

## MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

## Beavers fall to Wildcats 70-61

Oregon State held Arizona to 40% shooting from the floor, but it was not enough to overcome their own cold shooting as the Beavers lost to the Wildcats 70-61 on Thursday night in Tucson, Arizona.

Jarod Lucas and Ethan Thompson led Oregon State (10-9, 6-7 Pac-12) with 13 points apiece, while Gianni Hunt contributed 12 off the bench. Warith Alatishe had 10 points and six rebounds for the Beavers.

OSU struggled to score, making 24 of 64 (37.5%), and they were just 7-of-23 from 3-point range.

Benedict Mathurin and James Akinjo led Arizona (14-6, 8-6) with 14 points each.

The Beavers were able to keep it close because they only turned the ball over five times, but they also sent the Wildcats to the free-throw line 34 times. Arizona only made 23 of their 34 attempts, but OSU was only 6-of-10 from the charity stripe.

OSU faces Arizona State on Sunday.

— Bulletin staff report

## TOKYO GAMES

## Mori to step down as president

TOKYO — The long saga of Yoshiro Mori appears to be near the end.

Japan's Kyodo news agency and others reported on Thursday — citing unnamed sources "familiar with the matter" — that Yoshiro Mori will step down on Friday as the president of the Tokyo Olympic organizing committee.

The move follows his sexist comments about women more than a week ago, and an ensuing and rare public debate in Japan about gender equality. They also come just over five months before the Olympics are to open.

A decision is expected to be announced on Friday when the organizing committee's executive board meets. The executive board is overwhelming male, as is the day-to-day leadership.

The 83-year-old Mori, in a meeting of the Japanese Olympic Committee more than a week ago, essentially said women "talk too much" and are driven by a "strong sense of rivalry." Mori, a former prime minister, gave a grudging apology a few days after his opinions were reported but declined to resign.

Mori's remarks have drawn outrage from many quarters and have put the spotlight on how far Japan lags behind other prosperous countries in advancing women in politics or the boardrooms. Japan stands 121st out of 153 in the World Economic Forum's gender equality rankings.

Though some on the street have called for him to resign — several hundred Olympic volunteers say they are withdrawing — most decision makers have stopped short of this and have simply condemned his remarks. Japan is a country that works largely on consensus with politicians — often elderly and male — acting behind the scenes and leaking trial balloons to sense public sentiment.

His replacement is reported to be 84-year-old Saburo Kawabuchi, a former president of the Japanese soccer association.

— Associated Press

## MEN'S COLLEGE HOOPS

## Head start

Midyear enrollees seize opportunity to play with free eligibility

BY AARON BEARD  
AP Basketball Writer

The plan was for Carter Whitt to play a year at prep school before suiting up next season at Wake Forest. Instead, Whitt is already on the court for the Demon Deacons after graduating early and joining the program in December.

The 6-foot-4 guard is among a small group of freshmen nationally seizing an opportunity as midyear enrollees, getting the jump on college careers with what amounts to free eligibility amid the coronavirus pandemic. "I just figured it would be a better way to use a year," Whitt said. "Rather than being away at boarding school, I might as well just be away at college."

When the NCAA announced athletes in winter sports like basketball would get an extra year of eligibility due to the pandemic, it opened the door for signees to reclassify and join their college teams instead of facing the uncertainty of trying to play a final high school season in a pandemic.

Midyear enrollees have taken the court at several schools across the country, including No. 1 Gonzaga, No. 4 Ohio State, No. 20 Southern California, UCLA, Oregon and Maryland.



Andy Nelson/AP

Oregon's Franck Kepnang (22) blocks the shot of Washington's Nate Roberts (1) as Oregon's Will Richardson (0) and L.J. Figueroa (12) defend on Saturday in Eugene. Kepnang is among many midyear enrollees who are taking advantage of the NCAA's ruling to allow student-athletes an extra year of eligibility amid the coronavirus pandemic.

"You've got to imagine most of these guys that are doing it are probably college players with a hope to be in the NBA at some point, but aren't like lottery guys that we're talking about naturally. So it would be incredible to be able to groom them in your system for that long and watch them flourish and really be some of the best players playing in your program given the experience."

— Jordan Cornette, former Notre Dame player and ACC Network analyst

They've also shown up on the women's side, too, including Saylor Poffenbarger at No. 2 Connecticut and Dominique Darius at No. 8 UCLA making their debuts in January.

In most cases, they're earning spot minutes as reserves. Some are playing larger roles like Whitt or Mustapha Amzil as an every-game starter at Dayton. Still others, such as Trey Patterson at No. 5 Villanova, have enrolled in

school and are practicing but it is unclear if they will play this season.

Former Notre Dame player and ACC Network analyst Jordan Cornette compared it to an internship that benefits players and programs alike, noting: "There's nothing going in the eligibility flames here, so there's nothing being lost."

"You've got to imagine most of these guys that are doing it are proba-

bly college players with a hope to be in the NBA at some point, but aren't like lottery guys that we're talking about naturally," Cornette said. "So it would be incredible to be able to groom them in your system for that long and watch them flourish and really be some of the best players playing in your program given the experience."

For college coaches, the challenge is figuring out how much those freshmen can handle.

Ohio State's Chris Holtmann signed Meechie Johnson Jr. in November, then added the 6-2 guard to the roster in December after Johnson graduated early. Johnson made his debut Jan. 9 at Rutgers and has averaged 7.4 minutes through his first nine games, though he played more with senior point guard C.J. Walker recently sidelined four games with a hand injury.

See **Start** / B4

## NHL

## Multigame series ratchet up animosity

BY STEPHEN WHYNO  
AP Hockey Writer

It turns out Saturday night was all right for fighting between Arizona and St. Louis. Monday night, too.

Coyotes and Blues players dropped the gloves in both games, which were the third and fourth consecutive against each other. They will play three more times in four days — that's right, seven games in a row, like a playoff series that goes the distance, and a regular-season first for the NHL.

Tensions will continue to rise.

"If you're going to play a team seven times in a row, it's going to happen," Coyotes forward Connor Garland said. "You're going to have individual battles and then team battles. It's hockey. It's just the way it goes."

Especially this season, when the NHL cooked up four new divisions and scheduled all regular-season games within those divisions. That set up miniseries of anywhere from two to five games, with the NHL trying to limit travel in a bid to stem the spread of the coronavirus. Seven chapters of Coyotes-Blues is an anomaly caused by scheduling changes forced by the pandemic.

Animosity is clearly up around the league with players seeing the same familiar, aggravating faces over and over again. There have been 37 fights already this season, and only two of the league's 31 teams haven't had at least one.



Mark Zaleski/AP

Nashville Predators' Mathieu Olivier (25) fights with Tampa Bay Lightning's Luke Schenn (2) Monday in Nashville, Tennessee.

"There's a little bit of bad blood that goes on between games," Tampa Bay's Anthony Cirelli said after a game against Nashville that featured 32 penalty minutes. "The more and more we play teams, the emotions are high and these are the fun ones to play in because it kind of replicates that playoff kind of hockey."

It's not a perfect comparison. As Blues winger David Perron said, "There's not a Cup on the line" and Lord Stanley's trophy is far in the distance with the NHL just a quarter of the way through a shortened, 56-game regular season.

But the divisional schedule also means each game and point earned or lost is more important. It's direct competition in the eight-team U.S. divisions and seven-team Canadian division for four play-

off spots each, which leads to what Winnipeg forward Adam Lowry called "a little more chippiness."

"Just the battles I think get a little more intense, especially as it goes along," Lowry said. "If you can get a couple games up on the other team, they're that much more desperate."

The Blues know how that feels. They've lost three of the first four against the Coyotes, including allowing a tying goal with 0.7 seconds left in regulation and getting beat in a shootout in the most recent meeting.

Asked if he's tired of facing the Coyotes, Blues coach Craig Berube said, "I'm tired of losing to them." Same for Vancouver, which was swept in its last two "series" — two against Montreal and three against Toronto. Those games got increasingly heated.

See **NHL** / B4

## TENNIS COMMENTARY



Rick Rycroft/AP

Frances Tiafoe reacts to a call during his second-round match against Novak Djokovic at the Australian Open in Melbourne, Australia, on Wednesday.

## Tennis needs correct calls, and histrionics, too

BY HOWARD FENDRICH  
AP Tennis Writer

Eliminating all line judges and removing the human element from officiating at the Australian Open might have been a necessary step to reduce the number of people on court amid a pandemic.

It also might be good for the integrity of the game, because getting every call right — or as close to that as possible — matters so much to players and fans.

What there is no doubt about, however, is this: The proliferation of live electronic line-calling tends to be worse for the spectacle of the sport, an element tennis definitely needs. Players can't challenge a

call from the machines at Melbourne Park (a replay is shown in the arena after a ball lands within 2 inches of a line on a serve or within 6 inches on any other shot), so there isn't much sense in lodging a complaint during the first Grand Slam tournament played with zero line judges. Let's hope that doesn't hasten the disappearance of histrionics.

"That's the only downside: There's no one to argue with," Tommy Paul, an American ranked 53rd, said in a video interview with The Associated Press this week. "There's no one to blame when you feel like you might have made a ball but it was actually out."

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