#### **MONDAY**

BASEBALL	Time TV	!
MLB Preseason, Washington at St. Louis	10 a.m. MLB	,
MLB Preseason Baseball, Cincinnati at LA Angels	1 p.m. MLB	
BASKETBALL		
NBA, New York Knicks at Brooklyn Nets	5 p.m. ESPN	
NBA, Los Angeles Lakers at Golden State Warriors	7:35 p.m. ESPN	
HOCKEY		
College Hockey, NCHC Tournament, First Semifinal	1 p.m. CBSSN	
College Hockey, B1G Tournament, Semifinal 1	1:30 p.m. BIG10	)
NHL, Philadelphia Flyers at New York Rangers	4 p.m. NBCSN	
College, B1G Tournament, Semifinal 2	5:30 p.m. BIG10	
College, NCHC Tournament, Second Semifinal	6 p.m. CBSSN	
SOCCER		
Men's College, Rutgers (Camden) at Penn State	9 a.m. BIG10	)
Men's College, Michigan State at Indiana	11 a.m. BIG10	)
Premier League,		
Wolverhampton Wanderers vs Liverpool	12:55 p.m. NBCSN	
SOFTBALL		
College Softball, Mississippi State at Ole Miss	4 p.m. SEC	
TUESDAY		
BASEBALL		
MLB Preseason, Houston at NY Mets	10 a.m. MLB	•
MLB Preseason, Cleveland at LA Angels	1 p.m. MLB	,
BASKETBALL		
NBA, Utah Jazz at Boston Celtics	4:30 p.m. TNT	
NBA, New Orleans Pelicans at Portland Trail Blazers	7 p.m. NBCSNW,	
	TNT	
HOCKEY		
NHL, Boston Bruins at Pittsburgh Penguins	4 p.m. NBCSN	
College, B1G Tournament Championship	5 p.m. BIG10	
College, NCHC Tournament, Final: Teams TBA	5:30 p.m. CBSSN	
SOCCER	4 (0.55)	
UEFA Champions League, Real Madrid vs Atalanta	1 p.m. CBSSN	
WINTER SPORTS	O NECCH	
FIS Freestyle Skiing, World Championships	9 a.m. NBCSN	
FIS Snowboarding, World Championships: Big Air	12:30 p.m. NBCSN	l

#### **SPORTS BRIEFING**

Listings are the most accurate available.

#### **GOLF**

**Thomas rallies to win Players Championship** — Justin Thomas found the right time for a near-perfect performance to put a rough start to the year behind him, rallying from three shots behind with bold play to close with a 4-under 68 and win The Players Championship on Sunday. Thomas becomes only the fourth player to win a major, The Players Championship, the FedEx Cup and a World Golf Championship, and it couldn't have come at a better time. He called it as good as he has ever played tee-to-green, and he needed it to outlast Lee Westwood, a hard-luck runner-up for the second straight week. Westwood birdied the final hole for a 72 to finish one shot behind. Thomas went birdie-birdie-eagle-birdie around the turn, and put away Westwood for good with a pair of lag putts from 50 feet — one for birdie on the par-5 16th to take the lead, another on the island-green 17th for a par. "I fought so hard today," Thomas said. "It's probably one of the best rounds of my life tee-to-green. I've seen some crazy stuff happen on TV in the past, and I'm glad to be on this side of it."

## **FOOTBALL**

Saints QB Brees announces retirement at 42 — Saints quarterback Drew Brees, the NFL's leader in career comple-

tions and yards passing, has decided to retire after 20 NFL seasons, including his last 15 with New Orleans. "Til the very end I exhausted myself to give everything to the Saints organization, my team and the great City of New Orleans," Brees said in social media post Sunday. "We shared some amazing moments together, many of which are emblazoned in our hearts and minds and will forever be a part of us. ... I am only retiring from football. I am not retiring from New Orleans. This is not goodbye." The decision comes after the 42-year-old quarter-back won nine of 12 regular-season starts while completing 70.5% of his passes in 2020, and then won a wild-card round playoff game before New Orleans' season ended with a divisional-round loss to eventual Super Bowl champion Tampa Bay. Brees missed four games this season with multiple fractured ribs and a collapsed lung. It marked the second straight season Brees had to miss part of a season. Brees is the NFL's alltime leader in yards passing with 80,358.

## **MOTOR SPORTS**

Truex wins at Phoenix Raceway — Martin Truex Jr. pulled away in the final laps Sunday at Phoenix Raceway for his first NASCAR Cup Series victory of the season and 28th overall. Truex beat the four championship finalists from last year. He had failed to advance into the season-ending finale for the first time in four years and could only watch as Chase Elliott beat Joey Logano, Denny Hamlin and Brad Keselowski for the title at the desert oval. All four tailed Truex across the finish line.

## **SCOREBOARD**

Matthew Fitzpatrick (71), \$339,375

Sergio Garcia (71), \$339,375 Charles Howell III (71), \$339,375

Si Woo Kim (71), \$339,375

Jon Rahm (71), \$339,375

Jason Kokrak (71), \$339,375 Victor Perez, \$339,375

Charley Hoffman (54), \$221,250 Sungjae Im (54), \$221,250

Ryan Palmer (54), \$221,250 Cameron Smith (54), \$221,250

68-68-72-72-280

65-72-71-72-280 73-70-71-66-280

72-70-67-71-280

70-72-71-67-280 73-71-69-67-280

72-68-67-73-280

70-68-76-67-281 72-66-77-66-281

70-72-68-71-281

71-73-65-72-28

69-69-75-75-288 74-68-72-75-289

71-73-71-74-289 74-68-72-75-289

71-70-72-77-290

72-71-77-70-290 70-73-71-76-290

73-71-72-74-290 74-70-73-74-291 73-71-72-75-291

71-73-72-76-292

69-75-74-74-292 73-71-76-73-293

73-70-71-79-293

#### **ON DECK**

Prep Sports Monday, March 15

Volleyball: Mountain View at Summit, 6:30 p.m **Boys soccer:** Ridgeview at Mountain View, 4:30 p.m.; North Marion at Madras, 4 p.m.; Central Christian/Trinity Lutheran at Columbia Christian,

Girls soccer: Mountain View at Bend, 4 p.m.; Madras at North Marion, 4 p.m.; Pleasant Hill at La Pine,

Tuesday, March 16

Volleyball: Crook County at The Dalles, TBD; North Marion at Madras, 6 p.m.; Creswell at La Pine, 6 p.m.; Culver at Sheridan, 5 p.m.; North Lake/Paisley at Gilchrist, 6:30 p.m.; Central Christian at Trinity Lutheran, 5:30 p.m. **Boys soccer:** Summit JV at Redmond, 6 p.m.; Bend

JV2 at La Pine, 4 p.m. Girls soccer: Crook County at Summit JV, 4 p.m.; Summit at Sisters, 6 p.m.; Redmond at Ridgeview, 6 p.m.; Molalla at Estacada, 6 p.m.

### **BASKETBALL**

	N	BA		
E/	ASTERN C	ONFERE	NCE	
	W	L	Pct	GB
Phila.	27	12	.692	_
Brooklyn	26	13	.667	1
Milwaukee	24	14	.632	21/2
Miami	21	18	.538	6
Boston	20	18	.526	61/2
Charlotte	19	18	.514	7
New York	20	19	.513	7
Atlanta	19	20	.487	8
Indiana	17	20	.459	9
Toronto	17	21	.447	91/2
Chicago	16	20	.444	91/2
Washington	14	23	.378	12
Cleveland	14	24	.368	121/2
Orlando	13	26	.333	14
Detroit	10	28	.263	161/2
W		ONFERE		
	W	L	Pct	GB
Utah	28	10	.737	_
Phoenix	25	12	.676	21/2
L.A. Lakers	25	13	.658	3
L.A. Clippers	25	14	.641	31/2
Portland	22	16	.579	6
Denver	22	16	.579	6
San Antonio	19	16	.543	71/2
Dallas	20	17	.541	71/2
Golden State	20	19	.513	81/2
Memphis	17	18	.486	91/2
Oklahoma City	17	22	.436	111/2
New Orleans	16	22	.421	12
Sacramento	15	23	.395	13
Houston	11	26	.297	161/2
Minnesota	9	30	.231	191/2
		's Games	;	
Oklahoma City 1:	28, Memp	his 122		
Golden State 131	Utah 11	9		

Golden State 131, Utah 119 Phila. 134, San Antonio 99 Miami 102, Orlando 97 Boston 134, Houston 107 Minnesota 114. Portland 112 L.A. Clippers at New Orleans, late Toronto at Chicago, late Monday's Games

Milwaukee at Washington, 4 p.m. Sacramento at Charlotte, 4 p.m. New York at Brooklyn, 5 p.m San Antonio at Detroit, 5 p.m. Indiana at Denver, 6 p.m. L.A. Clippers at Dallas, 6 p.m. Memphis at Phoenix, 7 p.m. L.A. Lakers at Golden State, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday's Games Utah at Boston, 4:30 p.m. Atlanta at Houston, 5 p.m Cleveland at Miami, 5 p.m New York at Phila., 5 p.m. Oklahoma City at Chicago, 5 p.m. New Orleans at Portland, 7 p.m. Minnesota at L.A. Lakers, 7:30 p.m.

**Men's College** SCORES Sunday's Games APTOP 25

No. 3 Illinois (23-6) beat No. 9 Ohio St 91-88, OT. No. 6 Alabama (24-6) beat LSU 80-79. No. 7 Houston (24-3) beat Cincinnati 91-54. EAST Colgate 85, Loyola (Md.) 72

St. Bonaventure 74, VCU 65

#### Women's College SCORES

Sunday's Games AP TOP 25 No. 6 Baylor (25-2) beat No. 17 West Virginia 76-50. No. 24 Florida Gulf Coast (26-2) beat Liberty 84-62. EAST

Lehigh 64, Boston U. 54 Mount St. Mary's 70, Wagner 38 High Point 62, Campbell 46 VCU 81, UMass 69

SOUTHWEST Stephen F. Austin 56, Sam Houston St. 45

#### **HOCKEY**

								10m Hoge (40), \$135,964
	NHL							Adam Long (40), \$135,964
East	GP	w		ОТ	Pts	GF	GA	Keegan Bradley (29), \$96,125
N.Y. Islanders	29	19	<b>L</b>	4	42	86	64	Doug Ghim (29), \$96,125
Washington	27	17	6	4	38	94	87	Adam Hadwin (29), \$96,125
Pittsburgh	27	17	9	1	35	89	79	Harry Higgs (29), \$96,125
Boston	25	14	7	4	32	70	60	Joaquin Niemann (29), \$96,12
Philadelphia	25	13	9	3	29	83	83	Cameron Percy (29), \$96,125
N.Y. Rangers	26	11	12	3	25	72	71	Jason Day (21), \$73,125
New Jersey	25	8	13	4	20	62	82	Lanto Griffin (21), \$73,125
Buffalo	26	6	16	4	16	58	88	Patton Kizzire (21), \$73,125
Central	GP	w	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	Phil Mickelson (21), \$73,125
Carolina	27	20	6	1	41	95	68	Ryan Moore (21), \$73,125
Tampa Bay	26	19	5	2	40	97	60	Brendon Todd (21), \$73,125
Florida	27	18	5	4	40	93	78	Christiaan Bezuidenhout, \$53
Chicago	29	14	10	5	33	89	92	James Hahn (14), \$53,250
Columbus	30	11	12	7	29	80	99	Zach Johnson (14), \$53,250
Dallas	24	9	9	6	24	69	64	Kyoung-Hoon Lee (14), \$53,25
Nashville	28	11	16	1	23	67	96	Collin Morikawa (14), \$53,250
Detroit	29	8	17	4	20	64	97	Louis Oosthuizen (14), \$53,25
West	GP	W	Ľ	OT	Pts	GF	GA	Brendan Steele (14), \$53,250
Vegas	25	18	6	1	37	83	56	Dustin Johnson (9), \$38,036
Minnesota	26	17	8	i	35	83	64	Adam Scott (9), \$38,036
Colorado	26	16	8	2	34	78	60	Michael Thompson (9), \$38,03 Lucas Glover (9), \$38,036
St. Louis	28	14	9	5	33	88	92	
Los Angeles	27	11	10	6	28	79	78	Chris Kirk (9), \$38,036
Arizona	28	12	12	4	28	70	85	Jordan Spieth (9), \$38,036 Nick Taylor (9), \$38,036
San Jose	25	11	11	3	25	75	89	Ryan Armour (7), \$34,950
Anaheim	29	8	15	6	22	63	95	Matt Jones (7), \$34,950
North	GP	w	Ĺ	OT	Pts	GF	GA	Denny McCarthy (7), \$34,950
Toronto	30	19	9	2	40	102	79	Kramer Hickok (6), \$34,050
Winnipeg	27	17	8	2	36	91	78	Billy Horschel (6), \$34,050
Edmonton	30	18	12	0	36	100	87	Brian Stuard (6), \$34,050
Montreal	27	12	8	7	31	86	74	Scott Brown (5), \$33,000
Calgary	28	13	12	3	29	76	82	Scott Brown (5), \$33,000 Scott Harrington (5), \$33,000
Vancouver	31	13	16	2	28	86	100	Harold Varner III (5), \$33,000
Ottawa	31	10	20	1	21	83	124	Jhonattan Vegas (5), \$33,000
NOTE: Two p				-				Patrick Rodgers (4), \$32,100
loss. The top fo								Aaron Wise (4), \$32,100
playoffs under								Russell Knox (4), \$31,500
p.a.jons anaci				ames	. y i cui	.9		Rory Sabbatini (4), \$31,500
Minnesota 4, A			, , ,					Martin Laird (4), \$30,900
Carolina 2 Dei								Scott Diorcy (4) \$20,000

Carolina 2, Detroit 1 Dallas 2, Columbus 1, SO Colorado 4, Los Angeles 1 N.Y. Islanders 3, New Jersey 2, SO Ottawa 4, Toronto 3

Monday's Games Nashville at Tampa Bay, 1 p.m. Boston at Pittsburgh, 4 p.m. Chicago at Florida, 4 p.m. Philadelphia at N.Y. Rangers, 4 p.m. Vancouver at Ottawa, 4 p.m. Washington at Buffalo, 4 p.m Montreal at Winnipeg, 5 p.m. Edmonton at Calgary, 6 p.m. San Jose at Vegas, 7 p.m. St. Louis at Los Angeles, 7 p.m.

Tuesday's Games

Boston at Pittsburgh, 4 p.m. Buffalo at New Jersey, 4 p.m. N.Y. Islanders at Washington, 4 p.m. Carolina at Detroit, 4:30 p.m Tampa Bay at Dallas, 5:30 p.m.

#### **GOLF**

**PGA Tour** The Players Championship Scores Sunday at TPC Sawgrass, Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla. Purse: \$15 million | Yardage: 7,189; Par: 72

lustin Thomas (600), \$2,700,000 Lee Westwood (330), \$1,635,000 69-66-68-72-275 Bryson DeChambeau (180), \$885,000 69-69-67-71-276 Brian Harman (180), \$885,000 Paul Casey (115), \$579,375 Talor Gooch (115), \$579,375 Corey Conners (100), \$506,250

Shane Lowry (94), \$468,750

Daniel Berger (71), \$339,375

71-71-64-68-274 67-71-69-69-276 71-68-71-67-277 68-72-72-66-278

74-68-71-67-280

Will Zalatoris, \$183,750 70-71-70-71-282 Dylan Frittelli (40) \$135 964 71-68-76-68-283 Tyler McCumber (40), \$135,964 J.T. Poston (40), \$135,964 72-69-72-70-283 76-68-69-70-283 Patrick Reed (40), \$135,964 Abraham Ancer (40), \$135,964 70-72-70-71-283 72-70-68-73-283 Tom Hoge (40), \$135,964 69-71-71-72-283 70-74-67-72-283 ng (40), \$135,964 radley (29), \$96,125 70-72-73-69-284 m (29), \$96,125 71-67-68-78-284 dwin (29), \$96,125 lgs (29), \$96,125 74-69-71-70-284 71-73-67-73-284 liemann (29), \$96,125 Percy (29), \$96,125 (21), \$73,125 73-71-70-70-284 73-70-70-284 73-70-73-68-284 70-71-71-73-285 fin (21), \$73,125 zzire (21), \$73,125 73-71-68-73-285 Ison (21), \$73,125 71-72-71-71-285 75-69-71-70-285 74-69-71-70-285 70-72-71-73-286 odd (21), \$73,125 Bezuidenhout, \$53,250 hn (14), \$53,250 nson (14), \$53,250 76-67-74-69-286 75-68-72-71-286 oon Lee (14), \$53,250 72-71-71-72-286 71-73-76-66-286 73-69-74-70-286 72-72-71-71-286 ikawa (14), \$53,250 thuizen (14), \$53,250 teele (14), \$53,250 hnson (9), \$38,036 ott (9), \$38,036 73-70-73-71-287 72-71-73-71-287 hompson (9), \$38,036 ver (9), \$38,036 71-73-72-71-287 72-65-71-79-287 (9), \$38,036 70-74-68-75-287 70-74-72-71-287 eth (9), \$38,036 or (9), \$38,036 our (7), \$34,950 74-68-71-75-288 s (7), \$34,950 73-71-70-74-288

#### Scott Piercy (4), \$30,900 Nate Lashley (3), \$30,450 **European Tour** Commercial Bank Qatar Masters Scores

Sunday at Education City Golf Course, Daha, Qatar Purse: \$3.5 million   Yardage: 7,307; Par: 71							
Final Round	c. 7,307,1 al. 71						
Antoine Rozner, France	69-72-68-67 -	276					
Gaganjeet Bhullar, India	67-73-68-69 -	277					
Darren Fichardt, South Africa	68-68-70-71 -						
Guido Migliozzi, Italy	71-67-74-65 -						
amie Donaldson, Wales	68-68-73-70 -						
Richard Mcevoy, England	65-73-73-68 -	279					
Chris Paisley, England	67-70-73-70 -	280					
Brandon Stone, South Africa	69-68-73-70 -	280					
Thomas Detry, Belgium	66-72-72-71 -	281					
oachim B. Hansen, Denmark	66-71-72-72 -	281					
Kurt Kitayama, United States	67-69-75-70 -	281					
liklas Lemke, Sweden	70-72-72-67 -	281					
Thomas Pieters, Belgium	68-69-76-69 -	282					
Shaun Norris, South Africa	69-70-73-71 -	283					
ars Van Meijel, Netherlands	69-72-73-69 -	283					
ohannes Veerman, United States							
eff Winther, Sweden	67-67-77-72 -						
abrizio Zanotti, Paraguay	67-70-74-72 -						
Maverick Antcliff, Austria	69-72-72-71 -						
Vino Bertasio, Italy	65-72-74-73 -						
Alexander Bjork, Sweden	68-73-78-65 -						
ikeun Chang, Korea	70-71-71-72 –						
Hennie Du Plessis, South Africa	65-74-77-68 -						
Grant Forrest, Scotland	71-68-75-70 -						
Garrick Higgo, South Africa	66-71-77-70 –						
ordan Smith, England	69-74-71-70 –						
Andy Sullivan, England	69-74-73-68 -						
orge Campillo, Spain	67-74-70-74 -						
David Drysdale, Scotland	70-72-73-70 -						
orenzo Gagli, Italy	68-70-73-74 -						
Kalle Samooja, Finland	65-71-78-71 –						
Shubhankar Sharma, India	71-68-75-71 –	285					

#### **AUTO SPORTS**

**NASCAR Cup Series** 

Instacart 500 Results Sunday at Phoenix Raceway, Avondale, Ariz. Lap length: 1.00 miles (Start position in parentheses)

1. (5) Martin Truex Jr, Toyota, 312 laps, 49 points

2. (9) Joey Logano, Ford, 312, 54 3. (3) Denny Hamlin, Toyota, 312, 49. 4. (1) Brad Keselowski, Ford, 312, 48. 5. (6) Chase Elliott, Chevrolet, 312, 40 6. (18) Kevin Harvick, Ford, 312, 40. 7. (2) Kyle Larson, Chevrolet, 312, 32 8. (10) William Byron, Chevrolet, 312, 36. 9. (4) Christopher Bell, Toyota, 312, 29. 10. (8) Ryan Blaney, Ford, 312, 43. 11. (32) Aric Almirola, Ford, 312, 29. 12. (11) Ricky Stenhouse Jr, Chevrolet, 312, 25. 13. (21) Alex Bowman, Chevrolet, 312, 24 14. (20) Matt DiBenedetto, Ford, 312, 24. 15. (12) Kurt Busch, Chevrolet, 312, 22. (25) Bubba Wallace, Toyota, 312, 21. 17. (13) Austin Dillon, Chevrolet, 312, 20. 18. (17) Chris Buescher, Ford, 312, 19. 19. (22) Ross Chastain, Chevrolet, 312, 18. 20. (14) Erik Jones, Chevrolet, 312, 17. 21. (27) Daniel Suarez, Chevrolet, 312, 16. 22. (26) Chase Briscoe, Ford, 312, 15. (22) (24) Chase Briscoe, Ford, 312, 15.
 (3) Michael McDowell, Ford, 312, 14.
 (29) Justin Haley, Chevrolet, 312, 0.
 (7) Kyle Busch, Toyota, 311, 17.
 (15) Ryan Preece, Chevrolet, 311, 11. 27. (33) Corey Lajoie, Chevrolet, 311, 10. 28. (19) Ryan Newman, Ford, 311, 9. 29. (23) Tyler Reddick, Chevrolet, 310, 8. 30. (30) BJ McLeod, Ford, 309, 0. 31. (24) Cole Custer, Ford, 308, 6 32. (35) Quin Houff, Chevrolet, 305, 5 33. (38) James Davison, Chevrolet, 303, 4. 34. (34) Garrett Smithley, Ford, 300, 0. 35. (36) Josh Bilicki, Ford, garage, 258, 2. 36. (31) Cody Ware, Chevrolet, accident, 101, 0. 37. (28) Anthony Alfredo, Ford, accident, 87, 1.

38. (37) Timmy Hill, Ford, engine, 15, 0. Race Statistics
Average Speed of Race Winner: 103.802 mph. Time of Race: 3 hours, .0 minutes, 20 seconds. Margin of Victory: 1.698 seconds.

Caution Flags: 7 for 45 laps. Lead Changes: 22 among 9 drivers. Lap Leaders: B.Keselowski 0-2; D.Hamlin 3-33; B.Keselowski 34-43; R.Blaney 44-78; B.Keselowski 79; J.Logano 80-141; K.Larson 142; B.Wallace 143; C.Lajoie 144-155; J.Logano 156-193; D.Hamlin 194; J.Logano 195-223; M.Truex 224-253; R.Stenhouse 254; M.Truex 255-263; D.Hamlin 264; B.Wallace 265-267; J.Logano 268; B.Keselowski 269-273; J.Logano 274-283; B.Keselowski 284; J.Logano 285-287; M.Truex 288-312 Leaders Summary (Driver, Times Led, Laps Led): J.Loga-

no, 6 times for 143 laps; M.Truex, 3 times for 64 laps; R.Blaney, 1 time for 35 laps; D.Hamlin, 3 times for 33 laps; B.Keselowski, 5 times for 19 laps; C.Lajoie, 1 time for 12 laps; B.Wallace, 2 times for 4 laps; K.Larson, 1 time for 1 lap; R.Stenhouse, 1 time for 1 lap. Wins: M.Truex, 1; K.Larson, 1; C.Bell, 1; W.Byron, 1; M.McDowell, 1.
Top 16 in Points: 1. D.Hamlin, 236; 2. B.Keselowski, 197;

3. J.Logano, 192; 4. M.Truex, 180; 5. K.Larson, 179; 6. C.Elliott, 179; 7. K.Harvick, 176; 8. C.Bell, 167; 9. W.By-ron, 152; 10. Ku.Busch, 144; 11. M.McDowell, 140; 12. A.Dillon, 135; 13. R.Blaney, 134; 14. R.Preece, 123; 15. Ky.Busch, 115; 16. R.Stenhouse, 113.

### **DEALS**

**Sunday's Transactions** 

BASEBALL Major League Baseball

American League
HOUSTON ASTROS — Reassigned OFs Colin Barber
and Zach Daniels, LHP Ryan Hartman, RHP Blair Henley, INF Grae Kessinger and C Lorenzo Quintana to the minor leagues.
MINNESOTA TWINS — Optioned RHPs Jordan Balazovic,

Dakota Chalmers, Jhoan Duran and Bailer Ober to the alternate training site. Reassigned LHP Danny Coulombe and RHP Ian Gibaut to the minor leagues National League
ARIZONA DIAMONDBACKS — Optioned RHP Matt Pea-

cock to Reno (Triple-A West). ATLANTA BRAVES — Released LHP Philip Pfeifer.
CINCINNATI REDS — Claimed RHP Carson Fulmer off waivers from Pittsburgh. ST. LOUIS CARDINALS — Optioned RHPs Junior Fernan dez and Johan Quezada to Memphis (Triple-A East). WASHINGTON NATIONALS — Optioned RHP Joan Adon and INFs Yasel Antuna and Jake Noll to Rochester (Tri

## **Madness**

Continued from A5

"Heck of a game to start the tournament," Barnhart said, with tongue in cheek.

Four teams that didn't make it — Louisville, Colorado State, St. Louis and Mississippi have been put on stand-by. They could find their way into the bracket if a team in the field notifies the NCAA by Tuesday night that it must withdraw because of health concerns. After that, if a team pulls out, its opponent will advance via what is essentially a forfeit.

Fittingly for such an unpredictable season, some teams hoping to sneak in off the bubble were denied when Oregon State and Georgetown coached by its own former superstar, Patrick Ewing — won their conference tournaments to steal bids they wouldn't otherwise have won.

Another unexpected entry is

a familiar face: Rick Pitino. The coach, ousted at Louisville after a sordid recruiting scandal that enveloped the program for years, led his new team, Iona, from the ninth seed in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference all the way to the league title and the automatic bid that comes with it. The Gaels open Saturday against Alabama. Iona played only 13 regular-season games because of COVID-19 concerns that sidelined the Gaels for weeks. It was that kind of season.

And if hoops fans needed any more evidence of how unfamiliar this tournament will feel, maybe it's this: For the first time since 1976, Duke and Kentucky will both be missing from the tournament. Like Virginia and Kansas, Duke pulled out of its conference tournament last week because of COVID-19. The Blue Devils announced that marked the end of their season, before telling the NCAA that, yes, they'd

be available for March Madness if asked. But no dice. The 13-11 record wasn't enough.

68-72-73-72 - 285

ple-A East).

Callum Shinkwin, England

Dale Whitnell, England

Virginia and Kansas were never in doubt until the coronavirus hit both programs. The Jayhawks (20-8) will bring a No. 3 seed into the tournament's West region — the NCAA stuck with the usual names of the regions — while the Cavaliers (18-6) will be a 4 seed in the same part of the bracket, and come in as the most unusual of defending champions.

They won it all in 2019, and were poised for the run at a repeat last March when sports got wiped off the map by the still-nascent pandemic.

A year later, sports are back, but the hoops the NCAA is jumping through to make this tournament go are a symbol of how far we are from normal.

The decision to place all the games in and around the Indianapolis area is a first-of-itskind move. Also unique are

all teams will be under during their stay. Players will get their own rooms and teams will have their own floors in a cluster of hotels around the downtown convention center. That facility, usually a magnet for fan fests and coaching conferences, will turn into the main practice and meeting area for all the teams. Players will have to produce negative tests for seven days before arriving in Indianapolis to be eligible to play.

And if they're not? In one of its most eye-grabbing tidbits, the NCAA announced that if a team is hit with the virus but still has five players who can pass the protocol, that's enough to get on the floor for tip-off.

All just another piece of the puzzle for Americans to consider when they get back to a much-missed rite of spring filling out their brackets, crossing their fingers and waiting for madness to begin.

# **Championship**

**Continued from A5** 

When the final horn went off, Oregon State players and coaches excitedly bolted toward mid-court, looking for anyone wearing orange and black to embrace. Tinkle said it felt like "I was in a wind tunnel ... I haven't gotten that many hugs since we had a family reunion."

Junior forward Maurice Calloo, who had a breakout performance in the title game with 15 points, looked at Tinkle shortly after it was over and said "I could tell he was happy

Among those Tinkle first embraced were his two fouryear seniors, Ethan Thompson and Zach Reichle, one arm tightly wrapped around each.

"I just thanked them for their commitment to leading the way for us, on and off the court," Tinkle said.

The seventh-year coach's message to each player he hugged had a theme: This is why you came to Oregon State.

"We knew if we got everybody on the same page and bought in, that we could do tremendous things," Tinkle

Including something that hasn't been done since 1990: winning a championship and cutting down nets.

One by one, players and coaches walked up the step ladder placed underneath the basket to cut a piece of net as a memory. Sophomore point guard Gianni Hunt says gratitude was the only thing on his mind as he reached the top of



John Locher/AP

Oregon State's Warith Alatishe (10) grabs a rebound over Colorado during the second half of the Pac-12 championship game Saturday in Las Vegas.

the ladder.

"Just how blessed and grateful I am for being here, and being in this position," Hunt said. "I'm just so blessed and

thankful to be here with this team, with these guys. It's been a special run, but we're not

A reporter mentioned to

Calloo that the Beavers are going dancing.

Just you saying it gives me goosebumps. Puts a smile on my face," Calloo said. "First thing I did when I got my phone was call my mom. She was happy for me."

Tinkle was certain he would lose it at some point in the night, probably while surrounded by family, which included his son Tres, who played for his father at OSU from 2015-20. But actually, emotions began welling hours before the game, while Tinkle was alone in his hotel room at Park MGM.

'Right after pre-game meal, thinking about how blessed I am," Tinkle said. "I'm so blessed with the family I have, the support that I've had through the tough times.

"This has been the most emotional year in my life, and probably for all of us."

One hundred nine days ago, Oregon State's season for the ages started the day before Thanksgiving with a non-conference game against a Pac-12 opponent. There was strain, there was heartache, but in the end, fun and joy. It left social media with its mouth agape, wondering how a team that was a near-unanimous pick to finish last in the Pac-12 preseason poll end up at the top of the heap?

"It's just incredible that we've gotten to this level, and we know why we have," Tinkle said. "When you're patient, when you stay together, when you roll with the punches, eventually this is what it leads to. We've proven that."