

# BARDSLEY & CARLOS LLP

## News and Media

Charles Robinson, Yahoo! Sports

April 26, 2006

### **Transcripts allegedly tie Bush to sports agency**

Transcripts of parole violation hearings for New Era Sports & Entertainment associate Lloyd Lake not only detail alleged links between the marketing agency and USC running back Reggie Bush but also indicate contact with Trojan offensive tackle Winston Justice during the 2005 college football season.

In the transcripts – acquired by Yahoo! Sports from the U.S. District Court in San Diego – Lake's attorney, Marc Carlos, contends that his client's sports agency was "in negotiations with recruiting Reggie Bush" and that the agency at some point considered "potential litigation – or a settlement involving Mr. Bush's involvement with that agency."

San Diego-based agent David Caravantes, testifying as a character witness, claimed that he and Lake began working together in October to start a sports marketing firm that would be tied to the Sycuan Indian Tribe. That firm eventually took on the name New Era Sports & Entertainment. One of the tie-ins to the tribe was Michael Michaels, another one of the New Era founders who also works as a business officer for the Sycuans.

The Sycuan Tribe, acknowledging it was approached by Michaels and Lake, told the Associated Press Tuesday that it had no role with New Era Sports.

"There was a request to become partners in this New Era Sports," Adam Day, Sycuan's assistant tribal manager, told AP. "Both the tribal council and the development corporation board of directors refused to join into the business venture."

In the unsworn court testimony, taken on Jan. 30 and Feb. 6, in front of M. James Lorenz, Carlos produced a brochure put together by New Era Sports. The attorney then outlined Lake's role with New Era, and the marketing firm's involvement with Bush as a prospective client.

Carlos alluded to a fallout between Bush and New Era, noting that there had even been potential litigation discussed by the agency for breach of an agreement on the part of Bush and his family.

"He has been trying to get together a sports agency group," Carlos alleged of the attempt by Lake and others to form New Era Sports. "Apparently, they were in negotiations with recruiting Reggie Bush. And that matter is in litigation right now due to, I guess, representations made by Bush and his family to Mr. Lake's group."

Carlos later revisited the alleged fracturing of the relationship between the Bush family and New Era, noting that a meeting was supposed to have taken place among members of the firm to discuss some form of litigation.

"Apparently, what happened is that Mr. Bush – or through his associates – had made some type of agreement with Mr. Lake's group, the sports agency group that they had. There was a meeting to have happened. It was supposed to be on a Saturday where they were going to discuss potential litigation – or a settlement involving Mr. Bush's involvement with that agency."

Carlos, reached Tuesday, declined to elaborate on the testimony.

Details about Justice, a junior tackle who has made himself eligible for this weekend's NFL Draft, also surfaced during Lake's testimony. On Nov. 26, 2005 – one week before USC was to play UCLA in the regular season finale – Lake testified that both Justice and Bush were supposed to spend the night out with him. In his testimony, Lake explained his girlfriend had gotten upset with him for planning to go out with Bush, Justice and some of Bush's friends.

"Well, I had a sports agency we had formed, and we had a guy in, Winston Justice, from USC," Lake testified. "And [my girlfriend] had planned to go out with us that night, but Reggie Bush came into town. And at that time, he was going to go out with us, so I told her all his friends were coming and that it wasn't a good night for us to go out, and that kind of got her upset."

Lake said the group took a limousine to a club, and then eventually dropped Justice off at "Hotel Shalimar." There is no listing for a Hotel Shalimar in San Diego, however, there is an upscale \$300 per-night resort in the city's Gaslamp district called "Hotel Solamar." It is unclear from the testimony whether Bush was part of the group that night.

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"That's the first that we've heard of it and I probably need to verify it with Winston," Tessalone said of Justice's name appearing in the testimony.

Tessalone also told Yahoo! Sports that USC football coach Pete Carroll and athletic director Mike Garrett would be reserving comment until an ongoing investigation is concluded. An NCAA source confirmed Tuesday that the association has joined the Pacific 10 Conference in investigating the relationship between New Era Sports and Bush.

Caravantes also gave details of the New Era Sports venture in his testimony.

"Lloyd and I had got together in October to start a new sports management firm with the Sycuan, the Indian resort," Caravantes said. "And since then, Lloyd and myself, and some members of Sycuan and others, have put together a company called New Era Sports and Entertainment. And since October, Lloyd was a viable part of the company, helping recruit players, and in the process of merging this New Era Sports with Sycuan. In the process of this happening, you know, it obviously hurt the company because he had relationships with certain players who ended up not signing."

Bush signed with agent Joel Segal and marketing representative Michael Ornstein. His family lived in a house owned by Michaels for most of the last year until moving out last week.

Bush attorney David Cornwell and USC offensive tackle Winston Justice didn't return calls seeking comment.

Charles Robinson is a national NFL writer for Yahoo! Sports.