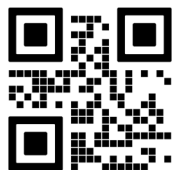


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MLS

**Timbers' Valeri to play in Argentina**

PORTLAND — Portland Timbers midfielder Diego Valeri is heading home to Argentina.

The Timbers on Thursday announced an agreement with Lanus for the transfer of the 35-year-old former league MVP. Lanus plays in Argentina's top division.

A nine-year veteran of the Timbers, Valeri scored 100 goals and 104 assists in 306 matches across all competitions. He's the team regular season leader for both goals (86) and assists (91).

Valeri is the third player in MLS history to reach 80 goals and 80 assists in regular-season play.

He was named the MLS Cup's Most Valuable Player in 2015 when the Timbers defeated Columbus for the league championship. In 2017, he was honored as the league MVP after scoring 21 goals with 11 assists. He was a five-time MLS All-Star and in 2020 was named one of the league's 25 greatest players.

"I do not believe there has been a more impactful Designated Player signing in the history of MLS than Diego Valeri," Timbers owner Merritt Paulson said in a statement.

Valeri also became a beloved member of the Portland community, known for painting playrooms for foster children and jumping into pickup futsal games. Valeri and his family were ardent supporters of the Portland Thorns, the National Women's Soccer League team.

In addition to the transfer, the Timbers and Lanus agreed to a testimonial match in Portland next year, during which Valeri will play a half for each team. Upon his retirement, Valeri will be an ambassador for the Timbers.

COLLEGE SPORTS

NCAA — New constitution paves way to restructuring. Story on B5.

BASEBALL

**Robot ump to be used in Triple-A**

NEW YORK — Robot umpires have been given a promotion and will be just one step from the major leagues this season.

Major League Baseball is expanding its automated strike zone experiment to Triple-A, the highest level of the minor leagues.

MLB's website posted a hiring notice seeking seasonal employees to operate the Automated Ball and Strike system. MLB said it is recruiting employees to operate the system for the Albuquerque Isotopes, Charlotte Knights, El Paso Chihuahuas, Las Vegas Aviators, Oklahoma City Dodgers, Reno Aces, Round Rock Express, Sacramento River Cats, Salt Lake Bees, Sugar Land Skeeters and Tacoma Rainiers.

The independent Atlantic League became the first American professional league to let a computer call balls and strikes at its All-Star Game in July 2019 and experimented with ABS during the second half of that season. It also was used in the Arizona Fall League for top prospects in 2019, drawing complaints of its call on breaking balls.

—Associated Press

PREP WRESTLING

## Lessons in losing

After tough loss in the Oregon Classic final, Crook County rebounds with dual-meet win over Mountain View

BY BRIAN RATHBONE • The Bulletin

The Oregon Wrestling Classic title was well within Crook County's reach, as the Cowboys held an 11-point lead over Thurston with just two matches remaining in the 5A final of the annual dual-meet tournament in Redmond.

But what could not happen — two losses by pins — happened, and the Colts stunned the Cowboys and walked away as the tournament champion in the 5A division with a one-point victory this past weekend.

INSIDE

• High school sports schedule and results in Score-board, B4

The short-term disappointment is not worrying Crook County, which still has its long-term goals well within reach.

"I knew it was going to be tight," said Crook County wrestling coach Jake Gonzales. "I want to win everything, that is my competitive nature, but I think it was good for us. We are using it as a way to get better, and if we can do that then everything will work out for us."

The midseason OSAA coaches poll was released



Ryan Brennecke/The Bulletin

Crook County's Mitch Warren attempts to pin Mountain View's Adrian Carpenter during a 120-pound match Wednesday night in Bend.

"I want to win everything, that is my competitive nature, but I think (losing) was good for us. We are using it as a way to get better, and if we can do that then everything will work out for us."

— Jake Gonzales, Crook County wrestling coach

Wednesday afternoon, and Crook County is right in the thick of the highly competitive Class 5A at No. 3, trailing only Crescent Valley and Thurston, who received the same number of votes.

As frustrating as the narrow loss in the final round of the Classic might have been, Crook

County's Tucker Bonner said it is something that the team might have needed heading into the heart of the schedule with district and state tournaments just weeks away.

"It gave us something to work toward," said the 126-pound Bonner. "We got a little ahead of ourselves at the Oregon Classic."

There were no signs of a hangover from the narrow defeat in the Cowboys' Wednesday night dual meet at Mountain View — which also finished second at the Classic but in the 6A division — in what has become something of a rivalry between two of the state's top programs.

Against the Cougars, the Cowboys came out swinging, winning the first five matches — four by pins — to jump out to a 30-0 lead.

See Wrestling / B4

WINTER X GAMES | SNOWBOARDING



Ng Han Guan/AP file

Scotty James, of Australia, performs a trick during the snowboard half-pipe for the FIS Snowboard World Cup held in northern China in December 2019.

## In a private halfpipe, Aussie boarder schemes for Winter Olympic gold

BY PAT GRAHAM

Associated Press

ASPEN, Colo. — On a private halfpipe in Switzerland, Scotty James schemed for the future.

The location became his own secret lab, the Australian snowboarder joked, where he was free to experiment with new tricks and combinations, and keep everything under the radar.

Introducing James' newest creation: His spin on a triple cork, the three-flip jump that could be the trick needed to win a gold medal at the Beijing Games.

Never one to hold anything back, the 27-year-old might give the public a rare look at his latest concoctions at the Winter X Games on Friday, no doubt wearing his trademark red boxing-glove mittens (he views competitions as prize fights).

It's a chance to give a tiny

glimpse of what could be in store next month in China.

"I'm in a good position with that trick," James said in a phone interview with The Associated Press. "It's a big trick that requires a lot of energy."

It's a trick that a number of Japanese riders have these days, too. In December, two-time Olympic silver medalist Ayumu Hirano pulled off what's called a frontside triple cork 1440, a jump that involves three head-over-heels flips with a twist while grabbing the board above the 22-foot-high halfpipe.

That was viewed as a game-changer on the halfpipe circuit. If the rumors prove accurate, James might have more than one version of the triple cork in his bag of tricks.

No easy feat for him, either. At 6-foot-2, he's tall for a snowboarder and that's a lot of rotations.

See X Games / B5

FOOTBALL

## NFL moving closer to 1st female head coach

BY ROB MAADDI

AP Pro Football Writer

The NFL is moving closer to having its first female head coach.

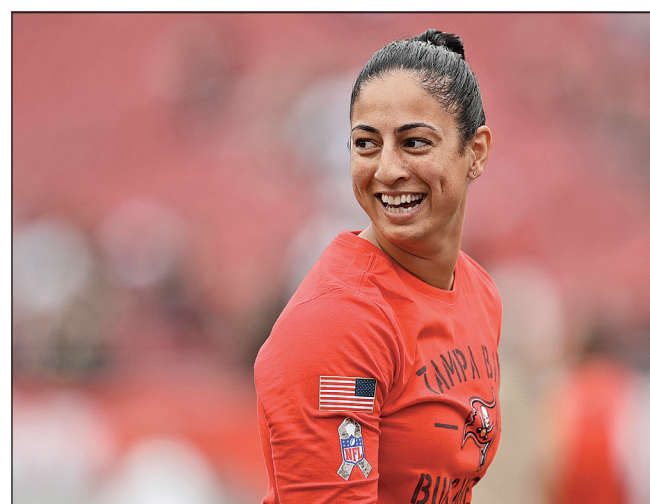
It may take a few more years, perhaps another decade. However, the question is no longer if it'll happen but when it will happen.

"We asked basically everybody that, including all the head coaches, and I think the general agreement is that it is going to happen," Jane Skinner Goodell said on the AP Pro Football Podcast. "I think the important thing that everybody seemed to point out was that it has to happen organically and it has to be a good fit, right? It's going to happen. ... I do think it's in the probably near future. Everybody, including the women, want it to happen in the right way so it's the right person at the right time."

Skinner Goodell, a former TV reporter who is married to NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell, is the executive producer of a new five-part docuseries from NFL Films called "Earnin' It." The series highlights the careers of some of the most powerful women working in the league. The first episode premieres Sunday on Peacock.

Last year, Tampa Bay Buccaneers assistant defensive line coach Lori Locust and assistant strength and conditioning coach Maral Javdifar became the first female coaches on a team to win the Super Bowl. Sarah Thomas also made history as the first woman to officiate a Super Bowl, working as the down judge.

In 2020, Katie Sowers became the first woman to coach in a Super Bowl. She was an offensive assistant for the San Francisco 49ers in



Chris O'Meara/AP file

Tampa Bay Buccaneers assistant strength and conditioning coach Maral Javdifar reacts before a game against the New Orleans Saints in 2019 in Tampa, Florida. Last year, Javdifar and Buccaneers assistant defensive line coach Lori Locust became the first female coaches on a team to win the Super Bowl.

their loss to Kansas City.

"Earnin' It" spotlights Locust, Thomas, Washington assistant running backs coach Jennifer King and other trailblazing women. It will feature first-hand accounts from NFL owners, coaches, players, officials, agents and other league insiders.

"The pace of change with bringing smart football minds who happen to be female into the game has been really, really rapid," Skinner Goodell said. "I'm a former reporter and I just felt like somebody needed to chronicle this because it's such a great story for the NFL. But also, I feel like if you're in a different industry, you might look at it and say, I would like to make some change and bring more diverse voices into our company or our team."

Singer/songwriter Ciara, wife of Seattle Seahawks star quarterback Russell Wilson, narrates the series.

"I am honored to be a part of something so special that

will undoubtedly be meaningful to so many people," Ciara said. "I am awe-inspired by their incredible stories and am grateful to be part of sharing them with the world."

Buccaneers coach Bruce Arians, Buffalo Bills coach Sean McDermott, Hall of Fame cornerback Deion Sanders and New York Giants running back Saquon Barkley are among many men who talk about the impact women have had on football.

Arians realized in the early 1990s that women deserved an opportunity to coach in the NFL when he met Dot Murphy, an assistant at Hinds Junior College.

"I used to clinic with them all the time and she was one hell of a coach, so I knew it back then," Arians said. "It was just who was going to open the door. That was going to be the thing."

Arians and other prominent coaches helped kick that door down.

See NFL / B4