Arizona Daily Star

SATURDAY, MARCH 27, 2021 • SECTION B

Editor: Ryan Finley / sportsed@tucson.com

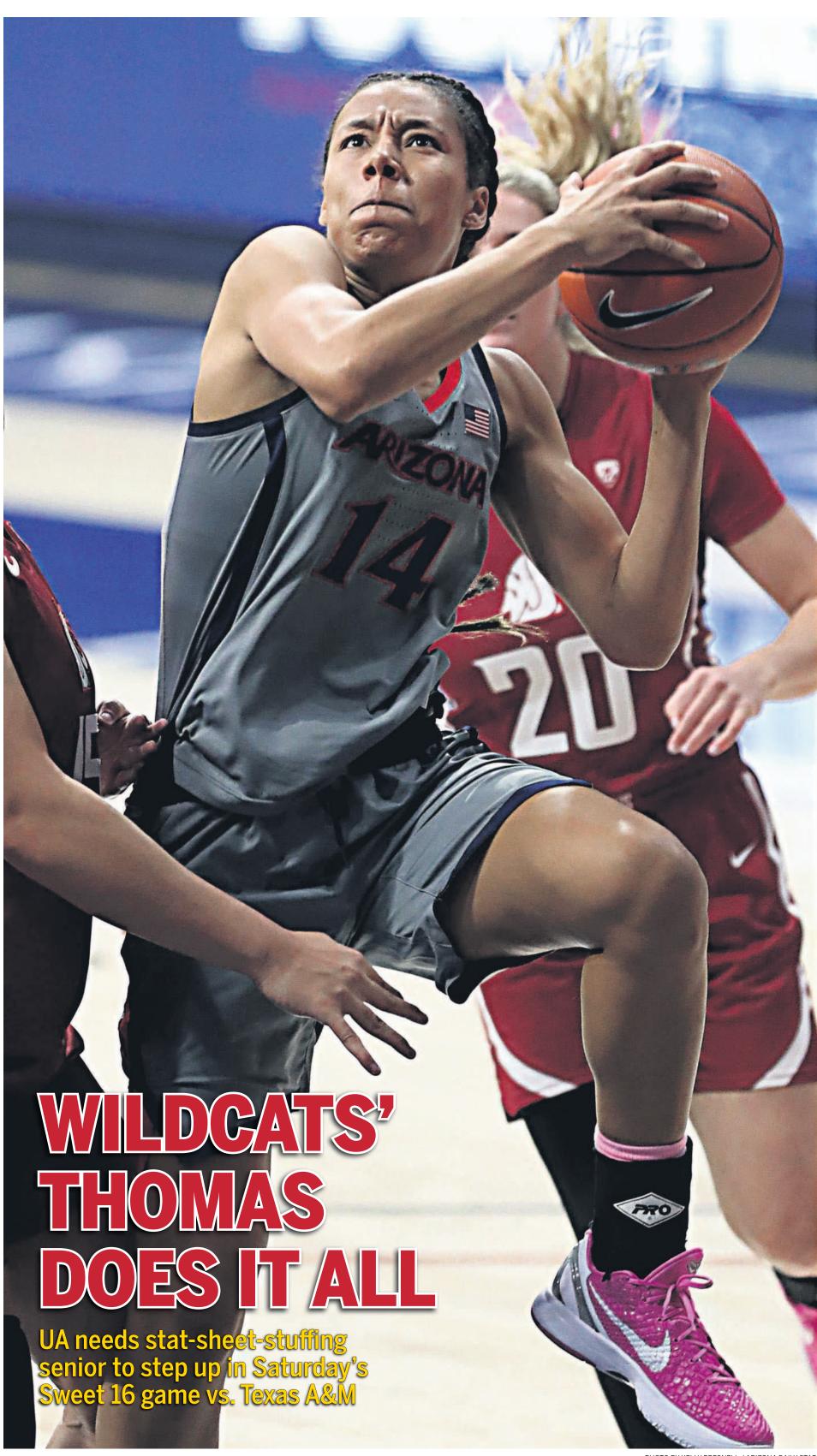


PHOTO BY KELLY PRESNELL / ARIZONA DAILY STAR

Hansen: Game a battle of program-building coaches

Arizona's Barnes, A&M's Blair crossed paths on their way to the top. **B2**

Aggies must contend with Wildcats' sensational Sam

Four-year captain Thomas baffles opponents with versaility, defensive tenacity. **B6-7**

Familiar faces joining new ones in Sweet 16 field Early upsets have changed the calculus in a tournament that's typically chalky. **B8**



football and softball coverage, and read up on Saturday's NCAA Tournament games.

RESTORATION SPECIALISTS BARNES, **BLAIR MEET IN SATURDAY'S SWEET 16**

he master builders of the women's Sweet 16 are Arizona's Adia Barnes and Texas A&M's Gary Blair. They are restoration specialists, no job too big, too messy or too tiresome.

Maybe they should go into business together: Barnes and Blair: We Fix Your Basketball Program.

After all, they've got a special connection.

Blair was hired by Texas A&M

athletic director Bill Byrne. Barnes was hired by Greg Byrne, Bill's son.

Blair took charge of an A&M operation that had not had a winning season for seven years, a bottom feeder of Big 12 bottom feeders, having reached the NCAA Tournament once. Ever.

Barnes accepted the monumental challenge of taking over an Arizona's women's basketball program that had one winning season in 12 years. It was such a daunting venture that on Thursday Barnes admitted she didn't immediately say "yes" to Byrne's

"I had second, third, fourth and fifth thoughts," she said in a Zoom interview, putting it in a long-range context that accept-



Greg Hansen

ing the wrong coaching offer even at your alma mater - might not always be the best move.

"Your first (head coaching) job might be your last job," she said.

It wasn't that Barnes didn't already have a good job. She was at the 2016 women's Final Four in Indianapolis, an assistant with the Washington Huskies, when Byrne offered her the Arizona job.

"They were waiting for us to finish the season but we kept on winning," she remembers. "Then I accepted the job while I was in Indianapolis prior to the Final Four."

Texas A&M's Blair can take that a step further. In his eighth season at A&M, the Aggies won the national championship. If women's basketball got the volume of recognition given to men's college basketball, Blair would be known as well as Syracuse's Jim Boeheim or Kentucky's John

Calipari.

Barnes and Blair have everything and nothing in common.

Barnes is 43. Blair is 75. Barnes was a pro basketball player. Blair was a proud member of the United States Marine Corps who worked in the restaurant business before returning to school at age 27 to play college baseball at Texas Tech. He has coached in 25 NCAA Tournaments, including 15 in succession. This is Barnes'

These unlikely rivals in restoration have one shared memory: In the 1996 WNIT semifinals, Barnes, then a sophomore at Arizona, led the Wildcats past Blair's Arkansas Razorbacks 80-77 in Amarillo, Texas.

Yes, Amarillo, Texas. How's that for the first step to Saturday's Sweet 16 Barnes v. Blair match in San Antonio?

Barnes was the game's leading scorer, with 25 points, and she made an impression on Blair. then in his third season as the Razorbacks head coach.

"Barnes was a better post player than post players in the SEC who are 6-4," Blair said in a postgame press session. "She was the difference."

Arizona won the WNIT title a day later, Barnes went on to be the Pac-10's 1998 Player of the Year and the leading scorer in Arizona history. Blair, then, 50, was just getting started, too. He coached Arkansas to the 1998 Final Four and was soon whisked away by A&M's Bill Byrne where Blair became a first-ballot Hall of Famer.

Here's some perspective: At Barnes' age, 44, Blair coached Stephen F. Austin to the Sweet 16. Yes, Stephen F. Austin. He was just getting started, as is Barnes.

The women's Sweet 16 is, as always, stacked with blue-blood programs: UConn, South Carolina, Baylor, Maryland, Stanford and A&M.

There are relative newbies like Arizona and Missouri State, but none of the coaches have made a climb to match that of Arizona's Barnes.

Missouri State coach Amaka Agugua-Hamilton, hired in 2019, took over a 25-10 program and went 26-4 her first season. That's quite a change from Barnes' 14-16 and 6-24 baptism to coaching seasons.

At this level, Cinderella stories often burn out in the Sweet 16.

You get the best shot from the super-powers like A&M. How good are the No. 2-seeded Aggies? They start three Mc-Donald's All-Americans: Aaliyah Wilson, Jordan Nixon and Ciera Johnson.

Arizona has recruited one Mc-Donald's All-American in history, junior forward Cate Reese. Even though she played high school basketball in Cypress, Texas -70miles from the A&M campus – Reese resisted recruiting pitches from A&M to take a chance on Barnes' restoration project at Arizona.

If Blair is bitter, he didn't sound that way after his club beat Iowa State in Wednesday's Round of 32 victory.

"Give Coach Barnes so much credit for building that team, blending in a few transfers, blending in what she's going to need because that is probably the best rebuilt program that we've seen in the last five to six to seven years," he said.

If anyone would know, Gary Blair would.

Contact sports columnist Greg Hansen at 520-573-4362 or ghansen@tucson.com. On Twitter: @ghansen711.

ON EIGHTH TRY, CATS CAN MAKE FIRST-EVER ELITE 8

This year marks Arizolook at how they fared:

1996-97

Final Record: 23-8

Roster: Adia Barnes, Lisa Griffith, Marte Alexander, foul trouble early in the Felecity Willis, DeAngela Minter, Mikko Giordano, Monika Crank, Cha-Ron Walker, Amber Phoenix, Fatima Imara, Hambrick

What went down: Arizona's first-ever appearance pull within three. It wasn't 3-seeded Wildcats in the in the NCAA Tournament enough, though, as the second game against Virstarted with a bang. In the Bulldogs beat the Wildcats first round, No. 7-seeded 80-74.

Arizona won handily over 1997-98 Western Kentucky, 76-54, na's eighth-ever trip to the with 21 points coming from NCAA Tournament, and Alexander. The Wildcats der, Griffith, Crank, Wiljust the second time they've led the entire game. Griffith lis, Reshea Bristol, Minter, made the Sweet 16. Here's a added 18 points and went 5 of 6 from the 3-point line.

In the second round, Arizona ran into No. 2 Georgia. Barnes scored 16 first-half points but was limited by second. Georgia's lead ballooned in the second half up to 18 points.

The Wildcats made a Shontey comeback in the last 5:32 fied the 75-63 win. Alexan-half. with steals and 3-pointers from Griffith and Barnes to

Record: 23-7

Roster: Barnes, Alexan-Giordano, Hambrick, Phoenix, Walker, Imara, Monique Paige, Lakeisha Taylor

What went down: The Wildcats' first – and so far only — trip to the Sweet 16 began with a first-round win over Santa Clara. Arizona found its groove at the beginning of the second half with a 15-4 run that solidider scored 23 points.

Barnes led the No. 1998-99 ginia, scoring 21 points, grabbing eight rebounds,

dishing two assists and 1-seeded and eventual na- 2003-04 posting two steals in the tional runner-up Tennesfirst half alone. She finished with 30 points and 10 as Arizona won 94-77.

The Wildcats couldn't get much traction against No. 2 UConn in the round of 16, losing 74-57. The Huskies outrebounded the Wildcats 51-33. UA drew within two points with 11 minutes to go, but could get no closer. lied. Griffith led UA with 19 to Michigan State 72-60 Much of it was due to Alexander leaving the game with a knee injury in the second

Record: 18-11

Roster: Griffith, Bristol, Willis, Crank, Julie Brase, Hambrick, Jen Callahan, Angela Lackey, Elizabeth Pickney, Tysell Bozeman, Tavlor, Tatum Brown, Michelle Mitchell

supposed to be a rebuilding lor - fouled out. vear as Arizona had lost four key players from its Sweet 2002-03 16 run to graduation.

In the first game against Florida, a big-time layup Polk, Dee-Dee Wheeler, Adefeso, Pace, Chappell, from Bristol sent the game into overtime after UA rallied from a 17-point deficit. Arizona ended up winning in 87-84 in overtime. Bristol finished with 20 points and ca Duger, Svjetlana Papcev-Lackey led all Wildcats with ic, Phakisha Peterson 29 points.

its stifling defense, 90-47.

1999-2000 **Record: 25-7**

Roster: Bristol, Willis, Griffith, Lackey, Brase, Mitchell, Bozeman, Jaime Sturdivant, Krista Warren, Pickney, Taylor, Mitchell, Brown

What went down: Arizona lost again in the second cats with 17 points, and Polk with 10 points. Wheeler round - this time to No. added 14.

see, 75-60. In the first game, the Stanford

Wildcats shut down Kent Mid-American Conference an easy win, as the Wildcats opened up a 23-point

Arizona fell to powerhouse Tennessee in the secgame for UA and finished with 11 points. Tamika scored 21 points for the Lady Vols.

The teams went to the figures. free throw line for a com-

Record: 22-9

Roster: Shawntinice Linder, Natalie Jones, Jessi-

The No. 6-seeded Wild- Wildcats' return to the drome, beating Oklahoma cats then lost to Rutgers and NCAA Tournament after a 72-69 in the first round brief one, as No. 11-seeded LSU 76-43. Notre Dame bounced the

season.

The difference in the

Record: 24-9, tied for first place in Pac-10 with

Roster: Polk, Wheel-State's Dawn Zerman, the er, Adefeso, Grzyb, Sanford, Linda Pace, Chappell, Player of the Year en route Linder, Jones, Dugar, Peterto a 73-61 victory. It wasn't son, Shannon Hobson, Rachael Schein

What went down: The lead before Kent State ral- No. 9-seeded Wildcats lost in the tournament's first round. Polk led all scorers with 23 points, yet her early ond round. Griffith scored foul trouble and time on the the first eight points of the bench put the Wildcats out of sync.

Wheeler scored 11 points, Catchings, the Naismith making her the only oth-Player of the Year winner, er Wildcat in double figures. All five Michigan State starters scored in double

The Wildcats came bined 49 attempts and two within three points, three **What went down:** It was Wildcats – Willis and Tay- times down the stretch, but couldn't close it out.

2004-05

Record: 20-12

Roster: Polk, Wheeler, Danielle Adefeso, Amiee Linder, Jones, Schein, Hob-Grzyb, Brase, Warren, Can-son, Joy Hollingsworth, dice Allen, Cocoa Sanford, Chari Smith, Che Oh, Jes-Anna Chappell, Katrina sica Arnold, Ashlev Whisonant

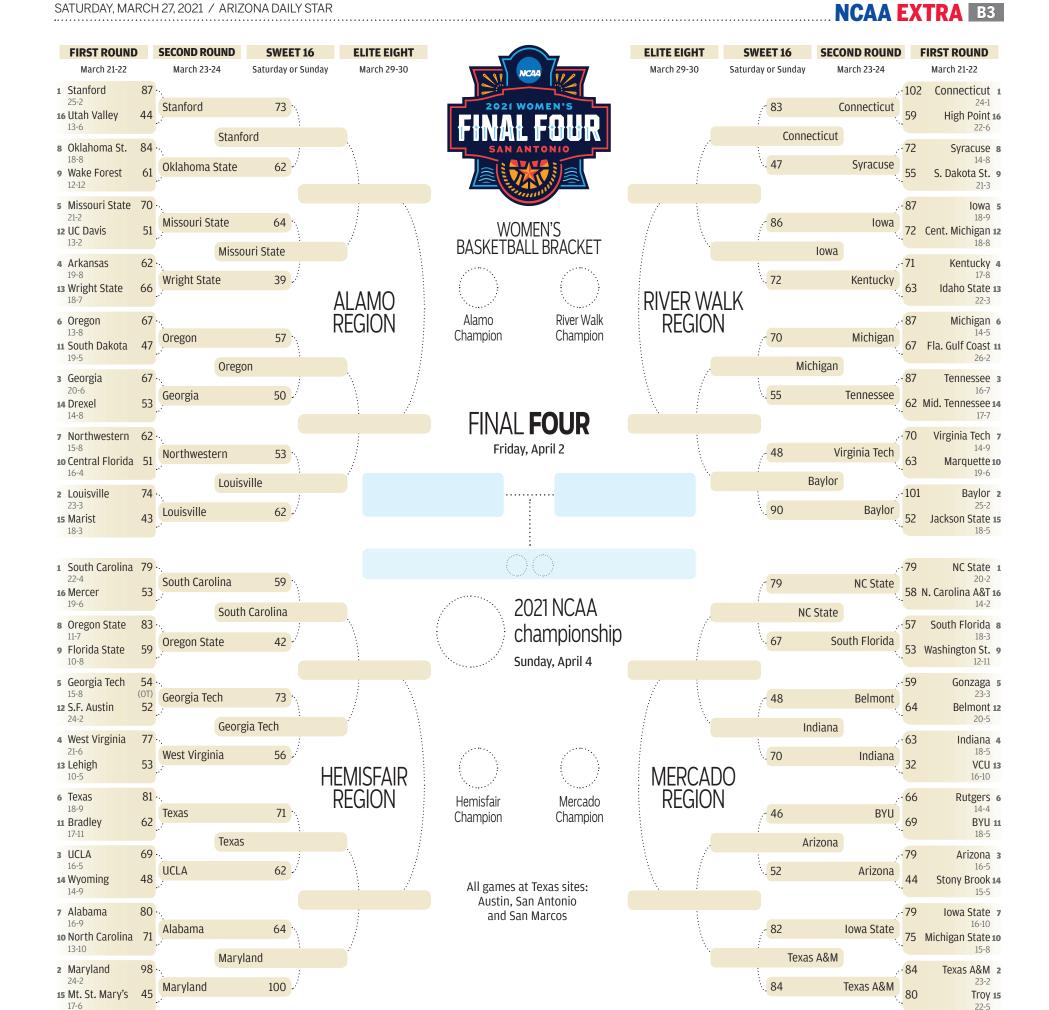
What went down: The Wildcats broke through What went down: The their first-round exit synthree-year absence was a before losing to top-ranked

The Tigers dominat-UA in the first round, 59-47. ed from the jump, and the UA shot 23.3 % from the dynamic duo on offense of field, the team's worst of- Seimone Augustus and Tefensive performance of the meka Johnson combined for 32 points.

Polk, who was battling a game was a 15-0 run by the left knee injury, played only Irish. Warren led the Wild- 25 minutes and finished scored 13 points.







INTRODUCING THE LAND ROVER DEFENDER





0.9% APR*

2021 LAND ROVER DEFENDER

FOR 24 to 60 MONTHS.

Everything about the Land Rover Defender bears testimony to the vehicle's undeniable spirit of adventure. Individually customize your off-road system preferences with Configurable Terrain Response^{®†} and stay connected with the intuitive Pivi Pro infotainment system.[‡] So, whether you're rock crawling in Moab or tearing through snow in Alaska, the Land Rover Defender is ready for just about anything.

Royal Land Rover Tucson Tucson AutoMall

4670 Circuit Rd, Tucson, AZ 85705 520-477-0572

royallandrover.com

Vehicle shown: 2020 Land Rover Defender 110 with optional equipment. "New 2121 Land Rover Defender eligible for financing at the APR shown for well-qualified buyers as determined by approved lender. Payments per month per \$1,000 financed, regardless of amount of down payment, can be as low as \$42.06 at 0.9% for 24 months, or \$17.05 at 0.9% for 60 months. All amounts shown are estimates; retailer sets actual amounts. Taxes, title, license and fees due at signing. Residency restrictions apply. Customer must take new vehicle delivery from retailer stock by 3/31/21. Land Rover or approved lender may rescind or amend this offer without notice. These systems are not a substitute for driving safely with due care and attention and will not function under all circumstances, speeds, weather and road conditions, etc. Driver should not assume that these systems will correct errors of judgment in driving. \$10 not use Land Rover InControl Substitute for products, specific features, options and availability remain market dependent. Certain Pivi Pro features use an embedded SIM card and may require a data plan with separate terms and conditions and an additional subscription after an initial term. Mobile connectivity cannot be guaranteed in all locations. The Land Rover Rotain Pivi Pro features uses an embedded SIM card and may require a data plan with separate terms and conditions and an additional subscription after an initial term. Mobile connectivity cannot be guaranteed in all locations. The Land Rover Rotailer, visit LANDROVERUSA. COM or call 1-800-FIND-4WD / 1-800-346-3493. © 2021 Jaguar Land Rover Rotailer, visit LANDROVERUSA.



KELLY PRESNELL / ARIZONA DAILY STAR

Aari McDonald has helped Arizona to some of the biggest wins in school history, and there may still be some more to come as the Wildcats seek their first-ever Elite Eight berth.

'MCDONALD TIME':

RANKING AARI'S TIMELESS SCORING PERFORMANCES WITH THE WILDCATS

By Justin Spears

ARIZONA DAILY STAR

You'd be hard-pressed to find a player in Arizona women's basketball history that's had a bigger impact than Aari McDonald.

McDonald is the Pac-12 Player of the Year and Pac-12 Co-Defensive Player of the Year, and has been named a second-team Associated Press All-American for the second year in a row.

This season marks McDonald's final run at the UA. As the Wildcats look to make the program's first-ever Elite Eight, we take a look at McDonald's best performances at Arizona:

Start of something special

Opponent: Loyola Marymount When: Nov. 13, 2018 Where: McKale Center

Final stats: 39 points (20-23 FT), 8 rebounds, 3 steals, 6 turn-

What went down: Arizona, meet Aari. Aari, meet Arizona. The game after McDonald's UA debut, where she dropped 22 points against Idaho State, the Washington transfer recorded a season-high 39 points, becoming the first Wildcat since LaBrittney Jones in 2015 to score at least 30. McDonald made 9 of 21 fieldgoal attempts but the majority of her scoring came from the freethrow line, where she went 20 for 23. However, the Wildcats fell outcome, it was one of McDonald's top offensive showings as a

Wildcat. A star was born. **She said it:** "I took it upon myself to get my teammates together, just try to talk, just try to be a leader out there." — McDonald

Treinta in Tempe

Opponent: Arizona State **When:** Feb. 28, 2021

Where: Desert Financial Arena, Tempe

Final stats: 30 points (10-19 FG), 4 rebounds, 4 assists, 6 steals What went down: McDonald's season-high performance

of 30 points and six steals wasn't enough, and Arizona was upset by ASU 66-64. McDonald will finish her UA career with a 4-2 record against the Sun Devils.

She said it: "We gave them momentum, we let them stick around. Then they just punched us in the face and took it from us. And that's unfortunate." Barnes

Wildcats make program history with in Corvallis

Opponent: No. 9 Oregon State When: Feb. 9, 2020

Where: Gill Coliseum, Corvallis, Oregon

Final stats: 22 points (8-23 FG), 9 rebounds, 4 steals



STEPHEN SPILLMAN / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS 2019

Arizona guard Aari McDonald put on a clinic in Austin at the beginning of last season, pouring in 44 points on 14-of-18 shooting in the Wildcats' rout of then-No. 22 Texas.

What went down: McDonald of fight." - McDonald was once again the Wildcats' top bucket-getter in the program's first-ever road win over a top-10 team. After the UA fell to the Beavers in nail-biting fashion at to LMU 66-64. Regardless of the McKale Center, Arizona avenged its loss to win in overtime and snap a 12-game losing streak to OSU. In the final 17 seconds of overtime, McDonald iced the game with a steal, a pair of freethrows and a defensive rebound. Arizona's win over the Beavers draft picks Sabrina Ionescu, Sa-

> streak. **She said it:** "It feels great. Today my team showed a lot of them once again in the Pac-12 Those fans in attendance caught toughness and we stuck with 'em Tournament semifinals. Both a glimpse of the Aari McDonald and we finished it out." - Mc-

Aari drops 35 in 3 OTS

Opponent: UCLA When: Jan. 27, 2019

Where: McKale Center Final stats: 35 points (14-25 FG), 12 rebounds, 7 assists, 4 steals

sixth 30-plus-point game as a Wildcat nearly helped the UA upset UCLA. With the game on the Pac-12 Networks postgame show. line in double-overtime, McDonald sunk a 3-pointer to extend the game into a third extra period – 2001. The Bruins dominated the glass and hauled in 27 offensive rebounds, and survived 98-93.

Put a ring on it

Opponent: No. 3 Oregon When: March 7, 2020

Where: Las Vegas Final stats: 34 points (14-25 FG), 5 rebounds, 5 assists, 3 turn-

What went down: Oregon was a buzzsaw during the 2019-20 season, boasting top-10 WNBA sparked a four-game winning tou Sabally and Ruthy Hebard. Arizona lost to the Ducks twice nouncer relayed that Arizona had in the regular season, then faced teams shot over 40%, but Oregon's star power was too overwhelming for the rising Cats, and championship win.

> What happened after the game changed McDonald's life forever.

Arizona was defeated 88-70.

placards that spelled out "Will you marry me?" Her boyfriend, with an engagement ring. The entire thing was shown on the

She said it: "I was so shocked. I was looking and was like 'What does that say?' And I saw him get the first triple-overtime contest on his knee and I was like 'Oh my between two Pac-12 teams since god? It's crazy. I should have put everything together because the last couple of months he's really been talking about it. I am just **She said it:** "I liked the way my shocked because my parents, team fought despite the outcome. my siblings and him — even my We definitely have things to work teammates plotted against me. on, but we definitely showed a lot I'm just happy." – McDonald

Cutting down the nets

Opponent: Northwestern When: April 6, 2019 Where: McKale Center

FG), 7 rebounds, 3 assists, 6

steals, 7 turnovers What went down: On a sunny, cloudless April day in Tucson, a line of spectators wrapped around McKale Center hours before Arizona's WNIT championship game against Northwestern. Near the end of the game, the McKale Center public address anset a Pac-12 attendance record. Show, as she tallied a game-high 19 points and six steals in a WNIT

It wasn't McDonald's best performance, but winning the Donald posted seven points, two WNIT changed the direction of McDonald walked over to her the Wildcats' program. She set family members, who held up Arizona's single-season scoring record with 890 points in 2019.

She said it: "It's just big. I am former UA defensive back Devon so excited just to be part of this What went down: McDonald's Brewer, knelt down and proposed team. We did amazing things this er of the Year, was limited to five program hasn't done in years. It's exciting. The best is yet to come." - McDonald

A record-setting showing

Opponent: No. 22 Texas

When: Nov. 17, 2019 Where: Frank Erwin Center,

Austin, Texas Final stats: 44 points (14-18 FG, 14-14 FT), 5 rebounds, 4 turnovers

What went down: McDonald broke Arizona's single-game scoring record with 44 points as the Wildcats beat the Longhorns 83-58. She remains the only player in program history to score 40 in a game. She said it: "No one could

guard Aari. She proved when it counted ... how she's going to step up and perform, that she is one of the best guards in the country." - Barnes

The Stanford stunner

Opponent: No. 4 Stanford **When:** Feb. 28, 2020

Where: McKale Center Final stats: 20 points (7-20

FG), 4 rebounds, 3 assists What went down: Following a sluggish start, McDonald flipped a switch. The UA's star guard scored 13 of her 20 points in the fourth quarter and overtime. McDonald turned the ball over with 42 seconds remaining in overtime, but Helena Pueyo and Amari Carter's defense on the inbounds pass coming out of the timeout break gave the Wildcats the ball with 13.1 seconds left. McDonald sank the game-winning jump shot with eight seconds left to give Arizona a 73-72 triumph. Arizona's victory over the fourth-ranked Cardinal was the UA's first-ever win against a

top-five opponent. She said it: "I was like 'OK, Final stats: 19 points (8-17 time to score.' So, we got to (get the) stop and convert it. I didn't hang my head - it was just next play. It was gutsy. I knew my team needed that." - McDonald

'McDonald time'

Opponent: 11th-seeded BYU When: Wednesday

Where: UTSA Convocation

Center, San Antonio Final stats: 17 points (7-16 FG), 11 rebounds, 4 steals, 3 as-

sists, 3 turnovers What went down: The second-seeded Wildcats trailed 43-39 with 5:12 left to play when "McDonald time" began. Mcrebounds and two steals in the closing minutes to help Arizona beat BYU 52-46 and punch the UA's ticket to its first Sweet 16 since 1998. Shaylee Gonzales, the West Coast Conference co-Playsecond-half points with McDonald as the primary defender.

McDonald - and Arizona will have an opportunity to make more history and enter uncharted territory on Saturday.

She said it: "This one in particular was special. (I) definitely didn't want to end my season didn't want to go home. I just had to put my team on my back. We got some key stops, but definitely had to buckle down on defense. ... just speechless." - McDonald



Congratulations to Coach Barnes and our entire team on making it to the Sweet 16!

Cheer them on in Arizona gear!

SHOP.ARIZONA.EDU/WBB



TEXAS A&M MUST CONTEND WITH THOMAS, ARIZONA'S STAT-SHEET-STUFFING DYNAMO

SPECIAL TO THE ARIZONA DAILY STAR Texas A&M coach Gary Blair gave his players Thursday off after they played an overtime thriller against Iowa State in the second round of the NCAA Tour-

That left the Aggies only one day -Friday — to prepare for Sam Thomas. The Arizona Wildcats' senior forward

plays every position on the court, often switching spots possession by possession. She fills the stat sheet, averaging 7.4 points, 3.3 rebounds, 2.2 steals and 1.2 blocks per game. She is a *four*-time

team captain. Third-seeded Arizona (18-5) will rely

on Thomas on Saturday, when it takes on second-seeded Texas A&M (25-2). Win, and the Wildcats will advance to the first Elite Eight in program his-

Texas A&M When: 5 p.m • TV: FSPN2 Radio: 1400-AN Star Aari McDonald describes Thomas as

SATURDAY

vs. No. 3 seed

No. 2 seed Arizona

both "the X-factor on the team" and "the glue that keeps us together." "Sam has a very high basketball IQ," McDonald said. "I don't know too many people who can play one through five (positions) and know every position

and know where people are supposed Thomas wasn't heavily recruited out of Las Vegas' Centennial High School. As a UA freshman, she played on a team beginning its turnaround under coach Adia Barnes. She averaged 10.2 points, best see her value. dipped slightly starting in the 2018-19 vorite players in the country."



that won just six games and was just Defensively, Sam Thomas (14) is typically matched up against the opponent's best player. Opposing coaches also note her ability to hit 3-pointers and stretch the floor.

McDonald – one the best players in the with a smile on her face, and brings stretch the defense is so valuable to regardless of their position. country - but forward Cate Reese, a it each and every game," VanDerveer them." said. "I've always been impressed with Barnes explained it best.

is today."

Thomas hasn't been overlooked, her and I respect how she's set the "If you watch her, and you look at the WSU's Charlisse Leger-Walker, to just ment. though. The people who know the game foundation of what Arizona basketball little things she does, they just don't 12 points — 7.2 below her season aver- In Monday's opener against Stony leader."

always show up in stat sheets," Barnes age. Thomas plays smart and doesn't 7.0 rebounds and 1.4 assists per game Tara VanDerveer, Stanford's legend- Oregon coach Kelly Graves says said. "She locks down her opponent ev- overplay her player, forcing the tips, linquish as a freshman. Her scoring numbers ary coach, calls Thomas "one of my fa- Thomas' ability to play multiple posi- ery single game. ... She's special." steals and blocks that can lead to big tions makes her dangerous, "but her Defensively, Thomas usually matches things for her teammates. Her posiseason, when Arizona added not only "She's competitive, always plays ability to make three-pointers and up against the opponent's best player — tioning is often perfect, and her timing and she's been doing a pretty good job.

is impeccable.

ited the league's Freshman of the Year, first two rounds of the NCAA Tourna- defensively — tells people where to go.

the second time this season. She added three assists and didn't turn the ball over. Wednesday against BYU, Thomas grabbed three steals in the first two minutes of the game.

ARIZONA DAILY STAR On Saturday, the Arizona

women's basketball team will

look to do what no other UA

team has been able to accom-

in the Sweet 16, the Wildcats

will reach the Elite Eight for

the first time in program his-

Here are the key statistics behind Arizona's historic

season and numbers to know

Arizona (18-5) has the

22nd-best scoring defense in

the NCAA and second-best

56 points per game. Of the 16

teams remaining in the NCAA

Tournament, Arizona ranks

The Wildcats also rank

22nd in the nation and first in

the Pac-12 with 10.5 steals per

game. They're averaging 14

steals per game in the NCAA

The Wildcats are unde-

feated when they shoot better

than their opponent, boasting

a 15-0 record. UA is 12-0 when

it shoots better than 40%

On the other side, the Cats

are 6-5 when their opponents

post a better shooting per-

centage – and just 1-4 when

they allow the opponent to

shoot 40% or better from the

season at Washington.

Tournament.

from the field.

1,000 x

15-0

fourth in scoring defense.

heading into the Sweet 16:

With a win over Texas A&M

Thomas' 202 career steals are only second to McDonald among active Pac-12 players. She also has 162 career blocks, making her the only active player in the league with more than

As Barnes said, Thomas is "a player who is helping you win games."

"Sam is such a good player ... (she can) impact the game and help us win without having double digits in scoring because she does so many other things," Barnes said.

She's often at her best against the nation's top teams. In the 2020 Pac-12 Tournament, Thomas held future WNBA top draft pick Satou Sabally to nine points. Thomas followed up with big performances in both meetings against the Ducks this season, knocking down three 3-pointers in the Wildcats' first win in a decade in Eugene and snatching four steals in January's win in Tucson.

Thomas is also shooting 49% from the 3-point line over the last 12 games. None was bigger than the one she nailed Wednesday.

BYU led Arizona 43-42 with less than four minutes remaining when the Cougars turned the ball over. Thomas missed a 3-pointer that would've given Arizona the lead, but teammate Trinity Baptiste corralled the offensive JOSH GALEMORE / ARIZONA DAILY STAR rebound and UA guard Helena Pueyo and kicked the ball back to Thomas. Her second 3-point attempt fell, giving the Wildcats a lead that they wouldn't re-

"She's been doing this for four years Props to Sam," McDonald said. "Besides In the Pac-12 Tournament, she limThomas' skills were on display in the myself, she gets us going offensively, That's what you want in a captain and a

BY THE NUMBERS: DEFENSIVE-MINDED

WILDCATS ALSO SHINE WHEN THEY

OUTSHOOT OPPONENTS

REBECCA SASNETT / ARIZONA DAILY STAR scoring defense in the Pac-The Arizona Wildcats celebrate after being selected to the NCAA Tournament field on March 15. 12, surrendering an average of The Wildcats won their first two postseason games, advancing to the Sweet 16.

MAMTA POPAT / ARIZONA DAILY STAR 1-3 Helena Pueyo attempts a

Pac-12 Player of the Year and 100 career blocks.

Fellow senior Sam Thomas 3

Aari McDonald leads the Junior forward Cate Reese Tournament; the Tigers beat against Texas A&M. The most way by a wide margin, hav- joined the 1,000-point club on the ninth-seeded Wildcats recent matchup between the ing scored 2,202 points -273 Jan. 22. Reese is averaging 11.3 76-43. coming during her freshman points per game this season.

The Wildcats are the lone The Wildcats are 15-0 when school in the Pac-12 to feature they shoot better than their three players who have scored opponents from the field.

this season, and is the only Arizona has overcome three more against the Aggies, Mc- That year, the Wildcats adplayer in school history with double-digit deficits this sea- Donald will have scored in vanced to - you guessed it both 100 career 3-pointers son, most recently at Colo- double figures in 90 consecu- the Sweet 16.

trailed to both USC and UCLA of 89 ranks as the most among in McKale Center earlier this active NCAA players. season only to rally and win The All-American point

UA coach Adia Barnes is one of only three Pac-12 14-2 coaches to have two 24-win at the helm. The other two when leading at halftime, and are Oregon's Kelly Graves and is 4-3 when trailing. In the sec-

in both the 2018-19 and 2019- came back to win 52-46. 20 seasons and have a higher winning percentage (.783) in 38 the shortened 2020-21 season than the previous two years.

Barnes was awarded a five-

time against SEC schools in from 2002-05. the NCAA Tournament. The most recent matchup came 7.-3 ond round of the 2005 NCAA

rado in December. Arizona tive games. Her current streak

guard is averaging 18.5 points per game in the tournament while shooting 15 of 30 (50%) from the field.

Stanford's Tara VanDerveer. ond round against BYU, Arizo-The Wildcats won 24 games na trailed 25-23 at the half and

McDonald needs 38 more points to surpass Dee-Dee year contract extension on Wheeler and move into third all-time on Arizona's scoring list. The senior has scored 1,929 points in 89 games in her three seasons at UA: Wheeler The Wildcats are 1-3 all- amassed 1,966 in 124 games

Arizona is 2-3 all-time two schools came in the 2010-11 season, with he Aggies win-

ning 87-78. Arizona last beat A&M By scoring 10 points or during the 1997-98 season.

ARIZONA WAS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT FOR REESE, **UA FORWARD WHO ONCE CONSIDERED TEXAS A&M**

By PJ Brown

na Wildcat

SPECIAL TO THE ARIZONA DAILY STAR Cate Reese was meant to be an Arizo-

The UA easily won the recruiting battle for the McDonald's All-American, beating out every team in Reese's home state – even Texas A&M, the Wildcats' opponent in Saturday's Sweet 16 game in San Antonio.

"It was like a first love," Cate's dad, Bill Reese, said.

Reese was recruited by coach Texas A&M Gary Blair after attending a camp and games. Reese took a few visits to College Station, but the relationship got no further than that. Reese's family was told Blair doesn't visit in-state recruits. He doesn't start freshmen, either, and with Cate Reese wanting to impact a program right away, the Aggies didn't make her list.

UA coach Adia Barnes, meanwhile, made Reese a priority in recruiting. She visited the Reeses' home in Cypress, Texas, twice. One time, Barnes brought the entire coaching staff for a scheduled one-hour visit that lasted more than five hours. When Reese committed, it was because she loved everything about the university. She is in the Eller business school and plans to stay for a one-year master's program after she graduates and before she plays professional basketball, according to her father.

Both of Reese's parents have been excited to watch her play in person in San Antonio. Before Monday, they had attended only three games all year − the ▮ Wildcats' opener against NAU and both of the team's Pac-12 Tournament games

in Las Vegas. "Just to see her was good," Cheryl Reese said. "I love watching her play and her energy. Everything, her whole life,

she's tackled 100% overdrive. "It's unbelievable where the program was four years ago and to see it now, as parents, makes us happy. And Cate is The parents of Cypress, Texas, native Cate Reese (25) will be in the stands today in San Antonio. "We're winning," her mother, Cheryl, predicts. "Cate has something to prove." making a difference."

Cheryl Reese was quick to add: "We're

This time, it's personnel

to prove."

worked, as Arizona ha been ranked in the Texas A&M's 84.

make more history. No Wildcats team eraging 66.5 points per game this season. ing to be a team that turns you over, that did, and so it is more important to win the process. And it's not about the end ed you are when you have a reason to be has ever played in the Elite Eight.

A&M walk over us. Cate has something siastic. We know we belong here. It's not not we're not some team with a tremen-five years ago, she had a plan to turn the Dominque (McBryde), Tee Tee (Starks), Rim shots a fluke that we're here," she said. "We're dous amount of offensive firepower. changing anything."

Barnes has developed a system that Arizona is averaging 65.5 points per offense. And we're one of the best in the and an NCAA Tournament run.

"This is our personnel,' she said. "It's presses you, that runs. So that's who we with these players," Barnes said. won't be intimidated by the moments. that that's the common story. We're a very us pretty successful."

"We're just ready to play anybody. We good defensive team. We play defense, we **The vision becomes reality**

zona is. We aren't going to be a team that become reality.

never a problem. Our defense creates our a packed McKale Center, adoring fans brate with them.

But the players that came here and built moment. And we've done that." winning (Saturday). We're not letting don't care. We're excited. We're enthu-find ways to win. It can be ugly, but we're

When Barnes took over the program this and they are the foundation — Aari, Wildcats into winners. She sold players Amari (Carter), Sam, Cate — those playhere for a reason. We play a certain style "We're never going to say, 'Oh, our Aari McDonald, Sam Thomas and Reese" ers came here and believed in the vision. • Texas A&M leads the series 3-2. The and that's what we're doing. We're not identity is our offense! Our offense is on her vision of what it could look like — It's so rewarding to stand there and cele- last time the Wildcats beat the Aggies

plays to her players' strengths. It's game in the tournament, 18½ less than country. It's not a problem. It's who Ari- In a few short years, that vision has they believed in us when no one in the •UA volleyball coach Dave Rubio said country did. Still, Barnes said the team doesn't have goes down to 60% from the 3 (-point "These players are the players that "We are doing what we set out to do. TV" watching Arizona's NCAA Tour-A win Saturday would help the UA any problems offensively. The team is av- line); that's not our personnel. We're go- believed in Arizona when no one else We believed in each other, we believed in nament run. "It's amazing how invest-

the top kids lists, because we're winning. learned along the way – just living in the the cake for me."

was in 1997, when Barnes – then a star "It's very meaningful for me because forward — was in the lineup.

this week that he has been "glued to the invested," he said. "All those things are Stil, Barnes said she and her players interesting for people that don't know are.... It's gotten us this far, and it's made "It's different now that we're on all "It's about the process and all we've really enjoyable for me... the frosting on

BY THE NUMBERS: HIGH-SCORING AGGIES **ENTER SWEET 16 FOLLOWING SCARES** IN TOURNEY'S FIRST TWO ROUNDS

Need a crash course on Texas A&M before the second-seeded Aggies take on No. 3 seed Arizona in Saturday's Sweet 16 matchup?

The Aggies (25-2) survived an 84-82 overtime thriller in their second-round game against Iowa State thanks to a buzzer-beater from guard Jordan Nixon. Before that, they struggled to put away Troy 84-80 in the first round.

Here are some key statis-

tics and numbers to know

about as A&M prepares for

the Wildcats:

You got it.

At 25-2 (.926), the Aggies have the best single-season winning percentage in Texas A&M guard Jordan Nixon, bottom center, celebrates with her teammates following Wednesprogram history. It surpass- day's overtime win over lowa State. The second-seeded Aggies face Arizona on Saturday. es that of the 2010-11 team, which went 33-5 (.868) and 32 won the national champion-

Texas A&M enters the tournament wins. Sweet 16 with a 9-1 record All five of A&M's starters the Aggies' 3-point shootagainst teams ranked in the average at least 10 points per ing specialist. Pitts, the SEC AP Top 25. The most nota- game. Senior guard Aaliyah Sixth Woman of the Year and Texas A&M is 5-5 in its

16 for the third straight tour- the field. nament. The Aggies made it in 2018 and 2019, though 265 they lost in the Sweet 16 both years. (Last year's tournament was canceled because of their opponent by 265 points ing a game-tying bucket at 2011 when A&M won 87-78 at

The Aggies rank 32nd in son. the country in scoring of-

Top-25 schools this season. Jones, Kayla Wells, Jordan her two tournament appear- straight.

Nixon and Ciera Johnson ances off the bench. have all scored more than 280 points this season. They're all 35 Texas A&M is in the Sweet shooting at least 40% from

fense, averaging 75.2 points 49 per game. They scored 84 in each of this week's two NCAA

the coronavirus pandemic). (1080-815) during the second the end of regulation and the a neutral site game in Mexico.

Senior guard Destiny Pitts 38 (57%) from the field. comes off the bench, and is

and third quarters this sea- game-winner as time expired

CHARLIE RIEDEL / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In two tournament games, Nixon has put up 21 and 35 points while shooting 22 for

ble was a 65-57 win against Wilson leads the team with a Minnesota transfer, has last 10 games against Pac-12 fifth-ranked South Carolina 12.6 points per game and was made 49 3s on 105 attempts schools dating back to the on Feb. 28 Arizona, by com- an All-SEC second-team pick. (47%). However, Pitts has 2014-15 season. However. parison, has gone 3-3 against Fellow starters N'dea made just one 3-pointer in the Aggies have won three

Arizona has lost to Texas Nixon was Texas A&M's A&M in each of its last three hero in the second round. The meetings, with an average 5-foot-8-inch guard scored margin of defeat of 13 points. a career-high 35 points The last Aggies vs. Wild-The Aggies are outscoring against Iowa State, includ- cats matchup came in 2010-





GAME'S FAMILIAR FACES JOINED BY SOME NEW ONES IN SWEET 16

By Doug Feinberg THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN ANTONIO - The women's NCAA Tournament regional semifinals field is set with many familiar faces like UConn, Baylor, Stanford and South Carolina. There's also some fresh ones, including Michigan and Arizona.

The Sweet 16 will tip off Saturday with a much anticipated matchup between UConn and Iowa. The schools are led by heralded freshmen Paige Bueckers and Caitlin Clark. Geno Auriemma, who will be coaching the Huskies for the first time in the tournament after being sidelined with COVID-19 the first two rounds, couldn't remember a time when there was so much hype around two freshmen.

"It's been a while since you have two kids that have had this kind of an impact, both on their teams and on the game itself nationally. To have one is kind of cool. To have two and to be so alike in so many ways?" Auriemma said. "And yet unfortunately, they're going to be put in a situation where it's like a big football game, where they Rogers. It couldn't be further from

"It's two really, really young lot for their teams."

Sweet 16. The Hawkeyes are one of which is making its 27th consecu- own right and they wanted to do you're kind of oblivious to a lot of tickets.



CHARLIE NEIBERGALL / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

lowa guard Caitlin Clark (22), has already become of the game's biggest names as a freshman. The Hawkeyes tangle with No. 1 UConn on Saturday.

a record four Big Ten teams in the tive appearance in the round of 16. say it's (Tom) Brady versus Aaron regional semifinals with Michigan, Indiana and Maryland joining could go somewhere else and you

"Things have changed. You playing for the Wildcats.

SWEET 16 SCHEDULE

Saturday's games

- · No. 5 seed lowa vs. No. 1 seed **UConn**: 10 a.m. (Ch. 9)
- No. 6 seed Michigan vs. No. 3
- seed Baylor: Noon (Ch. 9) No. 4 seed Indiana vs. No. 1
- seed NC State: 3 p.m. (ESPN2) · No. 3 seed Arizona vs. No. 2 seed Texas A&M: 5 p.m. (ESPN2)

Sunday's games

- No. 5 seed Georgia Tech vs. No. 1 seed South Carolina: 10 a.m.
- No. 5 seed Missouri State vs. No. 1 seed Stanford: Noon (Ch. 9)
- No. 6 seed Oregon vs. No. 2 seed Louisville: 4 p.m. (ESPN)
- · No. 6 seed Texas vs. No. 2 seed Maryland: 6 p.m. (ESPN)

something that has never been done before and I'm thankful to coach a group of them."

Sweet 16 for the first time since 1998 when coach Adia Barnes was

Asked how different the feelcould have the opportunity right ing was to get to the Sweet 16 nally get to come and watch the Wolverines coach Kim Barnes away to make an impact and create as a coach as opposed to when kids, really good players that do a Arico is happy to have her team in something that's never been done she did it as a player, Barnes rethe regional semifinals for the first before," she said. "Those kids are sponded, "coaching is a lot harder Clark has led Iowa back to the time as opposed to Connecticut, different. They are special in their than playing. Because as a player, allowed each participant up to six

things. You just kind of go out and play."

Some other things to know about this Sweet 16 field:

Inside the numbers: For the first time since 2013 three No. 6 seeds advanced to the Sweet 16 with Michigan, Oregon and Texas all reaching the regional semifinals. At the other of the spectrum, for the third straight tournament all the No. 1 and No. 2 seeds reached the Sweet 16.

She said it: "More and more people are noticing, more and more people are watching. I think a lot of people will tune in and watch this game and that's exactly what you want for women's college basketball." - Caitlin Clark,

Crowd noise: For the first time in the tournament the NCAAs will allow the public to attend games. That will be limited to 17% of the Alamodome's capacity per game which is roughly 4,800 tickets.

"We're in Texas, so, I feel like we're going to have a lot of fans,"" Arizona has made it back to the Baylor forward NaLyssa Smith said. "People's families finally start to get to come and everybody's friends and everybody that weren't on the ticket list, they figame. So, it's about to be very ex-

The first couple of rounds only

AFTER SQUEAKING BY FIRST TWO FOES, **AGGIES NEXT GET CATS IN CHALKY REGION**

By Kristie Rieken

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

No. 2 seed, Texas A&M was straight time. expected to breeze through the first two rounds of the the first two-seed to lose to we underplayed," Texas women's NCAA Tourna- a No. 15 in the first-round A&M coach Gary Blair rhement.

games in the Mercado Re- State 84-82 in overtime

gion, winning by a com- on Wednesday night with ed some of the most excitbined six points to advance a buzzer-beater by Jordan ing moments of the wom-SAN ANTONIO - As a to the Sweet 16 for the third Nixon.

with an 84-80 victory torically asked, before an-Instead they squeaked over Troy. The Aggies then swering his own question: by in both of their first two rallied to beat No. 7 Iowa

They avoided becoming have played so well or have they meet No. 3 Arizona in "I think it's just March."

The Aggies have provid-

en's tournament so far and "Is that because they hope to build on that when the regional semifinal. The Wildcats are in the Sweet 16 for the first time since coach Adia Barnes was a player in

Nixon became a social media sensation after her heartfelt postgame television interview that came after she banked in the game-winner to cap a career-best 35-point night against Iowa State. LeBron James praised her on his Instagram story on Thursday and actress Gabrielle Union, who is married to former NBA star Dwyane Wade, tweeted about her, too.

Nixon's Instagram account featured a picture of her after the shot and a video of the play. With it was a simple caption that has embodied the Aggies as they've survived these first two round: 'Never say die.'

"The term resilient is something that always comes to mind when I think of any Texas A&M team, but especially this one," she said. "We fight. It's what we do. It's what we've been doing all season."

ARIZONA-TEXAS A&M

Outlook: Nixon has been the breakout star of the tournament for the Aggies by combining for 56 points in two games. But Texas A&M (25-2) normally relies on a much more balanced scoring attack with all five starters averaging between 10.6 and 12.6 points a game this season.

The Wildcats (18-5) are led by Pac-12 Player of the Year Aari McDonald, who is averaging 19.6 points a game. McDonald was also the league's defensive player of the year and has scored 20 and 17 points respectively in tournament wins over lied on stellar defense in the coach Wes Moore said. Stony Brook and BYU.

key plays down the stretch to help the Wildcats finally pull for the win against BYU.

"I knew that was my moment," she said. "I didn't want to go home, and I know my coaches and my teammates didn't want to team on my back and just come through clutch offensively and defensively."

The X-Factor: Arizona's senior can — and has — Atlantic Coast Conference bounds this season. played all five positions for Tournament.



ERIC GAY / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Texas A&M guard Jordan Nixon (5) celebrates after the Aggies rallied in both regulation and overtime to hold off No. 7-seeded Iowa in the second round Wednesday.

her teammates mobbing the Wildcats this season. into the box score. "She's win over South Florida. the glue that keeps us together," McDonald said.

> cats forward Trinity Baptiste the difference from her first averages just 8.6 points a game but had a career-high 18 in the first-round win. a game. Texas A&M center Ciera Johnson had a season-high 19 points against the Cyclones in a performance that was overshadled to Nixon's final shot. Time: 5 p.m., ESPN2

INDIANA-NC STATE

Outlook: No. 4 Indiana (20-5) is in the Sweet 16 for her being able to tolerate the first time since the field the pain and discomfort, was expanded to 64 teams but the doctors are also goand will face top-seed North ing to make sure that there Carolina State on Saturday.

first two rounds, limiting tournament game.

She scored just 12 points Thomas is the overlooked in an opening round win key to the Arizona. She over NC A&T and was 3 of isn't flashy but is the kind 15 from the field in another of player who does the kind 12-point performance in the of things that don't make it Wolfpack's second-round

Despite the struggles she

remains confident in her Players to Watch: Wild- abilities and talked about Sweet 16 as a freshman in 2019 to now. "Expectations are a lit-

The senior leads the team tle bit higher this year," she by averaging 6.0 rebounds said. "We know that we can perform a lot more and go deeper than we did." X-Factor: N.C. State

forward Kayla Jones. She missed the Wolfpack's secowed by Nixon's heroics. ond-round game after in-She also had three blocks, juring her left knee in the capped by one on Iowa opening round and her sta-State's final possession that tus for Saturday's game is uncertain. If she can't play it will be a big blow with the senior averaging 11.9 points and 7.1 rebounds per game.

"A lot of it has to do with is no risk involved and that The Hoosiers have re- it can't do any damage,"

Players to watch: Indi-McDonald had several Belmont to 48 points in the ana forward Aleksa Gulbe. second round after holding She had a career-high 15 VCU to just 32 in their first rebounds in the second round after grabbing 10 in N.C. State, which earned the first game. She is ava No. 1 seed for the first eraging 9.1 points a game. time, is in the Sweet 16 for N.C. State forward Jada the third consecutive sea- Boyd. She scored 18 points son. The Wolfpack's lead- off the bench in the team's either. So, I had to put the ing scorer is 6-foot-5 Elissa tournament opener before Cunane, but she has cooled starting in the second game off in this tournament af- with Jones out and scoring ter scoring a combined 70 18 again. She's also a good points in three games to rebound and has had five Sam Thomas. The 6-foot earn MVP honors in the games with at least 10 re-

Time: 3 p.m., ESPN2



(520) 416.8181

*Based on Nationwide Results

Peak Performance For Men

SATURDAY, MARCH 27, 2021 | SECTION B

Editor: Ryan Finley | sportsed@tucson.com

NCAA TOURNAMENT

Thompson's rise helps power Beavers to Sweet 16

By Anne M. Peterson

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ethan Thompson understood the moment. Maybe that's why he couldn't stop smiling.

Oregon State's senior guard had just led the Beavers to a spot in the Sweet the Pac-12 at the start of the

said, the smile plastered and No. 11 Syracuse. on his face. "We pictured it from the beginning."

Loyola-Chicago on Satur- Oregon and No. 11 UCLA. since 1982, before an 80-

SATURDAY

- What: Sweet 16: No. 12 seed Oregon State vs. No. 8 seed Loyola-Chicago
- When: 11:40 a.m. • TV: Ch. 13

16, the latest milestone for a day in the Midwest Region team picked to finish last in of the NCAA Tournament. haps the most surprising of The winner earns a spot in the Elite Eight against the "We knew it was in us, winner of the game between ic berth in the tournament 1963. The victory over the this success," Thompson second-seeded Houston by beating Colorado 70-68

of four Pac-12 teams in they downed fifth-seeded No. 12 seed Oregon State the Sweet 16, joined by will now face eighth-seeded sixth-seeded USC, No. 7

The Trojans face the Ducks 70 win over No. 4 Oklahoon Sunday in the West Re- ma State to set up the game gion, while UCLA meets second-seeded Alabama in the East. The Pac-12 hasn't Thompson said. "I just got a won an NCAA title since feeling that I don't want it to Arizona cut down the nets in stop." 1997 – the longest drought for a major conference.

But the Beavers are perthe group.

They earned an automatin the Pac-12 tournament The Beavers are one championship game. Then Tennessee 70-56, their first NCAA Tournament victory

against the Ramblers.

"I'm so grateful for this,"

This is Oregon State's first tournament appearance since 2016 and only the second since 1990. The Beavers have twice made the Final Four, in 1949 and Volunteers snapped a seven-game tournament losing streak.

For Thompson, this is sort of destiny: He comes



PAUL SANCYA / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

'We pictured it from the beginning," said Oregon State's Ethan **See BEAVERS, B10** Thompson of his team's surprisingly successful season.

Wildcats back at Hillenbrand after nine straight road games



KELLY PRESNELL / ARIZONA DAILY STAR

Arizona right fielder Hannah Martinez tracks down a sinking liner from Oregon State's Madison Simon for the third out in the top of the third inning of Friday night's game at Hillenbrand Staidum. UA led 4-0 in the fourth inning at the Star's press time. The Wildcats (14-5) were back home after two weeks on the road, including losing both games to Washington in Seattle last week. For more on the game, as well as UA's baseball matchup against Oregon on Friday night, visit **Tucson.com/sports**

ARIZONA FOOTBALL

Snaps and drops: How Cruz, other QBs are adjusting to Arizona's new style of offense

By Michael Lev

ARIZONA DAILY STAR Iedd Fisch is bringing an NFL-style offense to Arizona. It's different from what the Wildcats have run in the recent past - and from what much of college football utilizes these days. It could give the UA a competitive advantage.

But none of it will matter if the Wildcats can't execute the most basic foundational element of each play – the snap from the center to the quarter-

That's been a focal point during the first week of spring practice as Arizona transitions from a spread, shotgun offense to one that incorporates under-center snaps; three-, fiveand seven-stop drops by the quarterback; and turn-yourback-to-the-defense play-action passes.

"We're throwing everything at them right now," passquarterbacks coach Jimmie Dougherty said. "Everything's new to them, from taking a snap under center to the terminology to just a lot of different things."

One of the quarterbacks competing for the starting job, Gunner Cruz, said after Thurstaken a snap from under center since junior high. The upin college after Cruz spent the not, feature four wide receivers past two seasons at Washington at a time. State.



KELLY PRESNELL / ARIZONA DAILY STAR

Quarterback Gunner Cruz cocks to throw during drills on the first day of spring practice.

ing that relationship with all feature two at a time. ing-game coordinator and the different centers and taking snaps different ways."

Cruz might be underestimating his personal adjustment period. He began his college career playing for Mike Leach, one of the founding fathers of the "Air Raid" offense. Cruz day's practice that he hadn't Nick Rolovich, who runs a runand-shoot system. Both put the quarterback in the shotgun on coming season will be his third every play and, more often than can understand the game."

"It had been a while," Cruz will have the QB under center and center Josh Baker ran a lap said. "A little bit of an adjust- around 35% of the time. It also around the field at one point ment period, but it's always makes significant use of the Thursday after a bungled exgood to learn new things, build-tight end. Some formations

> "All three, great offenses. I enjoyed my time that I spent in all of them. Here we're under center, there's a little bit more verbiage in the play call, we use hands are, how we're putting a tight end.

"But I think it's been great. hand." then played last season under I've been able to take all these put it together in a way that I

The quarterbacks and cen- As with every other aspect of ters have operated smoothly for Fisch has said his offense the most part, although Cruz

change. Cruz discussed, and even demonstrated, how much "Pretty different," Cruz said. the coaches are focusing on the fundamentals of the snap.

"Every part of it's getting coached," Cruz said, "our stance under center, how our pressure through the bottom

Once the ball is secured, the different experiences, all these quarterbacks have to execute different offenses, and kind of the proper footwork, whether handing the ball off, faking a handoff or dropping to pass.

See FOOTBALL, B11

Kunnemann rediscovered soccer after loss of sister

By Caitlin Schmidt

ARIZONA DAILY STAR

When Chloe Kunnemann's younger sister was diagnosed with cancer five years ago, her parents thought it would be best for everyone if they kept some thread of normalcy in their lives.

The following weekend, Kunnemann – then 16 — traveled to California to play in a soccer tournament.

"I was more of the person that made things more normal for us. I continued to play soccer, and they came to watch the games when they could," Kunnemann, 21

Soccer remained a huge part of their lives for the next year. For Kunnemann, the sport was a stabilizing force.

"Having me have soccer and some sort of normalcy kept my family together and sane though all this," Kunnemann said. "It was something normal we could all talk about."

But when Abbie Kunnemann lost her battle against Ewing's sarcoma in 2017 at age 12, everything changed.

"I played the entire time my sister was alive," Kunnemann said. "After she passed away, I just said, 'I'm done.'"

Nearly four years later, Kunnemann is back playing the sport she loves. Pima College's starting goalkeeper will lead the Aztecs in their spring season, which begins April 3 at Glendale Community College.

Kunnemann never left soccer - not completely, at least. She volunteered as a coach at Empire High School shortly after graduating. She also entered the workforce, taking a job as a server.

By 2019 Kunnemann couldn't stay away any longer. She talked to one of her former coaches during an FC Tucson game, and mentioned that she missed playing soccer. Her coach pushed her to contact Pima College.

Kunnemann got in touch with Aztecs coach Kendra Veliz, and by the start of the 2019 season, she was back on the pitch.

"It was hard coming back. I gained a lot of weight because of everything going on; that was kind of my coping mechanism," Kunnemann said.

Kunnemann had also undergone some mental changes in her two years away.

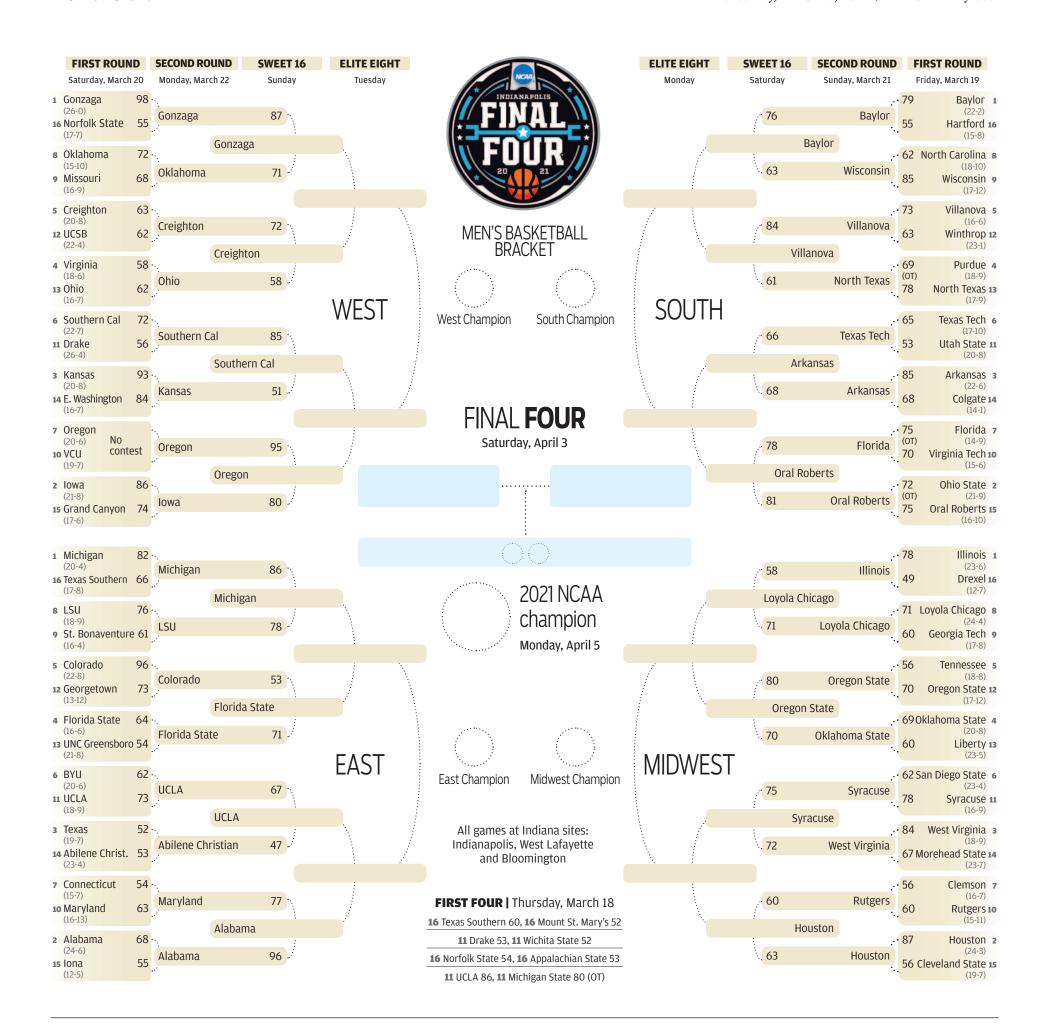
"There's a whole persona you take on with being an athlete. I lost my identify for a bit," Kunnemann said. "It was hard, but good for me. I was able to get back into who I am as a person and really take care of

Veliz said that while Kunnemann strug-

See SOCCER, B12



PHOTO COURTESY OF PIMA COLLEGE Chloe Kunnemann stopped playing soccer after her younger sister Abbie died in 2017.





PAUL SANCYA / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Oregon State guard Ethan Thompson and coach Wayne Tinkle are two wins away from leading the Beavers to what would be the third Final Four in program history.

BEAVERS

Continued from Page B9

from a basketball family. His dad, Stephen Thompson, is an assistant on Oregon State's staff, and his big who currently plays in Italy.

played at Syracuse and was matters most." on the 1987 team that played Indiana in the NCAA championship game.

success they'd have this season. After the dire prediction by the Pac-12's media, Oregon State dropped early games against Wyoming and Portland – which went just 6-15 this year.

tough losses early because I think it taught us a lot of lessons on how to close out games, and we're closing out games at the right time," Thompson said.

Wayne Tinkle Coach agreed.

"We had a lot of guys hurt early when we were able only had seven days where tough losses, but we never going to lead to wins."

threw in the towel. We never doubted ourselves," Tinkle said. "We just do what we do. We just stay hungry and humble, and we keep working, and we peak at the right time. It shouldn't have been a surprise. We just kept brother is a Beavers alum grinding it out knowing that we would get to playing The elder Thompson our best basketball when it

Thompson, named to the All-Pac-12 first team, averaged 15.3 points and Except for perhaps the 3.6 rebounds in the regular Beavers, few foresaw the season, but he's upped his game in the tournament, averaging 19.5 points and 8.5 rebounds.

Last year, Thompson flirted with leaving school early and trying his luck in the NBA draft, but he with-"Honestly, I'll take the drew his name two days before the deadline and decided to return to the Beavers for his senior year.

He said Oregon State has excelled by focusing on the fundamentals.

"We believe that we're capable of doing great things. Whether that be getting a much-needed stop to start practice. I think it on defense, breaking the was in the first 40 days we press, taking care of the ball, just take it step by step? we had our whole team at Thompson said. "If we take practice. We suffered from all the right steps, they're

Walton on Pac-12's NCAA tourney dominance: 'The dream come true'

By Jeff Miller

LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES - As the champion of the "Conference of Champions," Bill Walton is having as good an NCAA Tournament as the Pac-12 itself.

The league makes up a stunning one-quarter of the Sweet 16 - no other conference has more than two teams remaining — after entering with so little respect nationally that its top-seeded entry was No. 5 Colorado.

Yet, the man who gave the league its champion nickname and never fails to preach Pac-12 supremacy, dismissed the suggestion that he deserves credit this season for possessing a very prescient form of court vision.

"I'm not about recognition or credit or accolades," Walton said Thursday. "I'm a man of action. I love to work. I love my job. And I love seeing other people succeed."

The difference now is that Walton was one of the few who foresaw the Pac-12 succeeding at this level. Of course, he's always going to forecast the brightest of sunshine for his favorite conference.

His regular broadcast partner at ESPN, Dave Pasch, was the one who joked on social media last week that Walton's prediction for the Final Four featured all five Pac-12 participants.

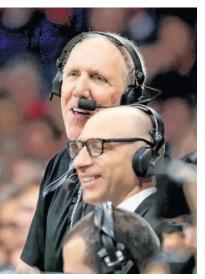
As it is, UCLA, USC, Oregon and Oregon State advanced to the tournament's second weekend, while Colorado won once before being eliminated. Counting a no-contest victory, the Pac-12 is 10-1.

"We've seen peak performance on command," Walton said. "The Pac-12 right now is on fire. This is the dream come true. ... Now, as in every tournament, you have to keep playing better."

Even while winning at a pace that suggests nothing is impossible, the Pac-12 can't secure each spot in the Final Four because of scheduling that Walton labeled a "disgrace."

Seeded sixth and seventh, respectively, USC and Oregon meet in a West regional semifinal, a matchup that is happening sooner than Walton believes is necessary or particularly fair.

"This should be a Final Four matchup, and, the way those two teams are playing, they would be matching up in the Final Four," he said. "That is a disservice to the conference, a disservice to basketball and a disservice to ev-



KELLY PRESNELL / ARIZONA DAILY STAR 2019 Bill Walton, top, with Dave Pasch, said the NCAA Tournament committee dropped the ball this year.

erybody involved. It's an unacceptable turn of events. I want that fixed for the

"I just think it's people not doing their job. When I don't do my job or you don't do your job, we get fired. When something like this happens, who's responsible? Who's accountable? We ask our athletes to be responsible. Yet, the people who are responsible for this ... the faceless, the nameless, the anonymous."

Walton also spoke with passion about the recently exposed imbalances between team accommodations for the men's and women's tournaments, saying the "systemic inequality is just unacceptable." He touted the financial rights of all student-athletes, explaining, "Whatever is going to benefit the athletes, I'm for." He pointed out the Pac-12 has three teams in the women's Sweet 16, saying Stanford's women are "as enjoyable a watch as there is in basketball today on any level."

Then, Walton added, "I'm clamoring for better refereeing, too."

With four teams in the men's Sweet 16, the Pac-12 has as many survivors as the Big Ten, ACC and Big 12 combined. The Pac-12 already has taken out a second-, a third-, a fourth- and a fifthseed.

On Monday, USC beat third-seeded Kansas, 85-51, the Jayhawks' worst

THIS WEEKEND'S **SWEET 16 GAMES**

Saturday's games

- No. 12 seed Oregon State vs. No. **8 seed Loyola-Chicago**, 11:40 a.m.
- No. 5 seed Villanova vs. No. 1 seed Baylor, 2:15 p.m. (Ch. 13)
- No. 15 seed Oral Roberts vs. No. 3
- seed Arkansas, 4:15 p.m. (TBS) No. 11 seed Syracuse vs. No. 2 seed Houston, 6:55 p.m. (TBS)

Sunday

- No. 5 seed Creighton vs. No. 1 seed
- **Gonzaga**, 11:10 a.m. (Ch. 13) No. 4 seed Florida State vs. No. 1
- seed Michigan, 2 p.m. (Ch. 13) No. 11 seed UCLA vs. No. 2 seed
- Alabama, 4:15 p.m. (TBS)
- No. 7 seed Oregon vs. No. 6 seed USC, 6:45 p.m. (TBS)

ond-seeded Iowa, 95-80.

"The fierceness of USC, of Oregon just saying, 'We're here to run. We're here to play. How about you guys?" Walton said. "And Kansas and Iowa, they basically put their hands up and said, 'We can't do this? It was beautiful. I was just so happy because I love good basketball. We're getting a lot of it."

He praised USC for exploiting its athletic ability and size and playing with so much freedom and spirit. The Trojans opened the tournament with a 16-point victory over Drake.

"This is just another step in Andy Enfield solidifying himself as being the mentor, the coach, of the greatest run in the history of USC basketball," Walton said. "And USC has a tremendous basketball history."

A former UCLA great, Walton also offered an appreciation of Bruins coach Mick Cronin, noting especially his character and authenticity.

"Could not be more proud of Mick or more thrilled that we have him as the coach at UCLA," Walton said. "When he got here, it was a mess, and he's quickly turned it around."

Now, 14 months later, it's all paying off for the Bruins. And for the Trojans and for the Pac-12.

And for Bill Walton, the champion tournament loss ever, and Oregon of the "Conference of Champions," a convincingly pulled away from sec- proud salesman with even more to sell.

BA	SKE	TBA	LL	
WE	NI STERN C	ONFERE		
Utah Suns L.A. Clippers L.A. Lakers Denver Portland Dallas San Antonio Memphis Golden State Sacramento New Orleans Oklahoma City Houston	W 32 30 30 28 26 26 23 22 21 22 20 19	L 11 14 16 17 18 18 19 20 20 23 25 24 25 31	Pct .744 .682 .652 .591 .591 .548 .524 .512 .489 .444 .442 .432 .279	GB - 2½ 3½ 5 6½ 6½ 6½ 10 11 13 13 13½ 200
Minnesota EA	STERN C	34 Onferen L	.227 ICE Pct	22½ GB
Philadelphia Milwaukee Brooklyn Charlotte New York Atlanta Miami Boston Indiana Chicago Toronto Cleveland Washington Orlando Detroit Thursday's Game Portland 125, M	32 29 31 22 23 22 21 20 19 18 17 15 15	13 14 15 21 22 22 23 23 23 24 27 27 28 29 32	.711 .674 .674 .512 .511 .500 .489 .477 .465 .442 .400 .386 .349 .341 .273	2 1½ 9 9 9½ 10 10½ 11 12 14 14½ 16 16½ 19½
Portland 125, M New York 106, W L.A. Clippers 98 Sacramento 14 Friday's Games Brooklyn 113, D Suns 104, Toror Boston at Milw Houston at Milw Maim at Charle Portland at Orla Indiana at Dalla Memphis at Uta Atlanta at Golde Cleveland at L.A Saturday's Game Detroit at Wash Houston at Milm New York at Milh Chicago at San Boston at Oklar Dallas at New O Memphis at Uta Cleveland at Sa Philadelphia at Cleveland at Sa Philadelphia at Sunday's Games	Ashing to the control of the control	tonio 25 in State 1 lakers 10 l l l late late late late late late lo p.m. 5 p.m. 5 p.m. 5 p.m. 5 p.m. 10 p.m.	m.	

Orlando at L.A. Lakers, / p.m.								
HOCKEY								
NHL								
West	GP	W	L	0T 1 3	Pts	GF	GA	
Vegas	31	22	8		45	101	72	
Colorado	32	21	8		45	111	72	
Minnesota	32	21	10	1	43	94	78	
St. Louis	33	16	12	5	37	97	106	
Coyotes	33	14	14	5	33	83	101	
Los Angeles	32	13	13	6	32	91	90	
San Jose	31	13	14	4	30	89	106	
Anaheim	34	9	19	6	24	74	115	
North Toronto Winnipeg	GP 33 33	W 21 20	10 11	OT 2 2 0	Pts 44 42	GF 110 109	GA 85 92	
Edmonton	34	21	13	0 9 3 3	42	116	97	
Montreal	31	14	8		37	100	87	
Vancouver	37	16	18		35	100	120	
Calgary Ottawa East	34 36 GP	15 12 W	16 20 L	4 OT	33 28 Pts	89 94 GF	102 135 GA	
Washington	33	22	7	4 2	48	114	95	
N.Y. Islanders	34	22	8		48	102	76	
Pittsburgh	34	21	11		44	109	90	
Boston	29	16	8	5	37	80	70	
N.Y. Rangers	32	15	13	4	34	102	85	
Philadelphia	32	15	13	4	34	100	119	
New Jersey Buffalo	32 32	12	16 22	4	28 16	78 66	101 115	

16 17 1 33 11 11 8 30 10 20 4 24 NOTE: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. The top four teams in each division will qualify for playoffs under this season's

L OT Pts
7 2 50
7 3 47

20 9 4 44 16 13 5 37 13 13 8 34

101 108 110

Thursday's Games
Pittsburgh 4, New Jersey 3
Washington 4, New Jersey 3 Carolina 4, Columbus 3, OT N.Y. Rangers 8, Philadelphia 3 N.Y. Islanders 4, Boston 3, OT Toronto 3, Ottawa 2, OT Chicago 3, Florida 0 Minnesota 2, St. Louis 0

Central

Florida

Chicago

Nashville

Columbus

Nashville 7, Detroit 1 Dallas 4, Tampa Bay 3 Colorado 5, Vegas 1 Friday's Games
Washington 4, New Jersey 0
Anaheim at St. Louis, late

San Jose at **Coyotes**, late Winnipeg at Calgary, ;ate Edmonton at Montreal, ppd. Saturday's Games Buffalo at Boston, 10 a.m.
N.Y. Rangers at Philadelphia, 10 a.m.
Columbus at Detroit, noon
Vegas at Colorado, noon Edmonton at Toronto, 4 p.m N.Y. Islanders at Pittsburgh, 4 p.m. Tampa Bay at Carolina, 4 p.m. Florida at Dallas, 5 p.m. Nashville at Chicago, 5 p.m.

San Jose at Coyotes, 7 p.m. Winnipeg at Calgary, 7 p.m. N.Y. Rangers at Washington, 9 a.m. Columbus at Detroit, noon Anaheim at St. Louis, 2 p.m. New Jersey at Boston, 2:30 p.m. Florida at Dallas, 3 p.m.

Nashville at Chicago, 5 p.m. Ottawa at Montreal, ppd. **Monday's Games** Edmonton at Toronto, 4 p.m. N.Y. Islanders at Pittsburgh, 4 p.m. Philadelphia at Buffalo, 4 p.m. Anaheim at Colorado, 6 p.m Los Angeles at Vegas, 7 p.m.

Winnipeg at Calgary, 7 p.m. Minnesota at San Jose, 7:30 p.m.						loi			
	AHL							Wi	
Pacific	GP	W	L	0L	SOL	Pts	GF	GA	To
Henderson	16	13	3	0	0	26	55	32	
Bakersfield	18	11	6	0	1	23	65	48	An
San Diego	21	11	10	0	0	22	60	67	
San Jose	17	6	6	4	1	17	47	57	Vik
Colorado	15	7	6	2	0	16	43	46	
Roadrunners	16	7	9	0	0	14	45	55	Ke
Ontario	20	6	12	2	0	14	64	79	
Atlantic	GP	W	L	0L	SOL	Pts	GF	GA	Bil
Providence	15	11	3	1	0	23	52	30	l
Hartford	11	4	6	1	0	9	31	39	Ma
Bridgeport	10	3	7	0	0	6	21	35	
Canadian	GP	W	L	0L	SOL	Pts	GF	GA	We
Laval	18	12	4	1	1	26	59	46	١
Manitoba	17	8	7	2	0	18	50	49	Ma
Toronto	16	8	7	0	1	17	50	49	Ι.
Stockton	14	7	6	1	0	15	45	45	Le
Belleville	13	4	9	0	0	8	26	41	۱.,
Central	GP	W	L	0L	SOL	Pts	GF	GA	Ma
Chicago	13	10	2	0	1	21	57	31	١,,,
Texas	15	8	5	2	0	18	54	50	Vic
Grand Rapids	12	7	3	2	0	16	38	30	۱.,
Rockford	16	6	9	1	0	13	45	59	Ma
Cleveland	10	5	4		0	11	32	31	l 1/-
lowa	14	4	8	2	0	10	36	60	Ke
North	GP	W	L	0L	SOL	Pts	GF	GA	n.
Hershey	15	9	4	2	0	20	50	40	Bo
Lehigh Valley	13	8	3	2	0	18	42	41	n.
WB/Scranton Utica	14 9	5	5 2 3	0	1	14 13	43 34	50 29	Ro
	10	6	2	0	1				lar
Rochester	12	6	3	1	0	13	35	32	l iat
Syracuse	12	3	5 5	3	1	13 10	41 33	35 47	Xa
Binghamton	12	3		. 3		10	33	4/	l ya

NOTE: Two points are awarded for a win, one point for an overtime or shootout loss. Top four teams in each division advance to

Thursday's Games Hartford 4. Providence 2 Cleveland 3, Texas 1 Manitoba 4, Laval 3 Friday's Games Hershey 3, WB/Scranton 1 Laval 1, Manitoba 0 Lehigh Valley 3, Binghamton 2 Belleville 2, Stockton 1 Syracuse 4, Rochester 3, OT Grand Rapids at Iowa, late Roadrunners at Ontario, late Bakersfield at San Diego, late

Colorado at Henderson, late Saturday's Games
Bridgeport at Hartford, 10 a.m.
Grand Rapids at Iowa, 4 p.m. Texas at Cleveland, 4 p.m. Utica at Syracuse, 4 p.m. Binghamton at Lehigh Valley, 4:05 p.m Bakersfield at Ontario, 5 p.m.

Chicago at Rockford, 6 p.m. Colorado at Henderson, 7 p.m. Roadrunners at San Diego, 7 p.m BASEBALL

MLB SPRING TRAINING
idav's Games

Friday's Games Detroit 5, Pittsburgh 2 Detroit 5, Pittsburgh 2
Tampa Bay 7, Boston 3
Cleveland 5, Colorado 4
San Francisco 5, Chicago Cubs 5
Chicago White Sox 7, Milwaukee 5
Cincinnati 7, **D-backs** 3
Atlanta vs. Minnesota, late
Miami vs. Houston, late
Washington vs. N.Y. Mets, late
Baltimore vs. N.Y. Yankees, late
Philadelphia vs. Toronto, late
Kansas City vs. Texas, late Kansas City vs. Texas, late Oakland vs. L.A. Dodgers, late Seattle vs. San Diego, late Saturday's Games Tampa Bay vs. Minnesota at Fort Myers, Fla.,

10:05 a.m. Toronto vs. N.Y. Yankees at Tampa, Fla., 10:05 Boston vs. Pittsburgh at Bradenton, Fla.,

10:05 a.m. Houston vs. N.Y. Mets at Port St. Lucie, Fla., Cleveland vs. L.A. Dodgers at Glendale, 12:05 p.m. San Diego vs. L.A. Angels at Tempe, 12:10 p.m. Milwaukee vs. Kansas City at Surprise, 1:05

Philadelphia vs. Detroit at Lakeland, Fla.,

Texas vs. Oakland at Mesa. 1:05 p.m Chicago White Sox vs. Colorado at Scottsdale, 1:10 p.m. Baltimore vs. Atlanta at North Port, Fla., 3:05

p.m. Miami vs. St. Louis at Jupiter, Fla., 3:05 p.m. Chicago Cubs vs. Cincinnati at Goodyear, 6:05 p.m. San Francisco vs. Seattle at Peoria, 6:40 p.m.

GOLF DELL MATCH PLAY Friday at Austin Country Club in Austin, Texas. Purse: \$10.5 million

Purse: 5,01.5 million Yardage: 7,108; Par. 71 Justin Thomas (2), United States, def. Louis Oosthuizen (22), South Africa, 3 and 2. Shane Lowry (38), Ireland, def. Sebastian Munoz, Colombia, 3 and 2. ony Finau (12), United States, def. Jason

ony rinau (12), United States, der. Jason Kokrak (29), United States, 2 up. Vill Zalatoris (40), United States, def. Dylan Frittelli (64), South Africa, 2 up. ommy Fleetwood (21), England, def. Bryson DeChambeau (5), United States, 1 up.

JUNE DE STATES, 1 Up. notione Rozner (58), France, def. Si Woo Kim (45), South Korea, 3 and 1. lktor Hovland (13), Norway, def. Abraham Ancer (27), Mexico, 1 up. evin Streelman (53), United States, def. Bernd Wiesberger (43), Austria, 1 up. wresberger (+3), Austria, 1 up.
illy Horschel (32), United States, def. Collin
Morikawa (4), United States, 3 and 2.
lax Homa (35), United States, def. J.T. Poston
(63), United States, 3 and 2.
lebb Simpson (9), United States, halved with
Paul Casey (17), England.

raui vasey (17), Erigiario. Jackenzie Hughes (48), Canada, halved with Talor Gooch (59), United States. se Westwood (18), England, def. Tyrrell Hatton (8), England, 4 and 3. latt Wallace (51), England, def. Sergio Garcia (39), Spain, 3 and 2.

ctor Perez (31), France, def. Sungjae Im (16),

ctor Perez (31), France, der. Sungjae im South Korea, 2 and 1. arc Leishman (36), halved with Russell Henley (50), United States. yoin Na (28), United States, def. Dustin Johnson (1), United States, 1 up.

Jonison (J.), United States, 1 Up ob MacIntyre (41), Scotland, halved with Adam Long (61), United States. ory McIlroy (11), halved with Cameron Smith (25), Australia. In Poulter (60), England, def. Lanto Griffin (46), Missia States (2), 2011. (46), United States, 2 and 1.

Xander Schauffele (6), United States, halved with Scottie Scheffler (30), United States.

Jason Day (44), Australia, def. Andy Sullivan (57), England, 2 and 1.

Daniel Berger (14), United States, def. Harris English (19), United States, 4 and 2.

English (19), United States, 4 and 2. Erik van Rooyen (62), South Africa, def. Bren-don Todd (47), United States, 2 and 1. Jon Rahm (3), Spain, halved with Ryan Palmer (24), United States. Hideki Matsuyama (23), Japan, def. Patrick Cantlay (10), United States, 4 and 2.

Brian Harman (54), United States, def. Carlos Ortiz (42), Mexico,
Joaquin Niemann (26), Chile, def. Patrick Reed
(7), United States, 5 and 4.
Bubba Watson (55), United States, def.

Christiaan Bezuidenout (33), South Africa. 5 and 3 Matt Fitzpatrick (15), England, def. Matthew Wolff (20), United States, 3 and 2. Jordan Spieth (49), United States, def. Corey Conners (37), Canada, 3 and 2. Matt Kuchar (52), United States, def. .Kevin Kisner (34), United States, 2 and 1.

BETTING LINES

NRA

NDA				
Saturday				
FAVORITE	LINE	0/U	UNDERDOG	
at WASHINGTON	OFF	(OFF)	Detroit	
at MINNESOTA	OFF	(OFF)	Houston	
at MILWAUKEE	OFF	(OFF)	New York	
at S. ANTONIO	OFF	(OFF)	Chicago	
at N. ORLEANS	OFF	(OFF)	Dallas	
at OKLA. CITY	OFF	(OFF)	Boston	
at UTAH	101/2	(228)	Memphis	
at SACRAMENTO	OFF	(OFF)	Cleveland	
at LA CLIPPERS	OFF	(OFF)	Philadelphia	

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Saturday			
FAVORITE	LINE	UNDERDO	
Baylor Arkansas Loyola-Chicago Houston	7½ 11½ 6½ 6½	Villanova Oral Roberts Oregon St Syracuse	

Florida St. Alabama UCLA Gonzaga SOUTHERN CAL

TRANSACTIONS BASEBALL Major League Baseball

American League
BOSTON RED SOX — Optioned INF Jonathan
Arauz to an alternate training site. Reassigned C Chris Herrmann, INF/OF Danny Santana, OFs Cesar Puello and Michael Gettys and RHPs Kevin McCarthy and

Gettys and Khr's Kevin McCartny and Marcus Walden to minor leagues. CLEVELAND INDIANS — Agreed to terms with INFs Jake Bauers and Yu Chang, OF Ben Gamel, LHP Oliver Perez, Optioned INF Bobby Bradley, OF Bradley Zimmer and LHP Kyle Nelson to Columbus (Triple-A Midwest) Released LHPs Anthony Gose and Blake Parker.
DETROIT TIGERS — Optioned OF Daz Cameron

to Toledo (Triple-A Midwest). LOS ANGELES ANGELS — Released OF Jon Jay and RHP Jesse Chavez from minor league contracts.
MINNESOTA TWINS — Released C Andrew

Romine from a minor league contract.

NEW YORK YANKEES — Optioned RHP Deiv Garcia to Wilkes-Barre/Scranton (Triple-A TAMPA BAY RAYS — Placed RHP Nick Anderso

on the 60-day injured list. Selected the con-tract of RHP Andrew Kittredge from Durham (Triple-A East). National League ATLANTA BRAVES — Optioned RHP Bryse

Wilson to the alternate training site.
CINCINNATI REDS — Released INF Dee Gordon-Strange from a minor league contract.
CLEVELAND INDIANS — Optioned OF Bradley Zimmer and P Kyle Nelson to Columbus

(Triple-A East).
MIAMI MARLINS — Released LHP Gio Gonzalez From a minor league contract.

MILWAUKEE BREWERS — Released RHPs

Brad Boxberger and Jordan Zimmerman to

alternate training sites.
PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES — Released RHPs Ivan Nova and Hector Rondon and C Jeff Mathis from minor league contracts. SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS — Reassigned RHPs Yunior Marte and Jimmie Sherfy to minor

league training camp. Atlantic League
LONG ISLAND DUCKS — Agreed to terms with
LHP Rob Zastryzny.

Frontier League
FLORENCE Y'ALLS — Agreed to terms with RHP
Pete Perez. Pete Perez.
NEW JERSEY JACKALS — Agreed to terms with LHP Sam Mercedes. Traded RHP Mat Latos to Southern Maryland of the Atlantic League. TRI-CITY VALLEY CATS — Agreed to terms with INF Sean Miller. Released OFs Reshard Mun-

roe and Stanley Espinal, RHP Erik Manoah ind INF Jose Reyes BASKETBALI

National Basketball Association
CLEVELAND CAVALIERS — Waived C Andre MEMPHIS GRIZZLIES — Waived C Gorjui Dieng. SACRAMENTO KINGS — Waived Fs Mifondu Kabengele and Jabari Parker. FOOTBALL

National Football League
ARIZONA CARDINALS — Signed TE Darrell BUFFALO BILLS — Signed WR Brandon Powell to a one-year contract. Signed DB Levi Wallace.

CHICAGO BEARS — Signed RB Damien Williams and DB Artie Burns to one-year CINCINNATI BENGALS - Signed WR Mike

CLEVELAND BROWNS — Placed DE Trevon Young on waivers.
DETROIT LIONS — Signed WR Kalif Raymond.
GREEN BAY PACKERS — Re-signed RB Aaron

Jones and CB Kevin King. JACSONVILLE JAGUARS — Signed OT Derwin Gray. KANSAS CITY CHIEFS — Signed WR Demarcus LAS VEGAS RAIDERS — Signed WR Willie

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS — Signed LB Kylei Fackrell.

LOS ANGELES RAMS — Signed WR DeSean Jackson and LB Travin Howard. ${\sf NEW}\,{\sf ENGLAND}\,{\sf PATRIOTS}-{\sf Signed}\,{\sf RB}\,{\sf James}$

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS — Signed QB Jameis

Winston.

NEW YORK JETS — Signed RB Tevin Coleman.

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES — Traded the No. 6

overall pick along with No. 156 overall to
the Miami for No. 12, No. 123 and a 2022

first-round pick.

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS — Acquired the No.
3 overall draft pick in 2021 from Miami in 3 overall draft pick in 2021 from Miami in exchange for 2021 first-round, along with the 2022 and 2023 first-round picks and a 2022 compensatory third-round draft pick. Re-signed CB K'Waun Williams to a one-year contract. Signed DB K'Waun Williams.

TV/RADIO BEST BETS TV SATURDAY NASCAR Trucks race Auto racing Basketball, men's D- II final: NW Miss. St. vs. W.Tex. A&M 9 a.m. Ch 13 NIT semi: Memphis vs. Colorado St. **ESPN** 9 a.m. NCAA: Oregon St. vs. Loyola-Chicago Ch 13 11:30 a.m. Noon NIT semi: Mississippi St. vs. La. Tech NCAA: Villanova vs. Baylor 2:15 p.m Ch 13 NCAA: Oral Roberts vs. Arkansas 4:15 p.m. **TBS** NCAA: Syracuse vs. Houston 6:45 p.m. TBS Basketball, women's NCAA: lowa vs. UConn 10 a.m. Ch 9 NCAA: Michigan vs. Baylor Ch 9 Noon NCAA: Indiana vs. NC State 3 p.m. NCAA: Arizona vs. Texas A&M ESPN2 5 p.m. Golf PGA Tour, third round 7 a.m. Golf PGA Tour, third round 11 a.m Golf PGA Tour Match Play quarterfinals 11 a.m. Ch 4 LPGA Tour, third round 3 p.m. Golf 10 a.m. MLB spring Blue Jays vs. Yankees MLB White Sox vs. Rangers 1 p.m. Giants vs. Mariners 6:30 p.m MLB 76ers at Clippers 7 p.m. NBA NCAA baseball Mississippi at Alabama SEC 11 a.m Oregon at Arizona Pac-12A 3 p.m. 4 p.m. Kentucky at Auburn SEC UCLA at USC Pac-12N 6 p.m. NCAA hockey Boston U. vs. St. Cloud St. **ESPNEWS** 10 a.m. Omaha vs. Minnesota **ESPNU** 7 p.m. NHL Golden Knights at Avalanche Noon NHL Oilers at Maple Leafs NHL 4 p.m. Sharks at Coyotes 7 p.m. **FSAZ** Jets at Flames 7 p.m. NHL Skating ISU World Championships **NRCS** 5 a.m. Soccer, men's Norway vs. Turkey 9:50 a.m ESPN2 Providence at Georgetown 10 a.m. FS1 Indiana at Michigan 11 a.m. BTN Czech Republic vs. Belgium 12:30 p.m. ESPN2 Maryland at Northwestern 1 p.m. BTN Auburn at Missouri Softball 9 a.m. SEC **ESPN** LSU at Florida 2 p.m. Georgia at Mississippi 2 p.m. SEC Miami Open 8 a.m. TEN Tennis Volleyball Purdue at Ohio State 11 a.m **ESPNU** TCU at Oklahoma 2 p.m. **FSAZ** 4 p.m. Wisconsin at Penn State BTN Indiana at Illinois 6 p.m. BTN **RADIO SATURDAY**

Basketball, men's NCAA: Oregon St. vs. Loyola-Chicago 11:30 a.m. 102 1-FM NCAA: Villanova vs. Baylor 2:15 p.m. 102.1-FM NCAA: Oral Roberts vs. Arkansas 4:15 p.m. 1490-AM³ NCAA: Syracuse vs. Houston 6:45 p.m. 1490-AM* Arizona vs. Texas A&M 1400-AM Basketball, women's 5 p.m. The Golf Arizona Show 1490-AM* Golf 8 a.m. Tucson at San Diego Hockey 7 p.m. 1450-AM 1290-AM NCAA baseball Oregon at Arizona 3 p.m. 1490-AM also airs on 104.9-FM

Note: Games subject to change due to pandemic.

Channel guide: Ch 13 (Ch 7 on Comcast) BTN is Big Ten Network (Ch 320 on Cox, Ch 272 on Comcast, Ch 610 on DirecTV, Ch 439 on Dish) CBSS is CBS Sports Network (Ch 312 on Cox, Ch 274 on Comcast, Ch 221 on DirecTV, Ch 158 on Dish) **ESPN** (Ch 24 on Cox, Ch 2 on Comcast, Ch 206 on DirecTV, Ch 140 on Dish) ESPN2 (Ch 25 on Cox, Ch 30 on Comcast, Ch 209 on DirecTV, Ch 143 on Dish) ESPNU (Ch 330 on Cox, Ch 266 on Comcast, Ch 208 on DirecTV, Ch 141 on Dish) ESPNEWS (Ch 331 on Cox, Ch 102 on Comcast, Ch 207 on DirecTV, Ch 142 on Dish) FS1 is Fox Sports 1 (Ch 27 on Cox, Ch 32 on Comcast, Ch 219 on DirecTV, Ch 150 on Dish) FSAZ is Fox Sports Arizona (Ch 26 on Cox, Ch 31 on Comcast, Ch 686 on DirecTV, Ch 415 on Dish) Golf (Ch 65 on Cox, Ch 28 on Comcast, Ch 218 on DirecTV, Ch 401 on Dish) **MLB** is MLB Network (Ch 305 on Cox, Ch 271 on Comcast, Ch 213 on DirecTV, Ch 152 on Dish) NBA is NBATV (Ch 308 on Cox, Ch 273 on Comcast Ch 216 on DirecTV, Ch 156 on Dish) NBCS is NBC Sports Network (Ch 59 on Cox, Ch 29 on Comcast, Ch 220 on DirecTV, Ch 159 on Dish) NHL is NHL Network (Ch 310 on Cox, Ch 279 on Comcast, Ch 220 on DirecTV, Ch 159 on Dish) NHL is NHL Network (Ch 310 on Cox, Ch 279 on Comcast, Ch 270 on Cox, Ch 279 on Comcast, Ch 270 on Cox, Ch 279 on Comcast, Ch 270 on Cox, Ch 279 on ${\it Ch\,215\,on\,DirecTV,Ch\,157\,on\,Dish)}\,\textbf{Pac-12A}\,\text{is}\,\textit{Pac-12}\,\textit{Arizona}\,(\textit{Ch\,75\,on}\,\textit{Cox},\textit{Ch\,103}\,\textit{on}\,\textit{Comcast},$ not available on DirecTV, Ch. 409, Ch 406 on Dish Hopper or contact Dish for channel information) Pac-12N is Pac-12 Network (Ch 70 on Cox, Ch. 283 on Comcast, not available on DirecTV, Ch 409 on Dish, Ch 406 on Dish Hopper) SEC is SEC Network (Ch 329 on Cox, Ch 286 on Comcast, Ch 611 on DirecTV, Ch 408 on Dish) ${\sf TBS}$ (Ch 30 on Cox, Ch 37 on Comcast, Ch 247 on DirecTV, Ch 139 on Dish) TEN is Tennis (Ch 315 on Cox, Ch 277 on Comcast, Ch 217 on DirecTV, Ch 400 on Dish)

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS — Signed DE Benson Mayowa, OG Jordan Simmons and OT Cedric WASHINGTON FOOTBALL TEAM — Signed CB

National Hockey League LOS ANGELES KINGS — Assigned C Mike Amadio and G Troy Grosenick to Ontario (AHL). Recalled G Matthew Villalta from Ontario (AHL)

Ontario (AHL).

MINNESOTA WILD — Loaned RW Will Bitten to lowa (AHL).

NEW JERSEY DEVILS — Recalled D Colton White from Binghamton (AHL). PHILADELPHIA FLYERS — Fined F Samuel Morin \$3,017.24 for unsportsmanlike con-duct against New York Rangers F Brendan

Lemieux during a March 25 game. Recalled G Felix Sandstrom from Lehign Valley (AHL). Assigned G Alex Lyon to Lehigh Valley (AHL). TAMPA BAY LIGHTNING — Recalled F Gemel Smith and G Christopher Gibson from Svr acuse (AHL) to the taxi squad. Reassigned F Taylor Raddysh and G Spencer Martin to Syracuse. SOCCER

Major League Soccer VANCOUVER WHITECAPS FC — Loaned CB Jasser Khmiri to USL Championship Clul San Antonio FC through end of the 2021

COLLEGE OKLAHOMA CITY UNIVERSITY — Named Mark

FOOTBALL

Continued from Page B9

the offense, Fisch and his staff want the QBs to get to a point where they aren't thinking about it.

"It's definitely different for these guys when you're under center and you're doing drills from under center," Fisch said. "You have to not count your steps. But you're told, 'Hey, this is a five-step, this is a seven-step, this is a three-step?

"Don't be the guy that counts steps; just be the guy that understands it. It's going to come from a process of ... repetition, and we just need to get them to the point that they have muscle memory. It's gonna take a bit a little bit longer for them to get there."

That's the tricky part for the coaching staff. They understand that it's going to take time for quarterbacks, centers and others who have been operating in spread-But they also want to push the players as hard as they can. Fisch doesn't often reference Arizona's recent past — if ever — but there's an implicit understanding that the Wildcats are starting from the bottom of the Pac-12.

a break. We put the pedal to the metal. We as we have here." tell them every day that we're playing in September against BYU, and whether or also mitigates the need for an abundance of not they've been having the same staff, whether they've been working together or not for a bunch of years, that doesn't really rives in June. matter when it comes down to kickoff.

"We have to try to catch up with all the teams in the Pac 12, with all the teams that we're playing. We recognize that, we understand it, we embrace it. But we can't really slow down at all."

Wide, wide world

Arizona has nine scholarship wide receivers, a relatively low number compared to recent seasons. One of those players. Jaden Mitchell, has been working on the side after having knee surgery last season.

None of the Wildcats' known incomtype systems since their high school days, ing freshmen is listed as a wide receiver. although multipurpose athlete Anthony Simpson could end up there.

So would 10 be enough?

"I'm coming from a league (the NFL) where you'd only dress four or five, maybe six if you're going to count a special-teams

"We're in fast-forward mode every sin- player, for a game," Fisch said. "So I consider Twitter. gle day," Fisch said. "We don't give our guys—it a huge bonus that we have as many players

> The increased emphasis on tight ends wideouts. Arizona will have six scholarship tight ends when freshman Colby Powers ar-

Support system

Fisch has unabashedly expressed his support for other UA teams, in particular the women's basketball team.

The latest illustration: He moved Saturday's practice up an hour, from 11 a.m. to 10 a.m., so he can catch a flight to San Antonio to watch the Wildcats play Texas A&M in the Sweet 16.

"Going to go trying to support the women's basketball program," Fisch said. "In order for me to get to the game, we're going to bump it up an hour."

plane with other UA athletic officials and donors. The Wildcats and Aggies are scheduled to tip off at 5 p.m.

UA senior forward Sam Thomas recognized Fisch's gesture after video of his first 200 fans who arrive at the Dick Tomey post-practice interview was posted on Practice Fields.

First week of spring ball and still makes time to support WBB," Thomas tweeted. "That's dedication."

Extra points

• Tailback Michael Wiley and linebacker Derick Mourning were full participants Thursday after being limited in the first practice Tuesday. Defensive tackle Aaron Blackwell, linebacker Anthony Pandy and defensive backs Isaiah Mays and Rhedi Short were among those limited to side

• Fisch after watching the film of the opening practice: "We need to get a lot better. We need to continue to improve on our execution. We need to continue to improve upon our effort. And we need to make sure that we play with a great enthusiasm, that we attack every play — every time the ball's in the air, every time that we're running the Fisch presumably will fly on a chartered football, that we've got as many people as we can swarming the ball. That's what we need to improve upon the most."

> Arizona will practice in pads for the first time Saturday. The session is open to the

SPORTS SHORTS

After 113 games at UA, Lee leaving for George Washington

STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

Former Arizona forward Ira Lee announced he will transfer to George Wash-

After spending four seasons with the Wildcats but playing a reduced role this season, Lee announced he was leaving Arizona immediately after its season ended in March 1. All participants this season were given an extra year of eligibility.

Lee posted his decision to head to George Washington on Twitter on Friday.

The Wildcats are also losing two other and Jemarl Baker, but still have a full roster of 13 players lined up for next season. Brown announced Thursday he will play for Washington next season.

Lee played in 113 games for the Wildcats over four years — and eight starts, including Arizona's home finale win against Washington. Lee finished his career averaging 3.9 points and 3.2 rebounds per game mostly as

a reserve power forward. The 6-foot-8-inch, 245-pound Los entire lifetime."

Angeles native signed with the Wildcats' star-studded recruiting class 2017 that featured top NBA draft pick **Deandre Ayton**, four-star New York guard Brandon Randolph, five-star wing Emmanuel Akot and Phoenix-area guard **Alex Barcello**. Ayton and Randolph turned pro, while Akot and Barcello transferred before the 2019-20 season, so Lee was the only member of the '17 class to play at the UA for four years. When Lee was honored on Senior Day, he

was the first four-year scholarship player to participate in the ceremony since **Dusan** transfers this spring, guards **Terrell Brown Ristic** and **Parker Jackson-Cartwright** in

Lee also dealt with personal life struggles during his time at the UA. In 2018, Lee was arrested for DUI, and was suspended for Arizona's home opener against Houston Baptist. The day before his arrest, Lee's grandmother died. Arizona coach Sean Miller said then that Lee was "hit with more in the last three or four months than a lot of people are going to be hit with in their

After growing from his tribulations, Lee returned to the Wildcats' rotation and finished his four-year career at the UA.

Garcia comes up aces at Match Play

AUSTIN, Texas - Needing to win the final hole to advance, **Bob MacIntrye** drilled a driver to 3 feet of the cup on he 371-yard 18th hole. Moments later, Sergio Garcia ended one of the record eight sudden-death ing Texas to coach Marquette, who anplayoffs with a hole-in-one.

Already the most fickle event in golf, the Dell Technologies Match Play on Friday was an endless frenzy.

Kevin Na lectured Dustin Johnson about not waiting for a putt to be conceded 6 inches — and then birdied the last two holes to oust the No. 1 player in the world. Patrick Cantlay, practically flawless with 14 birdies and an eagle over two days, managed only two birdies and lost a playoff with a three-putt.

When it finally ended, Jon Rahm at No. 3 was the only player from the top 20 seeds who made it to the knockout stage of the weekend at Austin Country Club. "You just never know what can happen

out there," **Billy Horschel** said after beating Max Homa on the third playoff hole.

MISCELLANEOUS

Smith leaves Texas for Marquette

MILWAUKEE - Shaka Smart is leavnounced the hiring Friday. It comes a week after Marquette fired Steve Wojciechowski and Smart's Texas team was upset 53-52 by Abilene Christian in the first round of the

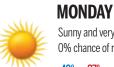
NCAA Tournament. • The San Francisco 49ers made a big move to grab their quarterback of the future by trading up with Miami to acquire the No. 3 pick in next month's draft. The Niners announced they are trading their No. 12 pick along with first-round picks in 2022 and 2023 to get the third overall pick.







SUNDAY 0% chance of rain





TUESDAY Sunny and warm 0% chance of rain

Happy Saturday. A few showers are possible especially south and east of Tucson before high pressure builds back in bringing back clear and warm conditions. Our first 90-degree day could happen by next Friday. In the meantime, highs will be in the low to mid-80s beginning on Sunday.

FORECAST

Benson	
38/69/pc	

Benson	
38/69/pc	

ra ta	Sells
4/pc	40/72/pc



70° 6 p.m.



0% chance of rain



Benson
00 (00 (

uarita

Sunny and very warm

REGIONAL

Sierra Vista	Sells	Green Valley	Sahı
38/64/pc	40/72/pc	43/70/pc	44/

Vail

43/69/pc

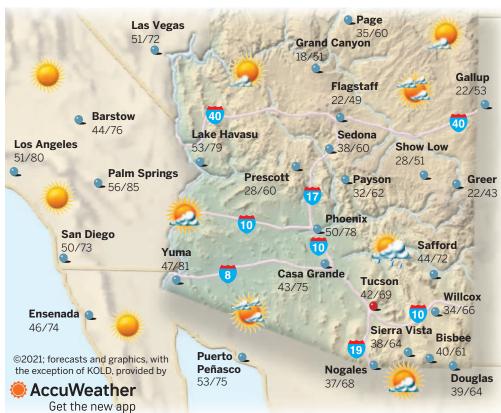
Tucson Intl. Airport 42/69/pc

Marana 44/75/pc

Sabino Canyon 44/71/pc

Valley Oracle 43/71/pc 40/64/pc

Lemmon 31/48/pc



ARIZONA

City

Benson

Bisbee Casa Grande

Coolidge

Douglas

Globe

Oracle

Payson

Prescott

Safford

Show Low

Sierra Vista

Grand Canyon Greer

Mount Lemmon

Yesterday

Lo/Hi/P 39/64/0.00

39/60/0.00

47/62/0.05

46/63/0.01 42/65/0.00

40/56/Tr

30/38/0.18

26/39/0.00

41/56/0.00 36/42/0.27

53/64/0.03

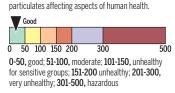
37/41/0.19

41/65/0.00 30/45/0.04

41/64/0.00

TODAY'S AQ

Forecast index based on presence of man-made



UV INDEX

The higher the AccuWeather.com UV Index™ number, the greater the need for eye and skin protection. Shown is the highest value of the day. Time to burn a fair complexion without sunscreen: **0-2,** 60 minutes; **3-4,** 45 minutes; **5-6,** 30 minutes;

7-9, 15-24 minutes; 10-15, 10 minutes					
5	8	5	2		
10 a m	Moon	2 n m	/ n m		

SKYWATCH

Hours of da	ylight today	/	12h 22m	
Sunset today	6:40 p.m.			
Sunrise Sur	nday		6:17 a.m	
Moonrise S	unday		6:56 p.m.	
Moonset St	unday		6:31 a.m.	
250	1	53	34	

New Moon

Apr 11

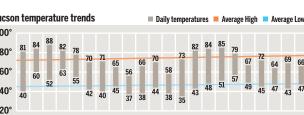
First Quarter

TUCSON ALMANAC

Statistics are through 6 p.m. yesterday at Tucson Int. Airport

recipitation		Wind and air					
4 hours through		Top wind speed	20 mph				
p.m. yesterday	0.00"		2 p.m.				
Ionth-to-date	0.31"	High barometer	29.94"				
lormal m-t-d	0.64"	Low barometer	29.85"				
ear-to-date	1.04"	High dew point	37°				
ormal year-to-date	2.44"	Low dew point	22°				
ast year to date	2.02"	Avg. dew point	28°				
ast rain Mar. 24	trace	High humidity	64%				
ecord 0.62	"(1989)	Low humidity	19%				

Tucson Temperatures												
High	66° at 2:00 p.m.	High a year ago	72°									
Low	47° at 6:10 a.m.	Low a year ago	56°									
Mean	57°	Record high	99° (1988)									
Normal hi	gh 77°	Record low	26° (1913)									
Normal lo	/A0	100° days	0									



Calgar 27/50 42/51 Shown are noon Winnipe 23/43 positions of Seattle 43/54 precipitation bands are highs for the day. 80s 32/68 Salt Lake City 34/55 70s 60s Los Angeles 51/80 50s 40s Honolulu 🦠 71/82 30s 48/83 Chihuahu 20s 42/75 10s T-Storms Z I-Sto Rain 0s Flurries -0s -10s

NATIONAL FORECAST Low: 5 Antero Reservoir, CO High: 93 Zapata, TX

City	Yesterday Lo/Hi/P	Today Lo/Hi/W	City	Yesterday Lo/Hi/P	Today Lo/Hi/W
Albany, NY	56/74/0.29	39/58/pc	Indianapolis	45/52/0.52	42/71/c
Albuquerque	35/53/Tr	35/58/pc	Jackson, MS	58/79/0.00	66/84/t
Asheville	57/80/1.62	47/71/sh	Kansas City	35/62/0.00	50/62/c
Atlanta	64/76/1.12	65/81/t	Las Vegas	49/66/Tr	51/72/s
Atlantic City	50/83/Tr	50/67/s	Los Angeles	51/64/0.00	51/80/s
Austin	43/91/0.00	64/85/t	Louisville	54/64/0.10	46/75/pc
Baltimore	56/83/Tr	49/72/s	Memphis	48/73/0.00	59/74/t
Bismarck	35/44/0.00	28/50/pc	Miami	76/84/0.00	75/85/pc
Boise	32/53/0.00	34/62/s	Milwaukee	33/41/0.03	38/50/r
Boston	49/69/0.03	45/56/s	Minneapolis	28/47/0.00	40/49/sh
Buffalo	52/55/0.00	39/57/pc	New Orleans	71/82/0.04	72/83/t
Burlington, VT	50/69/0.45	39/51/c	New York	52/81/0.20	50/65/s
Casper	30/38/0.01	22/43/s	Oklahoma City	39/77/0.00	51/72/s
Charleston, SC	65/86/0.07	64/87/t	Omaha	33/57/0.02	44/56/pc
Charleston, WV	60/70/0.01	44/74/s	Orlando	70/88/0.00	68/90/pc
Cheyenne	30/37/0.01	26/43/s	Philadelphia	55/82/0.01	48/70/s
Chicago	35/44/0.18	42/62/sh	Pittsburgh	58/61/0.05	44/70/pc
Cincinnati	53/56/0.03	45/72/pc	Portland, ME	43/56/0.49	39/52/pc
Cleveland	42/54/0.26	42/65/pc	Portland, OR	44/55/0.02	41/61/pc
Colorado Springs	35/48/0.05	30/49/pc	Providence	48/63/0.03	46/61/s
Columbia, SC	70/72/0.23	62/87/t	Raleigh	67/79/0.00	55/76/sh
Columbus, OH	51/61/Tr	47/70/pc	Richmond, VA	66/85/Tr	50/75/pc
Dallas	52/79/0.00	58/77/c	Sacramento	46/74/0.00	41/76/s
Denver	36/48/Tr	30/50/pc	Salt Lake City	32/48/0.37	34/55/s
Des Moines	39/52/0.01	46/56/c	San Antonio	48/85/0.00	64/86/c
Detroit	39/56/1.17	36/59/pc	San Diego	53/64/0.03	50/73/s
Duluth	25/32/Tr	27/38/i	San Francisco	45/71/0.00	47/69/s
Durango, CO	29/41/0.25	18/51/pc	San Jose	42/73/0.00	45/76/s
El Paso	51/71/0.00	46/65/s	Santa Fe	28/51/Tr	27/55/pc
Eugene, OR	33/59/0.00	35/63/s	Seattle	41/54/0.00	43/54/pc
Fargo	30/49/0.05	33/48/pc	Sioux Falls	26/55/0.01	39/51/sh
Fresno	45/69/0.00	47/78/s	Spokane	33/53/Tr	34/55/pc
Grand Rapids	36/45/1.28	33/56/r	St. Louis	46/63/0.04	48/77/pc
Great Falls	20/47/Tr	34/57/pc	Syracuse	60/71/0.27	36/57/pc
Hartford	53/76/0.06	44/64/s	Washington, DC	60/84/Tr	52/73/s
Helena	24/46/Tr	36/58/pc	Wilmington, DE	52/83/0.01	48/71/s

WORLD FORECAST

	Today	Buenos Aires	64/71/r	Johannesburg	54/75/s	Puerto Vallarta	52/79/s
City	Lo/Hi/W	Cabo	58/75/pc	Kabul	47/67/pc	Rio de Janeiro	76/89/s
-		Cairo	46/68/s	Karachi	76/98/pc	Rome	44/61/pc
Amsterdam	40/46/pc	Copenhagen	43/46/sh	Kuwait City	65/89/pc	San Juan	75/84/pc
Athens	41/61/s	Dublin	34/50/sh	London	37/51/pc	Sao Paulo	69/88/pc
Baghdad	64/68/pc	Frankfurt	44/50/sh	Madrid	43/70/s	Seoul	45/60/sh
Bangkok	80/97/pc	Guaymas	57/79/pc	Moscow	37/42/c	Singapore	79/89/t
Beijing	50/65/pc	Helsinki	31/45/c	New Delhi	64/94/pc	Sydney	62/79/s
Berlin	44/51/sh	Hong Kong	72/79/pc	Ottawa	31/50/pc	Tokyo	50/63/pc
Budapest	36/64/pc	Jerusalem	42/53/pc	Paris	40/53/pc	Vienna	38/61/c

W-weather, P-precipitation, s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, i-ice, r-rain, t-thunderstorms, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow

SOCCER

Full Moon

Continued from Page B9

Last Quarter

gled a bit at first, she never quit. She spent the 2019-20 season as the Aztecs' backup goalie, got a boost in confidence after getting some playing time, and helped secure shutout victories in four of her five appearances.

But Veliz said the real boost came during the offseason.

"She lost a lot of weight and became stronger, which in turn helped her with goalkeeping," Veliz said. "She wanted to be a better keeper for the team as well as herself."

And then the pandemic hit, giving Kunnemann a second extended break from soccer.

The time away wasn't all for naught. In January, while awaiting the start of the Aztecs' season, Kunnemann signed to play at Northwestern Oklahoma State. She'll move to Alva, Oklahoma, this summer.

She won't be alone: one of Kunnemann's best friends also

plays for the Rangers. "I'm excited. I was able to visit twice, and met my teammates when I was down there," Kunnemann said, adding that she instantly connected with the other players. "I felt really at home, which was weird, but it's really what drove me to want to go there."

Before she leaves, Kunnemann will play one more season with

the Aztecs. "She is starting this season in a much better place than when she first arrived," Veliz said.

"Chloe has brought joy to the team; she often times makes me laugh with how she tells personal stories.

"She is bright and talkative and

fun to be around." Kunnemann is looking forward to returning to play and making the move to Oklahoma, where she's planning to major in business and pursue a career in medical equipment sales. She was drawn to that line of work during Chloe Kunneman comes from a family of soccer fans. Abbie's illness, saying she saw how much the machines helped her from repeated IVs while she the way we wanted it to, it gave us her sister.

"Even the simplest thing,"

Tucson Temperatures													
High	66° at 2:00 p.m.	High a year ago	72										
Low	47° at 6:10 a.m.	Low a year ago	56										
Mean	57°	Record high	99° (1988										
Normal h	nigh 77°	Record low	26° (1913										

																uma	1			307	/1/	0.0
Tucso	ucson temperature trends Daily temperatures Average High Average Low																					
100°																						
80°	81	84	88	82	78								73	82	84	85	79		70			
	t	t	٠	t	1	70	71	65		66	70	58	/3	Т	1	Т	1	67	72	64	69	66
60°	п	60	52	63	55	ı	п	п	56	П	ı	36	ı	ı	ı	51	57		1	ı	ı	1
40°	40		UL.			42	40	45	37	38	44	38	35	43	48	JI		49	45	47	43	47
20°									3,				33									

PHOTO COURTESY OF CHLOE KUNNEMANN

Chloe Kunnemann, left, poses with her sisters Abbie and Izzy. Abbie Kunnemann's sarcoma diagnosis prompted the family to pursue normalcy



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHLOE KUNNEMAN

was undergoing chemotherapy. "Having those type of expe-Kunnemann said, talking about riences in life and seeing how the port-catheter that Abbie had much medicine has helped my has been through the pandemic. implanted in her chest to prevent sister, even though it didn't help

more time with her." It isn't lost on Kunnemann how invaluable medical equipment

PIMA'S 2021 WOMEN'S **SOCCER SCHEDULE**

- Home games in ALL-CAPS
- April 3: at Glendale CC, 2:30 p.m. April 8: COCHISE COLLEGE, 7 p.m.
- April 10: at Scottsdale CC, TBA • April 15: ARIZONA WESTERN
- COLLEGE, 6 p.m.
- April 22: PHOENIX COLLEGE,
- April 29: at Arizona Western College, 7 p.m.
- May 1: at Cochise College, 3 p.m. May 6: SCOTTSDALE CC, TBA
- May 10: NJCAA Region I, Division II playoffs begin
- · June 3: NJCAA Division II national tournament begins

works, but there's a reason for it," Kunnemann said.

Turns out there was a reason Contact reporter Caitlin Schmidt at for her break from soccer all those cschmidt@tucson.com or 573-4191. "It's weird how everything years ago, which Kunnemann said On Twitter: @caitlincschmidt

changed the trajectory of her life. "I couldn't imagine my life

without soccer," Kunnemann said. Just like her sister Abbie, who played soccer almost all the way up to her diagnosis, Kunnemann has a deep, ingrained love of the game.

"My favorite thing about soccer is probably the different minds that come together and the plays you can put together," Kunnemann said, adding that she also loves the way it kept her centered during the toughest times of her life.

If there's one thing Kunnemann learned through Abbie's illness, it's the importance of a having a separate space.

"Find that one outlet that allows you to be the person you are," she said, "and allows you to not think about everything else."

BASEBALL: NO. 21 ARIZONA 5. NO. 13 OREGON 4

Silseth shuts down Ducks as UA takes opener

By Michael Lev ARIZONA DAILY STAR

The Pac-12 schedule makers did the Arizona Wildcats no favors. Arizona opened the conference

slate at No. 23 UCLA. This weekend, the UA is hosting No. 13 Oregon. A trip to 13-5 Arizona State is up next.

Arizona coach Jay Johnson wouldn't have it any other way.

"At Arizona, we're gonna face week. "Instead of running from that, we want to run towards that, because I really believe that's going to help us be the best that we can be. And I don't think this week is any different."

Oregon came to Hi Corbett Field ranked ninth in the nation in RPI. The Ducks had the best fielding percentage in the country and the second-best ERA in the Pac-12.

The 21st-ranked Wildcats beat them at their own game.

Chase Silseth struck out a cadefeated the Ducks 5-4 in front of an announced crowd of 1,031.

"That was a special effort tonight," Johnson said of Silseth. "Facing Friday starters in the Pachander Riley Cooper on in relief, 12 is not easy. Just the confidence Tanner Smith reached on an error

SATURDAY

- Who: No. 13 Oregon (11-5, 2-2)
- at No. 21 Arizona (15-6, 2-2)
- When: 3 p.m.
- TV: Pac-12 Network

gonna keep you right there' is a big

elite competition," he said this its second game in a row after endthethreat. dropping two of three at UCLA. straight entering Friday.

> after improving to 4-0 in his first season as a Wildcat.

plete-game shutouts," Silseth said. scored. "I could have made some better pitches to not get in some bad situations ... But as the season goes on, definitely getting stronger." Silseth recorded his third con-

secutive quality start. He sailed reer-high 11 batters, UA outplayed through the first 62/3 innings, Oregon on defense and the Cats allowing only five baserunners. Silseth then hit a batter and walked another, setting up the game's most dramatic moment.

With the score 3-1 and left-

by second baseman Kobe Kato. Johnson, who noticed that Van- enough of it to ground out to first The miscue loaded the bases for nelle seemed composed after Ducks slugger Kenyon Yovan, who surrendering the home run. "I entered Friday with a .436 batting thought he sent a real message on average and six home runs.

Preston Price was summoned from the bullpen. The situation was nothing new for him. He has that he gives our team to say 'I'm entered games with the bases loaded multiple times this season.

Per usual, Price delivered. He Arizona (15-6, 2-2 Pac-12) won struck out Yovan with a slider to

"That was a big tipping point Oregon (11-5, 2-2) had won three in the game, obviously," Johnson inning. Third baseman Nik Mc-Silseth gave himself a B-plus didright there, that was him. But it for Arizona, began the rally with a was awesome."

Price has inherited 19 baserun-"A-pluses. A's are com- ners this season. Only three have off the left-field wall. Jacob Berry

> The senior right-hander notched three more strikeouts in the eighth, and he remained in in the fifth. Center fielder Robby the score 5-1. A walk and a single brought Vince Vannelle out Ashford scored on Smith's infield of the bullpen. Vannelle yielded a single. three-run homer to pinch-hitter Anthony Hall on the first pitch he saw. Vannelle then retired the next fourth save.

where he wanted to. Just a really good job by him."

Runs were hard to come by against savvy, veteran Oregon lefthander Robert Ahlstrom, who entered Friday with a 2.12 ERA. The Wildcats managed to score just enough to win.

They took a 2-0 lead in the third zona made. said. "To execute the pitches he Claughry, making his first start single. Donta' Williams drove him home with a wind-aided double followed with a single up the middle to score Williams.

Oregon cut the deficit in half the game to start the ninth with Ashford led off with a double. After advancing to third on a bunt,

Arizona got the run back in the bottom half of the frame. Kato led off with an infield single. He adthree batters — the 1-2-3 hitters in vanced to second on a McClaughry Oregon's lineup – to register his sacrifice bunt and to third on a on the national feed. Like Game "Great poise by Vince," said off a 3-2 curveball, getting just Pac-12 Oregon.

and score Kato despite the infield being drawn in.

The Wildcats padded the lead the next pitch, throwing it exactly in the ninth - and, as it turned out, they needed to. Daniel Susac drove in a run with a double and scored on an error. It was the first unearned run Oregon has allowed this season. The Ducks made two errors Friday. They had committed only three in their first 15 games. Kato's error was the only one Ari-

Inside pitch

• Tanner O'Tremba made his second consecutive start in left field. Johnson said veterans such as O'Tremba and McClaughry - both transfers – likely will play key roles for UA the rest of the season.

• Right-hander Cullen Kafka who has a 0.43 ERA in four starts is scheduled to start for Oregon in Game 2 Saturday afternoon. He will face UA lefty Garrett Irvin (0-

• Game 1 was televised by Pac-12 Networks but available only online outside of Oregon. Game 2 will air wild pitch. Williams then fought 1, Game 3 Sunday will air only on

SOFTBALL: NO. 9 ARIZONA 7. OREGON STATE O



KELLY PRESNELL / ARIZONA DAILY STAR

Arizona's third baseman Malia Martinez has to track back fast to snare an Oregon State pop-foul pushed by a brisk wind for the second out in the second inning Friday night.

Cats return to form, blank Beavers

By John McKelvey

SPECIAL TO THE ARIZONA DAILY STAR In softball, one at bat can be an

emotional rollercoaster. As Jessie Harper stepped to the plate with two outs in the third inning of Friday's 7-0 victory over Oregon State, the Arizona fans

mixture of optimism and anxiety. The No. 9 Wildcats (15-5, 1-2) had lost five of seven games and scored just six runs in their last five games. In the second inning, they needed two passed balls just to get on the board. So, this golden opportunity, one inning later, could easily be squandered.

Yet, as Harper watched three straight balls, the optimism grew. A surefire belief spread through the cold, windy air that the active NCAA career home-run leader was about to make something happen.

Back-to-back strikes quashed this momentum, and the anxiety returned. Coach Mike Candrea shouted encouragement at his sixth-year senior, who was seeking to end her 0-for-11 drought.

"In all honesty, I didn't hear a word he said," Harper said. "During that, I was just thinking, 'Hit the ball hard.' That's all I was thinking about."

She delivered, sending a deep fly ball over the left-center field fence.

regardless, the three-run homer ignited something in the Wildcats that had been missing since they left Tucson undefeated.



KELLY PRENELL / ARIZONA DAILY STAR Alyssa Denham was at her best with runners on base Friday, stranding nine Oregon State runners in the 7-0 victory at Hillenbrand Stadium.

SATURDAY

- Who: Oregon State (13-8, 2-2) at No. 9 Arizona (15-5, 1-2),
- doublehaeder
- When: 2 p.m.

"That's the thing about these kids, they're pleasers and they're The wind certainly helped, but trying to please everyone, sometimes trying to please too many people," Candrea said. "Hopefully, this will jumpstart us."

With a solid lead, Arizona was and Denham did the second her- A comfortable series-opening win p.m. Saturday.

the fifth inning to make it 7-0. cool in the circle, working through left fielder Janelle Meono cutting several jams to record the com- off a sharply-hit single before it plete-game shutout. She stranded reached the corner, setting up nine runners, getting some defensive help along the way.

ble plays. The first was a ground- return to form. er third baseman Malia Martinez fielded, stepped on third and home runs in their first 10 games, threw to first in the sixth inning, had their bats silenced on the road.

impeccable. Harper drilled anoth-self, snaring a liner and thrower homer, the 82nd of her career, in ing to first to get a runner leaning off the base in the seventh.

Martinez's double play. The players and coaches recog-

The Wildcats turned two dou- nized this evening constituted a The Wildcats, who had hit 20

served as a shot of confidence in the beleaguered program's arm.

"We went through a tough spell Alyssa Denham never lost her There were also little things, like there, and I think they're trying very hard, sometimes too hard," Candrea said.

"Coming out and being at home, being in your own bed and having a little bit of a routine throughout the day, is really what

the doctor ordered for us." Arizona continues its series against Oregon State (13-8, 2-2) with a doubleheader starting at 2

NBA STANDINGS & SCHEDULE

EASTERN CONFERENCE												
ATLANTIC	W L	Pct	GB	L10	Str	Home	Away	Conf				
Philadelphia	32 13	.711	_	9-1	W-4	19-4	13-9	22-7				
Brooklyn	31 15	.674	11/2	8-2	W-1	17-6	14-9	17-10				
New York	23 22	.511	9	5-5	W-2	14-8	9-14	16-14				
Boston	22 23	.489	10	4-6	W-1	13-7	9-16	16-13				
Toronto	18 27	.400	14	1-9	L-1	9-11	9-16	12-16				
SOUTHEAST	W L	Pct	GB	L10	Str	Home	Away	Conf				
Charlotte	23 21	.523	_	7-3	W-3	13-8	10-13	12-9				
Atlanta	23 22	.511	1/2	8-2	W-1	11-9	12-13	13-12				
Miami	22 24	.478	2	4-6	L-6	12-12	10-12	13-15				
Washington	15 28	.349	71/2	2-8	L-3	8-14	7-14	5-20				
Orlando	15 30	.333	81/2	2-8	L-1	10-15	5-15	10-17				
CENTRAL	W L	Pct	GB	L10	Str	Home	Away	Conf				
Milwaukee	29 15	.659	_	8-2	L-1	18-6	11-9	18-8				
Indiana	21 23	.477	8	5-5	W-2	8-12	13-11	13-13				
Chicago	19 24	.442	91/2	4-6	L-2	9-16	10-8	9-11				
Cleveland	17 28	.378	121/2	3-7	L-1	11-12	6-16	13-12				
Detroit	12 32	.273	17	3-7	L-3	7-13	5-19	8-20				
	30/	CTER	NI CO	NIEEE	LNC	-						

WE	STERN	CONF	ERENC
----	-------	------	--------------

SOUTHWEST	W	L	Pct	GB	L10	Str	Home	Away	Conf
Dallas	23	20	.535	_	6-4	L-1	11-10	12-10	14-13
San Antonio	22	20	.524	1/2	4-6	L-4	10-13	12-7	12-16
Memphis	21	21	.500	11/2	5-5	L-1	11-13	10-8	10-15
New Orleans	19	25	.432	41/2	4-6	L-1	13-11	6-14	11-17
Houston	12	32	.273	111/2	1-9	L-2	6-16	6-16	8-16
NORTHWEST	W	L	Pct	GB	L10	Str	Home	Away	Conf
Utah	33	11	.750	_	6-4	W-4	18-2	15-9	14-6
Denver	27	18	.600	61/2	7-3	W-1	12-9	15-9	15-11
Portland	27	18	.600	61/2	6-4	W-2	14-9	13-9	15-12
Oklahoma City	/ 19	25	.432	14	5-5	L-1	8-13	11-12	11-17
Minnesota	11	34	.244	221/2	4-6	W-1	6-16	5-18	8-20
PACIFIC	W	L	Pct	GB	L10	Str	Home	Away	Conf
Suns	30	14	.682	_	7-3	W-1	15-8	15-6	19-8
L.A. Clippers	30	16	.652	1	6-4	W-4	15-6	15-10	18-9
L.A. Lakers	29	17	.630	2	5-5	W-1	15-10	14-7	19-10
Golden State	22	24	.478	9	3-7	L-4	13-9	9-15	12-14
Sacramento	20	25	.444	101/2	6-4	W-3	11-12	9-13	9-11

Thursday's results

Portland 125, Miami 122 New York 106, Wash. 102 L.A. Clippers 98. S. Antonio 85 Sacra. 141, Golden St. 119 Phila. 109, L.A. Lakers 101

Friday's results

Brooklyn 113, Detroit 111 Boston 122, Milwaukee 114 **Suns** 104, Toronto 100 Denver 113, New Orleans 108 Minnesota 107, Houston 101 Charlotte 110, Miami 105 Portland 112, Orlando 105 Indiana 109, Dallas 94 Utah 117. Memphis 114 Atlanta 124, Golden St. 108 L.A. Lakers 100, Cleveland 86

Saturday's games

Detroit at Wash., 5 p.m. Houston at Minn., 5 p.m. New York at Milw., 5 p.m. Chicago at S.A., 5:30 p.m. Boston at Okla. City, 6 p.m. Dallas at New Orl., 6 p.m. Memphis at Utah, 6 p.m. Cleveland at Sac., 7 p.m. Phila. at L.A. Clippers, 7 p.m.

Sunday's games Suns at Charlotte, 10 a.m. Portland at Toronto, 4 p.m. Atlanta at Denver, 6 p.m. Orl. at L.A. Lakers, 7 p.m.

STAT OF THE DAY

In Thursday's 109-101 loss to the Philadelphia 76ers, the Los Angeles Lakers failed to block a shot for the first time since Feb. 10, 2018, ending a streak of 224 straight

- Associated Press

FRIDAY'S GAMES



AARON GASH. ASSOCIATED PRESS

Celtics forward Jayson Tatum looks to shoot against Bucks guard Pat Connaughton during the second half of Friday's game Friday in Milwaukee.

Tatum, Smart help Celtics end Bucks' winning streak

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Boston Celtics beat Milwausnap the Bucks' eight-game winning streak and spilt the two-game series.

14 3-pointers in the third quarter to push the lead to TRAIL BLAZERS 112, MAGIC hit early and often from long period.

James Harden scored 44 points and Blake Griffin star guard Damian Lillard. added 17 in his return to Detroit, lifting Brooklyn to **TIMBERWOLVES 107, ROCK-** home victory. victory.

in addition to his big scor- Houston. ing night. Brooklyn was still but the Nets had enough to hold off the last-place Pistons.

SUNS 104, RAPTORS 100: NUGGETS 113, PELICANS 108:

Tatum scored 34 points, Ayton each scored 19 points and nine assists as visiting Marcus Smart had 23 and the and visiting Phoenix held off Denver outlasted New Orle-Toronto despite not making ans in a tight fourth quarter kee 122-114 on Friday night to a field goal in the last 3:50. Paul and Devin Booker

converted four free throws 55 at the half, hit nine of the Suns improve to 30-14.

103-89 entering the final **105:** Orlando got a look at its harsh, new reality a night after trading away the core of its JAZZ 117, GRIZZLIES 114: NETS 113, PISTONS 111: team, losing to a visiting Portland squad without injured

ETS 101: Karl-Anthony Harden was back after Towns had 29 points and HAWKS 124, WARRIORS missing his team's previ- 16 rebounds, and Juancho ous game because of neck Hernangomez had 19 points soreness, and he added 14 off the bench as host Min-

without Kevin Durant (left HORNETS 110, HEAT 105: Mahamstring strain) and Kyrie lik Monk scored 32 points, Irving (personal reasons), Terry Rozier had 26 points as host Los Angeles rallied and a career-high 11 assists in the second half to beat and host Charlotte handed Cleveland and snap a four-

MILWAUKEE - Jayson Chris Paul and Deandre Nikola Jokic had 37 points

for the victory.

PACERS 109, MAVERICKS 94: in the final 42 seconds. Domantas Sabonis had 22 The Celtics, who led 60- Booker had 16 points to help points and 15 rebounds, Malcolm Brogdon also scored 22 points, and visiting Indiana

range in the win over Dallas.

Donovan Mitchell scored 35 points, Rudy Gobert had 25 and host Utah beat Memphis for its 18th straight

108: John Collins scored a career-high 38 points to go with 12 rebounds as visiting rebounds and eight assists nesota came back to beat Atlanta beat Golden State.

> LAKERS 100, CAVALIERS 86: Montrezl Harrell had 24 points and 10 rebounds Miami its sixth straight loss. game losing streak.

AROUND THE NBA

Cavaliers buy out center Drummond

CLEVELAND - Center Andre Drummond is now a free agent and can sign with a contending team after reaching a buyout with the Cava-

Drummond, who hasn't played since mid-February, began negotiating terms of the buyout with the Cavs on Thursday after the club didn't trade the 27-year-old before the deadline.

He averaged 17.5 points and 13.5 rebounds in 25 games before the Cavs decided to give Jarrett Allen the bulk of playing time.

Hornets' Ball may return this season

CHARLOTTE, N.C. - Hornets general manager Mitch Kupchak says he's not ruling out LaMelo Ball returning this season.

Kupchak says the rookie point guard will be reevaluated in "four or five weeks" after fracturing his right wrist on March 20.

If Ball is reevaluated in five weeks on April 27 the Hornets would have about three weeks remaining before the end of the regular season on May 16. Charlotte is in the hunt for a playoff spot, so its season could stretch into late May and beyond.

BRIEFLY

JACKSON RETURN: The Memphis Grizzlies expect forward Jaren Jackson Jr. back in the lineup by the end of April, nearly nine months after he hurt his left knee in the NBA bubble.

DONCIC SITS: All-Star guard Luka Doncic sat out the Dallas Mavericks' game against Indiana on Friday night because of tightness in his lower back. "He's getting treatment, working on it," coach Rick Carlisle said. "He will travel. Hope he's available tomorrow (at New Orleans on Saturday night)."

- Associated Press

NHL STANDINGS & SCHEDULE

East	GP	W	L	ОТ	Pts	GF	GA	Home	Away
Washington	33	22	7	4	48	114	95	12-4-2	10-3-2
N.Y. Islanders	34	22	8	4	48	102	76	13-1-2	9-7-2
Pittsburgh	34	21	11	2	44	109	90	14-3-1	7-8-1
Boston	29	16	8	5	37	80	70	7-3-2	9-5-3
N.Y. Rangers	32	15	13	4	34	102	85	7-6-3	8-7-1
Philadelphia	32	15	13	4	34	100	119	7-7-3	8-6-1
New Jersey	32	12	16	4	28	78	101	4-11-2	8-5-2
Buffalo	32	6	22	4	16	66	115	2-11-2	4-11-2
Central	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GΑ	Home	Away
Tampa Bay	33	24	7	2	50	120	78	13-2-0	11-5-2
Carolina	32	22	7	3	47	108	81	10-1-3	12-6-0
Florida	33	20	9	4	44	107	94	10-4-3	10-5-1
Chicago	34	16	13	5	37	101	108	9-4-2	7-9-3
Columbus	34	13	13	8	34	89	110	7-6-6	6-7-2
Nashville	34	16	17	1	33	86	104	9-7-0	7-10-1
Dallas	30	11	11	8	30	85	80	7-5-6	4-6-2
Detroit	34	10	20	4	24	72	113	7-8-3	3-12-1
West	GP	W	L	ОТ	Pts	GF	GA	Home	Away
Vegas	31	22	8	1	45	101	72	13-2-1	9-6-0
Colorado	32	21	8	3	45	111	72	13-4-1	8-4-2
Minnesota	32	21	10	1	43	94	78	13-3-0	8-7-1
St. Louis	36	16	13	5	37	98	110	4-8-3	12-5-2
Coyotes	34	15	14	5	35	88	103	9-8-3	6-6-2
Los Angeles	32	13	13	6	32	91	90	6-4-4	7-9-2
San Jose	32	13	15	4	30	91	111	5-6-2	8-9-2
Anaheim	35	10	19	6	26	78	116	5-11-3	5-8-3
North	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GΑ	Home	Away
Toronto	33	21	10	2	44	110	85	11-6-1	10-4-1
Winnipeg	34	21	11	2	44	112	94	10-5-1	11-6-1
Edmonton	34	21	13	0	42	116	97	12-8-0	9-5-0
Montreal	31	14	8	9	37	100	87	6-5-2	8-3-7
Vancouver	37	16	18	3	35	100	120	9-9-2	7-9-1
Calgary	35	15	17	3	33	91	105	8-6-1	7-11-2
Ottawa	36	12	20	4	28	94	135	8-6-4	4-14-0

NOTE: The NHL realigned divisions this season based on geography. Teams only will face division foes in the regular season The top four teams in each division will advance to the playoffs

Thursday's games PIttsburgh 4, Buffalo 0 Carolina 4. Columbus 3. OT

N.Y. Islanders 4, Boston 3, OT N.Y. Rangers 8, Philadelphia 3 Washington 4, New Jersey 3 Toronto 3, Ottawa 2, OT Nashville 7, Detroit 1 Blackhawks 3, Florida 0 Minnesota 2, St. Louis 0 Dallas 4, Tampa Bay 3 Colorado 5, Vegas 1

Friday's results Washington 4, New Jersey 0 Anaheim 4, St. Louis 1 Coyotes 5, San Jose 2 Winnipeg 3, Calgary 2 Edmonton at Montreal, ppd

N.Y. Rangers at Phila., 10 a.m. Columbus at Detroit, 12 p.m. Vegas at Colorado, 12 p.m. Edmonton at Toronto, 4 p.m. N.Y. Islanders at Pitts., 4 p.m. Tampa Bay at Carolina, 4 p.m. Florida at Dallas, 5 p.m. Nashville at Chicago, 5 p.m. San Jose at Coyotes, 7 p.m. Winnipeg at Calgary, 7 p.m.

Sunday's games

N.Y. Rangers at Wash., 9a.m. Columbus at Detroit, Noon Anaheim at St. Louis, 2 p.m. N. Jersey at Boston, 2:30 p.m. Florida at Dallas, 3 p.m. Oftawa at Montreal, ppd Nashville at Chicago, 5 p.m.

Saturday's Games Buffalo at Boston, 10 a.m.

STAT OF THE DAY

The number of consecutive goals scored by the New York Rangers in two meetings against the Philadelphia Flyers - one coming last week, the other coming Thursday. New York won 9-0 last week and 8-3 Thursday as the Flyers have gone 4-9-1 this month.

Associated Press

FRIDAY'S GAMES

Gibson stops 33 shots to lift Ducks

ST. LOUIS - Sam Steel and Max Jones each scored a goal and the Anaheim Ducks beat the St. Louis Blues 4-1 Friday night.

Anaheim goalie John Gibson stopped 33 shots in his first game back after missing five with a lower-body injury. Derek Grant and Richard Rakell added empty-net goals in the final 63 seconds to help the Ducks win for the second time in nine games.

Rvan O'Reilly scored for St. Louis, which has lost three consecutive games and six in a row at home.

The Blues had won six straight and eight of their previous nine against the Ducks — including the first four meetings this season.

Anaheim scored twice in the

Steel scored the first goal at 2:23 when the puck caromed in off his skate. Jakob Silfverberg threw the puck in from the corner. While Steel puck hit his skate and the fortuitous deflection got past Jordan Binnington. It of Marcel Dionne for fifth was the eighth consecutive on the NHL's career goal list game the Blues allowed the after scoring his 722nd and first goal.

Ovechkin scored twice, Ilya Samsonov made 24 saves, and the Washington Capitals rode their best players and an assist, and Samsonov to a 4-0 victory Friday night improved to 7-1-1 with his first Hunt and Phil Kessel also



JOE PUETZ, ASSOCIATED PRESS

second period to take the lead. Ducks forward Jakob Silfverberg (33) falls to the ice as he works against Blues right wing David Perron (57) for the puck during the second period of Friday's game in St. Louis.

New Jersey Devils.

Ovechkin has scored 10 and has a team-best 17 goals this season. He's eight shy 723rd.

Nicklas Backstrom scored **CAPITALS 4, DEVILS 0:** Alex his 13th goal of the season, while Evgeny Kuznetsov and Tom Wilson each had two assists. Conor Sheary had a goal

and two-game sweep of the shutout since Jan. 13, 2020. With Ovechkin rolling, the

Capitals have won nine of was in front of the net. The times in his past 10 games their past 10 games and are back atop the East Division. They're tied at 48 points with former coach Barry Trotz's New York Islanders but hold the tiebreaker having played one fewer game.

> COYOTES 5, SHARKS 2: Christian Dvorak scored twice to lift host Arizona over San

scored for Arizona, and Adin Hill stopped 20 shots. The win moved the Coyotes within two points of St. Louis for fourth place in the West Division.

JETS 3, FLAMES 2: Blake Wheeler, Kyle Connor and Paul Stastny each had a goal and an assist as visiting Winnipeg held off Calgary.

The victory was the third straight and sixth in the past 10 games for the Jets, while Nick Schmaltz, Dryden the Flames lost their fourth straight game.

AROUND THE LEAGUE

Sabres trade Staal to Canadiens

BUFFALO, N.Y. - The Buffalo Sabres' overhaul has begun, with the spiraling team trading veteran center Eric Staal to the Montreal Canadiens on Friday.

Buffalo acquired the Canadiens' third and fifth-round selections in the 2021 draft. The Sabres also agreed to retain \$1.625 million, which six and 14-8-9 overall. With clubs "under national interest

represents half of the final year of Staal's salary.

Staal is a 17-year veteran, who can provide the Canadiens a late-season boost to their playoff hopes. Staal won't be able to join the team immediately because he will have to first go into a minimum seven-day self-quarantine under Canadian health regulations for those traveling from outside the country.

37 points, the Canadiens sit fourth in the North Division, two ahead of Vancouver and four up on Calgary.

Canada reduces NHL quarantine

TORONTO - The Canadian government waived its mandatory 14-day quarantine period for players acquired by Ca-Montreal is 2-2-2 in its past nadian NHL teams from U.S.

grounds" ahead of the league's April 12 trade deadline.

The Canadian Press reported Friday, citing two unidentified people with knowledge of the decision, that players will now observe a seven-day quarantine upon arrival in the country and be subject to daily testing for COVID-19. Players will then be eligible to suit up for their new teams while continuing to undergo daily testing the following week.