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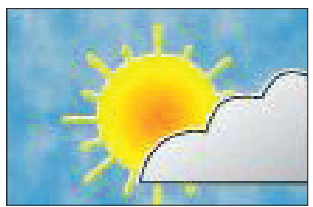
Cowboys' playoff run ends in 34-3 loss to Minnesota.
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BIG SPRING HERALD

MONDAY

JANUARY 18, 2010



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Council to again consider pool

By THOMAS JENKINS
 Staff Writer

Members of the Big Spring City Council will meet in a special work session Tuesday night to once again discuss the future of the municipal swimming pool, a subject that has been nothing less than polarizing among area residents and groups.

The council is expected to discuss design ideas and a possible funding timeline during the meeting, which is set for 5:30 p.m. in the city council chambers, located at 307 E. Fourth St.



DARDEN
 Assistant City Manager Todd Darden

During the meeting, the council will also meet with representatives from Water Technologies Inc., the company the council approved a contract with during its meeting last Tuesday.

"They've informed us they will be here and ready to answer questions," Darden told the council during the previous meeting. "The committee in charge of this matter looked at three different

companies, and they felt Water Technologies Inc. is the best company for us to work with."

The council gave the order not to open the swimming pool at the end of the school year in May 2009 after city officials learned the facility failed to meet federal requirements laid out in the Virginia Graeme Baker Act, which requires public swimming pools to have measures in place to prevent drain entrapment, a situation where a swimmer becomes trapped by the suction force of a pool drain.

According to city officials, the facility also failed to meet ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) requirements, many of which were identified when the city was sued by a local resident for not meeting the federal requirements.

Although the suit was later settled, the pool — along with the Municipal Auditorium — have both remained closed until they can be brought into compliance with federal and state law.

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QUILT SHOW HELD



Dianna Valdez looks at one of the several quilts that were on display at the third annual Signal Mountain Quilting Guild Show, held Saturday at Heritage Museum.

Legal?

Abbott doubts constitutionality of reform bill

CHUCK LINDELL
 Austin American-Statesman

AUSTIN — The health care overhaul bill is controversial, but is it unconstitutional?

Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott contends that portions probably are — particularly proposed tax penalties for the uninsured that he says threaten individual liberty and a sweetheart deal for Nebraska that he calls "uniquely contemptible and corrupt."

Several legal scholars, however, say Abbott's constitutional analysis falls short because it underestimates congressional power and relies on a selective reading of prior Supreme Court rulings.

The White House and congressional Democrats dismiss Abbott's conclusions as well. But a growing number of Republicans are embracing the idea of a constitutional challenge by states and individuals if current health care legislation becomes law.

"Unfortunately," Abbott wrote last week in a letter to



ABBOTT

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Oil stays near \$78 on demand doubts

PABLO GORONDI
 Associated Press Writer

Oil prices hovered around \$78 a barrel Monday as traders weighed doubts about global oil demand against a weaker U.S. dollar, which made crude cheaper for investors holding other currencies.

By midday in Europe, benchmark crude for February delivery was up 30 cents to \$78.30 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. On Friday, the contract slid \$1.39 to settle at \$78. The

price was down \$4.75 for the week after declining for five straight days.

Earlier Monday, declines in most of the major Asian stock markets dampened investor sentiment and helped pushed crude prices as low as \$77.07.

This followed Friday's decline on Wall Street, where rising loan losses at JPMorgan Chase & Co. sparked concerns about profits at other big banks. Bank of America Corp., Citigroup Inc., Goldman Sachs Group Inc., Morgan Stanley and Wells Far-

go & Co. are expected to post results this week.

"We see a downward pressure on oil. The corporate earnings results so far have not really indicated much revenue growth and that points to continued weakness in the U.S. economy," said Victor Shum, an energy analyst with consultancy Purvin & Gertz in Singapore.

Shum said the recent cold weather in the U.S. has failed to sharply

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Howard men look for 12th straight vs. NMMI



HERALD PHOTO/Joe Zigtema

Josh Watkins has carried Howard College thus far in WCJAC play, scoring more than 20 points per game. The Hawks host NMMI tonight at 7:45 p.m.

Herald Staff Report

Howard College will look to keep pace with conference leaders Midland and Odessa as it hosts New Mexico Military Institute tonight at 7:45 p.m. at Dorothy Garrett Coliseum.

The Hawks have won their last 11 games and own a 2-0 WCJAC conference record, which is tied atop the standings with NJCAA No.

1-ranked Midland and No. 11 Odessa. Howard is ranked No. 10 in the latest poll, up three spots from No. 13 the week before.

The Hawks defeated New Mexico Junior College 75-58 Thursday as they improved to 15-1. Midland squeaked by South Plains 65-57 at home, and Odessa beat NMMI 94-70.

The NMMI Broncos are still looking for their first WCJAC con-

ference win after falling to NMJC and Odessa by more than 20 points.

The Broncos are led by 6-6 sophomore Sedric Martin, who is coming off his best game of the season. Martin recorded 27 points and 12 rebounds in NMMI's loss to Odessa.

Howard will counter with guard Josh Watkins, who has scored at least 20 points in the team's first two district games.

Howard Head Coach Mark Adams is happy with the team's 2-0 conference start but said there was room for improvement.

"It's a good start, but we certainly have not played up to our potential the last two games," Adams said Thursday. "We've got to grow up and this team's got a lot of maturing to do if we're going to make a run at the conference championship."

Minneapolis dominates Cowboys in 34-3 blowout

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS—The now-annual waffling over retirement has made Brett Favre the butt of so many jokes, but seriously — his performance this season for the Minnesota Vikings has been as masterful as ever.

Favre couldn't resist putting retirement on hold for a second straight season to satisfy the craving of that irreplaceable adrenaline rush of winning a game when it really counts — and to chase the championship he hasn't had in 13 years.

He got a little bit closer with this clutch effort.

"I guess that's what they expected when they talked about getting me," Favre said.

Four touchdown passes by Minnesota's 40-year-old quarterback, a personal playoff game record for the NFL's all-time leading passer, sent the Vikings to the NFC championship game with a determined 34-3 victory over Tony Romo and the Dallas Cowboys on Sunday.

The Vikings (13-4) will take on the Saints next Sunday at New Orleans (14-3), with the winner going to the Super Bowl in Miami.

"This is why I came back," Favre said.

Favre found Sidney Rice for three scores and put an exclamation point on the final one when his fourth-and-3 pass from the 11 was caught in the end zone by Vianthe Shiancoe after the 2-minute warning. Never in 22 previous playoff games had Favre thrown for four touchdowns, and never before had he beaten Dallas in the postseason after losses to the Cowboys ended his first three playoff experiences with Green Bay.

Favre finished 15 for 24 for 234 yards with-



AP PHOTO/ Paul Sancya

Tony Romo is sacked by the Vikings' Jared Allen on Sunday at the Metrodome in Minneapolis. Romo was sacked six times, fumbled three times and threw an interception in the game as Minneapolis beat Dallas 34-3 to advance to the NFC Championship next week in New Orleans.

out a turnover, slapping fives with anyone in reach and rapidly pumping his right arm in celebration all afternoon. Favre even added another accomplishment as the first 40-year-old quarterback to win a playoff game.

"Probably the most fatigued or tired I got today was celebrating," he said with a smile.

All those big-game ghosts that Romo was supposed to have gotten rid of in last week's win over Philadelphia came back and haunted the Cowboys again.

"Any time you come in with the expectations and goals we set and don't accomplish them, No. 1, it's frustrating," Romo said, taking a long pause. "Right now, it's just hard to think the season is over."

Romo lost two of his three fumbles and threw an interception, with two of those turnovers leading to Vikings field goals. He completed 22 of 35 passes for 198 yards, but the best season of his career was brought to a crashing halt at the hands of a fierce Vikings rush.

Romo took six sacks, three by Ray Edwards.

"They supposedly had a high-powered offense coming in, but they didn't get no points today," Vikings defensive tackle Pat Williams said. "They're on the 'L' side. We're on the 'W' side."

The Vikings, who had last week off while Dallas whipped the Eagles, felt slighted by all the national favor building for the surging Cowboys.

"The Tasmanian devils were coming from Dallas that were about to bombard the state of Minnesota and run through us like Sherman through the South," coach Brad Childress said, exaggerating the popular opinion about this game. "All of us felt it quite palpably."

So the Vikings played aggressively all the way to the end, enough to make Cowboys linebacker Keith Brooking angry. He confronted Childress on the sideline after Favre's fourth touchdown toss and continued his rant afterward.

"I think it was totally classless and disrespectful," Brooking said.

Both Favre and Childress claimed innocence of running up the

score.

"That wasn't rubbing it in. It's just taking care of business," the coach said.

The Vikings couldn't get Adrian Peterson going again, watching his 26 carries net only 63 yards, but it didn't matter with the way Favre was throwing and the way the defense was harassing Romo.

Favre has had to do a lot more than he, or the Vikings, anticipated this season as opponents continue to slam the line of scrimmage to stop the running game.

"I was thinking, 'Well, I'll throw about 15 times, hand it off to Adrian, kind of pick and choose where we throw, who we'll throw it to, have the coverages we want and our defense will be outstanding so

I can kind of just slip through the cracks,'" Favre said. "Boy was I mistaken."

After gaining 118 yards, the Cowboys got only 130 the rest of the way and watched the buzz from their first playoff win in 13 years last week fizzle out.

"It's like the elevator falling from the top. It's tough when it's over. If you don't win it all, you have not reached your goal," coach Wade Phillips said.

The turning point came in the first quarter during a second straight too-easy drive for Dallas. Romo dropped a second-down snap at the 35, and on fourth-and-1 at the 30, Suisham sent Shaun Phillips out for a field goal. It went wide left, as did his try from 49 yards in the third quarter.

Four plays later, Favre found Rice in single coverage and fired a perfectly placed ball up the sideline from 47 yards out. Just like that, the Cowboys were behind for the first time since their loss to San Diego on Dec. 13.

"Words can't describe how we feel," said tight end Jason Witten, who had 10 receptions for 98 yards. "I think this team had the pieces there."

NOTES: Edwards appeared to hurt his knee in the third quarter, limping off the field. He returned briefly, but then was done for the day with the game in hand. Childress said he wasn't concerned about the injury. ... Rice's three TDs set a Vikings playoff record and tied the NFL record. ... Cowboys LT Flozell Adams hurt his leg late in the second quarter and didn't return. ... This was the second-biggest margin of defeat in Dallas playoff history. The Cowboys lost to the Lions in Detroit 38-6 in the divisional round after the 1991 season.

Sports in brief

Tuesday's area basketball games
All are district games
Check Wednesday's Herald for results

Big Spring at Abilene Cooper, 6/7:30 p.m.
Coahoma at Wall, 6:30/8 p.m.
Forsan at Iraan, 6:30/8 p.m.
Dawson at Grady, 6:30/8 p.m.
Stanton at McCamey, 6:30/8 p.m.
Loop at Sands, 6:30/8 p.m.

Coahoma softball players invited for alumni game

All Coahoma Bulldogette softball alumni are invited to join in the 8th annual Coahoma softball alumni game scheduled for Feb. 13 at 3 p.m.

The game will be played at the Coahoma High School field as the Bulldogettes 2010 season opener.

Call Amy Dunn at 268-3228 or e-mail at adunn@coahoma.esc18.net for more information.

BSHS Cheerleaders to offer mini-camp

The Big Spring High School cheerleaders are offering a mini-cheer camp for girls kindergarten through eighth grade.

The camp will be held Feb. 13 from 10 a.m. to noon, Feb. 14 from 2:30-4:30 p.m. and Feb. 15th from 6-7 p.m. Sign up through Jan. 25.

The girls will perform at halftime of the boys basketball game on Feb. 16. Cost is \$50 per child. Call Shannon Stuteville at 264-3641 ext. 1416.

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