

OREGON

Some fans allowed at outdoor events

The Portland Timbers and the Portland Thorns will be able to welcome a limited number of fans back to home soccer games starting next month.

The Oregon Health Authority said Wednesday that outdoor sporting events can be held at 25% capacity. At Providence Park, that's approximately 6,500 people.

The Thorns will host the first professional sporting event in Oregon with fans since the coronavirus shutdown when they host Kansas City on April 9 in the National Women's Soccer League's preseason Challenge Cup Tournament.

"Playing in front of the fans here in Portland is one of the most unique experiences a female soccer player is going to have," Thorns forward Christine Sinclair said. "Knowing that they're cheering for us just gives you that extra, extra little bit of energy in the game."

Major League Soccer's Timbers will play a CONCACAF Champions League match April 13.

Annual season ticket holders will get first crack at the available seats, based on a seniority system. There will be a number of safety measures, including distanced seating, mandatory masks, digital ticketing and cashless concessions.

Some MLS teams have already allowed a limited number of fans, including Dallas, Kansas City and Orlando.

—Associated Press

NFL

Niners, Williams agree to mega deal

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — The San Francisco 49ers locked up their biggest potential free agent for the long term by agreeing to give star left tackle Trent Williams the richest contract ever for an offensive lineman.

Williams' agents say the deal agreed to early Wednesday will pay Williams \$138.1 million over the next six years, surpassing the \$138 million deal David Bakhtiari got from Green Bay during last season.

Williams also will get the biggest signing bonus ever for an offensive lineman at \$30.1 million, as well as \$55.1 million guaranteed.

"Trent's a game changer," said fullback Kyle Juszczyk, who signed a five-year contract to stay in San Francisco earlier in the week. "He's somebody that teams have to scheme around. They have to change what they're doing because he's out there and he's a guy that we can just completely count on and know that he's going to get his job done and then some."

The Niners finalized the deal just hours before Williams could have left to sign with another team at the start of the new league year.

Williams sat out the entire 2019 season in Washington over a dispute with the front office before reviving his career in San Francisco.

After a slow start he quickly got back to his usual form and earned his eighth Pro Bowl selection. Williams was graded as the top left tackle by Pro Football Focus.

—Associated Press

PREP GIRLS SOCCER

Long wait for big win



Dean Guernsey/The Bulletin

Redmond's Jillian Bremont (3) sets up a shot as Ridgeview's Brooklyn Homan (3) and Scout Bale (8) pursue during a match at Ridgeview High School in Redmond on Tuesday night.

A resurgent Redmond girls soccer team finally defeats crosstown rival Ridgeview

BY MARK MORICAL
The Bulletin

REDMOND —

The emotions unleashed by the Panthers as the final horn sounded Tuesday night at Ridgeview High School were nearly nine years in the making.

"This has been my goal since I started. It's been so cool to be part of building this. It's just been a dream come true being part of this group and watching them improve every single year, and being able to contribute something to that."

— Dagne Harris, Redmond junior forward

Redmond High girls soccer had never defeated crosstown rival Ridgeview — a school that opened in 2012. So after hanging on to a narrow 2-1 victory, the Panthers whooped and hollered and celebrated together at midfield.

"This has been my goal since I started," said Redmond junior forward Dagne Harris, who was quick to point out that the Panthers lost to the Ravens twice in 2019 by a score of 8-0.

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MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Oregon State embraces underdog role in tourney

BY ANNE M. PETERSON
Associated Press

As Oregon State's players celebrated their unlikely Pac-12 tournament title, former teammate Tres Tinkle was in the stands with his arms raised, one finger extended on one hand and two on the other.

It's clear what the "12" he was signaling meant. That's where the Beavers were picked to finish in the conference.

Instead, the first-time Pac-12 tourney champions are headed to the NCAA Tournament.

As the 12th seed — ironically enough — the Beavers will face fifth-seeded Tennessee on Friday in the Midwest Region.

The number 12 has become something of a talisman for the team from Corvallis.

It's even on a patch sewn inside the team's jerseys.

"That was kind of our rally cry down the stretch. And then when they saw that we popped up as the 12th seed, everybody looked like, 'Yep. This is going to mean something, something special.' So we'll keep milking it," coach Wayne Tinkle said. "We'll keep milking it for sure."

Oregon State (17-12) is among five Pac-12 teams in the tournament, joining Oregon, which has made the field for seven straight seasons under coach Dana Altman, as well as USC and Colorado. UCLA faces Michigan State in a First Four game.

The Pac-12 hasn't had this many teams in the tournament since 2016, when it had a record seven make it.

But Oregon State and Colorado (22-8) have not reached this level in recent years. The Beavers have made the tournament just twice since 1990, most recently in 2016.

The Buffaloes, who also haven't been to the tournament since 2016, have the school's best-ever seed at No. 5. They'll face No. 12 Georgetown on Saturday in the East region.

"I'm very proud of our guys and how they've handled themselves this season. I want it bad for them," Colorado coach Tad Boyle said. "Because I always say, you know, I'm going to be coaching here again next year."

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GOLF

DJ, McIlroy searching as Masters nears

BY DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Fla. — The road to the Masters is starting to fill up with some high-powered cars.

Consider the last three weeks on the Florida swing.

PGA champion Collin Morikawa's pure iron play led to his first World Golf Championship title. U.S. Open champion Bryson DeChambeau brought the World Long Drive atmosphere to the sixth tee at Bay Hill, and he also made a few big putts on his way to the win at the Arnold Palmer Invitational. And then Justin Thomas had as good a weekend as anyone who ever won The Players Championship at the TPC Sawgrass.

The streak likely ends at the Honda Classic because no one from the top 10 in the world is playing.

Still, it's enough to whet the appetite for Augusta National, which is just over three weeks away. Just not for everyone.

Rory McIlroy had his highest score since the summer of 2019 and missed the cut at The Players Championship, his second weekend off in

four weeks. He said he would head home and start the process of "Bryson cleansing," which amounts to trying to stop swinging out of his shoes.

Dustin Johnson has made it to the weekend, but he keeps finishing in time for lunch.

The No. 1 player in the world, who picked up his 25th victory worldwide in Saudi Arabia just six weeks ago, has finished a combined 36 shots out of the lead in his last two events.

"I've got a little ways to go," Johnson said on a conference call Tuesday for the Masters. "Obviously, the game is not quite in the form that I would like it to be in right now, but I've got plenty of time to get it back in order leading up to Augusta."

Yes, there is plenty of time for Johnson and McIlroy, not to mention Xander Schauffele, who went from mediocre at Concession to missing the cut at Sawgrass. Schauffele had made 22 straight cuts until The Players, so that gets attention.

It's not the same as it was two years ago heading into the Masters, when eight of the top 10 players in the world had won on the PGA Tour lead-

ing into the first major of the year. And it's not any cause for alarm, even when someone as steady as Patrick Cantlay misses the cut. Even so, it's all about momentum at this point in the calendar.

Thomas was lacking that when he arrived at The Players. His head had been spinning from issues off the course, such as the fallout from an anti-gay comment he muttered under his breath and the death of his grandfather. Add that to poor play and he was headed down the wrong road.

"I've put too much pressure on myself," Thomas said one week ago. "I've been trying too hard. I think I want to win so bad, and I really want it too bad. ... The sense of urgency, definitely I know. I think it's present a little bit in myself, but I also have realized it. So I'm hoping that it helps with that."

It helped. His 64-68 weekend matched Fred Couples in 1996 as the lowest final 36 holes at Sawgrass by a winner. His head is in a better place. His game is in a great place. One week can change everything.

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