

Sports & Entertainment

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UFL announces Whisenhunt takes leave of absence; Turner steps in as interim head coach

ARLINGTON, TEXAS – March 24, 2025 – United Football League President & CEO Russ Brandon and Executive Vice President of Football Operations Daryl Johnston announced today that Ken Whisenhunt, head coach of the Memphis Showboats, has informed them that he will be taking a leave of absence from the team for personal reasons. Brandon and Johnston have named Offensive Line Coach Jim Turner to serve as interim head coach for the 2025 UFL season.

**Statement from UFL President & CEO Russ Brandon and UFL Executive Vice President of Football Operations Daryl Johnston**

"The impact that Ken has made on the culture of the Memphis Showboats in his brief time as

head coach has been very impressive and we were excited to see the team perform in Week 1. We take pride in the UFL being a Family First league and we respect Ken's decision to take a leave of absence for personal reasons at this time. We are fortunate to have Jim Turner in place to fill in as interim head coach and we are excited for his opportunity to lead the Showboats into the Opening Week of Season 2. If and when Ken Whisenhunt is ready to return to the UFL Family, we will welcome him with open arms."

Whisenhunt became head coach of the Showboats in September of 2024. Prior to that he served for nearly 30 years as a football coach at various levels in the NFL and NCAA, including a

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Memphis Showboats set for the big kickoff on Sunday, March 30 against the Michigan Panthers



Jaylon Allen (DE)



Troy Williams (QB)



Isaiah Washington (WR)

The Memphis Showboats have finalized their roster heading into the first week of the 2025 United Football League season. UFL teams will carry 50 active players throughout the 2025 season.

*See Full Roster on Sports Page 4*

Memphis Showboats release 2025 Game Theme Schedule for fans

MEMPHIS, Tenn. – The Memphis Showboats' 2025 United Football League season kicks off Sunday, March 30. The team announced its special themes for each home game at Simmons Bank Liberty Stadium.

The season-opener is slated at home, as the Showboats host the

Michigan Panthers in an 11 a.m. CT kickoff. It will be "Community Champions Day" celebrating the Champions of Memphis and the Mid South. The game will feature area student champions in the classroom and on the playing field as well as champions young and old in the

community. Champions Day will highlight the best of Memphis and showcase the winners in our midst every day.

The following is a look at a brief synopsis of the remaining home games and the themes that will be featured:

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Sports can empower young women to conquer many challenges and live healthy in both body and mind

By Dr. Brian Hainline

We're lucky to have more female sports stars than ever. But in terms of athletic participation, American girls are still considerably less likely to play a sport than boys. Each year, boys get about 1.13 million more sports opportunities than girls.

As someone who has spent a career studying the impact of athletics on mental and physical health, I see a strong correlation between this disparity and a troubling trend. In recent years, girls have experienced substantial declines in mental health relative to boys. Between 2011 and 2021, the number of girls who felt per-

sistently sad or hopeless increased from 36% to 57%, nearly double the number for boys. Boosting the number of girls in sports could go a long way toward improving their mental and physical health, along with their general well-being.

A recent report from the Women's Sports Foundation looked at data from several academic studies. Mental health disorders were 1.5 to 2.5 times less common for girls who currently play a sport compared to those who never have. Girls who par-

ticipate in athletics also reported significantly higher levels of meaning and purpose, as well as stronger peer relationships.

As a doctor and former collegiate athlete myself, I can attest that sports are a great way to help young people develop emotional resilience. Whether it's learning a new skill, working through a tough loss, or coming back from an injury, young athletes learn what it's like to become goal-oriented and overcome setbacks in a supportive environment that is challenging and fun.

The gender disparity in athletic participation points to an opportunity. More sports involvement

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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 University of Memphis Tigers, Memphis Grizzlies, TN Titans, Southern Heritage Classic, FedEx St. Jude Championship, Memphis Showboats, UFL, NFL, Soccer and more on The Mid-South Tribune and the Black Information Highway at [blackinformationhighway.com](http://blackinformationhighway.com)

*Welcome, Travelers!*

Legendary boxing champion George Foreman dies at 76



By William M. Larsha, Jr., Senior Sports Correspondent The Mid-South Tribune and the Black Information Highway

Two-time World Heavyweight Boxing Champion George Foreman died on March 21, 2025 at the age of 76. A statement from his family read that he was "surrounded by loved ones." No cause of death has been announced.

Foreman was born on January 19, 1948 in Marshall, Texas. He began boxing at the age of 17. He rose up the Golden Gloves ranks to become an Olympic boxer in 1968. He won the Gold Medal in the heavyweight division at the 1968 Summer Games. Five years

*Foreman may have been better known for a fight he lost. In 1974, he fought Muhammad Ali in Zaire, Africa. The fight was dubbed "the Rumble in the Jungle." For 8 rounds, Ali laid against the ropes while Foreman threw powerful punches. Once he tired out, Ali managed to score a knockout. Ali called his strategy the "Rope a Dope." It was perhaps the most famous fight of all time.*

later in 1973, Foreman won the World Heavyweight Championship. He beat Joe Frazier in a two-round knockout. The fight gave rise to Howard Cosell's famous call of "down goes Frazier!"

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MEMPHIS

SOFTBALL

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MEMPHIS

WOMEN'S SOCCER

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