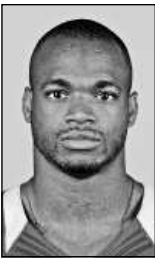


SPORTS

Vikings’ Peterson avoids jail in plea agreement

CONROE, Texas (AP) — Minnesota Vikings star Adrian Peterson avoided jail time on Tuesday in a plea agreement reached with prosecutors to resolve his child abuse case. Peterson was indicted in September on a felony charge of injury to a child for using a wooden switch to discipline his 4-year-old son earlier this year in suburban Houston. The All-Pro running back says he never intended to harm his

son and was disciplining him in the same way he had been as a child growing up in East Texas. The boy suffered cuts, marks and bruising to his thighs, back and on one of his testicles, according to court records. The case revived a de-



Adrian Peterson

bate about corporal punishment, which is on the decline in the U.S. but still widely practiced in homes and schools. Under the agreement approved by Montgomery County state District Judge Kelly Case and announced during a scheduled court hearing, Peterson pleaded no contest to a misdemeanor charge of reckless assault. If convicted of felony child abuse, he could have

faced up to two years in prison and a \$10,000 fine. A tentative trial date of Dec. 1 had been set in Peterson’s case. Peterson has been on paid leave from the Vikings under a special exemption from the NFL commissioner to take care of his legal problems. It was not immediately clear how the plea deal would affect his playing status. Last month, a visiting judge denied a request by

prosecutors to remove Case as judge in the case. Prosecutors had accused Case of being biased against them and wanted a new judge appointed. The plea deal made moot a pending motion by prosecutors to revoke Peterson’s \$15,000 bond for alleged marijuana use. Corporal punishment is legal in every state. The Texas Attorney General’s Office notes that belts and brushes “are accepted by

many as legitimate disciplinary ‘tools,’” but “electrical or phone cords, boards, yardsticks, ropes, shoes, and wires are likely to be considered instruments of abuse.” Texas law says the use of non-deadly force against someone younger than 18 is justified if a parent or guardian “reasonably believes the force is necessary to discipline the child or to safeguard or promote his welfare.”

Resilient Vikings enjoy consecutive rallies

EDEN PRAIRIE (AP) — Mike Zimmer has brought a demanding style to the Minnesota Vikings. The past two weeks, they’ve played with more of his personality. Even the hard-driving head coach let on some satisfaction. “I think we showed some resiliency there. I think our team grew up a little bit,” Zimmer said Monday, reflecting on the 29-26 comeback victory over Washington. He added: “I’ve always said I like how this team works and how they continue to compete and practice, and I think it’s starting to show up a little bit at the end of games.” The end-of-game performance last season was bad enough to bring the end of the previous coach’s employment. Leslie Frazier’s last of three years running the team was marked by a series of closing-seconds collapses. Five times, the Vikings lost a lead in the final min-

ute of regulation, for four defeats and one tie. That here-we-go-again feeling was palpable not only among the fan base, but in the locker room after the Vikings lost 17-16 at Buffalo Oct. 19. They gave up a touchdown pass with 1 second remaining, capping an 80-yard drive by the Bills that took a little more than 3 minutes. The next week, the Vikings bounced back. The game at Tampa Bay was ugly at times, but Teddy Bridgewater confidently moved them into position for the tying field goal as time expired in the fourth quarter. Then Anthony Barr beat the Buccaneers in overtime with a touchdown return off a fumble he forced. Against the Redskins, the Vikings rallied from deficits of 10-0, 20-14 and



Mike Zimmer

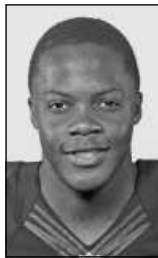
26-21 before emerging victorious. Matt Asiata’s third touchdown run of the afternoon gave them the last lead with 3:27 left. Now they’re 4-5 and still alive in an underwhelming NFC playoff race, entering their bye week. “We gave away that Buffalo game. The last two games have come down to that situation, and we’ve got it done,” safety Harrison Smith said. Zimmer was asked whether his vision for the team’s development was progressing any faster or slower than he expected. “I’m not very patient,” he said, smiling, “so we’ll just leave it at that.” Gracious enough, though, to give the players today off. The original plan called for practice that day, but they’ll be free after gathering Tuesday at Winter Park for workouts and meetings. “He said to us, ‘You take care of me and I’ll take care of you,’” fullback Jerome Felton said. “He’s been con-

sistent to that all the way back to training camp.” Minnesota’s next game is Nov. 16 at Chicago. With better protection for Bridgewater by the offensive line the past two games, the biggest issue for the Vikings these days is the deep ball. Bridgewater ranks 30th in the NFL in yards per attempt among qualifying quarterbacks with 6.71, and he misfired several times Sunday, particularly with wide receiver Cordarrelle Patterson. Zimmer, though, faulted Patterson for a lack of precision with his routes and said he doesn’t believe Bridgewater has a deficiency throwing long. “What I do believe is we probably need to throw it some more, and we’ll hit it,” Zimmer said, adding: “We’re going to continue to do it and continue to practice it. And I thought it was important this week that we took some shots down the field. And even if you don’t hit them, that’s not necessarily a bad thing.”

Vikings ruin RG3’s return, top Washington Redskins

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Five starts into his NFL career with Minnesota, Teddy Bridgewater has looked a lot like a rookie throughout much of his time on the field. With time winding down and the Vikings needing to score, though, he’s been at his best. Bridgewater threw a touchdown pass in the final minute of the first half and made four first-down throws on the go-ahead drive in the fourth quarter, helping the Vikings spoil the first game back for Robert Griffin III by beating the Washington Redskins 29-26 on Sunday. “Sometimes you’re going to have some slow starts, but it’s all about how you finish the game,” said Bridgewater, who completed 26 of 42 passes for 268 yards without a turnover and ran three times for 20 yards. Matt Asiata rushed for three touchdowns for the Vikings (4-5), who sacked Griffin five times, including on three straight plays in the third quarter. They rallied from deficits of 10-0, 20-14 and 26-21. “Don’t try to be perfect. Just play football,” coach Mike Zimmer told Bridgewater before the game. He misfired badly on several deep passes early, including an overthrow to Cordarrelle Patterson in the first quarter when the wide receiver didn’t have a defender within 20 yards of him. Griffin, meanwhile, was busy making several crisp passes down the field in his first appearance following a seven-week absence due to a dislocated ankle. But after Bridgewater’s incompletion on fourth-and-2 at the Washington 39 when he could’ve run past the down marker, the Vikings gave him the ball right back on a diving interception by Captain Munnerlyn. Bridgewater went 3 for 4, finishing with a 20-yard touchdown throw to tight end Chase Ford, who had 66 yards on five catches. “I love this kid: the way he goes about his business, his demeanor, the way he carries himself in front of the team, the way he carries himself in front of every-

body else,” Zimmer said. “You couldn’t ask for a better guy.” Griffin went 18 for 28 for 251 yards and one touchdown plus 24 yards on seven carries for the Redskins (3-6), who had a rough start and finish to their afternoon. The two buses carrying players, coaches and other personnel to the stadium crashed on the interstate exit ramp a few blocks away, hard enough to shatter the windshield and cause some minor injuries. “That didn’t affect the game. We’re going to have some bruises and some scrapes, but we were able to play,” linebacker Trent Murphy said. A little later, a protest of thousands of people decrying their nickname took place outside the stadium. A report of disharmony in the locker room surrounding Griffin’s return to the field also surfaced prior to the game. “Can’t really worry about the negativity that’s swirling around. Someday that’ll stop. I truly believe that,” said Griffin, who, like Bridgewater, took several hard hits. He had his chance to write a better ending for the story Sunday, but a sack put the Redskins in a third-and-20 situation from the 29 right after the 2-minute warning. Griffin gained 14 yards on a run to give them a manageable fourth down, but his throw to Pierre Garcon across the middle was low and skipped through the wide receiver’s legs. “I could’ve played better to help us win the game at the end,” Griffin said. “I’ll still cherish those moments. In the next game that it comes, I’ll come through.” With an eight-play, 80-yard drive capped by second of two touchdowns by Alfred Morris, who had 92 yards on 19 carries, the Redskins surged ahead. The 2-point conversion failed, leaving the lead at 26-21 at the 9-minute mark.



Teddy Bridgewater

TWINS

► continued from B1

is filled with frustration. Ryan, long one of the most revered decision-makers in the game, has not been immune from the criticism, either, and he realized the importance of this hire. Molitor’s Hall of Fame and 3,000-hit club credentials were pluses, sure, but his reputation of valuable work with prospects in his role as a roving tutor

specializing in baserunning and infield play were equal strengths for Ryan to assess. Molitor served the 2004 season as hitting coach with the Seattle Mariners but has otherwise spent the majority of his post-playing days tutoring throughout the Twins organization. “I’ll tell you this much, there won’t be a team anywhere in the league with a better leader than (Molitor),” Twins third baseman Trevor Plouffe tweeted. “Very excited to battle with him!” Molitor made his reputation with the Milwaukee Brewers and won a World Series with the Toronto Blue Jays, but he finished a stellar 21-year career of flawless compact swings with the Twins from 1996-98. The soft-spoken native of neighboring St. Paul attended the same high school as Twins first baseman Joe Mauer. After a standout career at the University of Minnesota, the

Brewers took Molitor with the third pick in the 1977 draft. His time in the majors wasn’t without tumult. Brewers fans were stung when he signed with the Blue Jays. He struggled with injuries. Then there was the drug problem that dogged the early stage of his career, use of cocaine and marijuana he later said was a reaction to pressure he felt by his image as the clean-cut, Midwest-raised star.

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