

NFL

Seahawks to release star Richard Sherman

By **TIM BOOTH**
AP Sports Writer

The Seattle Seahawks cut ties on Friday with star cornerback Richard Sherman, who became one of the NFL's premier cornerbacks during his seven seasons with the team.

The team informed Sherman early in the day he would be released, and he confirmed the decision in a text message to The Associated Press. The move appeared to be building after he met with the team Wednesday to discuss his future. Sherman declined to comment after the meeting.

"Thank you for helping win championships, shape our culture and define success in Seattle," the team said in a statement announcing the decision.

"We love you and your unwavering competitiveness, confidence and fierce passion for football and life. For that, you will always be a Hawk!"

Sherman was an overlooked fifth-round draft pick who went on to become a two-time All-Pro who helped anchor a defense that was the league's best for several years.

He will be 30 years old going into next season and coming off an Achilles tendon injury that cost him half of the 2017 season.

But the biggest reason for his release was financial. Sherman was due \$13 million for the 2018 season and his release gives Seattle a salary cap savings of about \$11 million.

Sherman became a star in Seattle, bringing a brash attitude and willingness to speak out on any topic to go along with his stellar play. His best seasons came in 2013 and 2014 when Seattle made two



AP Photo/Stephen Brashear, File

In this 2017 file photo, Seattle Seahawks cornerback Richard Sherman (25) runs after he intercepted a pass from Houston Texans quarterback Deshaun Watson (not shown) late in the second half of an NFL football game, in Seattle. The Seahawks are cutting ties with star cornerback Richard Sherman after seven seasons.

Super Bowl appearances and he has 32 interceptions.

This may not be an end for Sherman and the Seahawks, depending on what he finds in free agency. Seattle could be open to bringing Sherman back at a reduced

salary. Sherman was open to the idea of a new place to call home last offseason when Seattle engaged in trade discussions surrounding Sherman, but said his preference was to remain with the Seahawks.

What's still to be answered is how much of an impact the Achilles injury will have. Sherman has never been the fastest cornerback, often using his exquisite technique and smarts to make up for less than elite speed. But recovery from Achilles injuries can often be troublesome and Sherman also had a cleanup surgery on his opposite ankle during the offseason.

The questions about Sherman's health account for Seattle's position. The Seahawks don't want to be paying a premium price for a cornerback entering the final year of his contract with an injury concern. Seattle could be sacrificing something greater, though. Sherman has been a locker-room leader and mentor to younger players. Shaquill Griffin spoke regularly about Sherman's influence last year.

But it's clear the Seahawks are a team in transition, although it also remains to be seen how significant this makeover will be. Seattle already traded Michael Bennett to Philadelphia for two late-round draft picks and a little-used wide receiver. Kam Chancellor and Cliff Avril both have neck injuries, and it's uncertain if they'll play again. Earl Thomas said at the Pro Bowl he wants a new contract and may hold out.

About the only sure thing for the defense is the return of All-Pro linebacker Bobby Wagner. General manager John Schneider, speaking at the NFL combine, called it a "constant puzzle."

"You're trying to put stuff together all the time," he said. "It's a big challenge."

Browns make three major trades

Associated Press

CLEVELAND — Maybe the losing and laughing will finally stop. The Browns aren't fooling around.

With three stunning trades on the eve of free agency, Cleveland landed a proven starting quarterback, a game-breaking, three-time Pro Bowl wide receiver and a shut-down cornerback.

After 16 straight losses on the field, victory.

Two months after a winless season mercifully ended, new general manager John Dorsey addressed major roster needs Friday by acquiring mobile quarterback Tyrod Taylor in a deal with Buffalo, wide receiver Jarvis Landry from Miami and cornerback Damarious Randall from Green Bay, a person with direct knowledge of the overhaul told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

Teams are not permitted to announce any trades until next week.

In exchange, the Browns shipped quarterback DeShone Kizer and swapped late-round picks with the Packers, gave the Dolphins a fourth-round pick this season and a seventh rounder in 2019 and sent the Bills the No. 65 overall pick in this year's draft.

All in a day's work for Dorsey, who brought in major talent without giving up any of the team's five picks in the first two rounds this year.

The dynamic Taylor, who finished with a 23-21 record in three seasons with Buffalo, can affect the game as a passer or runner and he's the type of quarterback Browns coach Hue Jackson has sought since coming to Cleveland.

However, even with Taylor around, the Browns are still expected to select a quarterback with the No. 1 overall pick in this year's draft and Dorsey and his staff are in the process of deciding if that's Southern Cal's Sam Darnold, UCLA's Josh Rosen, Wyoming's Josh Allen or Oklahoma's Baker Mayfield, the Heisman Trophy winner who scares some Cleveland fans because of his Johnny Manziel-like showmanship.

Cleveland's next starting quarterback will be the team's 29th since 1999.

Landry is as good as they get. The 25-year-old, who caught a league-best 112 passes last season, immediately upgrades a Cleveland offense that finished last in scoring and didn't have any player who threatened a defense until wide receiver Josh Gordon made his late return from an indefinite NFL suspension. With Gordon on the outside, Landry in the slot and Taylor behind center, the Browns have the makings of a potent attack.



Randall started 30 games in three years for the Packers, who drafted him with the No. 30 overall pick in 2015. He had some injuries issues — and a visible spat with the team — in 2017, but finished the year as Green Bay's best cover corner.

Men's College Basketball

USC thumps Oregon, will meet Arizona for Pac-12 title

By **JOHN MARSHALL**
Associated Press

Pac-12 Semifinals

 No. 6 Oregon 54	 No. 2 USC 74
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LAS VEGAS — Jonah Mathews scored 27 points, Elijah Stewart added 15 and Southern California stormed its way into the Pac-12 Tournament title game with a 74-54 rout over Oregon on Friday night.

USC (23-10) took advantage of the tired Ducks at both ends. The Trojans shot 50 percent and made 10 of 23 from 3-point range, while harassing Oregon into turnovers and missed shots.

No. 2 seed USC moves on to face No. 15 and top-seeded Arizona in the Pac-12 title game Saturday night.

Oregon (22-12) labored in its third game in three days, unable to get shots to fall or keep up with the fresh-legged Trojans. The Ducks had two long scoreless stretches, shot 33 percent from the field and 8 of 30 from the 3-point arc.

MiKale McIntosh led Oregon with 21 points.

Oregon and USC entered the Pac-12 tournament on the NCAA bubble.

The Trojans have the better resume with four Quadrant 1 wins and kept their hopes alive with a quarterfinal win over Oregon State. The Ducks are more

of a longshot, taking the first step to a needed deep run in the Pac-12 tournament by beating Utah in the quarterfinals.

USC and Oregon met twice during the regular season, twice tight games, both won by the Trojans.

Playing the day before seemed to take something out of the Ducks. They had some careless turnovers early and struggled offensively, going scoreless for nearly 6½ minutes before another drought over the final 4:47 of the first half. Oregon shot 9 of 31 from the field, 4 of 16 from the 3-point arc, before the break.

USC led 37-23 at halftime behind Mathews' 16 points.

It didn't get any better for the Ducks in the second half. Oregon missed its first seven shots and USC kept stretching the lead, to 53-25 in the opening six minutes.

The Ducks caused USC some problems with their full-court press, cutting the lead to 14 with 6½ minutes left, but got no closer.



AP Photo/Isaac Brekken

USC's Jonah Mathews, left, passes the ball around Oregon's Kenny Wooten during the first half of the semifinals of the Pac-12 men's tournament Friday in Las Vegas.

BIG PICTURE
Oregon's longshot NCAA Tournament bid took a big hit with a loss to another bubble team.

USC may have secured its NCAA Tournament spot with a dominating performance at both ends.

Oregon is likely headed to a lower-tier postseason tournament. USC plays No. 15 Arizona in Saturday night.

SCOREBOARD

Local slate

COLLEGE BASEBALL	
Saturday	Shoreline at BMCC (DH), 11 a.m.
Sunday	Linn-Benton at BMCC (DH), 11 a.m.
COLLEGE SOFTBALL	
Saturday	EOU vs. Northwest Christian (at BMCC, Pendleton) (DH), 11 a.m.
Sunday	EOU vs. Northwest Christian (at BMCC, Pendleton) (DH), 11 a.m.
PREP BASEBALL	
Monday	Columbia White Salmon at Stanfield, 4 p.m.
Tuesday	Joseph at Weston-McEwen, Noon Umatilla at Touchet (WA) (DH), 2 p.m. Dufur at Riverside, 3 p.m. Southridge (WA) at Pendleton (DH), 3:30 p.m. Hermiston at Ridgeview, 4 p.m. Heppner at Pilot Rock, 4:30 p.m.
PREP SOFTBALL	
Monday	Irrigon at The Dalles, 4 p.m.
Tuesday	Umatilla at Touchet (WA) (DH), 2 p.m. Stevenson (WA) at Riverside (DH), 2 p.m. Ridgeview at Hermiston, 4 p.m. Pendleton at Hanford (WA), 4 p.m.
Basketball	
BOYS OSAA PLAYOFFS	
Class 6A State Tournament	
(at Chiles Center, University of Portland)	
Friday Semifinals	
No. 12 Tualatin 53, No. 8 Jesuit 49	
No. 3 Southridge 79, No. 68 West Salem 68	
Friday Semifinals	
No. 1 Jefferson 80, No. 20 Barlow 60	
No. 2 Grant vs. No. 11 Lincoln (championship)	
No. 11 Lincoln vs. No. 20 Barlow, 6:45 p.m. (3rd place)	
No. 3 Southridge vs. No. 12 Tualatin, 10:45 a.m. (4th place)	
Class 5A State Tournament	
(at Gill Coliseum, Oregon State University)	
Friday	
4th/6th Place Game	
No. 1 Silverton 61, No. 7 South Albany 50	

3rd/5th Place Game	
No. 8 Churchill 58, No. 2 Crater 57	
Championship Game	
No. 4 Wilsonville 54, No. 3 Thurston 36	
Class 4A State Tournament	
(at Forest Grove High School)	
Friday Consolation Semifinals	
No. 5 La Grande 57, No. 8 Sisters 56	
No. 3 Marshfield 56, No. 7 Mazama 49	
Friday Semifinals	
No. 5 Valley Catholic 41, No. 1 Banks 33	
No. 2 Seaside 56, No. 6 Newport 52	
Saturday's Games	
No. 2 Seaside vs. No. 5 Valley Catholic, 8:30 p.m. (championship)	
No. 1 Banks vs. No. 6 Newport (3rd place), 6:45 p.m.	
No. 3 Marshfield vs. No. 4 La Grande (4th place), 9:45 a.m.	
OSAA GIRLS PLAYOFFS	
Class 6A State Tournament	
(at Chiles Center, University of Portland)	
Friday Semifinals	
No. 1 Southridge 54, No. 4 West Linn 38	
No. 7 Benson 54, No. 3 Beaverton 53	
Saturday's Games	
No. 1 Southridge vs. No. 7 Benson (championship), 3:15 p.m.	
No. 3 Beaverton vs. No. 4 West Linn (3rd place), 1:30 p.m.	
No. 2 Tigard vs. No. 9 Clackamas (4th place), 9 a.m.	
Class 5A State Tournament	
(at Gill Coliseum, Oregon State University)	
Friday	
4th/6th Place Game	
No. 9 Crescent Valley 44, No. 3 Central 42	
Championship Game	
No. 5 Silverton 47, No. 6 Bend 29	
No. 1 Marist Catholic 59, No. 2 La Salle Prep 44	
Class 4A State Tournament	
(at Pacific University)	
Friday Consolation Semifinals	
No. 9 Valley Catholic 50, No. 4 Baker 48	
No. 6 Stayton 50, No. 2 Hidden Valley 46	
Friday Semifinals	
No. 1 Marshfield 61, No. 5 Banks 50	
No. 3 Cascade 41, No. 10 North Marion 39	
Saturday's Games	
No. 1 Marshfield vs. No. 3 Cascade (championship), 3:15 p.m.	
No. 5 Banks vs. No. 10 North Marion (3rd place), 1:30 p.m.	
No. 6 Stayton vs. No. 9 Valley Catholic (4th place), 8 a.m.	

NBA				
EASTERN CONFERENCE				
Atlantic Division				
x-Toronto	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Boston	46	20	69.7	—
Philadelphia	35	29	54.7	12½
New York	24	42	36.4	24½
Brooklyn	21	45	31.8	27½
Southeast Division				
Washington	W	L	Pct	GB
Miami	38	28	57.6	—
Charlotte	28	38	42.4	10
Orlando	20	46	30.3	18
Atlanta	20	46	30.3	18
Central Division				
Cleveland	W	L	Pct	GB
Indiana	38	28	57.6	½
Milwaukee	35	31	53.0	3½
Detroit	30	36	45.5	8½
Chicago	22	43	33.8	16
WESTERN CONFERENCE				
Southwest Division				
Houston	W	L	Pct	GB
New Orleans	38	27	58.5	13
San Antonio	37	28	56.9	14
Dallas	20	45	30.8	31
Memphis	18	47	27.7	33
Northwest Division				
Portland	W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	40	26	60.6	—
Oklahoma City	38	29	56.7	2½
Denver	36	30	54.5	4
Utah	36	30	54.5	4
Pacific Division				
Golden State	W	L	Pct	GB
L.A. Clippers	51	15	77.3	—
L.A. Lakers	35	29	54.7	15
Sacramento	29	36	44.6	21½
Phoenix	19	45	31.8	30
x-clinched playoff spot	19	48	28.4	32½
Friday's Games				
Detroit 99, Chicago 83				
Indiana 112, Atlanta 87				
Toronto 108, Houston 105				
Milwaukee 120, New York 112				
Utah 95, Memphis 78				
Washington 116, New Orleans 97				
Denver 125, L.A. Lakers 116				
Portland 125, Golden State 108				
Sacramento 94, Orlando 88				
L.A. Clippers 116, Cleveland 102				
Saturday's Games				
Phoenix at Charlotte, 2 p.m.				

Buffalo				
Metropolitan Division				
Pittsburgh	GP	W	L	OT Pts
Washington	68	39	25	4
Philadelphia	67	37	23	7
Columbus	68	34	23	11
New Jersey	68	34	26	8
Carolina	68	30	27	11
N.Y. Islanders	68	29	29	10
N.Y. Rangers	68	30	32	6
WESTERN CONFERENCE				
Central Division				
Nashville	GP	W	L	OT Pts
Winnipeg	67	44	14	9
Minnesota	67	41	17	9
Dallas	68	38	24	8
Colorado	67	35	24	8
St. Louis	67	35	27	5
Chicago	68	29	31	8
Pacific Division				
Vegas	GP	W	L	OT Pts
San Jose	67	43	19	5
Anaheim	69	34	22	12
Los Angeles	67	37	25	5
Calgary	69	34	25	10
Edmonton	67	29	34	6
Vancouver	68	25	34	9
Arizona	66	21	34	11
Friday's Games				
Calgary 2, Detroit 2				
Dallas 2, Anaheim 1				
Minnesota 5, Vancouver 2				
Saturday's Games				
Winnipeg at Philadelphia, 10 a.m.				
Montreal at Tampa Bay, 10 a.m.				
Vegas at Buffalo, 10 a.m.				
Chicago at Boston, 10 a.m.				
Arizona at Colorado, 12 p.m.				
Washington at San Jose, 1 p.m.				
St. Louis at Los Angeles, 1 p.m.				
N.Y. Rangers at Florida, 4 p.m.				
Pittsburgh at Toronto, 4 p.m.				
New Jersey at Nashville, 5 p.m.				
Minnesota at Edmonton, 7 p.m.				
Sunday's Games				
Boston at Chicago, 9:30 a.m.				
N.Y. Islanders at Calgary, 4 p.m.				
Dallas at Pittsburgh, 4:30 p.m.				
Vancouver at Arizona, 6 p.m.				

At Innisbrook Resort (Copperhead Course)	
Second Round	
Corey Connors	67-69=136 -6
Paul Casey	70-68=138 -4
Brandt Snedeker	70-68=138 -4
Tiger Woods	70-68=138 -4
Ryan Palmer	72-66=138 -4
Kelly Kraft	68-70=138 -4
Sean O'Hair	71-68=139 -3
Jason Kokrak	72-67=139 -3
Justin Rose	70-69=139 -3
Webb Simpson	71-68=139 -3
Keegan Bradley	69-70=139 -3
Failed to make the cut	
Jordan Spieth	76-71=147 +5
Rory McIlroy	74-73=147 +5
NASCAR Cup Series	
TicketGuardian 500	
Friday's qualifying; race Sunday at ISM Raceway	
Avondale, Ariz.	
(Car number in parentheses)	
1. (78) Martin Truex Jr., Toyota, 136.945 mph.	
2. (42) Kyle Larson, Chevrolet, 136.643.	
3. (9) Chase Elliott, Chevrolet, 136.126.	
4. (88) Alex Bowman, Chevrolet, 136.080.	
5. (22) Joey Logano, Ford, 135.947.	
6. (11) Denny Hamlin, Toyota, 135.900.	
7. (18) Kyle Busch, Toyota, 135.870.	
8. (1) Jamie McMurray, Chevrolet, 135.864.	
9. (20) Erik Jones, Toyota, 135.829.	
10. (4) Kevin Harvick, Chevrolet, 135.522.	
11. (24) William Byron, Chevrolet, 134.791.	
12. (12) Ryan Blaney, Ford, 134.778.	