

## MORE BUCS COVERAGE

**8** Today at 11 a.m. on the "Bucs Bonus" show, Dave Reynolds looks back at what has been a disastrous first three games for Tampa Bay.

- JP Peterson examines where the Bucs go from here.
- Dan Lucas hosts a roundtable discussion with Tribune writers Roy Cummings, Ira Kaufman and Katherine Smith.

**TBO.com** Keyword: Bucs to submit your questions to Roy Cummings and Ira Kaufman.

## TODAY ON TV

1 Dolphins at Texans WTSP, Ch. 10  
 1 Saints at Panthers WTVT, Ch. 13  
 4:15 Jags at Redskins WTSP, Ch. 10  
 8:15 Seahawks at Bears WFLA, Ch. 8

Game-by-game capsules, Page 12

# Ruud Misses Mother's Influence

Bucs linebacker Barrett Ruud and his family are still coming to terms with the passing of Jaime, who died suddenly in June.

By KATHERINE SMITH  
 The Tampa Tribune

**TAMPA** — Barrett Ruud stretched out on the artificial turf of the Metrodome in Minneapolis, warming up before his first NFL game.

The Bucs rookie linebacker's eyes began to wander as he took in his surroundings. Soon they settled on a petite brunette standing on the sideline. She looked awfully familiar.

With a little bit of embarrassment, Ruud realized it was his mother.

"I was like, 'What is this? How did she get on the sideline?'" Ruud said. "Next thing I know, she's walking up talking to [defensive coordinator] Monte [Kiffin]."

Jaime Ruud wanted to see her son's debut up close and personal, and got a sideline pass.



**UP NEXT:**  
 Bucs at Saints  
 Oct. 8;  
 1 p.m.

"She figured a mother's supposed to do that," said Ruud's father, Tom.

Ruud is back in Lincoln, Neb., this weekend spending time with his family, minus one very important member.

Jaime Ruud, a registered dietitian and sports nutrition consultant who wrote the book "Nutrition and the Female Athlete," died June 30 after suffering a heart attack. She was 52.

The family was on vacation in Minnesota, an annual outing and Ruud's final bit of down time before training camp was to open in July, when

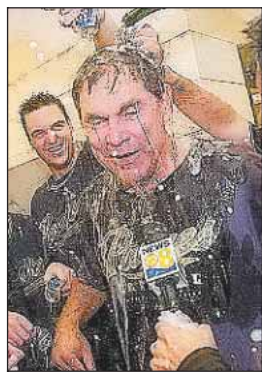
See **RUUD'S MOTHER**, Page 10 ►  
 "She walked me through everything," linebacker says.



Photo by TED KIRK

Barrett Ruud, with parents Tom and Jaime at a Nebraska game two years ago, says he talked to his mother about nearly everything except football.

## Baseball Playoff Races



### NL Central

Cardinals win (but so do Astros) to lower magic number to 1.

### NL West

Padres, Dodgers are in playoffs, but division title to be decided today.

### AL Central

Tigers and Twins stay tied, putting title up for grabs today (Detroit has tiebreaker).

DETAILS, Pages 4-5

# The Plan Is In Place

## SOMETHING TO BUILD ON

With key young veterans and promising prospects working their way up to the big leagues, the Rays believe they have a solid foundation to build a winning culture in Tampa Bay.



Tribune photo by JASON BEHNKEN

**CARL CRAWFORD:** Won his third AL stolen base title and surpassed 15 triples for the third consecutive year.



Getty Images

**ROCCO BALDELLI:** Returned from injuries that kept him out in 2005, and he posted solid numbers at the plate.



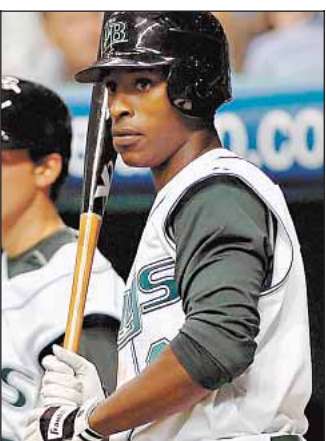
Tribune photo by JASON BEHNKEN

**SCOTT KAZMIR:** Won 10 games and struck out 163 before a shoulder injury derailed his season.



The Associated Press

**DELMON YOUNG:** Top prospect put 50-game suspension behind him to hit a home run in his Rays debut.



Tribune photo by JASON BEHNKEN

**B.J. UPTON:** The 2002 first-rounder is trying to adapt to playing third base.



Tribune photo by CLIFF McBRIDE

**EVAN LONGORIA:** The 2006 first-round pick helped lead Montgomery to the Southern League championship.

## RAYS' PATH: ESTABLISH A NEW CULTURE

By CARTER GADDIS  
 The Tampa Tribune

**CLEVELAND** — If Devil Rays manager Joe Maddon said it once, he said it dozens of times this season. This baseball team, in its ninth season, was the equivalent of a first-year expansion franchise.

Not that the eight seasons that came before Year 1 of the Stuart Sternberg Era were meaningless. If anything, Sternberg's chain of command came into it fully aware of the mistakes that were made before they came onto the scene.

And they were determined not to repeat them.

"There are aspects of an expansion franchise," first-year team president Matt Silverman said. "Not the roster that we have, per se, because it's a roster that we have had for a number of years. But in terms of creating a culture, a brand of baseball and a brand of business, it did operate somewhat like a first-year organization. We were all doing things together for the first time, and we were all trying to establish a culture distinct from the past."



Silverman

Free parking at Tropicana Field was one way the organization reached out to a disillusioned fan base. Other amenities were added to the ballpark — a spiffy new club level down the first-base line, a 10,000-gallon touch tank filled with cownose rays, cleaner bathrooms among others — with more promised for 2007.

Those are merely the most publicly visible steps taken by Sternberg's people to distinguish the new Rays from the surly and sorry era of Vince Naimoli's stewardship.

Maddon, when hired in mid-November, was charged with changing things internally, in the place that is (theoretically) most vital to the well-being of the franchise — the Rays' major-league clubhouse.

"Just the way you feel when you walk in that door had to change," Maddon said. "And I think it has. We still have a ways to go, but I'm getting the feeling that finally guys are on board, that they're starting to trust each other, they're not waiting for the other shoe to fall. They're not waiting for someone to be inconsistent in their approach, or say one thing and do something else."

Indeed, the face of the franchise, left fielder Carl Craw-

See **RAYS' PLAN**, Page 7 ►  
 Better farm system a priority.

RELATED STORY, Page 6:  
 Rays fall to Tribe 6-1, loss No. 100.

# Two Races In, Chase Is Still Wide Open

## BURTON LEADS BY ONLY 6 POINTS

By TONY FABRIZIO  
 The Tampa Tribune

**KANSAS CITY, Kan.** — Teammates Kevin Harvick and Jeff Burton have each won a race. Jeff Gordon has knocked out two top-five finishes, and Matt Kenseth has shown some clout.

But really, the first two races of NASCAR's third Chase for the Championship have done little to establish a front-runner.

Heading into today's Banquet 400 at Kansas Speedway, the Chase is almost as wide open as when it began. That's except for Kyle Busch, who, with finishes of 38th and 40th at New Hampshire and Dover, might be out of it.

**TODAY'S BANQUET 400:** 1:30 p.m.; WFLA, Ch. 8  
 "I don't see momentum [from anyone] yet," Jimmie Johnson said. "I see consistency from the No. 17 [Matt Kenseth] and the No. 24 [Jeff Gordon] and the No. 31 [Jeff Burton]. But I don't think anyone is really on fire yet."

With eight races left, Burton leads the standings by only six points against Gordon and 18 against Kenseth and rookie Denny Hamlin. Harvick is only 54 points back, Mark Martin 75 and Dale Earnhardt Jr. 102.

Johnson trails by 136, but his team has the ability to go on a tear at any time. Kasey Kahne is down by 182, but all of his best tracks are in front him.

Kahne will start on the pole today, driving an

See **BANQUET 400**, Page 8 ►  
 Hamlin is the wild card.