

COLLEGE
SOFTBALL

2 Ducks named
All-Americans

EUGENE — Oregon's Haley Cruse and Brooke Yanez are All-Americans. The Ducks' lead-off hitter and ace were named third-team NFCA All-Americans on Wednesday, marking the 10th time Oregon has had multiple players earn All-America honors in a season. Cruse led Oregon in hitting (.389) for a fourth straight year, a program first, as well runs (45), doubles (16), on-base percentage (.452), slugging percentage (.611) and steals (21) and reached base in 50 of 56 games. She leaves Oregon in the career top 10 of four different offensive categories: fifth in batting average (.378) and runs scored (156), seventh in stolen bases (63) and tied for eighth in doubles (38). Since UO's season ended the San Diego native celebrated her 23rd birthday, got engaged to Milwaukee Brewers 2020 first-round pick Garrett Mitchell and signed with the USSSA Pride professional softball team. Yanez went 22-6 with a 2.11 ERA over 182.1 innings with 268 strikeouts this season, third in UO history. Her 10.29 strikeouts per seven innings led the Pac-12 and ranked 13th nationally. The Ventura, Calif. native went 6-1 with a 1.35 ERA and 77 strikeouts to just 11 walks over her last 10 appearances, including three shutouts.

— The Oregonian

NBA

Boston Celtics GM
Ainge steps down

BOSTON — Danny Ainge, who helped bring two NBA titles to Boston as a player and another as the team's basketball boss, stepped down from the Celtics front office just hours after they were eliminated from the post-season, and coach Brad Stevens is giving up his job on the bench to replace him. Stevens will lead the search for his successor, the Celtics said in a news conference Wednesday. He leaves as the fourth-winningest coach in franchise history, but one who failed to hang a championship banner from the rafters. "Hiring a new coach will give us a great opportunity to hire somebody that will be ... a new, fresh voice with a new, fresh perspective," Stevens said. Stevens, who left Butler in 2013 after leading the Bulldogs to back-to-back trips to the NCAA championship game, ends his only NBA coaching job with a 354-282 record that included three trips to the conference finals in the previous four years. The moves came about 12 hours after the Celtics lost to the Brooklyn Nets in Game 5 of their first-round playoff series. Ainge, 62, a native of Eugene, won championships with the Celtics as a player in 1984 and '86 and took over as the president of basketball operations in 2003. He was voted the league's top executive in 2008, when Boston won its 17th championship — an NBA record that has since been matched by the Los Angeles Lakers. "Danny has meant so much to Celtics pride, the reinvigoration of the franchise," team owner Steve Pagliuca said.

— Associated Press

PREP BOYS BASKETBALL

Leaning on
the juniors

Summit has just one senior, but the Storm are in good hands, as proven in a tight win over Mountain View

BY BRIAN RATHBONE • The Bulletin

Julian Mora had been in a shooting slump in recent games. The shots that routinely fell were no longer falling. Trailing by two in the final minutes against Mountain View, the Summit junior point guard was not thinking about the previous shots he missed when he took aim from beyond the arc with the game on the line.

"I just had to trust myself," said Mora, who scored five of his eight points in the fourth quarter. Mora drained the shot, Summit's 13th 3-pointer of the game, which would prove to be the winning basket in the Storm's 68-66 win over the Cougars Tuesday evening in a muggy gym at Summit High. "This was a huge win for us," said Summit coach Jon Frazier. "To be in that kind of competitive environment with four minutes to go. ... It was a chance for a lot of our

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younger kids to be in that moment to see how they respond." Summit (4-2 overall) entered this late spring season as a young team with Kaes Harrington as the only senior on a roster with nine juniors and one freshman. It is a squad — with a core of Mora, third-year varsity guard Truman Teuber, transfer Caden Harris and three other juniors with varsity experience — that has Frazier and the players thinking special things are on the horizon. See Storm / A6



Dean Guernsey/The Bulletin

Summit's Julian Mora (left) flies by Mountain View's Nathan Hoisington (right) during Tuesday night's basketball game at Summit High School.

COLLEGE BASEBALL



Leon Neuschwander/For The Oregonian, file

Oregon State's Kevin Abel pitches against Stanford on May 27.

Beavs' Kevin Abel back for
another postseason ride

BY JARRID DENNEY
Corvallis Gazette-Times

By the time he throws his first pitch at Lupton Stadium on Friday, it will have been 1,072 days since Kevin Abel's legendary performance that helped Oregon State capture the 2018 College World Series title. In context, that feels like an eternity ago. Pat Casey was still at the helm of the program. Mitch Canham was managing in the Seattle Mariners organization, then stationed at Single-A Modesto. Abel was still a baby-faced freshman who had just cemented his place in college baseball history. A little less than three years later, so much has changed. But as Oregon State begins its postseason journey this weekend at the Fort Worth regional, the Beavers will lean on Abel to carry them once again. "All you can really ask for is an opportunity to get back to Omaha," Abel said. "I think we've got a good shot at it. It's

the first one to 11 wins. It's a race at this point." It's been an up-and-down season for the redshirt sophomore right-hander. After a series of elbow surgeries derailed his 2019 campaign, and the coronavirus pandemic nullified his efforts to make a healthy return in 2020, this season was supposed to be Abel's long-awaited encore to that magical postseason showing. There have been glimpses of that same pitcher. The competitive drive, the sharp fastball and the knee-buckling changeup are still there. But, much like Oregon State's season as a whole, Abel's performances have been sporadic. He is 3-4 with a 3.42 ERA and his 106 strikeouts over 79 innings are tied for the most in the Pac-12. But his 53 walks are also the most in the conference, as are the 17 batters that he has hit.

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NBA COMMENTARY

Assigning blame for Blazers' latest loss

BY JOHN CANZANO
The Oregonian

The temptation today is going to be to blame Damian Lillard's supporting cast for not doing enough to help him win on Tuesday night. It's true. His co-workers didn't get it done in Game 5. But blaming the sidekicks without acknowledging how we got here in the first place sort of misses the larger point. The franchise needs a new general manager. Lillard is a cheat code. He set an NBA record for 3-point baskets in a playoff game. He scored 55 points against the Denver Nuggets on Tuesday. But, as he punched out for the night Lillard delivered a sobering message. One that shouldn't be forgotten when evaluating the job security of GM Neil Olshey. "It don't matter," Lillard said. "We lost the game." Final score: 147-140. The Nuggets won in double overtime. Denver leads the best-of-seven series 3-2. Portland now tries to avoid elimination in the first round of the playoffs for the fifth time in eight Lillard postseason appearances. Think on the shame of that today. Kevin Durant, watching from afar, called the Lillard performance "a spiritual experience." I call it a Band-Aid. At one point in Game 5, Denver guard Austin Rivers shadowed Lillard as he dribbled up court. The Portland guard who made 12 of 17 shots from behind the arc dribbled off a high screen, pulled up and launched a 3. The shot hit the front of the rim, bounced high, then rolled off the back iron — a miss. Rivers looked up at the arena ceiling. Then, he brought his hands together in prayer. "Thank God," he said. The Blazers may very well regroup and win Game 6. But as the final minutes of the latest loss melted away I found myself studying the VIP seats just beyond the Trail Blazers' bench, a few rows back from the baseline in Denver. Bert Kolde was there. He met Paul Allen when they were roommates in school at Washington State. It was "lots of chess and pizza," Kolde once said. They



Jack Dempsey/AP

Portland Trail Blazers' Damian Lillard (0) goes up for a shot against Denver Nuggets' Nikola Jokic (15) in Game 5 of a first-round playoff series on Tuesday night in Denver.

became best friends. Kolde later helped a then-35-year-old Allen engineer the purchase of the Trail Blazers for \$70 million in 1988. He also rose to become vice chair of Allen's NBA team and a mainstay at Blazers and Seahawks games alongside the late Portland owner. Kolde and Allen arrived together, left together and always sat together. Allen was mostly inaccessible. Kolde served as his buffer. League executives and agents learned over the years that an effective way to float an idea to Allen was to first whisper it to his former college roommate. Said one, "Bert was Paul's ears." Warren LeGarie — an agent who represents a line of coaches and GMs — worked the Kolde pipeline especially well. As a result, the Blazers sifted through LeGarie's client list, hiring John Nash, Tom Penn, Kevin Pritchard, Terry Stotts and Olshey, among others. See Blazers / A7