

Women's College Basketball

Oregon State beats Colorado

Associated Press

BOULDER, Colo. — Sydney Wiese had 14 points, Kolbie Orum added 10 and No. 11 Oregon State used a late push to get past Colorado 54-49 on Friday night.

The Beavers (24-3, 13-2 Pac-12) closed the game on a 6-2 run with Marie Gulich's layup making it 50-47 with 1:17 left, Weise adding a pair of free throws, and Gabriella Hanson and Mikayla Pivec each splitting a pair in final 31 seconds.

It was the Beavers' second win in a row and ninth in the last 10.

The Buffaloes (14-12, 4-11) opened the fourth quarter with a 12-4 run to cut a 44-35 deficit to within one.

Kennedy Leonard had 18 points to lead Colorado, which opened the


game on a 7-0 run. Oregon State ended the quarter with a 17-4 run and pushed to their largest lead at 33-21 late in the half.

Colorado missed all 14 of its 3-point attempts. Oregon State made 5 of 20.

No. 18 UCLA 90, No. 9 WASHINGTON 79 — At Los Angeles, Jordin Canada scored 22 points to lead UCLA to a 90-79 upset victory over No. 9 Washington on Friday night.

The Bruins (19-7, 10-5 Pac-12) weren't even sure if Canada would play since she left the previous game with a neck injury and didn't practice all week. She didn't start,

Pac-12

 Oregon State 54	 Colorado 49
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but she sure helped as UCLA won its 26th consecutive home game, dating to last season.

Monique Billings added 19 points and Nicole Kornet 15 for the Bruins.

Washington's Kelsey Plum, the nation's leading scorer, scored 39 points in the loss. Chantel Osahor had a double-double with 16 points and 10 rebounds. Plum is closing in on second place on the NCAA's career scoring list. Jackie Stiles is No. 1 with 3,393 career points and Britney Griner second with 3,283, while Plum is at 3,280 — just three from tying Griner.

Washington (24-4, 12-3) saw its four-game win streak snapped.



Cliff Grassmick/The Daily Camera via AP

Oregon State's Sydney Wiese collides with Colorado's Makenzie Ellis during the first half of an NCAA college basketball game Friday, Feb. 17, 2017, in Boulder, Colo.

NBA

Westbrook, Durant All-Star reunion off to awkward start



In this Nov. 3, 2016, file photo, Golden State Warriors' Kevin Durant, right, celebrates in front of Oklahoma City Thunder guard Russell Westbrook (0) during the first half of an NBA basketball game, in Oakland, Calif.

By BRETT MARTEL
Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — Russell Westbrook and Kevin Durant had plenty to say at their first All-Star appearance. Just not about one another.

Reunited on the Western Conference All-Star team, the former Oklahoma City Thunder teammates — until Durant left for Golden State last summer — will have to practice together on Saturday and play together on Sunday.

If either of them expects it to be awkward — particularly after the way they jawed at one another in a recent regular season game — they weren't discussing it on Friday.

Westbrook smirked and responded to questions about any potential awkward interaction with Durant and or the other Warriors with thoughts on New York

City's Fashion Week.

"Man, you know what? Fashion week has been great. You seen fashion week?"

You been paying attention to fashion week?" Westbrook responded to a question about Durant. "Man. There's a lot of great-looking things at fashion week, man. I'm looking forward to new collections. It's been good, man."

Two questions later came this gem from Westbrook:

"Man, you see the new Public School clothing? Crazy, dog. They got like the new Jordan hoodie. ... It's crazy man. A lot of new, great things at fashion week I've seen, man."

"What other designers? Gucci? The new Gucci stuff is dope. Good stuff, man."

Later came another, more general question about playing with four members of Golden State on the West team, and Westbrook shot back:

"What's your favorite fashion brand? What you like?"

For his part, Durant was curt, or vague or sometimes critical of the media for obsessing over things that aren't important, not to him anyway.

Durant used a total of five words to respond to his first question about the opportunity to play with Westbrook again: "I'm excited to be here."

Later, Durant said more directly, "I don't want to talk about it."

At other times, Durant became philosophical, minimizing the significance of contract talks, trades or when stars change teams.

"It's not real-life problems," Durant said, so he prefers to "just block it out."

He added: "Stuff you guys may think is important, I don't really think is important at all, so when I look at it that way, it's pretty easy to me."

Ultimately, which five players are on the court at any given time will be up to West coach Steve Kerr.

So far, Kerr has been coy about how he'll handle his rotations.

Of course, the coach used to work in TV, so he knows as well as anyone how to maintain intrigue.

"The only thing I want is for our players to enjoy the weekend," Kerr said. "It's a hectic weekend for all of them. It's a great honor to be here. I want everybody to be comfortable and happy. This should be an enjoyable time. So I don't want anybody to feel uncomfortable."

"I'm just going to try to create a very comfortable environment for the players and hope that everyone just relaxes and enjoys themselves — and I'm pretty confident that they will."

Little big man: Isaiah Thomas plays into MVP discussion

By TIM REYNOLDS
Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — Isaiah Thomas isn't even average.

The Boston Celtics list their two-time All-Star point guard at 5-foot-9 — even that is believed to be a bit generous — and 185 pounds. That means Thomas actually is slightly shorter and even a bit lighter than the typical male in the United States, at least based on the latest federal data that tracks such things.

So in society, he's obviously not a big guy.

But in the NBA, he's the little big man right now.

Averaging 29.9 points per game and leading Boston to the No. 2 spot in the Eastern Conference so far, Thomas is being mentioned by reigning two-time NBA MVP Stephen Curry of the Golden State Warriors as someone worthy of consideration for the league's top individual honor this year.

"Nobody in their right mind would have thought that," Thomas said of his MVP hopes. "At one point I might not have even thought I was going to be the MVP. But now I do. I'm going to keep going. I'm not trying to play for MVP — if it happens it happens, if it doesn't it doesn't. But that's definitely a goal of mine in my career at some point."

It might come sooner than he thinks.

All-Star Media Day was Friday in New Orleans, and LeBron James and Carmelo Anthony both missed the Eastern Conference session for personal reasons. Their absences likely drove a few more people over toward the riser where Thomas took questions for a half-hour or so, though he seemed genuinely



Boston Celtics guard Isaiah Thomas (4) passes the ball as he is covered by the Philadelphia 76ers during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Boston, Wednesday, Feb. 15, 2017. The Celtics defeated the 76ers 116-108.

surprised when he arrived and saw plenty of reporters awaiting his arrival.

Curry wasn't. He's a Thomas fan.

"He's doing amazing things," Curry said. "I don't think that confidence (was any) different now than when he was a rookie or whatever. You go through each year, gain experience, get the right guys around you, good things happen. He's having an amazing year. It's

been fun to watch."

Thomas' path is well-chronicled.

He was the 60th and last pick in the 2011 NBA draft, taken behind seven guys who have not — and probably never will — score their first NBA point. Of those selected that year, only Klay Thompson has more career points, only Kemba Walker has more career assists, and no one from the 2011 group who remains in the NBA has a better free-throw percentage than

Thomas.

Put simply, a lot of teams whiffed on him coming out of Washington, some multiple times. And those snubs are a big part of what makes Thomas tick.

The Celtics could have drafted Thomas twice that night and passed, but atoned for that when they swung a three-team deal to land him. The second anniversary of that trade is Sunday, when Thomas appears in his second All-Star Game — one in

which he'll be playing on a team led by his Celtics coach, Brad Stevens.

"Everything fuels him," Stevens said. "I think that's the thing we've all learned about Isaiah. Everybody knew he had a chip on his shoulder. Now you realize he's hungry for more. Success fuels him, too, just the same. He's an incredible guy because he just wants to get better, because he just wants to keep getting better whether he's getting accolades or getting criticism."

These days, the criticism is in short supply.

He has a chance to become the first player in Celtics history to average 30 points a game. Larry Bird averaged 29.93 in 1987-88; Thomas, right now, is at 29.87.

Such comparisons make even Thomas shake his head.

"It means everything," Thomas said. "To be mentioned with such great players like Larry Bird, like all the legends that played before me in a Celtics uniform, means a lot."

No one who stands 5-foot-anything has won an NBA MVP award; Allen Iverson was the shortest to win it, doing so while listed at exactly 6 feet. Short people just don't usually thrive at the highest levels of basketball. There hasn't been a WNBA MVP under 6 feet since 5-10 Cynthia Cooper won the first two such in that league in 1997 and 1998.

Yet here Thomas is, back on the game's in-season showcase stage, and feeling like he belongs now more than ever.

"No doubt," Thomas said. "Last year I didn't know what to expect. Everything was coming at me so fast. This year I kind of know what to expect, and hopefully it's for many more years to come."

In this photo released by the Iran Newspaper, United States' wrestler Jordan Ernest Burroughs, red, competes against Iranian wrestler Peyman Yarahmadi during the men's 74-kg freestyle wrestling competition at the 2017 world cup final match in Kermanshah, Iran, Friday.



Naemim Ahmadi, IIPA via AP

Wrestling

Iran defeats US freestyle world cup

Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran's wrestling team Friday defeated the United States wrestling team to secure the gold medal at the Freestyle World Cup.

During the final matches, Iranian wrestlers sealed a 5-3 victory against their American guests in the western Iranian city of Kermanshah. State TV broadcast the matches live.

The Iranians won at the 57, 61, 65, 70 and 125 kilogram divisions, while the American wrestlers won 74, 86 and 97 kilogram divisions.

The U.S. wrestling team reached the final matches after defeating Russia, Georgia and Azerbaijan in group A of the competition. Iran defeated Turkey, India and Mongolia in group B over two days to reach the final.

Following their win, hundreds of Kermanshah residents poured into the streets, with drivers honking their cars horns, to celebrate the victory, Iranian media reported.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani also issued a statement to offer his congratulations, the official IRNA news agency

reported.

During the competitions, Iranian spectators warmly welcomed the American wrestlers, and many took selfies with them.

Earlier in February, Iran reversed its position and allowed U.S. wrestlers to participate in the competition following an earlier U.S. travel ban, now frozen, by President Donald Trump on nationals from seven Muslim-majority countries, including Iran.

American and Iranian wrestlers have frequently hosted each other in similar competitions.