Rangers beat the Chicago Blackhawks 1-0 on Friday night. Derek Stepan passed from the boards to a streaking Holden in the middle of the ice, and he beat Scott Darling on the stick side for his fourth goal of the season. Darling was going for his second straight shutout while subbing for injured starter Corey Crawford but had to settle for another solid performance. Raanta, who made his NHL debut with Chicago in 2013 and played for the Blackhawks for two seasons before he was traded to New York, improved to 15-0-3 in 20 career appearances at the United Center. The 27-year-old Raanta had 17 saves in Thursday's 2-1 victory at Winnipeg, and coach Alain Vigneault opted to give him a second straight start over Henrik Lundqvist because of his recent play and his success in Chicago.

## WILD 3, OILERS 2, SO

Eric Staal scored in the sixth round of a shootout and Minnesota beat Edmonton. Matt Dumba and Jason Zucker scored in regulation for Minnesota, which has won three straight. Wild goalie Devan Dubnyk made 25 saves. He entered with a league-best .946 save percentage and 1.65 goals-against average. Leon Draisaitl and Ryan Nugent-Hopkins had goals for the Oilers, whose four-game losing streak began with a 2-1 home overtime loss to the Wild last Sunday.

## CAPITALS 4, SABRES 1

T.J. Oshie and Marcus Johansson each scored a goal, Philipp Grubauer made 27 saves and Washington beat Buffalo for its third straight win. Jakub Vrana and John Carlson also scored, helping Washington beat Buffalo for the third time in 15 days. Kyle Okposo had a goal and Robin Lehner made 25 saves for Buffalo. The Sabres have lost three of their last four.

## BLUES 4, DEVILS 1

Robby Fabbri scored twice and Vladimir Tarasenko had three assists, lifting St. Louis over New Jersey. Tarasenko had eight of St. Louis' 32 shots on goal, while Ryan Reaves and Jaden Schwartz also scored for the Blues. Jake Allen stopped 20 shots and won for the ninth time in 10 starts. Keith Kinkaid had 28 saves for New Jersey, and PA Parenteau had a goal. — AP



**HOUSTON:** Denver's Karsten Hanlin (17) tries to stop Wake Forest's Alex Knox (18) from getting control of the ball during the first half of the NCAA soccer men's College Cup semifinal Friday, in Houston. — AP

## CLOCK TICKING ON BECKHAM'S MIAMI PLAN: MLS COMMISSIONER

**TORONTO:** David Beckham's protracted efforts to bring a Major League Soccer team to Miami are coming up against a deadline, league commissioner Don Garber said Friday.

Beckham announced nearly three years ago that he intended to bring a team to the South Florida city, exercising an option he had to create a new franchise.

But the former England, Manchester United and Real Madrid midfielder has faced problems finding a stadium deal raising questions over the viability of the project.

MLS's board are meeting on Thursday to discuss further expansion plans for the league and the Beckham situation will be on the agenda. "There is a deadline on the Miami deal. I am not going to share that deadline, it is an agreement we have with David and (his business partner) Simon Fuller," Garber told reporters. "But ... we need to resolve the Miami situation so that we can go forward with our expansion plans for (expansion) teams 25-28 because they are team 24 and if they are not going to be 24 there are going to be a lot of things that need to move around and it is something we will discuss at our board meeting," he said.

"We may or may not come out of that meeting with anything definitive that we will announce publicly as it relates to Miami," added Garber. MLS will add its 21st and 22nd teams next season with Atlanta United and Minnesota United joining the league. A new Los Angeles franchise will join in 2018 with Beckham's Miami team projected to be the

next in line. "There is a timetable and we continue to work with our ownership group because we want a team in Miami. We try to do everything we can to ensure we have the right recipe for success as we are building clubs that we would like to be there for the rest of time," said Garber.

"We continue to be very engaged there. We have reached agreement on land, we have investor groups, we have all sorts of community issues ... zoning issues and it is all happening in real time," he said.

After announcing his plan in February 2014, Beckham had proposals for stadiums at two different waterfront sites rejected by local politicians. A plan to build a stadium next to the Miami Marlins baseball park also fell through and Beckham's group are now working on a site in the Overtown district of the city. — AFP



David Beckham

## NHL results/standings

Anaheim 3, San Jose 2; NY Rangers 1, Chicago 0 (OT); Minnesota 3, Edmonton 2 (SO); Columbus 4, Detroit 1; St. Louis 4, New Jersey 1; Washington 4, Buffalo 1.

| Western Conference |    |     |    |    |     | Eastern Conference    |              |     |    |    |     |    |
|--------------------|----|-----|----|----|-----|-----------------------|--------------|-----|----|----|-----|----|
| Central Division   |    |     |    |    |     | Atlantic Division     |              |     |    |    |     |    |
| W                  | L  | OTL | GF | GA | PTS | W                     | L            | OTL | GF | GA | PTS |    |
| Chicago            | 17 | 8   | 4  | 78 | 69  | 38                    | Montreal     | 18  | 6  | 3  | 81  | 61 |
| St. Louis          | 16 | 8   | 4  | 78 | 76  | 36                    |              |     |    |    |     |    |
| Minnesota          | 14 | 8   | 4  | 72 | 55  | 32                    |              |     |    |    |     |    |
| Winnipeg           | 13 | 14  | 3  | 78 | 87  | 29                    |              |     |    |    |     |    |
| Nashville          | 12 | 10  | 4  | 77 | 74  | 28                    |              |     |    |    |     |    |
| Dallas             | 11 | 11  | 6  | 72 | 89  | 28                    |              |     |    |    |     |    |
| Colorado           | 10 | 14  | 1  | 56 | 75  | 21                    |              |     |    |    |     |    |
| Pacific Division   |    |     |    |    |     | Metropolitan Division |              |     |    |    |     |    |
| Anaheim            | 14 | 9   | 5  | 76 | 74  | 33                    | NY Rangers   | 19  | 9  | 1  | 100 | 70 |
| Edmonton           | 14 | 11  | 5  | 90 | 83  | 33                    | Pittsburgh   | 17  | 7  | 3  | 93  | 81 |
| Calgary            | 15 | 13  | 2  | 75 | 84  | 32                    | Columbus     | 16  | 5  | 4  | 81  | 54 |
| San Jose           | 15 | 11  | 1  | 64 | 58  | 31                    | Washington   | 16  | 7  | 3  | 69  | 59 |
| Los Angeles        | 13 | 11  | 2  | 67 | 69  | 28                    | Philadelphia | 16  | 10 | 3  | 96  | 92 |
| Vancouver          | 12 | 13  | 2  | 65 | 79  | 26                    | New Jersey   | 12  | 9  | 6  | 69  | 77 |
| Arizona            | 8  | 13  | 5  | 58 | 82  | 21                    | Carolina     | 11  | 10 | 6  | 66  | 72 |
| Eastern Conference |    |     |    |    |     | NY Islanders          |              |     |    |    |     |    |
| Atlantic Division  |    |     |    |    |     | 11                    | 10           | 5   | 69 | 75 | 27  |    |

Note: Overtime losses (OTL) are worth one point in the standings and are not included in the loss column (L)

## ABUSE SCANDAL - WHAT WE KNOW

**LONDON:** The sex abuse scandal that has rocked English football's foundations has seen new revelations every day since they first surfaced a fortnight ago.

Here AFP Sports takes a look at what we know so far:

### COACHES ACCUSED

At least seven youth coaches or scouts-three of whom are now dead-have been accused of sexual abuse, although the National Police Chiefs Council revealed on Friday there are 83 potential suspects. Two of those still alive-former Crewe Alexandra youth coach Barry Bennell, who has served three jail terms for sex offences, and Northern Irishman Jim McCafferty, who served as kitman and a scout at Celtic-have been charged. Bennell, who also had links with Manchester City, Stoke and Leeds, was found unconscious in a hotel near London before being charged with eight counts of sex abuse whilst McCafferty spoke to the Irish Mirror as he wanted to 'cleanse his soul' before walking into a police station where he was subsequently charged although with non-football linked offences committed in Ulster.

### CHELSEA AND SAINTS IN EYE OF THE STORM

Some of the biggest names in English football such as Chelsea and Manchester City figure among the 98 clubs from all levels the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) say have been 'impacted'. The present Chelsea regime has attracted a welter of criticism for paying compensation to former youth player Gary Johnson-who was abused by ex-Chelsea scout Eddie Heath in the 1970s when the club was under different ownership-but with a gagging order attached in 2015. He broke that condition to go public and the club issued a statement 'apologising profusely' for his suffering. Another Premier League club who are in the sights of former players is Southampton. Around a dozen have claimed they were abused by former youth coach Bob Higgins with some taking legal action against the Saints. Higgins was found not guilty of sex abuse in 1992. Three years earlier, police and social services issued a joint letter warning

he was dangerous to children. He has yet to comment.

### NUMBER OF VICTIMS

The number of victims, according to the NPCC, still stands at around 350 although that figure could well rise as 'Operation Hydrant'-the overall investigation into historic sex abuse covering all walks of life-sifts through the allegations, "with processes to determine if the referral relates to a victim or a witness and whether the information received is new or a duplication of information already received".

### FA COVER-UP?

Present FA chairman Greg Clarke doesn't believe so although he admits people may have preferred to turn a blind eye to the rumours. The FA do not emerge well from the 1997 Channel Four documentary exposing sex abuse in football dismissing the allegations with a 'no comment'. However, four years later they launched a review into child protection at football clubs led by an eminent specialist, Professor Celia Brackenridge. Meant to last four years it was abruptly halted in 2003. The researchers criticised the clubs' attitude and added the clubs were at loggerheads with the FA over the 'importance of the issue'. Clarke, who has only been in the job for a few months, has launched a review headed by an eminent lawyer to uncover how much the FA knew about the allegations raised down the years in what he has described as being the biggest crisis in English football that he could recall.

### INVESTIGATIONS GROW AS SCANDAL WIDENS

Aside from the FA review, such is the breadth of the scandal that 21 of the United Kingdom's 45 territorial police forces are holding investigations. The NPCC said on Friday every call or allegation was being acted upon as quickly as possible but given the number of claims not all could be dealt with immediately. "As the number of calls being received across the service is higher than usual, it may take longer than normal for an officer from a local force to make contact to follow up from the initial call," they said. — AFP