

NBA

# Trail Blazers set to open season against Suns

By ANNE M. PETERSON  
Associated Press

PORTLAND — The season opener for the Portland Trail Blazers has come with an unexpected twist: The absence of starter CJ McCollum, who is suspended for Wednesday's game at Phoenix.

The suspension was handed down Saturday. McCollum was disciplined for leaving the bench when Portland's Caleb Swanigan and the Suns' Alex Len tussled in the fourth quarter of a preseason game last Wednesday night — coincidentally in Phoenix.

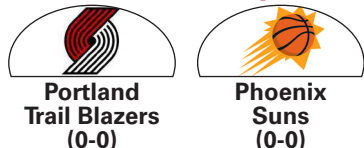
McCollum didn't engage anyone after taking a few steps onto the floor, but leaving the bench area merited the penalty under NBA rules. So he will be a spectator when the Blazers open the season against the Suns. He'll also lose some \$164,000 in salary.

Some — including McCollum — questioned the suspension, given that he isn't a brawler at all, it was a preseason game, and the action wasn't menacing.

Nonetheless, he took full responsibility for his actions.

"You never want to miss games, especially like that to start the

## 2017 Season Opener



• Wednesday, 7 p.m.  
• at Phoenix, Arizona

season. You work so hard to prepare for the season, you go through a lot of preseason games that don't mean anything and then you miss a regular-season game because of an incident that you weren't even involved in," he told reporters following practice Monday. "There's nothing I can do about it now but more forward and learn from it."

McCollum averaged a career-best 23 points per game on 48 percent shooting last season as half of a formidable backcourt duo with Damian Lillard, who had a career-best average of 27 points per game, along with 4.8 rebounds and 5.9 assists.

The Blazers beat the Suns 113-104 in last Wednesday's game, finishing the preseason 5-1.

Phoenix is in rebuilding mode, with coach Earl Watson guiding



AP Photo/Steve Dykes, file

In this Oct. 5 file photo, Portland Trail Blazers guard Damian Lillard, right, speaks with center Jusuf Nurkic during the first half of a preseason game against the Toronto Raptors in Portland.

the development of 20-year-old burgeoning star Devin Booker and promising rookie Josh Jackson, alongside steady point guard Eric Bledsoe. The Suns went 24-58 last season, second-worst in the league.

Celebrating the franchise's 50th season this year, the Suns haven't made the playoffs in six years, the longest drought in franchise history.

The Blazers went 41-41 last season and made the playoffs, where they had the unfortunate luck of facing the eventual champion Golden State Warriors in the first round.

Portland got off to a poor start last season but saw improvement with the arrival of center Jusuf Nurkic, who was able to quickly develop chemistry with the rest of

the team. He averaged 15.2 points, 10.4 rebounds and 1.9 blocks in 20 games with the Blazers, who were 14-5 with him in the starting lineup.

Nurkic was injured at the end of last season, and appeared in just one of the playoff games against the Warriors.

The 7-footer, known as the Bosnian Beast, shed about 35 pounds in the offseason to become more agile. He suggested that in the talented Western Conference, the Blazers could become the NBA's Bad Boys, drawing inspiration from the Detroit Pistons of years past.

McCollum said it will be tough for the Blazers in a loaded Western Conference topped by the Warriors. But Portland could draw inspiration from two seasons ago, when the young squad of underdogs surprised the league after the departure of four starters.

"We need to be competitive, we need to have a chip on our shoulder, we need to be accountable for our actions, our words and our preparation each day," he said. "Everybody has gotten better in the Western Conference, especially in our division. There aren't going to be any easy nights."

## BRIEFLY

### Hermiston High golf teams holding fundraiser

HERMISTON — The Hermiston High School Golf Association is holding its annual golf tournament fundraiser next month.

The 13th annual turkey shoot will be held on Nov. 18 at Big River Golf Course in Hermiston. The shoot is a four-person scramble event that costs \$50 per person, which does not include the cost of a golf cart.

The scramble check in is set for 9 a.m. and event will begin at 9:30 a.m. Contact Big River Golf Course by Nov. 1 to reserve a cart. All proceeds will benefit the Hermiston High boys and girls golf teams.

For more information contact Bob Brinkley at 567-0248 or 571-4647 or Josh Browning at 720-4542.

## House Democrats question safety efforts in youth football

By BEN NUCKOLS  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — After hearing from brain trauma researchers who said playing football at a young age is unsafe even for kids who don't suffer obvious injuries, members of Congress on Tuesday asked the nation's governing body for the sport's amateurs to detail efforts to make the game safer for children.

Democrats on the Energy and Commerce Committee sent a letter to USA Football seeking details on how it evaluates the safety of tackle football programs for kids. USA Football recently launched a pilot program called Rookie Tackle for younger kids that uses

smaller teams and fields plus rules intended to reduce contact.

Researchers at Boston University found in a study published last month that playing tackle football before age 12 can more than double the risk of behavioral problems and depression later in life.

A senior author of that study, Robert Stern, told the committee at a forum last week that researchers have not yet determined at what age it may be safe, or at least safer, to start playing football. He recommended young kids avoid the sport because routine collisions can cause brain damage.

"There is not necessarily a safe time for the head to be hit and for the brain to be moved around

... over and over again. It's just not made to do that," Stern said. "To do whatever can be done to reduce the overall number of hits is critical."

The letter seeks details on what USA Football is doing to determine whether Rookie Tackle is any safer than conventional tackle football. It also asks whether USA Football believes there is an age where tackle football is inappropriate.

A previous study commissioned by USA Football about its Heads Up Football program made claims about safety that were later found to be misleading. The program was ultimately found to have no effect on the number of concussions or head injuries.

USA Football executive director Scott Hallenbeck told AP the organization is focused on developmental aspects of Rookie Tackle and is not necessarily claiming it is safer.

"I don't have any information that otherwise would say this form of football is safer than another form," Hallenbeck said. "We sort of learned that's a very, very challenging space. You need a lot of research. It takes a long time."

Melinda Whitemarsh, a spokeswoman for the organization, said it will respond to the letter.

"We welcome the members' interest in our Rookie Tackle pilot program," she said, "and look forward to providing them with the information requested."

## PLAYOFFS: Yankees make late charge to even series with Astros

Continued from 1B

time since Hall of Famer Tommy Lasorda managed Kirk Gibson, Orel Hershiser and Co. to the club's last championship 29 years ago.

Jake Arrieta, eligible for free agency after the season, pitches for the Cubs in what could be his final start with the team.

Los Angeles was eliminated by Chicago in the NLCS last year, but this is a different group of Dodgers. Their patient lineup is coming up big in key spots and their pitching staff is much deeper, especially since Darvish was acquired in a trade with Texas in the final minutes before the July 31 deadline.

Not even a return to Wrigley could get the Cubs back on track after a rough stay in Los Angeles. Chicago manager Joe Maddon juggled his lineup, inserting Kyle Schwarber into the No. 2 slot and benching slumping second baseman Javier Baez, but the defending World Series champions were shut down by another Dodgers starter and more stellar relief from the NL West champions.



AP Photo/Matt Slocum

Los Angeles Dodgers' Chris Taylor (3) celebrates his home run with Cody Bellinger (35) during the third inning of Game 3 of the National League Championship Series against the Chicago Cubs, Tuesday in Chicago.

"I really didn't change much approach-wise from first inning until the end of the game," Darvish said through a translator. "I just kept pitching the same way."

Making their third straight appearance in the NLCS, the weary Cubs also hurt themselves with a couple of big mistakes. Carl Edwards Jr. walked Darvish on four pitches with the bases loaded and two outs in the sixth, continuing a rocky post-season for the reliever and leading to a round of boos

from a frustrated crowd of 41,871.

A passed ball brought home another run in the eighth, and pinch-hitter Kyle Farmer hit a sacrifice fly to make it 6-1.

Darvish departed after striking out Addison Russell in the seventh, pausing for congratulations from his whole infield before heading to the dugout. The Japanese right-hander allowed six hits, including Schwarber's first-inning homer, in his second career playoff win —

both this year. He struck out seven and walked one.

Tony Watson got two outs, Brandon Morrow worked the eighth and Kenley Jansen closed it out after Ross Stripling gave up two hits in the ninth. With manager Dave Roberts pushing the right buttons, Los Angeles' bullpen has yet to allow a run in the series.

The Cubs finished with eight hits, one more than in the first two games combined.

The only four-game postseason sweep for the Dodgers came in the 1963 World Series against the New York Yankees. If Los Angeles can finish off Chicago on Wednesday, the Dodgers would have five days off before hosting the Yankees or Houston Astros in the World Series opener.

Schwarber's sixth career postseason homer got Chicago off to a fast start, but Jon Jay struck out with two on to end the inning. The Dodgers responded with Ethier's leadoff drive in the second and Taylor's second homer of the series in the third, a mammoth shot to center off losing pitcher Kyle Hendricks.

"We had a chance obvi-

ously, early," Maddon said. "We hit some balls well early in the game, and then he settled in."

Ethier had two hits in his first start of this year's playoffs after he missed most of the season with a herniated lumbar disk. Taylor also had two hits and is 4 for 14 for the series, helping make up for the loss of All-Star shortstop Corey Seager to a back injury.

**YANKEES 6, ASTROS 4** — With a soaring shot headed for Yankee Stadium's Monument Park, Aaron Judge got New York back on track for another memorable October.

Judge ignited a rousing rally with a home run, then doubled during a four-run eighth inning to spur the unflappable New York Yankees over the Houston Astros 6-4 Tuesday night and tie the AL Championship Series 2-2.

The Baby Bombers trailed 4-0 against starter Lance McCullers Jr. until Judge homered leading off the seventh. He tied it with a line drive that nearly left the park in the eighth and scored when Gary Sanchez hit a go-ahead two-run double off loser Ken

Giles.

The Yankees overcame three errors and have roared back from a second straight 0-2 series deficit — they beat Cleveland in the Division Series by winning three in a row to take that best-of-five matchup.

Aroldis Chapman struck out two in a perfect ninth to cap a three-hitter. New York improved to 5-0 at home in the playoffs and won for the 18th time in their last 21 home games.

Yankee Stadium will be rocking again when Masahiro Tanaka pitches for New York against Dallas Keuchel in Game 5 Wednesday. It's a rematch of the series opener, when Keuchel outdid the Japanese right-hander in a 2-1 Astros win.

"Once we're within striking distance like that, anything can happen," Judge said.

Houston manager A.J. Hinch pulled McCullers after 81 pitches, Didi Gregorius tripled off Chris Devenski and Sanchez brought Gregorius in with a sacrifice fly.

"I thought Aaron's home run just lit a little spark," Yankees manager Joe Girardi said.

## SCOREBOARD

### Local slate

PREP FOOTBALL	
Friday	Redmond at Hermiston, 7 p.m. Pendleton at Bend, 7 p.m. Baker at Mac-Hi, 7 p.m. Nyssa at Riverside, 7 p.m. Irrigon at Umatilla, 7 p.m. Heppner at Stanfield, 7 p.m. Pilot Rock at Dufur, 7 p.m. Echo at Cove, 7 p.m. Arlington at Sherman, 7 p.m.
PREP VOLLEYBALL	
Thursday	Pendleton at Baker, 6:30 p.m. Sherman at Condon/Wheeler, 5 p.m.
Saturday	Condon/Wheeler vs. TBD (Big Sky District tournament at The Dalles), 10 a.m. Ione vs. TBD (Big Sky District tournament at Sherman), Noon Echo vs. TBD (Old Oregon League districts at La Grande), TBD
PREP BOYS SOCCER	
Thursday	Pendleton at Baker, 4 p.m.
Saturday	Mac-Hi at Baker, 1:30 p.m. Umatilla at Irrigon, 3 p.m. Riverside at Nyssa, 3 p.m.
PREP GIRLS SOCCER	
Thursday	Baker at Pendleton, 6 p.m. Mac-Hi at The Dalles, 4 p.m.
Saturday	Mac-Hi at Baker, Noon Umatilla at Irrigon, 1 p.m. Riverside at Nyssa, 1 p.m.
PREP CROSS COUNTRY	
Thursday	Pendleton, Hermiston, Mac-Hi, Heppner, Helix, Weston-McEwen, Umatilla, Stanfield at Wildhorse Invite (Pendleton), 3 p.m.
COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL	
Wednesday	

Big Bend at BMCC, 6 p.m.	
Friday	Northwest at EOU, 7 p.m.
Saturday	BMCC at Grays Harbor Tournament, TBA Evergreen at EOU, 5 p.m.
Sunday	BMCC at Grays Harbor Tournament, TBA
COLLEGE MEN'S SOCCER	
Friday	EOU at College of Idaho, Noon
Saturday	BMCC at Wenatchee Valley, 2:15 p.m.
Sunday	EOU at Rocky Mountain, Noon
COLLEGE WOMEN'S SOCCER	
Friday	EOU at College of Idaho, 2:30 p.m.
Saturday	BMCC at Wenatchee Valley, Noon
Sunday	EOU at Rocky Mountain, 2 p.m.
COLLEGE FOOTBALL	
Saturday	EOU at Montana-Western, 1 p.m.

Baseball	
MLB Postseason	
LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES (Best-of-7; x if necessary)	
American League	
<b>Houston 2, New York 2</b>	
Oct. 13:	Houston 2, New York 1
Oct. 14:	Houston 2, New York 1
Oct. 16:	New York 8, Houston 1
Tuesday:	New York 6, Houston 4
Oct. 14:	Los Angeles 5, Chicago 2
Oct. 15:	Los Angeles 4, Chicago 1
Oct. 16:	Los Angeles 5, Chicago 2
Oct. 17:	Los Angeles 4, Chicago 1
Tuesday:	Los Angeles 6, Chicago 1

### Football

NFL	
AMERICAN CONFERENCE	
East	
New England	4 2 0.667 172 159
Buffalo	3 2 0.600 89 74
Miami	3 2 0.600 61 84
N.Y. Jets	3 3 0.500 109 130
South	
Jacksonville	3 3 0.500 156 110
Houston	3 3 0.500 177 147
Tennessee	2 3 0.400 110 142
Indianapolis	2 3 0.400 97 159
North	
Pittsburgh	4 2 0.667 118 102
Baltimore	3 3 0.500 114 124
Cincinnati	2 3 0.400 84 83
Cleveland	0 6 0.000 94 157
West	
Kansas City	5 1 0.833 177 130
Denver	2 2 0.500 108 97
L.A. Chargers	2 4 0.333 116 131
Oakland	2 4 0.333 124 126
NATIONAL CONFERENCE	
East	
Philadelphia	5 1 0.833 165 122
Washington	3 2 0.600 117 113
Dallas	2 3 0.400 125 132
N.Y. Giants	1 5 0.167 105 132
South	
Carolina	4 2 0.667 128 122
New Orleans	3 2 0.600 145 116
Atlanta	3 2 0.600 121 109
Tampa Bay	2 3 0.400 118 121
North	
Minnesota	4 2 0.667 122 103
Green Bay	4 2 0.667 147 135
Detroit	3 3 0.500 161 149
Chicago	2 4 0.333 105 148
West	
L.A. Rams	4 2 0.667 179 138

Seattle	3 2 0.600 110 87
Arizona	3 3 0.500 119 158
San Francisco	0 6 0.000 113 146
Week 7	
Thursday's Game	
Kansas City at Oakland, 5:25 p.m.	
Sunday's Games	
Tampa Bay at Buffalo, 10 a.m.	
New Orleans at Green Bay, 10 a.m.	
Baltimore at Minnesota, 10 a.m.	
N.Y. Jets at Miami, 10 a.m.	
Jacksonville at Indianapolis, 10 a.m.	
Arizona vs. L.A. Rams at London, UK, 10 a.m.	
Carolina at Chicago, 10 a.m.	
Dallas at San Francisco, 1:05 p.m.	
Cincinnati at Pittsburgh, 1:25 p.m.	
Seattle at N.Y. Giants, 1:25 p.m.	
Denver at L.A. Chargers, 1:25 p.m.	
Atlanta at New England, 5:30 p.m.	
Open: Detroit, Houston	
Monday's Game	
Washington at Philadelphia, 5:30 p.m.	
NCAA	
Top 25 Schedule	
Thursday	
No. 25 Memphis at Houston, 5 p.m. (ESPN)	
Saturday	
No. 1 Alabama vs. Tennessee, 12:30 p.m. (CBS)	
No. 2 Penn State vs. No. 19 Michigan, 4:30 p.m. (ABC)	
No. 4 TCU vs. Kansas, 5 p.m. (FOX)	
No. 5 Wisconsin vs. Maryland, 9 a.m. (FOX)	
No. 8 Miami vs. Syracuse, 12:30 p.m. (ESPN)	
No. 9 Oklahoma at Kansas State, 1 p.m. (FOX)	
No. 10 Oklahoma State at Texas, 9 a.m. (ABC)	
No. 11 USC at No. 13 Notre Dame, 4:30 p.m. (NBC)	
No. 14 Virginia Tech vs. North Carolina, 12:30 p.m. (ESPN2)	
No. 15 Washington State vs. Colorado, 7:45 p.m. (ESPN)	
No. 16 South Florida at Tulane, 4 p.m.	

Hockey	
NHL	
EASTERN CONFERENCE	
Tampa Bay	7 5 1 1 11 27 23
Columbus	6 5 1 0 10 21 13
Toronto	6 5 1 0 10 28 19
New Jersey	6 5 1 0 10 26 17
Pittsburgh	7 4 2 1 1 9 25 29
Detroit	6 4 2 0 8 20 15
Philadelphia	6 4 2 0 8 26 16
Ottawa	6 3 1 2 8 20 13
Washington	7 3 3 1 7 23 24
Carolina	4 2 1 1 5 12 11
N.Y. Islanders	6 2 3 1 5 15 18
Boston	5 2 3 0 4 14 18
Florida	5 2 3 0 4 17 20
Buffalo	7 1 4 2 4 18 28
Montreal	6 2 1 4 1 3 10 22
N.Y. Rangers	7 1 5 1 3 17 26
WESTERN CONFERENCE	
Vegas	6 5 1 0 10 20 15
Los Angeles	5 4 0 1 9 16 25
Chicago	6 4 1 1 9 19 13
St. Louis	6 4 2 0 8 18 16
Calgary	6 4 2 0 8 17 17
Colorado	7 4 3 0 8 20 17
Nashville	6 3 2 1 7 18 17
Dallas	6 3 3 0 6 14 14
Winnipeg	6 3 3 0 6 18 23
Vancouver	5 2 2 1 5 12 14
Anaheim	6 2 3 1 5 12 17
Minnesota	4 1 1 2 4 15 16
San Jose	5 2 3 0 4 13 16
Edmonton	5 1 4 0 2 11 19
Arizona	6 0 5 1 1 12 25
NOTE:	Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss.
Tuesday's Games	
Philadelphia 5, Florida 1	

Pittsburgh 5, N.Y. Rangers 4, OT	
Toronto 2, Washington 0	
Vancouver 3, Ottawa 0	
New Jersey 5, Tampa Bay 4, SO	
Nashville 4, Colorado 1	
Columbus 5, Winnipeg 2	
Dallas 3, Arizona 1	
Carolina 5, Edmonton 3	
Vegas 5, Buffalo 4, OT	
San Jose 5, Montreal 2	
Wednesday's Games	
Detroit at Toronto, 4:30 p.m.	
Chicago at St. Louis, 5 p.m.	
Montreal at Los Angeles, 7:30 p.m.	
Soccer	
MLS	
Sunday's Games	
Chicago at Houston, 1 p.m.	
Colorado at Seattle, 1 p.m.	
Columbus at New York City FC, 1 p.m.	
Los Angeles at FC Dallas, 1 p.m.	
Minnesota United at San Jose, 1 p.m.	
New England at Montreal, 1 p.m.	
New York at D.C. United, 1 p.m.	
Orlando City at Philadelphia, 1 p.m.	
Sporting K.C. at Real Salt Lake, 1 p.m.	
Toronto FC at Atlanta United FC, 1 p.m.	
Vancouver at Portland, 1 p.m.	
Basketball	
NBA Regular Season	
Tuesday's Games	
Cleveland 102, Boston 99	
Houston 122, Golden State 121	
Wednesday's Games	
Brooklyn at Indiana, 4 p.m.	
Charlotte at Detroit, 4 p.m.	
Miami at Orlando, 4 p.m.	
Philadelphia at Washington, 4 p.m.	
Milwaukee at Boston, 4:30 p.m.	
New Orleans at Memphis, 5 p.m.	
Atlanta at Dallas, 5:30 p.m.	
Denver at Utah, 6 p.m.	
Minnesota at San Antonio, 6:30 p.m.	
Houston at Sacramento, 7 p.m.	
Portland at Phoenix, 7 p.m.	