

SPORTS

THE BULLETIN • FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2022

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ESPN 'COLLEGE GAME DAY'

Ex-Duck Ionescu to be guest picker

Former Oregon Ducks women's basketball great Sabrina Ionescu has been chosen to be the guest picker on ESPN "College GameDay" Saturday as the college football pre-game show broadcasts from Eugene.

"GameDay" will be in town ahead of Saturday's Pac-12 showdown between No. 9 UCLA and No. 10 Oregon (12:30 p.m. on Fox).

The "GameDay" show will broadcast live from 6 to 9 a.m. from the Memorial Quad on the University of Oregon campus.

Ionescu, who now plays for the New York Liberty of the WNBA, is one of the best players in college basketball history. She is the all-time leader in NCAA career triple-doubles and led the Ducks to the Final Four in 2019.

On the show, Ionescu will join other members of the "GameDay" broadcast team in making picks for the winners of select games in college football this week.

"College GameDay" will be in Eugene for the 11th time overall. The national road show typically broadcasts live from the site of one of the top games of the week.

The Ducks record when "College GameDay" is in Eugene is 7-3, beginning with a 29-10 win over UCLA on Sept. 23, 2000.

Overall, Oregon is 16-11 when the show is at its games, including last season when the Ducks beat the Bruins at the Rose Bowl.

The last time an Oregon team hosted "GameDay" in Eugene was in 2018, when Stanford paid a visit and ousted the Ducks in a heartbreaking overtime game.

The UCLA-Oregon matchup is the first game between two teams ranked in the top 10 at Autzen Stadium since No. 3 Oregon defeated No. 7 Michigan State in 2014, and the first at Autzen between two top-10 Pac-12 teams since the No. 4 Ducks beat No. 9 Stanford in 2010. The Ducks have a 22-game winning streak at home.

— Bulletin wire reports

PREP HOOPS

Oregon athletes sign NIL deals

Just weeks after it was first allowed, a pair of local basketball stars have made Oregon history as the first to sign endorsement deals as high school athletes.

On Thursday morning, Portland Gear announced that it had signed a deal with West Linn's Jackson Shelstad and Jesuit's Sofia Bell. Both are senior basketball players who have committed to play for the Oregon Ducks.

Shelstad is a four-star point guard for the Lions, and helped lead West Linn to a 22-4 record in the 2021-22 season. Bell is the No. 26-ranked player in the current senior class by ESPN and previously played for St. Mary's.

The deal was made possible by the OSAA changing its Rule 8.4 earlier in October. The NIL rule was previously given the green light by the executive board earlier in the fall, and was voted on by the delegate assembly in October. It allows student athletes to profit off their name, image and likeness so long as they follow certain criteria.

— The Oregonian

PREP VOLLEYBALL

Ridgeview is ready

A new belief in themselves has Ravens prepared for the Class 5A state playoffs

BY BRIAN RATHBONE • The Bulletin

REDMOND — Ridgeview volleyball coach Kurtis Bower admitted he was nervous coming into the season taking over a program with a long history of not only making the playoffs, but advancing to state tournaments.

After the regular season came to an end Wednesday night with a 3-0 (25-19, 25-15, 25-16) sweep of Mountain View, the Ravens are right back where they usually are — in the playoffs and a win away from advancing to the 5A state tournament.

"I knew I had a great team coming in," Bower said. "But getting it to a point where we are getting to the playoffs and having that goal in mind, and to finally getting there and achieving it is kind of surreal."

INSIDE

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Perhaps just as, if not more, important is how the Ridgeview players feel entering the postseason. They believe they are playing their best volleyball of the season.

"I feel like everything is coming together," said senior outside hitter Madie Vaughn. "I think we are



Ryan Brennecke/The Bulletin

Ridgeview's Madie Vaughn (8) hits the ball past a pair of Mountain View defenders during the first set in Redmond on Wednesday night.

ready to go into the playoffs because we have played a lot of the toughest teams in all these tournaments. We are ready to go out there and give it everything we have got."

While Ridgeview had a second-place finish in the Intermountain Conference behind IMC-champion Bend High and will be in contention to host a playoff match once the brackets are finalized, neither Bower nor Vaughn would say that it has been a smooth ride for the Ravens this season.

The year started off with three consecutive losses and when playing in tournaments against some of

the state's top competition nearly every weekend of the season, the Ravens struggled.

With the regular season winding down, Ridgeview met in the team room for what Vaughn called a "come to Jesus moment" to get everyone on the same page as they embarked on another run to the postseason.

"We talked about what needed to be fixed and then we went out and executed," Vaughn said. "A lot of things went unsaid. We just had a sit-down talk and realized that we have the postseason coming and that we need to turn it on."

See Volleyball / B4

MLB PLAYOFFS | NLCS GAME 3 PREVIEW



Jae C. Hong/AP

San Diego Padres starting pitcher Joe Musgrove works against a Los Angeles Dodgers batter during the first inning in Game 4 of a National League Division Series game Saturday in San Diego.

Padres turn to October ace Joe Musgrove vs. Phillies

BY DAN GELSTON
Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — There was at least one fuddy-duddy in San Diego who did not see the humor in a mural painted this week of the famous San Diego Chicken using his super-sized yellow foot to stomp on the side of the head of the Phillie Phanatic.

Did someone cry fowl because of the mascot-on-mascot crime?

Or was it just superstition that made the makeover necessary because of a belief it's best not to put the cart before the chicken?

Whatever the reason, the mural outside Tivoli Bar and Grill was quickly gone — yes, a true cover up because no one has fessed up to applying the fresh coat of paint — but the original art is a bit of a metaphor for what's happening in the National League Championship Series.

The Padres are suddenly putting the hurt on the Phillies.

Yes, the NLCS is only tied 1-1 as it shifts to Philadelphia for Game 3 on Friday, but the Padres not only roughed up October ace Aaron Nola in an 8-5 victory, they have the decisive edge on the mound in Philly.

San Diego's Joe Musgrove survived a TSA-worthy pat-down and tossed one-hit ball over seven shutout innings in an NL Wild Card Series win over the Mets and followed up with six solid innings to help beat the Dodgers in the NLCS. The Phillies counter with lefty Ranger Suárez, who walked five in 3 1/3 innings in his Game 2 NLDS start at Atlanta.

Musgrove (1-0, 1.38 postseason) is ready for the moment.

His story at times almost seems like a work of fiction for those who followed the 29-year-old big right-hander's career. The El Cajon, California native grew up rooting for the Padres and former ace Jake Peavy.

See MLB / B4

NBA COMMENTARY

Blazers' season-opening win gives fans reasons to believe

BY BILL ORAM

The Oregonian

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — You won't find it on a shelf in the team store. You can't buy it online. But here's something new the Portland Trail Blazers have to sell their fans: A future.

For years, the Blazers have been a known commodity with a clear ceiling.

But general manager Joe Cronin's reset of Portland's roster has the Blazers feeling interesting and fresh in an unfamiliar way.

You saw it in Shaedon Sharpe's offensive cool. And in Anfernee Simons' assertiveness when Damian Lillard was off the floor. In the tenacity of Josh Hart and Jerami Grant on both ends of the floor.

The Blazers didn't simply rely on the singlehanded heroics of Lillard on Wednesday night to win their season opener in Sacramento. Instead, it was a balanced scoring attack and a versatile, opportunistic defense that propelled them to the 115-108 victory.

This year's Blazers may not ultimately match the success they had at the height of Lillard's partnership with CJ McCollum — they still lack size, they're short on depth — but for the first time in years it feels like they have someplace new to go.

They have room to grow. Different Blazers? Well, yeah. The supporting cast around Lillard has not transformed so dramatically since LaMarcus Aldridge's departure seven years ago.

A victory in the first of 82 games, against a team that hasn't reached the playoffs since 2006 no less, doesn't



José Luis Villegas/AP

Portland Trail Blazers' Anfernee Simons (1) goes up for a shot over Sacramento Kings' Harrison Barnes (40) during the first quarter Wednesday night in Sacramento, California.

validate all of the decisions that brought the Blazers to this point. They may not make the playoffs this season, or even the play-in. But if you buy into the organization's longer-range vision, it wasn't hard to find signs of hope on Wednesday. And that starts with Sharpe and Simons.

Yeah, Hart and Grant and Justise Winslow are pros the Blazers can lean on to win games and survive the rigors of a six-month grind. But the more critical piece to long-term success is whether their investments — the financial one in Simons, the draft pick on Sharpe — pay off in a big way.

Face it: For the Blazers to build a Western Conference contender while Lillard is in his prime, they need certain dominoes to fall.

That makes the lottery tickets that are Simons and Sharpe — the two Blazers

with the most upside — the keys to the Blazers eventually breaking through. Either as tradable assets or with their own ascents to stardom.

Their value was on full display on a night the superstar Lillard was far from a peak performance. Playing his first game of 2022 after abdominal surgery last winter, he shot 5 of 18 and missed seven of his eight three-pointers.

On Wednesday, he said he told Simons, "You can't be shy." The 23-year-old certainly was not. A first-time starter next to Lillard, Simons needed 22 shots to score 22 points, but took over when Lillard went to the bench late in the third quarter and closed the gap on what had been a double-digit Kings' lead.

See Blazers / B5