

SPORTS

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COLLEGE
SOFTBALLSooners top 'Noles
to WCWS title

OKLAHOMA CITY — Giselle Juarez threw her second consecutive complete game and Oklahoma won its fifth national championship, beating Florida State 5-1 in the Women's College World Series on Thursday.

The Sooners had lacked a dominant pitcher heading into the series but Juarez answered the call, allowing one run on two hits in the decisive Game 3. Oklahoma won Game 2 6-2 behind Juarez, who went 5-0 at the World Series and was named Most Outstanding Player. She allowed four runs in 31.1 innings.

Much of the crowd stood when Juarez took the circle in the seventh inning. Fittingly, the final out was a popup into her glove. Teammates mobbed her and "Boomer Sooner" blared over the sound system as the crowd of mostly Oklahoma fans celebrated the win just 25 miles from campus.

Oklahoma (56-4) also won titles in 2000, 2013, 2016 and 2017, all under coach Patty Gasso. The Sooners set the Division I single-season record with 161 home runs this season.

Jocelyn Alo homered in Game 3, her 34th of the season, extending her school single-season record. The USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Year hit four homers in the World Series, including the go-ahead blast in Game 2.

Left fielder Mackenzie Donihoo went 10-for-21 in the World Series.

Florida State (49-13-1) was seeking its second national championship in the past three World Series under coach Lonni Alameda. Kathryn Sandercocock gave up one hit in 3.1 innings of relief in the final game.

Florida State freshman Kaley Mudge set the record for most hits in a Women's College World Series with 14.

—Associated Press

OLYMPICS

Brisbane to host
'32 Summer Games

GENEVA — Brisbane has long seemed to be in a one-horse race to host the 2032 Olympics.

That race looks sure to be over and won in Tokyo next month when the International Olympic Committee meets before the games open.

IOC president Thomas Bach said Thursday after an executive board meeting Brisbane can be awarded hosting rights as the only candidate proposed at a July 21 meeting ahead of the Tokyo Olympics.

The Australian city's victory already looked certain after the IOC put it on the fast track in February by being named the preferred candidate without a formal opponent.

Though Bach said the outcome was "in the hands" of the members they typically rubber stamp all recommendations coming from the leadership.

Bach praised Australia as a sport-loving country with strong support from layers of government in the city of Brisbane, the state of Queensland and federal level.

"All this together I think made it somehow irresistible," the IOC leader said.

—Associated Press

WEST COAST LEAGUE BASEBALL

Next
player up

Reinforcements arriving as Bend Elks turn over roster early in the season

BY BRIAN RATHBONE • The Bulletin

When the Bend Elks took the field this week for their first home series of West Coast League play against the Cowlitz Bears, six new names showed up in the team's starting lineup.

More than a dozen players that were not on the opening day roster have now joined the Elks. And more will be making their way to Central Oregon over the next couple of weeks as the Elks quickly work through the early parts of the season trying to build a winning ball club.

"We have had a lot of reinforcements coming in," said Elks coach Kyle Nobach. "I've been taking guys into the office one by one and sitting them down and building a relationship with them. That's the first step in coaching anybody ... you have to know them and have a relationship with them."

In their first WCL series of the season, the Elks were swept on the road by the Ridgefield (Wash.)



Ryan Brennecke/The Bulletin

Bend Elks' Matt Dallas turns to make the throw to first base during the fourth inning of the first game of a double-header against Cowlitz on Thursday at Bend's Vince Genna Stadium.

"This is my first time playing summer ball. I've been welcomed by all the guys. Everyone here has good energy, and we are all here to put a lot of work in."

— Matt Dallas, Bend Elks player

Raptors. Their roster however, was still made up of players on 10-day contracts, while the Raptors were close to having their full roster.

"That was part of the challenge," Nobach said. "And what I learned was no matter how much we

want to win, and the outcome matters, we can't get absorbed in the outcome. It is a long season. We are going to play here and we have our guys coming in. And our goal is to compete every night and put up a fight."

One day after arriving in Bend, Matt Dallas, who played at Lane Community College in Eugene this past season and will play for the University of Oregon next season, was quickly plugged in to play shortstop and batted second in the Elks series opener against Cowlitz (Wash.).

Joining a team and immediately playing on the field was a new experience for Dallas.

See Elks / B4



Michel Euler/AP

Rafael Nadal returns the ball to Diego Schwartzman during their quarterfinal match of the French Open on Wednesday in Paris. Nadal squares off against Novak Djokovic in a semifinal on Friday. If he can top Djokovic, Nadal will have a shot to break a tie with Roger Federer by winning his 21st Grand Slam.

TENNIS | FRENCH OPEN

Legacies at stake in men's semis

BY HOWARD FENDRICH
AP Tennis Writer

Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal know there's something special about the two of them meeting in the French Open semifinals — even if they'd prefer, of course, for it to happen a round later.

"Each time we face each other, there's that extra tension and expectations," the top-seeded Djokovic said.

"Just vibes are different walking on the court with him"

The third-seeded Nadal's take?

"In some way," he said, "we are practicing, we are living the sport, for these moments."

Whatever the quality of play might be between Nadal and Djokovic in Paris on Friday — their semifinal will follow the one between No. 5 Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece and No. 6 Alexander Zverev of Germany — the numbers associated with the matchup are overwhelming.

Start with the big picture: Nadal is two wins away from his 21st Grand Slam title, which would break the men's mark he currently shares with

Roger Federer.

Djokovic is trying to get to No. 19, which would leave him just one behind his rivals.

Nadal is 105-2 at Roland Garros — Djokovic is responsible for one of those defeats, in the 2015 quarterfinals; Robin Soderling the other — and eyeing a 14th championship at the clay-court major.

Djokovic won La Coupe des Mousquetaires in 2016 and could join Rod Laver and Roy Emerson as the only men to win each of the four Grand Slam tournaments twice.

See French Open / B5

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

College Football Playoff is considering expansion to 12 teams

BY RALPH D. RUSSO
AP College Football Writer

The College Football Playoff announced Thursday it will consider expanding from four to 12 teams to settle the national championship, with six spots reserved for the highest-ranked conference champions and the other six going to at-large selections.

The CFP's surprising announcement outlined a plan that would triple the number teams that enter the postseason with a chance to win it all.

Even if the format is adopted — no earlier than this fall — there was no indication in the proposal about when an expanded playoff could be in place. The soonest would seem to be for the 2023 season, but it is probably more likely to be after the 2026 season.

A selection committee would still be involved, and the proposed 12-team playoff would not limit how many teams can come from any one conference. The four highest-ranked conference champions would receive first-round byes and teams 5-12 would face each other in four games

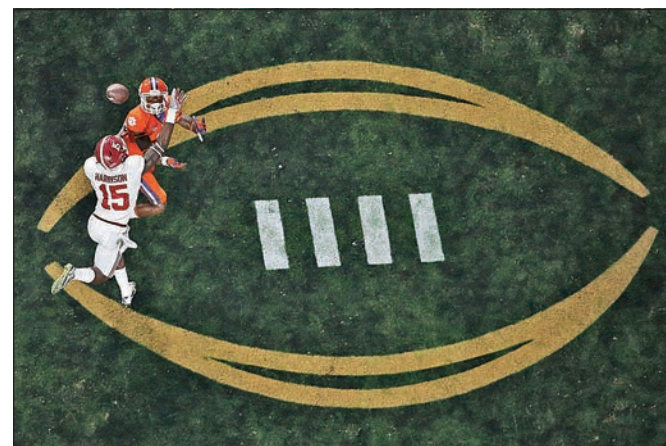
played on campus sometime during the two-week period following conference championship weekend, typically early December.

The plan calls for no re-seeding of the bracket as teams advance. Quarterfinals would be hosted by bowl games on New Year's Day — unless that falls on a Sunday, in which case those games will be played Jan. 2 — and an adjacent day.

The semifinals would also be hosted by bowl games, as is the case now.

The proposal includes no dates for semifinals and the championship game to be played, but did indicate the semifinals would not be played as a doubleheader on a single day.

Currently six bowl games have a three-year rotation for hosting the semifinals and the championship game site is open to bidders, similar to the what the NFL does with the Super Bowl. The current semifinal bowl rotation includes the Rose, Sugar, Orange, Fiesta, Cotton and Peach bowls, but they are not guaranteed to be



Ross D. Franklin/AP

Alabama's Ronnie Harrison (15) breaks up a pass intended for Clemson's Artavis Scott during the 2016 College Football Playoff championship game in Glendale, Arizona.

hosts in the proposed expansion plan.

"The process for selecting the six bowls that would rotate as hosts of the quarterfinals and semifinals (is) still to be determined," the CFP plan said.

The proposal will be considered by the full CFP management committee in Chicago on June 17-18.

On Thursday, a subcommittee comprised of Southeastern

Conference Commissioner Greg Sankey, Big 12 Commissioner Bob Bowlsby, Mountain West Commissioner Craig Thompson and Notre Dame athletic director Jack Swarbrick presented the proposal to the rest of conference commissioners in a Zoom meeting.

The group has been working on an expansion plan for almost two years and it might have been put forth sooner if not for the pandemic.

"The four-team format has been very popular and is a big success," the members of the four-person working group said in a statement. "But it's important that we consider the opportunity for more teams and more student-athletes to participate in the playoff. After reviewing numerous options, we believe this proposal is the best option to increase participation, enhance the regular season and grow the national excitement of college football."

The full management committee will determine next week whether it will recommend expansion to university presidents who make up the CFP oversight committee. The presidents are scheduled to meet with the management committee in Dallas on June 22.

If the presidents sign off, the next step is determining over the summer whether the plan can be implemented and when. The final approval would likely come in September.

The College Football Playoff is entering year eight of a 12-year agreement with ESPN.

See Playoff / B4