

NCAA WOMEN'S: CHAMPIONSHIP  No. 1 Stanford 54, No. 3 Arizona 53

NAIL-BITER



Arizona guard Aari McDonald (2) watches after missing a last-second shot at the end of the women's national championship game against Stanford on Sunday at the Alamodome in San Antonio. McDonald led all scorers with 22 points, but Stanford prevailed 54-53. *Morry Gash/AP*

VOLLEYBALL

Ducks return to NCAA Tournament

Oregon volleyball is heading back to the NCAA Tournament, and the Ducks will get to ease their way into the post-season.

Oregon, which had an eight-season post-season streak ended in 2019, earned one of 18 at-large berths and the No. 10 overall seed when the field of 48 was announced Sunday afternoon.

As a top-16 seed, Oregon (14-4) will get a first-round bye when the tournament takes place in Omaha, Nebraska, between April 14-24. The Ducks' first match will be at 9 a.m. April 15 against the winner of Notre Dame-Army.

"Excited for the team," coach Matt Ulmer said. "They've worked so hard and we've come a long way since the last time we were in the tournament in 2018. ... They've positioned themselves to make a run. I really love the group and am excited to go do this with them."

The top four seeds are No. 1 Wisconsin, No. 2 Kentucky, No. 3 Minnesota and No. 4 Texas.

The Pac-12, which had the second-most teams selected, also will be represented by conference champion No. 6 Washington, No. 14 Utah, No. 15 Washington State and UCLA.

Playing a conference-only schedule, the Ducks went 3-3 against those tournament teams this season, splitting two-match series against the Huskies, Cougars and Bruins. The original schedule had Oregon playing 22 matches but four were canceled — two each against Utah and Stanford — due to COVID-19.

Still, the Ducks finished the season in second place in the Pac-12, matching the program's highest finish. Their 14 conference wins are tied for the second-most in a season in program history.

— *The Register-Guard*

GOLF

Spieth ends his drought in Texas

Jordan Spieth tapped in for par to win the British Open for his third major and 11th victory in just five years on the PGA Tour. He never imagined he would go 1,351 days before he felt that way again.

He went 82 events on tour without winning. Once the No. 1 player, he was headed out of the top 100 in the world.

And now he's back. Spieth ended a mystifying slump Sunday by giving himself birdie chances and making most of them, closing with a 6-under 66 to hold off Charley Hoffman for a two-shot victory in the Valero Texas Open.

"There's peaks and valleys in this sport, but I never expected to go this long," Spieth said. "Back then, in between wins, maybe I took things more for granted than I should have. It's very difficult to win out here and I'll certainly enjoy this one as much as I have any other."

The only surprise was that he figured he would be more emotional. He was too busy holding off a spirited run by Hoffman, who went from a three-shot deficit with six holes to play to one shot behind. Spieth all but sealed it with a wedge to a back pin to 5 feet for birdie.

— *Associated Press*

Cardinal and coach Tara VanDerveer win their first national championship in 29 years

BY DOUG FEINBERG
AP Basketball Writer

SAN ANTONIO — Tara VanDerveer hugged each of her Stanford players as they climbed the ladder to cut down the nets, capping a taxing whirlwind journey and ending an exhaustive championship drought for the Cardinal.

After 29 years overall and including having to be on the road for 10 weeks this season because of the coronavirus, VanDerveer and the Cardinal are NCAA women's basketball champions again.

Haley Jones scored 17 points and Stanford beat Arizona 54-53, giving the Cardinal and their Hall of Fame coach their first national championship in 29 years on Sunday night.

"Getting through all the things we got through, we're excited to win the COVID

Most NCAA Women's Basketball Championships

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 11 — Connecticut | 2 — Louisiana Tech |
| 8 — Tennessee | 2 — Notre Dame |
| 3 — Baylor | 2 — Southern Cal |
| 3 — Stanford | |

championship," VanDerveer said. "The other one was not quite as close, the last one. But we're really excited. No one knows the score, no one knows who scored, it's a national championship."

It wasn't a masterpiece by any stretch with both teams struggling to score and missing easy layups and shots, but Stanford did

just enough to pull off the win — its second straight by a point.

Stanford (31-2) built a nine-point lead in the fourth quarter before Arizona (21-6) cut it to 51-50 on star guard Aari McDonald's 3-pointer.

After a timeout, Jones answered with a three-point play with 2:24 left. That would be Stanford's last basket of the game. McDonald got the Wildcats with 54-53 with 36.6 seconds left converting three of four free throws.

"I just owe it all to my teammates, they have confidence in me when I don't have confidence in myself," said Jones, who was honored as the tournament's Most Outstanding Player. "I saw they needed me to come up big and I did."

See *NCAA Women's* / A6

NCAA MEN'S: CHAMPIONSHIP  No. 1 Gonzaga vs. No. 1 Baylor, 6:20 p.m. Monday (CBS)

Gonzaga's last hurdles: Quick turnaround, Baylor

BY EDDIE PELLIS
AP National Writer

INDIANAPOLIS — Now comes the hard part for Gonzaga.

Less than 16 hours after walking off the floor with one of the most scintillating wins in the game's history, the barely-still-undefeated Bulldogs returned to the practice court Sunday to get ready for the national championship game.

Their opponent, Baylor, is rested, ready and waiting for a challenge.

The meeting Monday is one most hoops fans have waited for all year — two years, really — a matchup between two teams who have been on a collision course since the bracket came out.

No need for extra motivation here. But how do the Zags move on after THAT?

"It's a lot in 30 hours, but it is what it is," Gonzaga coach Mark Few said. "My guys have been great at game

preparations all season, so consistent with effort and the attention to detail on game night. So, we're definitely banking on that."

To recap, Jalen Suggs banked in a shot from a step inside the midcourt line at the buzzer to lift the Zags to a 93-90 overtime victory over UCLA. The game ended after 11 p.m. Saturday.

By the time that happened, Baylor (27-2) was back at the hotel.

"We were probably like everyone else on the eighth floor of the hotel," Baylor coach Scott Drew said of the reaction to The Shot. "Pandemonium erupted."

The Bears rolled over Houston 78-59 and, suddenly, they look every bit as unbeatable as the unbeaten Bulldogs (31-0). No team has come closer than nine points of Baylor over the three weeks in Indianapolis.

See *NCAA Men's* / A6



Gonzaga guard Jalen Suggs (1) shoots a 3-pointer from just inside half-court over UCLA guard David Singleton (34) to win the game during overtime in the NCAA Final Four semifinal on Saturday at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis. Gonzaga won 93-90.

Michael Conroy/AP