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Pro hockey aims to send a message on violence

Vancouver's Bertuzzi gets 'harsh' suspension for attacking ex-Hershey Bear

BY TIM LEONE
Of The Patriot-News

Colorado Avalanche forward Steve Moore is hospitalized and done for the season.

Now Vancouver Canucks forward Todd Bertuzzi is finished, too.

The National Hockey League suspended Bertuzzi for the rest of the regular season and playoffs — a total of at least 17 games — yesterday in the wake of his blind-side attack during Monday night's game that left Moore, formerly of the Hershey Bears, with a broken neck and concussion.

NHL officials described the sentence as a message that it won't tolerate premeditated violence on the ice. Police are investigating the incident that has captured sports and news headlines all week.

"This is not a part of our game, and it will not be tolerated in our game," NHL commissioner Gary Bettman said yesterday.

He called the punishment "stern, harsh and quick." Bettman said he

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Rogers Sportsnet

In a scene taken from television, Vancouver's Todd Bertuzzi punches Colorado's Steve Moore from behind during the third period Monday night. The attack has been replayed on television all week.

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¼ Flyers' Brashear: Police should stay out of itC1



JULIA MALAKIE, The Associated Press

Ryan Pledger of Woburn, Mass., left, and his cousin, Aaron Pledger of Brooklyn, N.Y., right, join members of two Baptist churches protesting same-sex marriage outside the statehouse in Boston yesterday as Massachusetts lawmakers took up the issue inside.

FIGHTING BACK

Mass. lawmakers back gay-marriage ban

From wire reports

The Massachusetts Legislature for the first time yesterday gave preliminary approval to an amendment to the state constitution banning same-sex marriage but allowing civil unions for gay couples.

The amendment, touted by its sponsors as a compromise on the volatile issue of gay marriage, must still pass a series of votes and survive further attempts to modify it before it can be adopted by the state's constitutional convention.

If the current measure passes, it would require an additional vote in the Legislature in 2006 and then be put on the ballot for Massachusetts voters — two years after same-sex marriages have begun in the state.

Across the country yesterday, the California Supreme Court ordered an immediate halt to same-sex weddings in San Francisco.

Massachusetts took center stage in the national debate over gay marriage following a landmark decision by its highest court in November that was reaffirmed last month. The rulings set the stage for the nation's first legally sanctioned gay marriages on May 17.

"This is a consensus amendment," said Republican Sen. Brian Lees, the senate minority leader, who sponsored the amendment, which is also backed by House Speaker Thomas Finneran and Senate President Robert Travaglini. "I do believe that this is where the public is."

The amendment won approval during three preliminary votes before the Legislature recessed just before midnight last night. Lawmakers plan to return March 29 to resume deliberations.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the country yes-

Please see **GAY** on Page A11



BRIAN BRANCH-PRICE, The Associated Press

Paul Breakiron, left, and Gary Nehls of Uniontown, leave city hall in Asbury Park, N.J., after they were denied a marriage-license application. Officials voted yesterday to halt applications.

Bedrock values keep midstate out of fray

BY ELIZABETH GIBSON
Of The Patriot-News

The Rev. Eva O'Diam, pastor of Metropolitan Community Church of the Spirit in Susquehanna Twp., performs about 50 spiritual commitment ceremonies for gay couples each year.

But O'Diam says she does not think Pennsylvania will grant licenses for same-sex marriages.

"I think there's a perception, at least in central Pennsylvania, that it's conservative enough that [gay couples] wouldn't get a positive answer," O'Diam said.

Many gay couples are keenly aware of that. "At this point, I don't think I'm prepared to

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Bombs kill scores on trains in Spain

Al-Qaida-linked group says it carried out attacks that hurt 1,400

From wire reports

MADRID, Spain • A coordinated series of 10 terrorist bombs hidden on trains in Madrid exploded yesterday morning, killing at least 192 people and injuring more than 1,400 in the deadliest terrorist attack on a European target since World War II.

Immediately after the explosions, officials speculated that the Basque separatist group ETA, which has long campaigned for an independent homeland in northern Spain, was responsible. But as the day wore on, they were less certain.

An unsubstantiated claim of credit received by an Arabic newspaper and the discovery of a stolen van containing detonators and Arabic-language tapes of Quranic verses began to turn attention to the terrorist organization al-Qaida.

A Basque politician, Arnold Otegi, denied ETA was behind the blasts and blamed "Arab resistance," noting Spain's support for the Iraq war.

"An act of barbaric terrorism has engulfed Spain with profound pain, repulsion and anger," King Juan Carlos said on national television.

Panicked rush-hour commuters trampled on each other, abandoning their bags and shoes, after two of the bombs went off in one train in the Atocha station in the heart of Madrid.

Train cars were turned into twisted wrecks and platforms were strewn with corpses. Cell phones rang unanswered on the bodies of

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INSIDE

¼ Witnesses and rescue crews recount the horrorA8

House boosts broadcast indecency fines

BY JONATHAN D. SALANT
Of The Associated Press

WASHINGTON • Spurred by public outrage over football's Super Bowl halftime show, the House voted overwhelmingly yesterday to dramatically increase fines for broadcast indecency.

While definitions vary widely on just where indecency begins, House members clearly agreed that the best way to combat shock jocks and other over-the-edge TV and radio programming is to hit companies and personalities in the wallet. Hard.

Under the legislation, approved on a 391-22 vote, broadcast companies and entertainers could be fined up to \$500,000 per indecent incident. That's a huge jump from the current \$27,500 for license-holders and \$11,000 for personalities.

The bill goes to the Senate, where the Commerce Committee unanimously passed similar legislation this week. President Bush has prom-

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Infinity pupils dig deep to meet creative challenges

BY KELLY BOTHUM
Of The Patriot-News

Rhonda McGilberry's pupils spend their days inside her kindergarten classroom, but their minds soar far beyond their tiny desks and chairs.

Since September, they've burrowed beneath the Earth's surface to study igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic rocks. They cooked sugar in a pot and cooled it at different rates to see the crystals that formed.

They speak German. Every day brings a whirlwind of activities for the 20 youngsters in

McGilberry's inaugural class of kindergartners at Infinity Charter School. The school, with a focus on educating gifted students, opened last fall after a two-year battle with Central Dauphin School District.

Its fight with Central Dauphin is not over. The district challenged the state charter school appeal board's approval of Infinity's charter. Central Dauphin officials had argued that the school would discriminate against pupils who are not gifted. The two sides await a Commonwealth Court ruling.



MICHAEL FERNANDEZ, The Patriot-News

Teacher Nancy Hall instructs first- and second-graders about Abraham Lincoln at Infinity Charter School in Penbrook. Infinity, which opened in the fall, has 80 pupils from 11 area school districts.

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