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Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

Timbers Advance to Championship Game

Play for MLS Cup Sunday in Columbus

The Portland Timbers are Western Division champions of Major League Soccer and will play for the MLS Cup in a league championship game Sunday against the Columbus Crew Soccer Club in Columbus, Ohio.

The match will begin at 1 p.m. (PST) and broadcast on ESPN. Both teams finished with the same record (15-11-8) over 34 games. Columbus is playing in their second MLS Cup final, having claimed the 2008 title with a 3-0 win over the New York Red Bulls in Carson, Calif.

Portland, in their fifth year as an MLS club, is playing in their first MLS Cup final; they played in the former North American Soccer League for a championship in the club's original inaugural season in 1975, but lost the title match. The Timbers were also Western Conference Champions in 2013.

This will be the second MLS Cup championship game hosted in Columbus; San Jose beat the LA Galaxy 2-1 in the 2001 final. Early forecasts for Sunday's weather call for mostly sunny skies and a



The Portland Timbers celebrate winning the Western Conference championship against FC Dallas at Toyota Stadium in Dallas, Texas. The win puts Portland in the title match for the MLS Cup championship on Sunday against Columbus Crew SC in Columbus, Ohio.

high of 51 degrees.

When the Portland Timbers joined MLS five years ago, they were celebrated as a club that seemingly had everything: a rich history in the origins of professional soccer in North America, a rabid fan base and an unparalleled atmosphere in their cozy downtown stadium.

What lacked over the course of their first half-decade in the league was a major trophy to add. That changed Sunday night at Toyota

Stadium, with Portland pulling out a thrilling 2-2 draw to win the Western Conference Championship 5-3 on aggregate goals over two legs.

"When we started the year, we wanted to get into the playoffs and win a trophy," Timbers head coach Caleb Porter said in his postgame comments outside a champagne and beer-drenched locker room. "That was the goal, and here we are. We've won one, and now we want to win the big one. So it's very satisfying."

Kobe Bryant to Retire at Season's End

(AP) — Kobe Bryant has decided to retire after this season, ending his 20-year career with the Los Angeles Lakers.

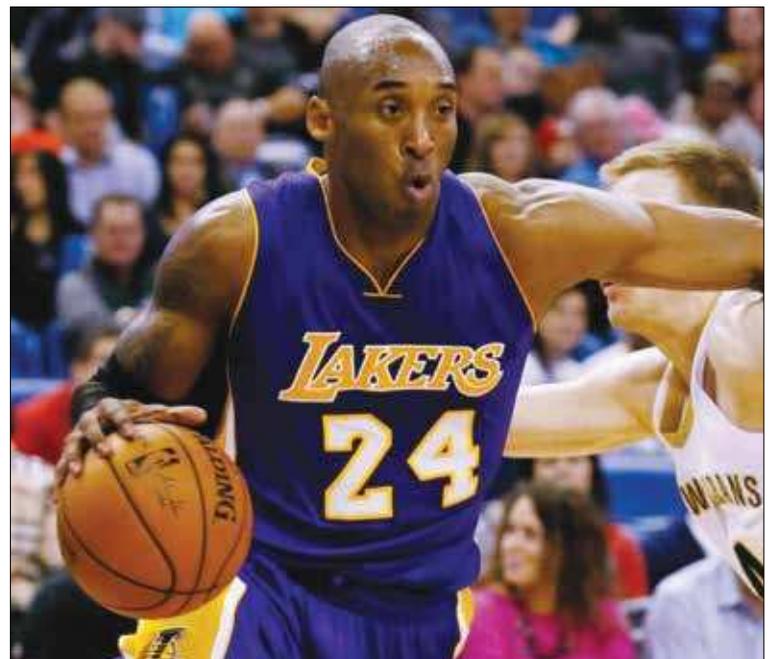
The 37-year-old Bryant is third-leading scorer in NBA history.

"My heart can take the pounding. My mind can handle the grind. But my body knows it's time to say goodbye," Bryant wrote in a social media post.

Bryant went straight from high school in suburban Philadelphia to the Lakers in 1996, and he earned five championship rings and 17 All-Star selections during two decades with the franchise -- the longest tenure with one team in NBA history. Bryant also won two Olympic gold medals.

But Bryant's last three seasons have ended early due to injuries, and he played in only 41 games over the previous two years.

"Kobe Bryant is one of the greatest players in the history of our game," NBA Commission-



Kobe Bryant has decided to retire after this season. He is the third-leading scorer in NBA history.

er Adam Silver said. "Whether competing in the Finals or hoisting jump shots after midnight in an empty gym, Kobe has an unconditional love for the game.

I join Kobe's millions of fans around the world in congratulating him on an outstanding NBA career and thank him for so many thrilling memories."

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