

SPORTS

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ARIZONA SOFTBALL

Powerhouse Cats, Bruins set to make more history in LA

By Norma Gonzalez

ARIZONA DAILY STAR

LOS ANGELES — When it comes to college softball, the Arizona-UCLA rivalry is second to none.

The powerhouse programs have combined to win 19 of the 35 Women's College World Series titles all time; they've met in the WCWS Championship Finals seven times.

After winning the Tucson Regional, the No. 14-seeded Wildcats are set to play in their fifth

consecutive Super Regional — this time in Los Angeles against the third-ranked Bruins. The best-of-three series starts Thursday at 6 p.m.

This is the first postseason meeting between both programs since 2010, when Arizona finished as WCWS runner-up.

"A lot of history, tradition. It's kind of like our rivalry between us and ASU — you just hate them," senior Ashleigh Hughes said. "So, every time we meet, it's just a clash of a lot of history and a lot of

THURSDAY

- **What:** NCAA Super Regionals: No. 14 Arizona at No. 3 UCLA
- **When:** 6 p.m.
- **TV:** ESPN
- **Online:** Follow @TheWildcater on Twitter for up-to-the-minute highlights, videos and more.

competition."

The Wildcats know UCLA is a formidable team, but their biggest obstacle will be the Bruins' ace,

Rachel Garcia. The sophomore was named to the 2018 USA Softball National Team World Championship roster; she has a 30-3 record in the circle this season.

One of her losses came in Saturday's regionals. Cal State Fullerton stunned the Bruins 3-2 in nine innings, pushing the hosts into the loser's bracket. UCLA rallied, winning again on Saturday and twice on Sunday to advance.

UCLA will continue to ride Garcia through the Super Regionals, but she may not be as fresh after

pitching five games in three days. Garcia threw 501 pitches over the three days.

The Wildcats, meanwhile, won their regional championship in three games. Coach Mike Candrea had wanted to rest ace Taylor McQuillin the third day, but a hiccup in the plans — starter Alyssa Denham faltered — forced McQuillin back into the circle. Still, McQuillin threw only 275 pitches in the three-game set.

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ARIZONA WOMEN'S GOLF



SUE OGROCKI / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

UA players pose for a selfie with the trophy after defeating Alabama for the national championship Wednesday. "It is actually like a dream," said Haley Moore, who made the winning putt.

Wildcats claim national championship

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

STILLWATER, Okla. — Haley Moore beat Lakareber Abe with a birdie on the first extra hole Wednesday to give the Arizona Wildcats a 3-2 victory over Alabama in the NCAA women's golf championship.

Three days after the Wildcats were one putt away from being eliminated, Moore made a 4-foot putt on the par-5 18th to finally finish off Abe in the last match at Karsten Creek. Abe putted first and missed from about the same distance, with her ball going by on the left.

"It means so much. It is actually like a dream," Moore said. "I never would have thought that it would be like this. I'm just so happy right now and for my team, and I did this for them."

Abe birdied the 18th in regulation to force overtime.

"I kind of screwed up on 17 and then came to 18, and I knew I was going to have to make a birdie or



SUE OGROCKI / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Arizona players mob Haley Moore, center, after Arizona defeated Alabama in the final round of the NCAA Division I women's golf championship.

eagle because Hayley had been outdriving me all day," Abe said. "Just to hit a good drive and a good 3-wood and to have a chance to play 19 holes is the best feeling."

Arizona, also the 1996 and

2000 winner, became the first No. 8 seed to get past the quarter-finals.

"Arizona is my home. It's where

See **GOLF, B4**

Arizona's 19th team title the most unlikely one yet

A frost delay pushed back starting times at Dell Ulrich Golf Course late in January, and when I stepped to the first tee about 8:30 a.m., I was wearing the winter gear you use only two or three times a year in Tucson.

Somebody laughed and said it was insane to tee off when it was 42 degrees.

At that moment, UA assistant golf coach Derek Radley walked by the No. 1 tee toward the driving range. Most of the Wildcats golfers were with him: Bianca Pagdanganan, Haley Moore, Sandra Nordaas, Gigi Stoll and newly enrolled freshman Yu Sang-Hou.

Head coach Laura Ianello was in the pro shop, trying to squeeze in a tee time.



Greg Hansen

I didn't see senior standout Krystal Quihuis, a former Salpointe Catholic state champion who, on many days, was Arizona's No. 1 golfer.

"Where's Krystal?" I asked Radley.

"She left the team," he said.

"She decided to turn pro."

Really? Radley gave a grim look and

See **HANSEN, B4**

CHANCES 'BETTER THAN 50 PERCENT'

Arena Football League could expand to Tucson starting in '19

By Ryan Finley

ARIZONA DAILY STAR

Two years ago, the Rio Nuevo board approved \$3 million in improvements to Tucson Arena and landed an American Hockey League franchise.

Could an arena football team be next?

Rio Nuevo has authorized \$400,000 in further arena improvements contingent on Tucson landing an Arena Football League expansion team for the

2019 season, a prospect that chairman Fletcher McCusker says is likely.

"I think it's better than 50 percent — not unlike what we went through with hockey," he told the Star on Wednesday.

"The dates are available. The arena will be ready. And I think (the AFL) appreciates what Tucson has done to help the Roadrunners.

"I'd be surprised if they didn't pick Tucson, frankly."

DID YOU KNOW?

Tucson pursued an Indoor Football League team in 2010, and even announced a name — the ThunderKats — with plans to play their first game in 2011. The team held tryouts but never played a game.

A message left for an AFL spokesperson was not immediately returned.

The \$400,000 earmarked for arena improvement would pay for a turf field, goalposts and some locker room improvements. By design, arena football fields fit perfectly inside the dimensions of a hockey rink.

Arena football features eight players on each side of the ball, with many of the skill-position athletes playing both offense and defense.

AFL teams play 12-game schedules, with all games played

on either Fridays or Saturdays. The 2018 regular season started last month and will end July 7.

The AFL peaked in the 1990s thanks to teams like the Arizona Rattlers, San Jose SaberCats and Orlando Predators. ESPN aired many AFL games, often on tape delay, and the fast-paced, violent indoor sport caught on. Football star Kurt Warner played for the Iowa Barnstormers before

See **FOOTBALL, B5**