

The Mid-South Tribune Sports & Entertainment

Black Information Highway.com

Fort Bragg hosts NASCAR driver Austin Dillon for his Mission 600 visit to get ready for the Coca Cola 600

By Jason Ragucci, Fort Bragg Garrison Public Affairs Office

May 11, 2026 - Fort Bragg, North Carolina, hosted NASCAR driver Austin Dillon, May 7, as part of Mission 600, an annual program where racing teams visit military bases and learn about service members' daily lives in preparation for the Coca Cola 600.

Dillon, who drives the No. 3 Chevrolet for Richard Childress Racing, is a two time NASCAR champion with wins in the Daytona 500 and Coca Cola 600. This was not his first time at the Army installation. Dillon previously visited the post in 2019 during an earlier Mission 600 tour, where he also trained with soldiers and learned about airborne operations.

This year, Charlotte Motor Speedway sent drivers to military installations across the country for the ninth time to meet with troops and recognize their service. Fort Bragg became one of the key stops for the 2026 campaign.

During the visit, Dillon and his racing team fired a howitzer, received weapons training, tested a flight simulator and jumped from the installation's 34 foot jump tower. These hands on activities were designed to help the team understand the skills, training and challenges soldiers face every day.

Dillon said the experience helped him better understand why Memorial Day weekend is so important to NASCAR and to the

Please see sports page 4

NFL, NFLRA reach seven-year collective bargaining agreement

NEW YORK — May 8, 2026 — The NFL and the NFL Referees Association have reached a seven-year collective bargaining agreement that will run through the 2032 NFL season. The current deal was scheduled to expire on May 31.

The agreement was approved by the NFLRA Board of Directors and ratified by a vote of the NFLRA membership.

"This agreement is a testament to the joint commitment of the league and union to invest in and improve officiating," said NFL Executive Vice President of Football Operations Troy Vincent. "It also speaks to the game

officials' relentless pursuit of improvement and officiating excellence. We look forward to working together for the betterment of the game."

The deal covers a wide range of issues including economics, performance, and accountability, all with the shared goal of ensuring the outstanding officiating that the game demands.

"It was a mutual and determined effort, and the outcome is seven years of certainty for the league and the officials," said NFLRA Executive Director Scott Green. "We appreciate Troy Vincent and

Please see sports page 3

Grizzlies' Statement on the loss of Brandon Clarke

MEMPHIS, Tenn., May 12, 2026 – The Memphis Grizzlies released the following statement:

"We are heartbroken by the tragic loss of Brandon Clarke. Brandon was an outstanding teammate and an even better person whose impact on the organization and the greater Memphis community will not be forgotten. We express our deepest condolences to his family and loved ones during this difficult time."

The Tennessee Titans select four coaches for the NFL's Bill Walsh Diversity Coaching Fellowship

Seven current Titans coaches have participated in the annual fellowship, a league-wide program that has spanned over 30 years.

NASHVILLE, May 12, 2026 – The Tennessee Titans have announced the addition of four coaches who have joined head coach Robert Saleh's staff for the offseason training program as part of the NFL's Bill Walsh Diversity Coaching Fellowship program: **D'Anthony Batiste** (offensive line), **Darryl Blackstock** (linebackers), **Larry Dace** (special teams and running backs) and **Jeremy Holt** (performance).

The program's objective is to use NFL clubs' training camps, offseason workout programs and minicamps to give talented coaches opportunities to observe, participate, gain experience and ultimately obtain a full-time NFL coaching position. In 2026, Titans running backs coach **Randy Jordan** serves as the club's Bill Walsh diversity coaching fellowship coordinator. "I am honored to serve as the coordinator of the Bill Walsh Diversity Coaching Fellowship,"

Williams (Chiefs, 2021). **D'Anthony Batiste** will work primarily with the Titans' offensive line room. A former NFL offensive tackle, Batiste is currently a strength and conditioning intern for the football and baseball teams at the University of Las Vegas. He spent the previous eight seasons (2018-25) with the Oakland/Las Vegas Raiders, where he served as a strength and conditioning assistant. After playing collegiately at Louisiana-Lafayette (2001-03), Batiste spent two years in the Arena Football League and in law enforcement before signing with the Edmonton Eskimos of the Canadian Football League and then joining the Dallas Cowboys in 2006. His eight-season NFL career included stints with the Cowboys (2006), Panthers (2006-07), Falcons (2007-08), Commanders (2008-09), Broncos (2009-10), Cardinals (2010-12) and Steelers (2013). He played 37 games with 14 starts before announcing his retirement as an NFL player in 2018. A native of Marksville, La., Batiste served as

Please see sports page 3

Tennessee Titans sign first-pick Carnell Tate to rookie contract

rookie contract.

Tate, selected with the fourth overall pick out of Ohio State, becomes the sixth player from the team's 2026 draft class to reach a deal with the team.

Earlier, the Titans signed guard Fernando Carmona, running back Nick Singleton, defensive tackle Jackie Marshall, center Pat Coogan, and tight end Jaren Kanak.

Two of the team's eight picks re-

Please see sports page 2

Meet some of BIHMST Sports Correspondents



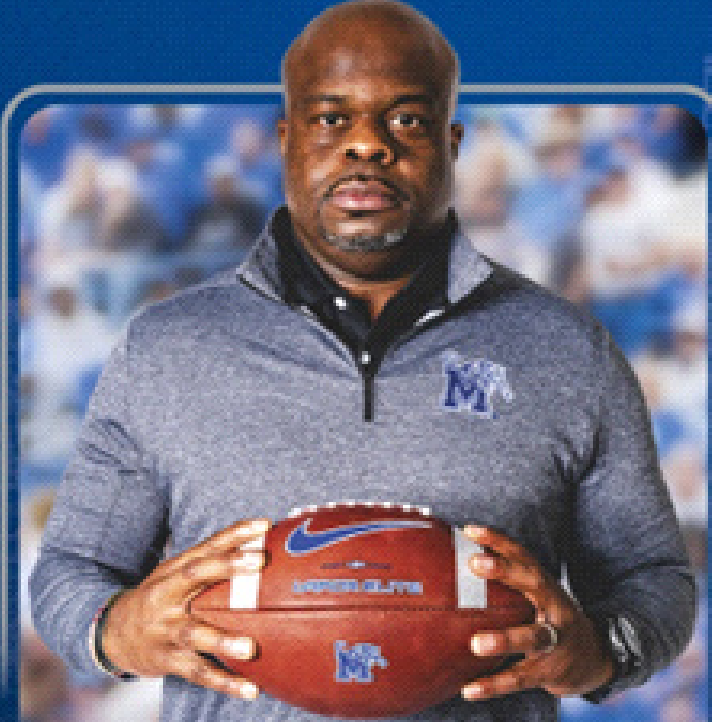
William M. Larsha, Jr.



Ashley Braun Gendek

BIHMST Travelers, join correspondents William M. Larsha, Jr. and Ashley Braun Gendek in their sports coverage of The University of Memphis Tigers, Memphis Grizzlies, TN Titans, Southern Heritage Classic, and more!

- 
- Wilson—TN State Fair Kicks Off 'Farm to Fair Feast' Fund-raiser ... *see sports-Ent. 4* ***
 - Sidney Chism Marks 26th Annual Community Picnic *see sports-Ent. 5* ***
 - Newsmax Audience Surges, Surpassing 25 Mil in Social Media... *see sports-Ent. 6* ***
 - Jasmine Wright Named Executive Director of Women Advocacy Center... *see sports-Law & Military 3* ***
 - Former Army Vet Aaron Banks Named U.S. Sales Manager-West... *see sports-Military 2* ***
 - Southern Drift Management & Media Company Launched *see sports-Ent. 4* ***
 - Grammy Winner Giveton Gelin Salutes Black Trumpet Players... *see sports-Ent. 6*





MEMPHIS '26
FOOTBALL

SEASON TICKETS

ON SALE NOW!

COACH CHARLES HUFF

GOTIGERSGO.COM/TICKETS