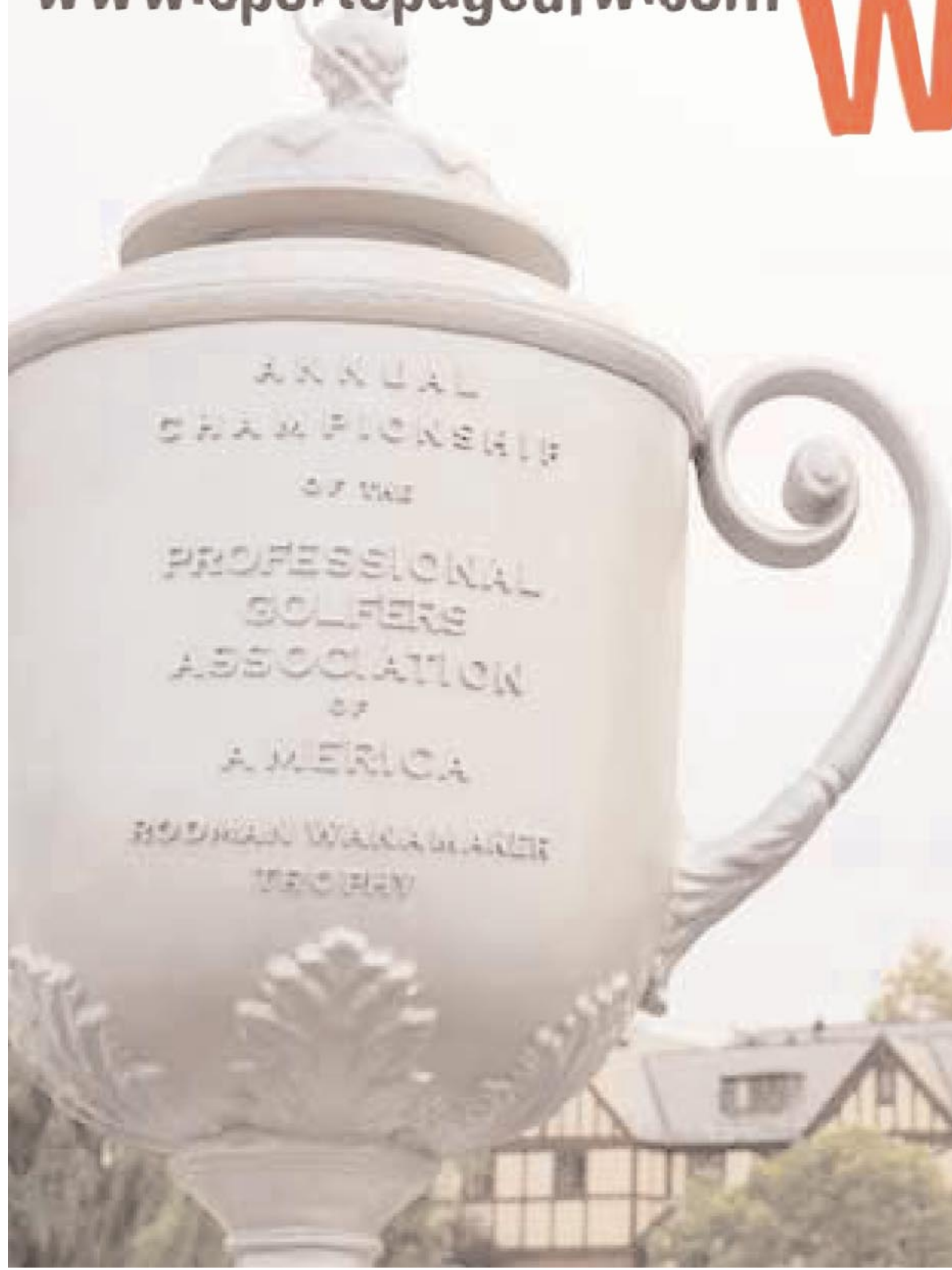


# the **SPORTS** page

www.sportspagedfw.com

# Weekly



May 17 - May 23, 2024

Vol. 22, Issue 36

www.sportspagedfw.com

**FREE**

*Make Tax Problems a Thing of the PAST!*

Call now for your  
free consultation

**800-406-5032**

2024-2025 ACC MEN'S BASKETBALL OPPONENTS



2024-2025 ACC WOMEN'S BASKETBALL OPPONENTS

HOME

AWAY



HOME AWAY



HOME

AWAY



HOME AWAY



PLACE YOUR DEPOSIT HERE

SMUMUSTANGS.COM



Sunday Funday Family Pack

VALID EVERY SUNDAY HOME GAME

TICKET PACK INCLUDES:

4 SUNDAY TICKETS

2 RAISING CANE'S KIDS COMBO CARDS\*

\*CARDS CAN BE REDEEMED AT PARTICIPATING RAISING CANE'S RESTAURANTS



ONLY \$60





# 2024 SCHEDULE

## MARCH/APRIL

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				28 CHC	29	30 CHC
31 CHC	1 TB	2 TB	3 TB	4	5 HOU	6 HOU
7 HOU	8 HOU	9 OAK	10 OAK	11 OAK	12 HOU	13 HOU
14 HOU	15 DET	16 DET	17 DET	18 DET	19 ATL	20 ATL
21 ATL	22	23 SEA	24 SEA	25 SEA	26 CIN	27 CIN
28 CIN	29	30 WSH				

## JULY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2 SD	3 SD	4 SD	5 TB	6 TB
7 TB	8 LAA	9 LAA	10 LAA	11	12 HOU	13 HOU
14 HOU	15	16 2024 ALL-STAR WEEK	17	18	19 BAL	20 BAL
21 BAL	22 CWS	23 CWS	24 CWS	25 CWS	26 TOR	27 TOR
28 TOR	29 STL	30 STL	31 STL			

## MAY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 WSH	2 WSH	3 KC	4 KC
5 KC	6 OAK	7 OAK	8 OAK	9	10 COL	11 COL
12 COL	13 CLE	14 CLE	15 CLE	16	17 LAA	18 LAA
19 LAA	20	21 PHI	22 PHI	23 PHI	24 MIN	25 MIN
26 MIN	27	28 AZ	29 AZ	30	31 MIA	

## AUGUST

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2 BOS	3 BOS
4 BOS	5 HOU	6 HOU	7 HOU	8	9 NYY	10 NYY
11 NYY	12 BOS	13 BOS	14 BOS	15 MIN	16 MIN	17 MIN
18 MIN	19 PIT	20 PIT	21 PIT	22	23 CLE	24 CLE
25 CLE	26	27 CWS	28 CWS	29 CWS	30 OAK	31 OAK

## JUNE

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 MIA
2 MIA	3 DET	4 DET	5 DET	6	7 SF	8 SF
9 SF	10	11 LAD	12 LAD	13 LAD	14 SEA	15 SEA
16 SEA	17 NYM	18 NYM	19 NYM	20	21 KC	22 KC
23 KC	24 MIL	25 MIL	26 MIL	27 BAL	28 BAL	29 BAL
30 BAL						

## SEPTEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 OAK	2 NYY	3 NYY	4 NYY	5 LAA	6 LAA	7 LAA
8 LAA	9	10 AZ	11 AZ	12 SEA	13 SEA	14 SEA
15 SEA	16	17 TOR	18 TOR	19 TOR	20 SEA	21 SEA
22 SEA	23	24 OAK	25 OAK	26 OAK	27 LAA	28 LAA
29 LAA	30					

Schedule subject to change. Times to be announced at a later date.

Home Games

Cover Photo:

**4 AROUND THE AREA**

**5 LUCA DONCIC DELIVERS IN GAME 5**  
 BY STAFF

**6 GOLF, ETC**  
 BY TOM WARD

**7 PGA CHAMPIONSHIP PREVIEW**  
 BY ADAM STANLEY

**8 WOODS TEMPERS EXPECTATIONS**  
 BY PAUL HADOWANIK

**9 SPIETH GETS ANOTHER SHOT AT THE GRAND SLAM**  
 BY STAFF

**10 NINE THINGS ABOUT VALHALA GOLF CLUB**  
 BY BRADLEY S. KLEIN

**14 BIG 12 BASEBALL POWER RANKINGS**  
 BY STACY URBAN

**15 COLLEGE FOOTBALL NEWS AND NOTES**  
 BY BO CARTER

**Follow us on  
 Twitter & Facebook**

 [twitter.com/sportspagedfw](https://twitter.com/sportspagedfw)

 [facebook.com/sportspageweek-](https://facebook.com/sportspageweek-)

Publisher  
**Sports Page Publishing Group, LLC**  
 info@sportspagedallas.com  
 www.sportspagedfw.com

Contact Us  
 Main Number (214) 683-1469  
 P.O. Box 820813  
 Dallas, Tx. 75382

Dic Humphrey, Tom Ward, Bo Carter, Richard Pollak, Robert Cortinez, James McAnally

To advertise in *The Sports Page Weekly* call the contacts above or 214.683.1469

For editorial comments/suggestions, e-mail [dmcvicker@sportspagedallas.com](mailto:dmcvicker@sportspagedallas.com)  
 Follow us on [Twitter@sportspagedfw](https://twitter.com/sportspagedfw)

Copyright 2016 *Sports Page Weekly, Inc.* All rights reserved. The *Sports Page Weekly* is published every week on Thursdays. Views expressed in *The Sports Page Weekly* are not necessarily the opinion of *The Sports Page Weekly*, its staff or advertisers. *The Sports Page Weekly* does not knowingly accept false or misleading editorial content or advertising, nor is *The Sports Page Weekly* responsible for the content or claims of any advertising or editorial in this publication. No content (articles, photographs, graphics) in *The Sports Page Weekly* may be used for reproduction without permission from the publisher.

*The SportsPage Weekly* is available free of charge, limited to one copy per reader. Additional copies of *The SportsPage Weekly* may be purchased for \$1.00, payable at *The SportsPage Weekly's* office in advance. *The SportsPage Weekly* may be distributed only by *The SportsPage Weekly's* authorized independent contractors or *The SportsPage Weekly's* authorized distributors. No person may, without prior written permission of *The SportsPage Weekly*, take more than one copy of each *SportsPage Weekly* issue.

**AROUND THE AREA**

LOCAL NEWS OF INTEREST

**SMU-Baylor schedule home and home**



The SMU Mustangs and Baylor Bears have scheduled a home-and-home football series for the 2025 and 2026 seasons, both schools announced on Tuesday this week.

In the first game of the series, SMU will host Baylor at Gerald J. Ford Stadium in Dallas, Texas, on Sept. 6, 2025. The series will conclude the following season when the Mustangs travel to face the Bears at McLane Stadium in Waco, Texas, on Sept. 19, 2026.

SMU and Baylor first met on the grid-iron in 1916 and have played 82 contests overall. The Bears have won the last 13 meetings in the series, which spans from 1989 through 2016, and currently hold a three-game advantage in the overall series, 39-36-7.

With the addition of Baylor, SMU now has two power conference opponents scheduled for the 2025 season. The Mustangs are also scheduled to visit the TCU Horned Frogs on Sept. 20. SMU can play a total of four non-conference games to go along with its eight-game ACC slate. Baylor is the first announced non-conference opponent for SMU in 2026.

Baylor now has two non-conference opponents announced for both the 2025 and 2026 seasons, and both are from power leagues. The Bears have a series on the books with the Auburn Tigers, at home on

Aug. 30, 2025 and on the road on Sept. 5, 2026.

With a nine-game Big 12 schedule, Baylor needs only one non-conference opponent in 2025 and 2026. If past scheduling is any indication, both opponents will come from the Football Championship Subdivision (FCS).

**Mustangs Advance To NCAA Golf Championships; Place Fourth At Stanford Regional**

The SMU Men's Golf Team have qualified for the NCAA Championships with fourth-place finish at the NCAA Regional on Wednesday at Stanford Golf Course.

The Mustangs came into the day in fifth place needing to maintain a spot in the top five to advance on to the NCAA Championship. The Mustangs moved up the leaderboard into fourth place early in round three. Things tightened up near the end with three teams, SMU, Stanford and Ole Miss, vying for the final two spots. With one hole to play, the Mustangs were tied with Stanford for the final spot while Ole Miss was looming one stroke behind. Zachary Kingsland parred the final hole along with the other two competitors to keep the standings unchanged. SMU punched its ticket to its 23rd NCAA Championship and first since 2021.

Kingsland led the way for SMU with a tied for 18th place finish. The sophomore shot 72 on the final day and two under for the tournament. He carded a 63 in the middle round to vault up the leaderboard.

Chaz Aurilia finished in 26th place after

an even-par final round. He wrapped up play at one-under par across three days.

One stroke back, Matthew Foster and J. Holland Humphries finished in a tie for 28th. Foster carded a two-under 68 on the final round including birdies in two of his final three holes. Humphries shot a 64 in the middle round to highlight his week.

Will Sides shot even par on the final day. The sophomore finished in a tie for 37th.

The Mustangs set their sights on the NCAA Championship for their third Championship appearance in the last five tournaments. The team made the quarterfinals in 2019 and won the national championship in 1954. This year's tournament is held at Omni La Costa Golf Course in Carlsbad, California running May 24-29.

**TEAM LEADERBOARD**

- 1 Illinois -36
- 2 Florida State -28
- 3 Texas A&M -19
- T4 SMU -10
- T4 Stanford -10
- 6 Ole Miss -9
- 7 UCLA -5
- 8 Augusta +1
- 9 UNLV +7
- 10 Missouri +8
- 11 Liberty +13
- 12 Fresno State +18
- 13 Sacramento State +22
- 14 Siena +34






**SMU RESULTS**

- T18 Zachary Kingsland -2
- T26 Chaz Aurilia -1
- T28 J. Holland Humphries E
- T28 Matthew Foster E
- T36 Will Sides +2

**NCAA Basketball Poll**

Coaches Poll	FINAL	AP Poll
1. Houston	1. Houston	1. Houston
2. UConn	2. UConn	2. UConn
3. Purdue	3. Purdue	3. Purdue
4. Iowa State	4. Iowa State	4. Iowa State
5. North Carolina	5. North Carolina	5. North Carolina
6. Tennessee	6. Tennessee	6. Tennessee
7. Auburn	7. Auburn	7. Auburn
8. Marquette	8. Marquette	8. Marquette
9. Arizona	9. Arizona	9. Arizona
10. Illinois	10. Illinois	10. Illinois
11. Creighton	11. Creighton	11. Creighton
12. Kentucky	12. Kentucky	12. Kentucky
13. Duke	13. Illinois	13. Illinois
14. Baylor	14. Baylor	14. Baylor
15. Saint Mary's	15. South Carolina	15. South Carolina
16. South Carolina	16. Kansas	16. Kansas
17. Kansas	17. Gonzaga	17. Gonzaga
18. Gonzaga	18. Utah State	18. Utah State
19. Alabama	19. Alabama	19. Alabama
20. Utah State	20. BYU	20. BYU
21. BYU	21. Saint Mary's	21. Saint Mary's
22. Texas Tech	22. Washington State	22. Washington State
23. Wisconsin	23. Nevada	23. Nevada
24. San Diego State	24. Dayton	24. Dayton
25. Washington State	25. Texas Tech	25. Texas Tech

**WEEKLY CALENDAR**

	MAY 17 FRIDAY	MAY 18 SATURDAY	MAY 19 SUNDAY	MAY 20 MONDAY	MAY 21 TUESDAY	MAY 22 WEDNESDAY	MAY 23 THURSDAY
		Mavs vs Thunder 7:30 / TNT		Mavs at Thunder 7:30 / TNT			
	Rangers vs Angels 7:05 / Bally's	Rangers vs Angels 6:15 / Bally's	Rangers vs Angels 1:35 / Bally's		Rangers at Phillies 5:40 / Bally's	Rangers at Phillies 5:40 / Bally's	Rangers at Phillies 12:05 / Bally's
		FC Dallas at Houston 7:30				FC Dallas at Houston 6:30	
	Stars at Colorado 7:30 / TNT		Stars vs Colorado 7:30 / TNT				
	Roughriders at Amarillo 7:05	Roughriders at Amarillo 7:05	Roughriders at Amarillo 1:05			Roughriders vs Midland 11:05	Roughriders vs Midland 6:35

# Luka Dončić delivers in pivotal Game 5



The Mavericks are back in Dallas Saturday for Game 6

**Dončić erupts for a 31-point triple-double, Derrick Jones Jr. can't miss and Dallas stifles OKC to grab a 3-2 series lead.**

By Jon Thomas

Luka Dončić flexed hard, nodding defiantly at the crowd in the fourth quarter after drilling a 3-pointer over Cason Wallace to put Dallas up by 18 points.

Thunder coach Mark Daigneault had warned earlier that Game 2 was “a pretty important case study for us tonight because that was the last time Dallas came off a loss against us.” He recalled how the visitors’ “physicality, effort, intensity they came in the gym with was potent.”

Dallas brought in all that again on Wednesday night to seize a 104-92 victory in pivotal Game 5.

Similar to how Game 2 unfolded, Dončić and the Mavs clamped down early and never let go, leading the last 43:59 of the game. Dončić improved his 29-10-7 line from Game 2 with a 31-point triple-double as Dallas heads home for Saturday’s Game 6 leading the series 3-2.

Here are five takeaways from the matchup:

## 1. Dončić the triple-double machine

Battling through knee, ankle, and back

issues, Dončić racked up his second straight game with a triple-double, totaling 31 points with 10 rebounds and 11 assists in workhorse fashion.

“It was the old Luka,” he said. “A smile on my face.”

Dončić made it look good, too. Especially in the first half when he played the role of catalyst as Dallas executed five alley-oops, including two nasty ones to Dereck Lively II. The Mavs completed six lob dunks on the night as the crowd at Paycom Center groaned in disgust at every one of them.

“He set the tone and got everybody involved,” Dallas coach Jason Kidd said. Dončić said he approached Game 5 looking to “just focus on basketball” instead of sparring with referees, which often saps away some of his concentration at crucial moments in these big games.

“We know the last game we played against them we let it go,” he said. “In the playoffs it’s the first to four. So, you’ve got to win four before they do.”

Dončić’s triple-double in Game 5 marked his third this postseason, which currently leads the NBA. The 25-year-old has now logged six career playoff triple-doubles and he’s scored 30 points or more in three of them.

## 2. Another unusual suspect steps up for Dallas

Unexpectedly, we watched P.J. Washington carve up Oklahoma City for three games this series as the Thunder kept Dončić and Kyrie Irving below their usual production levels.

This time, another unheralded Dallas player caught OKC by surprise in Derrick Jones Jr., who set a playoff-career high in scoring (19 points) for the second consecutive game after pouring in 17 points in Game 4.

Undrafted out of UNLV in 2016, Jones dropped 15 first-half points on 6-for-6 shooting, including 3-for-3 on 3-pointers, taking advantage of the extra attention Washington garnered from the Thunder on the heels of his three straight 20-plus point outings.

From Games 2 to 4, Washington averaged 25.7 points, knocking down 50% of his 3-pointers.

He lured in two OKC defenders with 5:11 remaining in the first half, leaving Jones wide open in the left corner for a 23-footer that gave Dallas a 12-point advantage.

Jones also found himself flying high on the receiving end of two of the Mavs’ five alley-oops over the first two quarters from Dončić, who dished seven assists in the opening half.

“Both centers are very tall and they can jump,” Dončić said. “So, I just throw it up there. D-Jones is out of this world. The way he jumps is just insane. I never saw something like that. But he was knocking down 3s too.”

## 3. Irving’s defense is underrated

Kidd made a weird but entertaining point when discussing the defense of eight-time All-Star Irving. The 32-year-old isn’t contributing his typical offensive output as Dallas’ second-leading scorer, but he’s defended at a high level this entire series.

“Everyone’s talking about Kai’s scoring, but we don’t get enough likes or hearts on defense,” Kidd said. “As we continue to show that we can play defense, our offense will come. We believe we have two of the best offensive players in the league. We understand we need to get Kai more touches.”

Irving scored 12 points in Game 5, and he’s averaged 14.5 points this series while shooting 45.9% from the field and 43.8% from distance with 6.8 assists per game. Irving hasn’t been as lethal this series as a scorer but in the second halves of games this series he’s shooting 54.5% from 3-point range. The veteran attempted only one 3 (and made it) in the second half of Game 5.

Kidd mentioned Irving often finds himself double-teamed, but added the veteran continues to “make the right play.” Defensively, Irving has logged six steals this series with four blocks.

“You feel like he’s out of a play, and he just gets the ball,” Daigneault said.

## 4. Giddey out of starting lineup

Daigneault declined to discuss specifics leading into Game 5, but mentioned multiple times OKC would explore all options to ensure the best chance for victory, including a change in the starting lineup.

The Thunder announced Isaiah Joe as Game 5’s starter at guard, marking the first time Josh Giddey didn’t start in 218 career games, including the postseason.

The move seemed to be in the works since the start of this series due to the 21-year-old’s continued struggles. Ultimately, it didn’t work.

Joe shot 2-for-9 for six points in 22 minutes. Giddey finished with 11 points on 5-for-8 shooting.

Playing an average of 13.3 minutes in the series’ first four games, Giddey averaged 6.0 points per game, shooting 38.5% from the floor and 18.2% on 3-pointers against a Dallas defense that left him largely unguarded. Defensively, he was a liability against the Mavs’ athletic wings.

So, OKC looked to improve spacing by inserting the sharpshooting Joe into the starting lineup as Dallas had proven it didn’t respect Giddey as a shooter. The move showed promise early as Joe nailed a corner 3-pointer just 87 seconds into Game 5.

Giddey entered the game for the first time with 4:26 left in the opening quarter.

## 5. Poor shooting keeps sinking Thunder

The Thunder fired away from deep with decent accuracy in the first five games of the postseason, connecting on 40% from 3-point range. OKC hasn’t sniffed anything close to that over the last four games of this series.

The Thunder shot 10-for-40 from 3-point range in Game 5 but haven’t connected on better than 45.7% from the field this entire series. OKC hasn’t made more than 10 3-pointers in any of its last four outings, and the team hasn’t drained better than 25.9% in the last two games.

Credit Dallas’ switching defense led by athletic bigs Daniel Gafford and Lively as well as its bouncy wings in Washington and Jones.

“I do think getting used to how they’re playing us is something we have to learn and evolve [from],” Daigneault said. “The opponent is playing against you and improving at playing against you. That’s what’s happening right now for both teams.”

# How golf can create family bonds



**TOM WARD**  
TOMPWARD@SBCGLOBAL.NET

The beauty of golf, unlike some of the other sports, is that you can play it well into old age. I've worked with many professional athletes over the decades that become passionate about golf after their playing days are over. People like challenges and competitiveness which the game of golf can provide. In addition, I've taught many men and woman who wanted to use golf as a social and business tool in their lives.

Another way golf has lent an assist is in personal relationships. Family dynamics change as children get older and start to move away. Golf has a unique niche that can sometimes help bring families together.

Years ago, I began teaching a young teenager who was still in high school. When he got home from taking a lesson, he excitedly told his father what he had learned that day. His dad never played the game and didn't understand what all the excitement was about.

The boy and his father had started drifting apart in their relationship. His father was busy at his job and traveled a lot, which didn't leave too much time to interact with his son. Over the next year, the boy continued his daily activities of attending school and practicing golf.

One day he noticed a posting on the bulletin board at school that there would be tryouts for the golf team in a few weeks. He let me know of his goal to try and make the team. We went full steam ahead in preparing him for the upcoming qualifying. He ended up making the team. What I gathered from the young man is that every day at dinner he would talk incessantly about golf. This must have piqued his father's interest, because one day out of the blue his dad showed up at the golf club to observe his son working on his game with me.

Afterwards, he inquired about lessons for himself. He told me that he had never held a golf club. He saw the passion that his son exhibited and wanted to be involved with his son's life. He didn't want me to tell his boy about taking any lessons. I agreed, and a few days later we started. This went on for a few months, as both father and son were making some real strides. One day, as we were finishing up, the father walked up to his son and grabbed his golf club and proceeded to hit a beautiful shot right down the middle. His son looked on in amazement. His father proceeded to tell him of our secret lessons, as the young man was smiling ear to ear.

This was the start of a long, happy bonding experience that brought a father and son together and lasted for many years. Both of them became low single-digit handicap players, each occasionally breaking par. They traveled a lot playing in father/son events all over the country. The young man would go onto college and receive his degree in finance. Ironically, he

met his future wife at a charity golf event. They wound up having two boys.

Sadly, his father succumbed to heart disease after a long battle. Before his passing, he was able to get out on the golf course with his son and his young grandsons to play a few rounds. Golf had become a generational fun activity that enriched their lives. The young man I once taught was now a successful businessman with a wife and a family. He told me that taking up golf was one of the greatest things he had ever done. It brought him and his father closer together at a critical juncture in their relationship. They were able to spend quality time and connect as father and son in a way that he couldn't have ever imagined.

These days both of his young sons have become avid golfers, along with his wife who has caught the golfing bug and has begun taking lessons. Together, they have assimilated the game of golf into their lives and made it a family affair.

Please visit: [www.teetimewithtom.com](http://www.teetimewithtom.com)

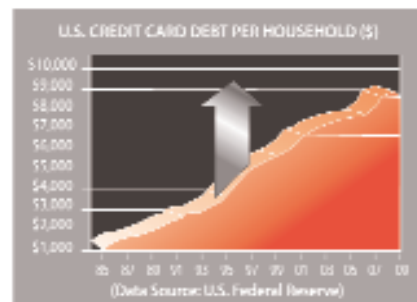


## Credit Card Debt?

Solutions that can help you get out of debt.

Tom Hill  
CGA STAFF WRITER

Every three minutes another person falls behind on credit card debt. It's no wonder, since every major credit card company has nearly doubled the minimum monthly payment on consumers' bills. Federal Regulators forced the change because of their concern about the growing mountain of consumer debt, which stands at \$2.17 trillion. Many consumers can only pay the minimum payment, which can take up to 30 years to pay off. Now, relief is in sight for millions of Americans.



CreditGUARD of America, a non-profit licensed debt management service provider, is making a new program available to lower debt payments and become free of all credit card debt in only three to five years. Consumers need only \$2,000 or more in total credit card debt and at least 30 days behind on any account, to cut their payment by 35% to 50%, and reduce or eliminate interest charges altogether.

Over 200,000 families, located throughout the U.S. have regained financial independence with CreditGUARD's licensed, bonded and insured service. CreditGUARD of America has received high marks in consumer surveys showing high consumer satisfaction and confidence. The CreditGUARD debt management program can lower your monthly payments by hundreds and save you thousands!

One such case is Sandra L. who proclaimed "CreditGUARD cut my monthly payment by \$636 and saved me over \$29,206.53 in interest. They saved my way of life and gave me back my peace of mind! Now I can see myself on my way to becoming debt free." or Jeffrey C. who said "CreditGUARD of America helped me consolidate 3 of my credit cards into one affordable payment. They are now saving me nearly \$200 a month. Now I will be debt free in 2 years or less"

Certified Credit Counselors at CreditGUARD of America provide Debt Relief Consultations at no charge, when you call:

**1-866-253-0182**

# This week on TOUR: PGA Championship



Brooks Koepka won his third PGA Championship last year

## PGA Championship

May 16 - May 19, 2024

Valhalla Country Club

Louisville, Kentucky

Purse - \$18,000,000

Winners share - \$3,150,000

Defending Champs - Brooks Koepka

By Adam Stanley

The season's second major championship is here – and there's no shortage of exciting storylines as the TOUR returns to the Bluegrass State.

This year's PGA Championship features a hearty 1-2 punch of Scottie Scheffler – expected to return to action – and Rory McIlroy, who's arriving in Kentucky with momentum after Sunday's Wells Fargo Championship victory – near the top of the board in terms of favorites.

Valhalla Golf Club, now lengthened and completely renovated, will make for a solid championship test once again, with Mother Nature sure to have her say as well.

Whether it's someone seeking their first major, or Scheffler or McIlroy looking to add to their legacy (or even Jordan Spieth, eyeing the final leg of the career Grand Slam), it's set to be a loaded week in Louisville.

Here's everything else you need to know for the 106th PGA Championship.

**FIELD NOTES:** Scottie Scheffler is expected to return to action after nearly a month off as he and wife Meredith have been expecting the birth of their first child. Scheffler, who leads the way on TOUR in basically every key statistical category, has won four of his last five starts on TOUR, including his last two – the Masters and RBC Heritage... Rory McIlroy comes to Valhalla the same way he did in 2014 – off a win. McIlroy has won his last two TOUR starts (alongside Shane Lowry at the Zurich Classic of New Orleans and at last week's Wells Fargo Championship) and now looks to break a decade-long drought without a major title. He won the last PGA contested at Valhalla 10 years ago... Jordan Spieth eyes the career Grand Slam once again. This will be his seventh attempt. His best finish at the PGA Championship – since he started chasing the Grand Slam – came in 2019 when he finished T3... returns to action for the first time since he made the cut at the Masters. Woods, who won the 2000 PGA Championship played at Valhalla, has three Wanamaker Trophies in his collection... Xander Schauffele leads the pack of notables eyeing their first major

title, an illustrious group that includes Patrick Cantlay, Will Zalatoris, Tony Finau and Max Homa – to name a few. Schauffele had the 54-hole lead at the Wells Fargo but fell victim to McIlroy's late surge; he's now 3-for-9 in converting 54-hole leads on TOUR. He also held the 54-hole lead at this year's PLAYERS (finishing T2) and is even hungrier to get the major monkey off his back and snap a nearly two-year winless drought on TOUR... Ludvig Åberg will make his PGA Championship debut. Åberg finishing runner-up at last month's Masters, his first career major start, and now he'll try to do one better at his latest major debut... Two-time PGA Championship winner Justin Thomas will tee it up at a major in his home state. Thomas has four top-15 finishes in nine starts so far this season... Chris Gotterup will make his PGA Championship debut after earning a spot in the PGA Championship thanks to his victory Sunday at the Myrtle Beach Classic... Brooks Koepka is the defending champion.

### HIGHEST-RANKED PLAYERS IN THE FIELD

World Ranking	FedExCup
1. Scottie Scheffler	1. S.Scheffler
2. Rory McIlroy	2. X.Schauffele

3. Xander Schauffele	3. W. Clark
4. Wyndham Clark	4. Rory McIlroy
5. Jon Rahm	5. S. Theegala
6. Ludvig Åberg	6. B. Hun An
7. Viktor Hovland	7. Ludvig Åberg
8. Patrick Cantlay	8. H.Matsuyama
9. Max Homa	9. Chris Kirk
10. Brian Harman	10. M. Pavon

### SIGNATURE EVENT STORYLINES:

The next Signature Event on the PGA TOUR schedule is the Memorial Tournament presented by Workday... The top 10 players on the season-long FedExCup standings, not otherwise exempt, will earn spots at the Memorial via the Aon Next 10... Ludvig Åberg remains atop the Aon Next 10... Taylor Pendrith was the only player to move inside the Aon Next 10 at the Wells Fargo Championship, finishing T10 a week after his maiden TOUR title... The top five FedExCup points earners across the Myrtle Beach Classic, Charles Schwab Challenge and RBC Canadian Open, not otherwise exempt, will earn spots via the Aon Swing 5 ... Thanks to his win in Myrtle Beach, Chris Gotterup leads the Aon Swing 5, with Davis Thompson in the No. 2 position and six players tied for the final threespots.

### COMCAST BUSINESS TOUR TOP 10

**UPDATES:** With his win at the Wells Fargo Championship, Rory McIlroy jumped into the Comcast Business TOUR TOP 10 for the first time this season, moving from No. 16 to No. 4 in the standings... Byeong Hun An, after finishing third at Quail Hollow, moved from No. 8 to No. 6. An and Chris Kirk remain the only players to have stayed in the TOUR TOP 10 every week so far this season... Xander Schauffele, after finishing second at the Wells Fargo Championship, moved up one spot from No. 3 to No. 2, swapping with Wyndham Clark... Jason Day's T4 result in Charlotte jumped him up the standings from No. 27 to No. 12 – he's now knocking on the door of moving into the TOUR TOP 10.

**FEDEXCUP:** Winner receives 750 FedExCup points.

**COURSE:** Valhalla Golf Club, par 71, 7,609 yards. In comparison to the previous PGA Championship at Valhalla (in 2014), the Kentucky club has been completed renovated. An extensive fairway renovation was coordinated by the PGA of America in 2021: The project consisted of changing fairway turf and tees from bent grass to Zeon Zoysia. Zeon Zoysia fairways (requiring less water) allow for firm, fast playing conditions all season long, as opposed to the seasonality of bent grass. The PGA Championship team, with consultation from the Nicklaus Design team,

decided to create new championship tees on Nos. 1, 12, 13, 14 and 18. The total length of the 2024 PGA Championship is 151 yards longer than 2014.

The club was purchased by the PGA of America in 2000 but sold in 2022 to a group of Louisville investors with a continued desire to host elite events.

**72-HOLE RECORD:** 264, Brooks Koepka (2018 at Bellerive Country Club)

**18-HOLE RECORD:** 63, Bruce Crampton (Round 2, 1975 at Firestone CC), Raymond Floyd (Round 1, 1982 at Southern Hills), Gary Player (Round 2, 1984 at Shoal Creek), Michael Bradley (Round 1, 1993 at Inverness), Vijay Singh (Round 2, 1993 at Inverness), Brad Faxon (Round 4, 1995 at Riviera CC), José María Olazábal (Round 3, 2000 at Valhalla), Mark O'Meara (Round 2, 2001 at Atlanta AC), Thomas Bjorn (Round 3, 2005 at Baltusrol), Tiger Woods (Round 2, 2007 at Southern Hills), Steve Stricker (Round 1, 2011 at Atlanta AC), Jason Dufner (Round 2, 2013 at Oak Hill), Hiroshi Iwata (Round 2, 2015 at Whistling Straits), Robert Streb (Round 2, 2016 at Baltusrol), Brooks Koepka (Round 2, 2018 at Bellerive; Round 1, 2019 at Bethpage Black), Charl Schwartzel (Round 2, 2018 at Bellerive), Bubba Watson (Round 2, 2022 at Southern Hills).

**LAST TIME:** Brooks Koepka won his third PGA Championship, topping Scottie Scheffler and Viktor Hovland by two shots at Oak Hill in Rochester, New York. Koepka joined Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods as the only players to win the Wanamaker Trophy three times in the stroke-play era. He had a one-shot lead through 54 holes and raced out of the gate, making birdie on Nos. 2-4. He made back-to-back bogeys on Nos. 6 and 7 but shot a 2-under 33 on his back nine to top Hovland and a hard-charging Scheffler, whose 5-under 65 tied for the low round of the day. Among those who also shot 65 in the final round were Cam Davis and Kurt Kitayama, who shared fourth place alongside Bryson DeChambeau. It marked a career-best major finish for both Davis and Kitayama.

McIlroy won the previous PGA Championship contested at Valhalla, in 2014.

#### HOW TO FOLLOW (all times ET)

##### Television:

- Thursday: 7 a.m.-noon (ESPN+), noon-8 p.m. (ESPN)
  - Friday: 7 a.m.-noon (ESPN+), noon-7 p.m. (ESPN)
  - Saturday-Sunday: 8-10 a.m. (ESPN+), 10 a.m.-1 p.m. (ESPN), 1-7 p.m. (CBS).
- PGA TOUR Radio on SiriusXM and free on PGATOUR.COM/liveaudio:
- Thursday-Friday: 1-7 p.m.
  - Saturday-Sunday: 2-7 p.m. (SiriusXM)

# Woods tempers expectations at PGA



## Body is 'OK' but 'I wish my game was sharper'

Sometimes it's the question, not the answer, that says the most.

Tiger Woods took 25 questions for his pre-tournament press conference at the rainy PGA Championship at Valhalla Golf Club on Tuesday, and the most interesting of these was not about how the course fits his game. It was about how the course fits his body.

"Well, I wouldn't say the walk's that difficult," Woods said of Valhalla, which will measure some 7,609 yards. "I know it's a long walk, it's a big piece of property. More than anything, just stay out of the rough. This is a big golf course, and if you get in the rough here, yeah, things could get a little bit sore, but if I drive it well and do the things I need to do and what I did 24 years ago, hopefully it works."

The winner of the 2000 PGA at Valhalla, the surgically repaired Woods is now 48 and only occasionally teeing it up on the PGA TOUR. And when he does, it takes something extra just to get to the first tee.

The Grand Slam for Woods in 2024 is something like stretching, massage, chiropractic work, and Icy Hot.

"He told me that he woke up at like 3:45 this morning just to get ready for the day," said the amateur Neal Shipley, who played with Woods in the final round of the Masters Tournament last month. "Which is — I got about three hours more sleep than him."

"He's really grinding and making a big commitment to be out here for everyone."

That was the last time we saw Woods in action, and finishing the tournament was its own sort of win. He shot 73-72-82-77 and wound up 60th, last among those who made the cut. In his press conference Tuesday, when he pronounced his health "OK" before adding, "I wish my game was a little bit sharper," he admitted that his body more or less gave out on the weekend at Augusta National.

Still, he proved over those first two rounds that he can still compete.

"Yeah, I can still hit shots," Woods said at Valhalla. "It's getting around is more of the difficulty that I face, day-to-day and

the recovery of pushing myself either in practice or in competition days. You saw it at Augusta. I was there after two days and didn't do very well on the weekend."

Max Homa, who played with Woods for the first two days at the Masters, agreed.

"Yeah, his golf game was incredible," said Homa, who finished T3 at the Masters. "Two days I played with him he hit a great. If he had made anything he would have been right around the lead. So, it was tough draw for him in that we had to play 20-odd some holes the second day. He wasn't limping too bad. So, yeah, I think he's got a decent amount (of competitive shelf life)."

Woods is the first to admit he is in a very different phase of life these days than he was in 2000, when he beat the pesky Bob May in an aggregate playoff at Valhalla. Woods, whose 82 PGA TOUR wins include 15 major titles, is a golf dad, a course designer, a PGA Policy Board member.

Playing in a major, he said Tuesday, means something different to him now.

"I think that I appreciate it more now, just the fact that I don't come out here very often," he said. "I don't play much, and I'm at home where it's quiet and it's so different to coming out to practice rounds when there's thousands of people out there like it was at Augusta."

When he won here at the turn of the century, Woods was in the midst of the Tiger Slam, when he held all four major championship trophies concurrently. He was the center of the golf world, and peers like Ernie Els knew it wouldn't be long before they were asked about Woods in their own press conferences.

Now the reverse is true. On Tuesday, one of Woods' most expansive answers covered the excellence of world No. 1 Scottie Scheffler vis-à-vis No. 2 Rory McIlroy.

Woods praised them effusively, said McIlroy's finish is so pretty, "it looks like a statue," and gave advice to new dad Scheffler ("Get some sleep," he said). Such is the new life of Tiger, whose own kids are all grown up.

"Yeah, I still feel that I can win golf tournaments," Woods said. "I still feel I can hit the shots and still feel like I still have my hand around the greens, and I can putt."

"I just need to do it for all four days," he added, "not like I did at Augusta for only two."

## Ludvig Åberg says knee is 'all good' at PGA Championship

Ludvig Åberg said lingering knee soreness that kept him out of the Wells Fargo Championship last week will not be an issue at this week's PGA Championship.



The world No. 6 Åberg, who finished second at the Masters Tournament in his very first major start last month, allowed that he is wearing a brace as a precautionary measure.

"Knee's good," said Åberg, 24. "It was more of a safety concern last week that I didn't play. I'm consulting with my doctors, and I trust them with everything that I have, so it's not bothering me at all this week, and I look forward to playing. I'm wearing a brace just for safety reasons, but it's nothing that's bothering me. I'm focusing on the golf."

The Wells Fargo was the first tournament Åberg has missed for health reasons, he said, adding that he stayed home to prep for this week and watched a bit of Rory McIlroy's victory on TV.

It's only been a year since Åberg left Texas Tech and accepted his PGA TOUR card as the No. 1 player in the PGA TOUR University Ranking. Since then, his ascent has been rocket-like. Åberg won the DP World Tour's Omega European Masters, went 2-2-0 for the winning European Ryder Cup team, and won The RSM Classic, the PGA TOUR's final event of 2023.

Other than atypical results in Hawaii, where he did not crack the top 25 in either of the first two tournaments of this season, his play on TOUR has continued to belie his youth and inexperience. He finished T10 in his last start at the RBC Heritage; that was the week after finishing second at the Masters in his first look at Augusta National. He hasn't been out of the top 25 since January.

Åberg said he likes the look of Valhalla so far, and will be leaning on his caddie Joe Skovron, who was on Rickie Fowler's bag when Fowler tied for third at the 2014 PGA at Valhalla.

"Obviously they have added some length since," Åberg said, "so a few of those holes are a little bit different. But from what I've understood, the green areas are very similar, and it looks like it's going to be a little bit wet towards the weekend, and hopefully, you know, we'll be able to hit a lot of fairways and a lot of greens."

Åberg will go off the 10th hole with Xander Schauffele and two-time PGA Championship winner Justin Thomas of nearby Goshen, Kentucky, at 7:53 a.m.



# Spieth gets another Grand Slam shot



Jordan Spieth will look to complete the career Grand Slam at this week's PGA Championship at Valhalla

By Staff

The attention starts building weeks, if not months, ahead of the one major keeping Rory McIlroy from the career Grand Slam, the most elite club in golf. It's like that every year, and it doesn't make it any easier when he gets to the Masters.

Jordan Spieth should be able to appreciate the feeling. Except that he really doesn't. Now that McIlroy missed again at the Masters — his 10th straight attempt at getting the final leg — Spieth is next up with an opportunity to become only the sixth player in history to capture all four professional majors.

It feels like an afterthought going into the PGA Championship.

Scottie Scheffler tries to extend his dominance with a second straight major. Brooks Koepka is the defending champion, while Jon Rahm turned in a dud at the Masters and curious eyes will want to see at Valhalla if that was an aberration.

Oh yes, and Spieth goes for the career Grand Slam, a feat achieved only by Tiger Woods, Jack Nicklaus, Gary Player, Ben Hogan and Gene Sarazen.

"These things, like winning a career Grand Slam, they happen kind of when I think there's less focus and less of a spotlight on him," said Jim Nantz of CBS, who has covered every PGA Championship since 1991. "And I think Jordan goes into this week without a whole lot of discussion about that possibility coming up at Valhalla.

"So maybe it is favorable in that sense mentally."

Spieth isn't surprised the attention is not that high, certainly not at the level McIlroy has faced the last decade each time he heads to Augusta National.

One reason is his game, which has not been great. Spieth has gone just over two years since he last won a tournament and has had only a few close calls since then. He comes into the PGA Championship having missed the cut in four of his last five tournaments that had a 36-hole cut. "He's got more accolades," Spieth said about the Slam hype between him and McIlroy. "He's been a better player over his career. Maybe that creates a little noise. He's been a bit more vocal about it himself, so maybe that makes a little bit more difference."

The other reason is the Masters, the only major held on the same course every year. Sarazen is the only player with the career Grand Slam who completed it at Augusta National. But that was in 1935, long before the Masters was considered a major and 25 years before Arnold Palmer first brought a professional slam into the golf conversation.

McIlroy threw away a chance in 2011 when he lost a four-shot lead in the final round at the Masters. He played in the final group with Patrick Reed in 2018 and didn't get it done. Reminders are everywhere when he returns.

That isn't the case for Spieth. He goes to

Quail Hollow one year, Bellerive the next. He has had seven cracks at getting the missing piece of the Grand Slam on seven courses.

"For me, it's like the PGA Championship feels decently similar to a number of tournaments we play," Spieth said. "I don't mean that in a bad way. It's played on some of the biggest, best golf courses. But the identity is not the same as the other three. In my mind, you don't need to find a different way to win, versus guys who don't have some of the other ones.

"We play a few tournaments a year that could be PGA Championships if you change the branding and the grandstands." Only two other players lacked only the PGA Championship for the career slam — Arnold Palmer and Tom Watson.

Jack Nicklaus referenced them last month when speaking of McIlroy's chances at Augusta.

"Is Tom Watson good enough to win the Grand Slam? Absolutely. Was Arnold Palmer good enough to win the Grand Slam? Absolutely," Nicklaus said.

He felt the same way about McIlroy before adding, "But they have got to do it." Spieth is 30 and would seem to have time on his side — but not history. Sarazen, Hogan and Woods won the final leg in their first attempt. Woods did it in the most spectacular fashion, winning the U.S. Open by 15 shots and a month later The Open by eight. He was 24.

Player (1965 U.S. Open) and Nicklaus (1966 Open Championship) completed the Grand Slam on their third attempt after they had captured the third leg.

McIlroy already has had 10 cracks at the Masters since he picked up the third leg. Spieth has had seven tries at the PGA Championship since winning the third leg at Royal Birkdale in 2017.

He said it doesn't weigh on him, at least not lately.

"I remember thinking about it in '17 because it was right after The Open and I was playing so well," Spieth said. He tied for 28th at Quail Hollow.

He also said he gave the Grand Slam some thought in 2019 at Bethpage Black when he was in the final group going into the weekend with Brooks Koepka. That wasn't really a fair fight. Koepka set the 36-hole record for majors (128), a record seven shots ahead of Spieth.

"But I don't feel like it will build up over time, not like people talk about Rory's building up over time," Spieth said.

More focus is on a nagging injury to his left wrist that first surfaced right before the PGA Championship last year at Oak Hill. Spieth is trying to manage it. He also is spending more time than he imagined on

the phone as part of the PGA TOUR Enterprises board.

Justin Thomas has two PGA titles — what Spieth wouldn't do for one — and is surprised why his longtime friend doesn't get much attention as he pursues the final leg.

"It should be the same amount of attention — you could say more because he's younger than Rory," Thomas said. "But that also could be a good thing. Going in under the radar is never bad."

New & Used Clubs from the Top Brands in Golf

2nd Swing

# Nine things about Valhalla Golf Club



Valhalla Golf Club has hosted three PGA Championships, two Senior PGA Championships and the 2008 Ryder Cup

By Bradley S. Klein

Valhalla Golf Club in Louisville, Kentucky, was built specifically to host major championships, and it has stood the test of time. Now recently polished and upgraded, the course is ready to host this year's PGA Championship.

## 1. WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Its name alone invokes epic tales, and it has been the site of some. Valhalla refers to the mythological Norse hall of slain warriors who rest under the watchful eye of the warrior god Odin. A bit fanciful, perhaps. But the original ownership hired Jack Nicklaus in the 1980s to design a major-championship venue, and the venue has produced memorable theatrics during three PGA Championships (1996 – Mark Brooks; 2000 – Tiger Woods; 2014 – Rory McIlroy), two Senior PGA Championships (2004 – Hale Irwin; 2011 – Tom Watson) and the 2008 Ryder Cup (USA). Perhaps another humbled god of yore can rise again this time.

The first PGA saw Kentucky's own Kenny Perry fall in a sudden-death playoff to Mark Brooks. Perry made a mess of the first extra hole after making the questionable decision to be interviewed in the CBS broadcast booth instead of keeping warm on the range. Perry also lost a sudden-death playoff at the 2009 Masters after making bogey on the final two holes of regulation.

He never did get his major championship, but he got redemption in his home state when, at the age of 48, he was a member of the U.S. Team that won the 2008 Ryder Cup at Valhalla. That team, captained by Paul Azinger, set a template that the U.S. side has been trying to replicate since.

Valhalla's next PGA, held just four years after Brooks' victory, was Woods' third consecutive major win. He became the first man since Ben Hogan in 1953 to win three majors in the same year and went on to win the following year's Masters to complete the Tiger Slam. Woods had to hole a downhill, sliding 7-footer for birdie to force a playoff with plucky underdog Bob May, then dispatched of him in a three-hole playoff. The scene of Woods chasing down his birdie putt and pointing at the hole on the first extra hole is perhaps the most famous moment at Valhalla.

**Photo Finish:** This epic finishing hole bends gracefully to the right, with a large bunker to the left of the landing zone and a beautiful water feature on the right. Most players can get home in two, but will have to contend with a big bunker in front and a smaller pot bunker left. The vast, horse-shoe-shaped green has distinct putting areas left, center, and right, so simply getting on the surface is no guarantee of a good score.

**Straight Up:** The tee shot must find the

uphill, left-angling fairway, which means avoiding the two large bunkers, one on each side of the landing area. Then the approach must find the green, which is completely surrounded by trouble—two bunkers to the left and tightly mown turf everywhere else. (Source:PGA of America)

**Homestretch:** Brush Run Creek lines the right side of this slight dogleg-right, as well. But the real difficulty is the formidable green complex, which features two bunkers in front and a severe drop-off to a closely manicured chipping area to the right. The natural amphitheater is a prime spot for spectator viewing. (Source: PGA of America)

**Julep:** Unfortunately, that's not mint julep in Brush Run Creek, which runs down the entire right side of the hole. The landing area is framed by deep bluegrass rough to the left and a large bunker to the right. The creek and a small bunker edge the right side of the large green, with a bigger bunker on the left. (Source:PGA of America)

**On The Rocks:** The longest par 3 on the course, and also one of the best views of the surrounding countryside. The serene setting gets more serious around the two-tiered green, which is sandwiched between two bunkers in front and two behind. Playing from either of the two rear bunkers can be especially painful as the green slopes from back to front. (Source: PGA of

America)

**The Limestone Hole:** Don't let the distance deceive you: Yes, it's the shortest two-shot hole on the course, but those two shots have to be good. A cluster of six bunkers sits just to the left of the fairway landing zone, while the green is a true island, surrounded by water and built up nearly 20 feet on large limestone boulders. (Source: PGA of America)

**Holler:** It's a middle- to long-iron shot into a shallow green that features a slight false front, with a large bunker in front and a smaller one behind. The green angles right to left, but shots going too far left will bound down the steep hillside. (Source: PGA of America)

**Sting Like A Bee:** This hole has an island fairway which is especially difficult because it doglegs to the right and then leaves an approach shot of 170-190 yards to an elevated green. One of the deepest bunkers on the course sits to the right of the angled putting surface, while the bluegrass rough to the left is gnarly and painful. (Source: PGA of America)

**Big Red:** Named after Secretariat, the big, long-distance thoroughbred, this hole is a double-dogleg with a fairway bunker on the right side of the driving zone and deep rough and trees to the left. The undulating, two-tiered green is nearly perpendicular to the fairway and protected by a large, deep



Valhalla's greens are visible from the approach area, even if not every pin placement can be seen

bunker in front. (Source: PGA of America)  
**Twin Spires:** The tee shot at this uphill par 4 is challenged by three fairway bunkers along the right side and two more left.

The uphill approach makes judging the yardage difficult, exaggerated by the presence of one of the largest and deepest bunkers on the course just right of the green. The green itself is one of the most undulating on the entire golf course. (Source: PGA of America)

**Float Like A Butterfly:** It's only a short-to middle-iron in, but the green complex is as dangerous as a Muhammad Ali combination. The front is protected by a deep bunker and a severe, closely manicured collection area. There is another bunker left, and another low-mow collection area beyond the green. The large, angled green affords numerous testing hole locations. (Source: PGA of America)

**Genuine Risk:** The split fairway sets up a classic risk vs. reward dilemma. Driving to the left shortens the hole by more than 50 yards, but the landing area is only 26 yards wide, surrounded by bluegrass rough, and guarded by water right; the approach from this island fairway is 210-230 yards, all over water. Driving to the right is longer but safer. With water along the front and left side of the green, it's a brave player who attacks from any angle. (Source: PGA of America)

**Long Shot:** The name "Long Shot" refers not to distance but one's chance of making a par on this difficult hole. It demands an accurate tee shot, and for some players will be something less than a driver as the aim is to get as close to Floyd's Fork as one dares. Even after a good drive, players will still be looking at over 200 yards to a challenging green complex: A deep bunker guards the left side, a closely mown collec-

tion area lurks on the right. (Source: PGA of America)

**The Sun Shines Bright:** The fairway on this dogleg-right is bracketed by a large fairway bunker on the right side and three bunkers on the left. The large, triangular green is also guarded on both sides, by a large bunker right and a closely mown collection area left. The back-right hole location is one of the most challenging on the course. (Source: PGA of America)

**Mine That Bird:** The aggressive line on this short-ish par 4 is down the left side, carrying the large bunker at the inside of the dogleg-left's elbow. When the tee is moved forward most players can drive the green, but this brings Floyd's Fork into play to the left side of the green and the putting surface features significant movement and contours. Golfers who choose to lay back and approach with a wedge will need precise distance control to get near the hole wherever it's positioned. (Source: PGA of America)

**Honest Abe:** Named after Kentucky's only president (Lincoln was born in Larue County, about 70 miles south of Valhalla; his family moved to Illinois when he was 7), this challenging par 3 demands an "honest" attempt. Floyd's Fork sweeps around to the right of the green, which also is guarded by a large bunker to the right and smaller bunkers to the left and behind. But the real danger is misreading the wind, which can push a shot to the right side, which slopes down toward the hazards. (Source: PGA of America)

**The Post:** The challenge on this dogleg-left is not only off the tee, but also on the approach. The large front-right bunker is both visually intimidating and a real threat when the hole is cut front-left or back-right. The left bunker will catch errant

shots aimed at the back of the green. (Source: PGA of America)

**Winning Colors:** Another slight dogleg left, this long par 4 is lined with beautiful Kentucky hardwoods. Tee shots need to stay clear of a finger of Floyd's Fork, a waterway that runs along the left side of the fairway and green, and continues to meander through the front nine. Also protecting the angled green are three bunkers, two front-left and one back-right. (Source: PGA of America)

McIlroy will mark something of a milestone when he returns to Valhalla this week. This was the site of his fourth – and most recent major – victory. That tournament was held in August, so we are a few months short of an exact decade, but there will no doubt be reflections on the fact that McIlroy won four majors from 2011-14 but has not won one since. He finished off his 2014 PGA Championship in the dark after

storms delayed the final round. It was his second major win of the year, coming on the heels of his victory a month earlier in The Open.

## 2. BIG BALLPARK

This is a golf club, not a country club, and everything about it is big in scale. It's a golf facility built for the modern game and built for hosting big events. The 485-acre property sits 20 miles east of downtown Louisville, easily accessible by highway and with plenty of local parking to accommodate the large crowds.

With 60 feet of elevation change across the entire site, Valhalla is easily walkable. There's also plenty of room alongside the holes to provide spectators with excellent viewing and to tuck the necessary cart paths behind mounds or in the trees. The two tees of the double-sided practice area sit 350 yards apart so there's no need to worry about netting on the practice area, either. The takeaway? There's no shortage of space at Valhalla.

## 3. HAZARD-IOUS MATERIAL

The corridors at Valhalla are framed by the spartan use of bunkers and the creeks that wind through the property. There are 62 bunkers on the course, and they're almost evenly deployed between the fairways and the greens.

The fairway bunkers tend to line the sides of the landing zones, which are approximately 25 yards wide. They're not necessarily there to define ideal lines of play or to present players with risky, but rewarding, carries. They simply constrict the landing areas and penalize those who stray from the fairway.

The greenside bunkers also help define aerial lines of play; these are perched up putting surfaces that are not designed for ground-game approaches. In this sense, the course is distinctly modern in its encouragement of aerial power.

Additional strategy is provided by two meandering streams: Floyd's Fork on the front nine and Brush Run Creek on the back nine. Together, they influence play on seven holes should players come up short.

*(continued on page 12)*

# RAINEY & ROYALS

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

Accounting • Audit Services  
 Tax Planning • Bookkeeping • Consulting

RAINEY & ROYALS PLLC  
 6500 E. MOCKINGBIRD LANE  
 SUITE 270  
 Dallas, Texas 75214  
 P. 214.580.1040  
 F. 214.580.1072  
 raineyroyalscpa.com





The greens average approximately 5,000 square feet, which makes them the third-smallest thus far in the PGA TOUR season

with their approaches or wander too far afield with their tee shots

#### 4. LONG GAME

Valhalla has been lengthened by 151 yards for this year's PGA Championship, a 2% increase over its yardage in 2014. It will now top out at 7,609 yards and have a par of 71. Over that same decade, the average drive on the PGA TOUR has increased by 2.8%. That means the effective playing distance is marginally less than it was a decade ago, especially when considering the added length that iron shots travel. Valhalla's added length is part of ongoing renovation by the Nicklaus design team. Recent changes were concentrated on four holes: the par-4 first and 12th holes, the par-3 14th and par-5 closing hole.

The first hole will now play approximately 50 yards longer, while 20 yards have been added to No.12. The 14th hole can now be played as a 250-yard par-3.

#### 5. THREE KEY HOLES

These are three holes to keep an eye on this week:

**No. 4:** The 372-yard par 4 normally plays as a lay-up off the tee to a tightly-bunkered fairway and then a wedge to a well-guarded green. But the PGA's Chief Championship Officer, Kerry Haigh, has indicated that the tees will "probably" be moved up at some point, in which case many players will tempt what amounts to a 305-yard carry to the green. Making the hole drivable brings Floyd's Fork into play left of the putting surface.

**Mine That Bird:** The aggressive line on this short-ish par 4 is down the left side, carrying the large bunker at the inside of the dogleg-left's elbow. When the tee is moved forward most players can drive the green, but this brings Floyd's Fork into play to the left side of the green and the putting surface features significant movement and contours. Golfers who choose to

lay back and approach with a wedge will need precise distance control to get near the hole wherever it's positioned. (Source: PGA of America)

**No. 6:** This 495-yard par 4 will likely be the toughest hole all week. Players have to back off on a driver because the fairway ends at 295 yards, bisected by Floyd's Fork. It's a 340-yard carry past trees and creek to reach the other side. Modesty off the tee leaves most players with 200 yards remaining to a perched green that falls off steeply on the left. Miss the fairway off the tee and par becomes very elusive.

**Long Shot:** The name "Long Shot" refers not to distance but one's chance of making a par on this difficult hole. It demands an accurate tee shot, and for some players will be something less than a driver as the aim is to get as close to Floyd's Fork as one dares. Even after a good drive, players will still be looking at over 200 yards to a challenging green complex: A deep bunker guards the left side, a closely mown collection area lurks on the right. (Source: PGA of America)

**No. 13:** This 351-yard par 4 is Valhalla's most photographed hole, and for good reason. It plays from an elevated tee to a densely-bunkered fairway. The approach is hit to a fortress of an island green that has absolutely no support around it. You either hit the 5,662-square-foot green or you are in the water. The risk-reward ratio is extremely high, so everyone rational lays up off the tee and then tries to hit the green with a wedge. The hole has recently been excavated anew to expose its supportive limestone and adjoining waterfall. It's quite the spectacle.

**The Limestone Hole:** Don't let the distance deceive you: Yes, it's the shortest two-shot hole on the course, but those two shots have to be good. A cluster of six bunkers sits just to the left of the fairway

landing zone, while the green is a true island, surrounded by water and built up nearly 20 feet on large limestone boulders. (Source: PGA of America)

#### 6. THAT 18TH

Fitting for a course in Kentucky, the 18th hole is nicknamed "Photo Finish," and it has provided plenty of those. Two of the three PGAs held at Valhalla have been decided in a playoff, while the other was a one-shot victory.

For this year's PGA, the par 5 has been lengthened by 28 yards to 570. It's still within reach of most of the field, but players will need to hit the fairway to get home in two.

The oversized green is 6,534 square feet. It wraps around a mammoth "lion's mouth" bunker that is in front of the green and divides it into three sections. The green serves as center stage, surrounded by hills that create a huge amphitheater for spectators.

**Photo Finish:** This epic finishing hole bends gracefully to the right, with a large bunker to the left of the landing zone and a beautiful water feature on the right. Most players can get home in two, but will have to contend with a big bunker in front and a smaller pot bunker left. The vast, horse-shoe-shaped green has distinct putting areas left, center, and right, so simply getting on the surface is no guarantee of a good score. (Source: PGA of America)

Perry bogeyed the hole in 1996, then watched Brooks make a 4-footer for birdie to force a playoff. Brooks birdied it again to win on the first extra hole.

Four years later, Woods had to hole a 7-foot birdie on No. 18 to force a three-hole playoff with May. And in 2014, the PGA had one of its most memorable finishes as McIlroy asserted himself on the 18th tee, finishing in the dark to avoid having to return the next day to complete his one-stroke win.

#### 7. NEW GRASS

Louisville occupies what turfgrass folks call the "transition zone." That is the mid-central region of the United States, which is in between a more Northern climate that favors bentgrass and a Southern climate suited for Bermudagrass. The mid-season heat and humidity that Valhalla endures is not ideal for cool-season grasses, and that meant that the club's original bentgrass fairways and tees were prone to wilting and required extra care.

In 2021, the club switched 30 acres of fairway and teeing grounds to Zeon Zoysia, a fine-bladed turfgrass that thrives in the local conditions and requires less water, chemicals and labor. That leads to annual savings of \$250,000 in maintenance.

From a competition standpoint, the Zoysia will play firmer, faster and effectively speed up the ground game, placing more of a premium on accurate ballstriking. That shrinks the playing surface because the ball will roll more after landing. In other words, it's a more sustainable playing surface that also requires more pre-

cise play. It's a win-win.

#### 8. NEW GREENS

Valhalla's greens, which were rebuilt in 2011, are on the small side for championship golf. They average approximately 5,000 square feet, which makes them the third-smallest thus far in the PGA TOUR season. Only those at Pebble Beach (3,500 square feet) and Harbour Town (3,700) have been smaller. This also is just the third time in 2024 that the TOUR pros will face bentgrass putting surfaces, following those at Augusta National and TPC Craig Ranch recently for THE CJ CUP Byron Nelson.

Valhalla's greens are visible from the approach area, even if not every pin placement can be seen. The course generally presents itself very well visually, a design trait of Nicklaus. With putting surfaces mowed to 1/10th of an inch, they will likely support speeds of 12-12.5 on the Stimpmeter. The breaks tend to be subtle, not swooping, and particular attention must be paid to putts inside 5-6 feet given the presence of modest contours at the cup.

#### 9. SUPER STUFF

Valhalla's superintendent, John Bollard, is a 25-year veteran of the turfgrass industry. He has spent the past five years at Valhalla, where he oversaw the installation of the Zeon Zoysia fairways and tees. He's also been prepping for his first professional major through close observation of the setups at Southern Hills for the 2022 PGA and last year at Oak Hill. It helps having a brand-new shop and storage area, plus the support of three assistants, a total of 40 employees, and – for championship week – another 125 volunteers.

He'll have Valhalla ready for another memorable finish.

#### Valhalla Golf Club 2024 PGA Championship Card of the course:

Hole	Par	Yardage
1	4	484
2	4	500
3	3	208
4	4	372
5	4	463
6	4	495
7	5	597
8	3	190
9	4	415
	<b>35</b>	<b>3,724</b>
10	5	590
11	3	211
12	4	494
13	4	351
14	3	254
15	4	435
16	4	508
17	4	472
18	5	570
	<b>36</b>	<b>3,885</b>
	<b>71</b>	<b>7,609</b>

PICTURE PERFECT

# FINISH

JESÚS FERREIRA BECAME THE YOUNGEST PLAYER IN MLS HISTORY TO SCORE 50 GOALS IN REGULAR SEASON ACTION.

## UPCOMING MATCHES:

### NEXT AWAY MATCH

TEXAS DERBY



AT



MAY 18 | 7:30PM



# Big 12 Baseball Power Rankings



OU won their first conference championship in baseball as a member of the Big 12

By Stacy Urban

The final weekend of Big 12 regular-season play is coming up, but it'll be devoid of much suspense. All the participants for the 10-team conference tournament were decided last weekend.

That includes the team at the top. Oklahoma has clinched the Big 12 title, the Sooners' first regular-season conference baseball championship since 1995 when they were in the Big Eight. Picked in the preseason coaches' poll to tie for sixth, the Sooners instead showed everybody by sweeping six conference series.

Sweep No. 6 came last Friday and Saturday when OU won three home games against Baylor, claimed a share of the title and hoisted a trophy. It got better on Sunday, when the Oklahoma State-Texas Tech series finale was canceled. That made the Sooners the Big 12 champs outright.

The jostling for position behind OU can still go a lot of directions. Oklahoma State, Texas, West Virginia, Cincinnati and Kansas are bunched within 2 1/2 games of one another going into the weekend, leaving myriad possibilities for seeds 2 through 6. The top two seeds receive a first-round bye in the conference tournament May 21-25 at Globe Life Field in Arlington.

Here are this week's Big 12 power rankings. Records are as of Monday. So are rankings in the USA TODAY Sports Top 25 coaches poll.

**1. Oklahoma (32-17, 21-6)**

**Last week: 1**

**What to know:** Don't bank on a seventh Big 12 series sweep. No. 15 OU finishes at Cincinnati, the surprise team of the Big 12 and one of the hottest ballclubs down the stretch.

**2. Oklahoma State (34-16, 17-9)**

**Last week: 2**

**What to know:** Too bad No. 17 OSU's series finale Sunday against slumping Texas Tech was rained out. Before then, the Cowboys were mathematically still in the race for the conference title with a

head-to-head tiebreaker over Oklahoma.

**3. Texas (32-20, 17-10)**

**Last week: 3**

**What to know:** How's this for consistency: The Longhorns have won two out of three in eight of their nine conference series. No other Big 12 team has won more than six conference series.

**4. West Virginia (31-19, 17-10)**

**Last week: 4**

**What to know:** Mountaineers coach Randy Mazey announced before the season he was stepping down when it ended. They celebrated Mazey on Sunday with a victory over Kansas State in his final home game.

**5. Kansas State (29-21, 13-14)**

**Last week: 5**

**What to know:** K-State, No. 36 in the RPI, had some momentum with recent series victories over Oklahoma State and Kansas. But after winning last weekend's opener at West Virginia, the Wildcats lost 13-0 and 12-5.

**6. Kansas (29-18, 15-12)**

**Last week: 7**

**What to know:** Kansas, with help, could still get the No. 3 seed in the Big 12 tournament. The Jayhawks finish at Texas in perhaps the best series of the final weekend.

**7. Cincinnati (30-21, 16-11)**

**Last week: 6**

**What to know:** Don't be dismissive of Cincinnati at the Big 12 tournament. The Bearcats have won four conference series in a row and five of their past six.

**8. Central Florida (31-17, 12-14)**

**Last week: 8**

**What to know:** The Knights have lost three of their past four conference series after winning four of their first five. Barring a late run, they're probably going to miss NCAA regional action for the sixth tournament in a row.

**9. TCU (30-17, 13-14)**

**Last week: 9**

**What to know:** The Horned Frogs have gone from outside the cut line for the Big 12 tournament not long ago to a bubble

team for the NCAA tournament with a No. 38 RPI and a No. 41 strength of schedule. They finish at home against West Virginia.

**10. Texas Tech (30-22, 12-17)**

**Last week: 10**

**What to know:** The Red Raiders are going to miss the NCAA tournament for the first time since 2015 unless they win the Big 12 tournament. Kansas, Oklahoma and Oklahoma State have Texas Tech on an eight-game conference losing streak.

**11. Baylor (21-29, 9-18)**

**Last week: 11**

**What to know:** Texas Tech might have missed the Big 12 tournament if Baylor had had anything left. The Bears have lost 11 conference games in a row.

**12. Houston (25-26, 7-19)**

**Last week: 13**

**What to know:** Houston hung losses on Texas's Max Grubbs and Kansas's Reese Dutton, who have two of the Big 12's five lowest ERAs among qualified pitchers. Even so, the Cougars have lost 19 of their past 22 conference games.

**13. Brigham Young (19-29, 6-21)**

**Last week: 12**

**What to know:** Thank goodness for mid-weeks. The Cougars are 6-2 in their past eight non-conference games. But in conference? They've been swept four series in a row.

Big 12 Baseball Standings <i>(as of April 25)</i>		
Team	Conf.	Overall
Oklahoma	21-6	32-17
Oklahoma St	17-9	34-16
West Virginia	17-10	31-19
Texas	17-10	32-20
Cincinnati	16-11	30-21
Kansas	15-12	29-18
TCU	13-14	30-17
Kansas State	13-14	29-21
UCF	12-14	31-17
Texas Tech	12-17	30-22
Baylor	9-18	21-29
Houston	7-19	26-26
BYU	6-21	20-29



**ST. PETE'S DANCING MARLIN**  
*Restaurant and Bar*

---

**Watch All the Games Here**

---

HIP FOOD FOR MODERN FOLK

---

2730 Commerce Street • Dallas, TX 75226  
Phone 214.698.1511  
[www.stpetesdancingmarlin.com](http://www.stpetesdancingmarlin.com)

# College Football News and Notes



BO CARTER

bcarter@footballfoundation.com

The NFF Gridiron Club of Dallas partnered with the Dallas-Fort Worth chapter of the NFL Alumni Association for the club's second annual charity golf tournament last Monday, and the tournament focused on raising funds for college scholarships to benefit high school scholar-athletes recognized at its annual awards banquet each spring. NFF Dallas vice president and tournament director Gary Peek produced two videos of featured speakers and NFF College Hall of Fame members Dat Nguyen of Texas A&M in 2023 and Gary Reasons of Northwestern State in 2024, and the URL links are Video-Gary Reasons NFF Gridiron Club of Dallas ([nffdallas.org](http://nffdallas.org)) and Video-Dat Nguyen — NFF Gridiron Club of Dallas ([nffdallas.org](http://nffdallas.org)). Peek also contributed this report on the festivities:

The forecast was bleak! Rain and thunderstorms were on the horizon for the big event! Every golf tournament host, corporate, charity, or otherwise, is closely watching weather patterns in the leadup to the event.

This year was no different as it was raining most of the weekend and the forecast did not look good for Monday. The calls, emails, and text messages were coming in the day before. Would we still play was the

big question on everyone's minds.

The tournament committee, led by Gary Peek vice president and treasurer for the NFF Gridiron Club of Dallas, decided to push forward as planned due to the difficulty of rescheduling a golf tournament considering players, sponsors, and challenging schedules for all. The prayers of many were answered and the weather was clear for the event, albeit a little overcast and humid.

The second annual NFF Gridiron Club of Dallas Charity Golf Tournament was held on Monday, May 6, on the King's Course at Gleneagles Country Club in Plano, Texas. The event consisted of a golf tournament during the day followed by a dinner banquet in the evening with Gary Reasons, two-time Super Bowl champ (XXI and XXV) with the New York Giants and 1996 College Football Hall of Fame inductee. Reasons was recognized for his play at Northwestern State as the first player in FCS Football history (then Div I-AA) to earn First Team All-America honors.

Scott Murray, legendary sportscaster and CEO of Murray Media, kicked off the event as the players readied to start their rounds and Larry Dan Melton, care pastor of Fielder Church in Arlington, Texas, provided the opening prayer.

Liffort Hoble, president of the DFW NFL Alumni and chairman of the NFL Alumni Presidents, helped provide NFL players as the fifth player on each team. This added a new and exciting dimension to the event as the objectives for both organizations are closely aligned in the world of football. In addition to Hoble (Miami Dolphins), players such as Rex Burkhead (New England Patriots), Van Malone (Detroit Lions), Clarence LeBlanc (New York Giants), and Charles Ali (Cleveland Browns), among others.

The tournament continued its fundrais-

ing partnership with Charity Golf International, and Mike Dobbyn, 2007 World Long Drive Champion, served as the Long Drive Entertainer on the 10th tee box. In addition, a new on course fundraising event was launched with BackSwing Golf Events, and Hannah Wood, former University of Oklahoma golfer, conducted a "Beat the Pro" contest to add to our fundraising efforts. Also, the owners of Stretch Zone DFW were on hand at the driving range for golfer warmup and on the course to help the golfers stay limber throughout the day.

As play finished up for the day, golfers started arriving back at the clubhouse to enjoy a fantastic buffet dinner and get ready for the events of the evening. The video for the 75th Anniversary of the National Football Foundation was played, and Gary Peek served as emcee for the evening.

Gerald Brence, president of the NFF Gridiron Club of Dallas, gave the President's Update sharing photos from the annual awards banquet covering the high school and collegiate scholar-athletes with special attention given to the five high school scholarship awards winners that evening. Cooper Peach, recipient of the chapter's highest honor, Scholar-Athlete of the Year, was on hand and spoke to the audience for a few minutes thanking them for the recognition and encouraging them to support the college fundraising efforts of the organization. Scott Peach, head football coach of Arlington High School, was also present in support of his son, Cooper, with a chapter salute to veteran Texas high school football coach Eddy Peach and three generations of the football family and the "Peach Bowls" featuring Eddy and Scott coaching opposing teams.

Peek then introduced featured speaker, Gary Reasons, after a highlight video of his collegiate and professional football days was shown. Reasons gave a very emotional speech recalling special memories and interesting stories from his days in football. He shared his learnings along the way and surprised everyone by allowing four of his rings to be passed around the room including his College Football Hall of Fame and two Super Bowl rings. The players and sponsors were delighted to try on the rings and take photos.

After Reasons concluded, Peek brought to the dais Brandon Pollard, pastor of Grace for Eternity Church in Fort Worth, Texas, and auctioneer for the evening. There were many auction items that drove a spirited battle among participants. Auction items included helmets signed by Dallas Cowboy greats Bob Lilly and Randy White, Royal Liverpool pin flag signed by 2023 British

Open champion, Brian Harman, 2025 CJ Cup Byron Nelson VIP and merchandise package, and several great international vacation packages.

The highlight of the live auction brought Reasons back to the podium for an auction of a New York Giants helmet, a framed display of nine NYG trading cards of Reasons, and a framed #55 jersey with several inscriptions signed by Reasons prior to the event. What made it extra special for these items is that Reasons autographed the helmet and back of the framed trading cards as each auction item was won and took photos with all three auction items winners. This added greatly to the auction experience with the winners being able to engage greatly with one of the NYG greats.

The awards and prizes were handed out next from various on course contests including five Closest-to-the-Pin awards, a Longest Drive award, and putting contest winners. Three teams were awarded for the top finishes for the day along with special gifts, including gift cards from Bob's Steak and Chop House, golf clubs, and golf bags.

The evening wrapped up with the announcement of Silent Auction winners and raffle tickets being drawn for over 30 raffle items. Photographs for the event will be shared on the chapter's website, [www.nffdallas.org](http://www.nffdallas.org), in coming weeks.

The NFF Sunflower Chapter in the Kansas City area featured another packed house for its annual Scholar-Athlete Awards Banquet last week. Former Big Eight Conference assistant commissioner Jeff Bollig served as master of ceremonies and a facilitator for area scholarship donations.

June 3 is the date for denotation of the candidates on the 2025 College Football Hall of Fame ballot by the NFF. The 66th NFF Awards Dinner is set for Tuesday, Dec. 10, in Las Vegas, Nev. For NFF membership, ticket information and additional data, please access [Footballfoundation.org](http://Footballfoundation.org). The NIL INFLCR Summit is scheduled for June 22-24 at the NFF Chick-Fil-A College Hall of Fame in Atlanta. There will be an anticipated 500-plus student-athletes and nationally known speakers will help share ideas and conduct seminars. Some of the top speakers already secured for the 440-capacity conference are Sam Acho, 2010 William V. Campbell Trophy® recipient, former Texas and NFL defensive end, ESPN Analyst; Tom Bratton, Medallion Partners CEO, business consultant; Greg Johnson, McAfee President and CEO, former Intuit executive VP, and former Air Force halfback; and Joe Moglia, former TD Ameritrade Chairman and CEO, former Coastal Carolina head football coach.

(continued on page 16)

Nominees for the 2024 NIL Awards powered by Influencer at the NIL Summit include such categories as Female Athlete of the Year, Male Athlete of the Year, Innovator of the Year, the Hustle Award, Scholar Athlete of the Year, Athlete Advocate of the Year, Breakthrough Athlete of the Year, Athlete Creator of the Year, Best Institutional Program, and Brand of the Year. Some of the top institutional program nominees include Cincinnati, Florida, Grand Canyon, Ole Miss, Nebraska, Ohio State, Saint Joseph's (Pa.), and UCLA. Student-athlete and coach/administrator registration also remains open for the NIL Summit in upcoming weeks.

The fourth annual Black College Baseball World Series presented by Tyson was contested last May 8-11 at Riverwalk Stadium (home of the Class AA Southern League Montgomery Biscuits) with some of the top HBCU programs from NCAA Division II and NAIA ranks competing. No. 1 seed Talladega, Edward Waters, Wiley (Texas) U., Bluefield (W.Va.) State, Miles (Ala.), and Florida Memorial U. The BCB World Series has become one of the most popular HBCU tournaments nationally and has been captured in previous years by Bluefield State in 2021, Edward Waters in 2022 and Florida Memorial in the longest game in college baseball during the 2023 season – 19 innings – in 3-2 fashion over Albany State, which has been No. 1 for the majority of the '24 season in the Black College Nines Small College poll.

The 2024 winner was Bluefield State (school-record 33 wins in 48 overall games) with a 5-1 win over NAIA Championship-bound Talladega College (39-16) last Saturday.

#### **NFF College Hall of Fame Facts:**

**Some notable birthdates** in NFF College Hall of Fame annals in the May 13-19 time period are May 14 (1907) Howard Harpster, Salem, Ore.; (1924) John Ferraro, Cudahy, Calif.; May 15 (1958) Ron Simmons, Perry, Ga.; (1966) Thurman Thomas, Houston, Texas; (1969) Emmitt Smith, Pensacola, Fla.; (1970) Desmond Howard, Cleveland, Ohio; (1970) Rod Smith, Texarkana, Ark.; (1976) Michael Bishop, Galveston, Texas; May 16 (1943) Donny Anderson, Borger, Texas; May 17 (1912) Ace Parker, Portsmouth, Va.; May 18 (1916) Paul Hoernemann, Lima, Ohio 18 (1924) Charlie "Choo Choo" Justice, Asheville, N.C.; (1983) Vince Young, Houston, Texas; May 19 (1893) Tuss McLaughry, Chicago, Ill.; (1949) Archie Manning, Cleveland, Miss.; (1967) John Friesz, Missoula, Mont.; (1975) London Fletcher, Cleveland, Ohio. Notable anniversaries of passings if NFF College Hall of Fame members are May 13 (1985) Morley Jennings, Lubbock, Texas; May 14 (1995) Tommy Prothro, Memphis, Tenn.; May 15 (1970) Clark Shaughnessy, Santa Monica, Calif.; (1999) Bobby Wilson, Brenham, Texas; May 16 (2019) Bob Schloredt, Seattle, Wash.; May

17 (1993) Bill Wallace, Houston, Texas; May 18 (1963) Ernie Davis, Cleveland, Ohio; (2018) Dr. Billy Cannon, St. Francisville, La.; (2023) Jim Brown, Los Angeles, California.

**Happy birthdays** to NFF Hall of Fame members born May 15 Ron Simmons, Thurman Thomas, Emmitt Smith, Desmond Howard, Rod Smith, Michael Bishop, May 16 Donny Anderson (a spry 81), May 18 Vince Young, May 19 NFF chairman Archie Manning, John Friesz, London Fletcher...

#### **Schedules:**

The Army West Point-Notre Dame at Yankee Stadium in The Bronx, N.Y., will be a primetime telecast (exact airtime to be determined) via NBC Sports. It celebrates the 100-year anniversary of NFF tri-founder Grantland Rice's connotation of the Four Horsemen in the Notre Dame backfield...UCF will host Conference USA 2023 runnerup Jacksonville State on Thursday, Aug. 28 in the season opener for both schools...UCF also has future contests with North Carolina A&T in 2025, Bethune-Cookman in '26 and Massachusetts during the 2026 season... Boston College and Rutgers will renew their series in 2026 and '27...Notre Dame will continue its two-game series with Texas A&M in 2025...Norfolk State and North Carolina Central Eagles will meet in the 2024 Circle City Classic at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, Indiana.

#### **Good Works:**

Southwest Airlines is offering additional intern possibilities for Paul Quinn College students and also gave each graduating senior a free round trip air ticket to each spring PQQ graduate last weekend...The NFL Atlanta Falcons are granting 20 high schools in Alabama funds to start girls flag football programs...Longtime NFF member and supporter entertainer Kenny Chesney played before a sold out concert audience last Saturday at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas...Lindy Waters III of Oklahoma State was saluted as a Kiowa Native American student-athlete who has worked his way up the ladder from the lowers professional basketball levels to the NBA title-contending Oklahoma City Thunder...Vanderbilt begins its Football Tailgate Tour with pregame events around the VU-Georgia State contest in Atlanta Sept. 14.

#### **Football Coaches:**

Utah State head coach Blake Anderson was highlighted on ESPN about personal grief and emotional support for student-athletes in a moving interview... Jacksonville State formally extended the contract of head coach Rich Rodriguez for two additional years through the 2020 season...Liberty head coach Jamey Chadwell likes the idea of the highest remaining Group of Five conference squad remaining in the 12-team College Football Playoff with the next four top-ranked G5 squads competing in a special tournament with two semifinal tilts and a Group of Five title

test...College of New Jersey head coach Casey Goff is leaving the program to accept another coaching position... Knoxville (Tenn.) Farragut HS head coach Eddie Courtney has retired after 214 victories and 29 years at the school...

**Hometowns** of more 2024 college head coaches – Boise State: Spencer Danielson, Solana Beach, Calif.; Boston College: Bill O'Brien, Boston, Mass.; Bowling Green: Scot Loeffler, Barberton, Ohio; Buffalo: Pete Lembo, Staten Island, N.Y.; BYU: Kalani Sitake, Nukualofa, Tonga.

#### **Directors of Athletics:**

UNI named Megan Franklin director of athletics...Marquette AD Bill Scholl will retire when as soon as his successor is selected...Mississippi State AD Zac Selmon has adopted the motto Elevating the Standard as he begins his second years at the helm and was highlighted in a two-part series in 247Sports...Houston AD Chris Pezman projects the completion of updates on UH's west side of TDECU Stadium is on schedule for August 2025 with an expanded video board that is 160 feet wide...James Madison AD Matt Roan may look at future expansion of Bridgeforth Stadium on campus...FCGU AD Colin Hargis says that when the NIL is done correctly, the options for student-athletes and departments can be productive. He also believes that there needs to be more focus on NIL governance and conversations on improving procedures and that the Atlantic Sun Conference has been a great landing point for his group...UTSA added Mac Hart as senior associate AD for internal operations...Retiring VMI AD Jim Miller answered questions about how competitive the Keydets can be in both football and basketball if NIL and NCAA transfer portal conditions continue to evolve...Northwestern AD and former Vanderbilt football standout Dr. Derrick Gragg and staff have denied rumors that he may accept another similar post...South Carolina State AD Nathan Cochran mentioned his current priorities at SCSU as possibly adding sports (such as golf and bowling), NIL engagement, more opportunities for women student-athletes, and increasing attendance for football and other sports...St. Joseph's (Pa.) AD Jill Bodensteiner chronicled the behind the scenes' activity in and around the NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Selection Committee meetings...Oregon AD Rob Mullens expressed his notions about paying student-athletes as university employees, cost of attendance challenges, the NIL's impact on possible player tampering – especially in football and basketball, cost of attendance approaching \$100,000 per student-athletes at many FBS universities, and financing a NCAA FBS department of athletics...Michigan AD Warde Manuel notes that the NCAA transfer portal is contradictory to his ideals for UM athletics and continues to consider adding women's ice hockey to the Wolverines varsity list...Nebraska Deputy AD and chief operat-

ing officer Haven Fields signed a three-year contract with extensive compensation...David Reed has moved to executive vice president for compliance solutions with Fortify College Athletics after serving as associate AD at ULM...Pat Knight, son of late Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame coach Bob Knight, has been named men's basketball head coach at Marian (Ind.)... Chris Aliano is the new associate director of development at Rutgers...Seton Hall named Nicole Gaudenzi associate AD for student-athlete development and leadership...Kent State named Heather Hefner field hockey head coach...Drexel selected Erin DeMarco as associate AD for compliance...Leanne Ulmer, head volleyball coach at Carthage College, recalled challenges of college head coaching for 25 seasons and ways to handle having to remove a student-athlete from a team, some anxiety from that decision, pinpointing student-athlete leaders early in their careers, working with a small staff, and developing meaningful relationships with other coaches and ADs. Her son and Oregon women's volleyball head coach Matt Ulmer obviously learned these lessons well...Kansas men's basketball head coach Bill Self confirmed a 20-game intra-conference schedule for the Big 12 in 2024-25...Jordan Szabo named Auburn women's tennis head coach...USF AD Michael Kelly is in favor of the U.S. Senate proposal for the Department of Homeland Security to allow international student-athletes to gain NIL arrangements...Connecticut granted a contract extension for director of tennis and women's head coach Glenn Marshall through May 2028...Illinois State named Raleigh DeRose women's soccer head coach...UCF associate AD for sports medicine Mary Vander Heiden is the new NCAA Division I chair for the Intercollegiate Council for Sports Medicine...USC chose Michael Rorabaugh as senior associate AD and chief development officer and Cody Worsham as senior associate AD for strategic communications and brand advancement...UTSA named Ashley Poronsky senior associate AD for development and strategy...NC State tabbed Kevin Hansen as associate AD of compliance...Providence men's basketball head coach Kim English notes that tampering may be continuing as NIL allurements and teams making promises to potential transfer portal entries...Cal State Bakersfield added Ari Wideman as women's basketball head coach...Arizona swimming and diving head coach Augie Busch has left his post...Hampton and Appalachian State are seeking new softball head coaches...Louisiana Tech added Wally Crittenden as senior associate AD for championship resources...UMass Lowell chancellor Dr. Julie Chen gave some inside administrative pointers for hiring a director of athletics and other key positions at UML...The latest position openings in athletics on D1Ticker.com are Arizona State, Cal State Bakersfield, Cleveland State, Colorado State, Fresno



# IN TROUBLE WITH THE IRS?



*If you owe the IRS or state \$10,000, \$15,000 or more call us for a FREE, no obligation consultation.*

## **Our FREE Consultation will help you:**

- Resolve your past due tax problems
- End Wage Garnishment
- Stop IRS Tax Levies

We know your rights and are here to protect you.

Our team of highly qualified tax attorneys deal with the IRS for you.

**We have successfully represented thousands of cases with the IRS.**



***Make Tax Problems a Thing of the PAST!***

Call now for your  
free consultation

**800-406-5032**

State, Illinois State, Indiana State, Iowa, Long Island, Northern Iowa, St. Bonaventure, UMass Lowell, VMI, Washington State, Arkansas, Bellarmine, Eastern Kentucky, Florida, James Madison, Louisville, Michigan, Michigan State, NC State, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Texas, Ole Miss, San Diego State, Stanford, Duke, LSU, Middle Tennessee, Penn State, Portland State, SMU, UTSA, Washington, Wichita State, Stetson, Texas A&M Corpus Christi, Tulane, UTEP, Virginia Tech, Western Michigan, and Wisconsin.

#### **The Conferences:**

The Big Ten Conference is conferring on how to break tiebreakers for the Big Ten Football Championship clash with the new 18-team configuration in 2024...Missouri State will join Conference USA in July, 2025, and transition to NCAA FBS in August 2025...Grand Canyon and Seattle U. have accepted memberships in the West Coast Conference beginning in 2025....

...Mountain West Conference commissioner Gloria Nevarez remains committed to the latest College Football Playoff but would like a readjustment of funding to all 10 NCAA FBS circuits...Southeastern Conference ADs such as Arkansas' Hunter Yurachek and Oklahoma's Joe Castiglione (NFF board member) are estimating how to sign contracts with non-conference opponents from the 2026 season onward after the circuit certified eight-game SEC schedules for 2024 and '25...Horizon League commissioner Julie Roe Lach covered her opinions about the current sports landscape, the "green grass" of the NCAA transfer portal, some nationally recognized student-athletes from the HL, and a possible boomerang effect on some student-athletes who have returned to the League after brief respites...Missouri Valley Conference Baseball Players were Mike Sears, Indiana State (player); and Shane Harris, Evansville (pitcher)...Oklahoma State's Nolan Schubart (player), Oklahoma's Braden Davis (pitcher) and BYU's Kuhio Aloy (newcomer) were the Big 12 Conference Baseball Players of the Week..

...Mountain West Conference Baseball Players of the Week were Air Force's Charlie Jones (player), San Diego State's Omar Serrano and SDSU's Zane Kelly (freshman)...Jacksonville State 3B Brennen Norton and New Mexico State pitcher Hayden Walker were Conference USA Baseball Players of the Week...

#### **The Bowls:**

Bowl Season executive director Nick Carparelli opines that there will be more total bowl games with the expanded, 12-team College Football Playoff format and that NIL arrangements with compensation will improve the more frequent opt-outs for FBS postseason activity in coming years...The former Barstool Arizona Bowl

now is being sponsored as the Snoop Dogg Arizona Bowl presented by Gin and Juice by Dre and Snoop. Snoop Dogg has been a longtime youth football coach and the father of former USC football student-athlete Cordell Broadus. He also is director of the Snoop Youth Football League in Los Angeles...The College Football Playoff is working with the city of Atlanta and area tourism to host several events around the CFP title game and the Martin Luther King national holiday observance.

#### **The Players:**

Colorado now has 37 incoming transfers for '24 through the NCAA portal. The Buffaloes also gained three verbal commitments for 2025 in DB Mantrez Walker, CB Alex Graham and TE Corbin Laisure...Tyrin Lawrence is transferring from Vanderbilt to Georgia...Georgia's RJ Melendez is headed to Mississippi State via the portal...Youngstown State DT Anthony Johnson has transferred to Mississippi State...NC State DL Drew Tuazama has joined the transfer portal merry-go-round...Washington State LB Jordan Smith entered the portal last week...WR Artis Cole is the latest Fresno State griddy to transfer...Penn State safety King Mack has taken his talents to Alabama for '24...North Carolina's Daja Kelly is moving to Oregon starting with the fall semester...CB Montre Miller has taken his talents from West Virginia to Mississippi State...Former pro baseball performer Monte Harrison has committed to play football at Arkansas...Alabama gained a key transfer in Rutgers' Clifford Omoruyi...Samara Spencer has left Arkansas to join the Tennessee program...Four other key transfer portal entries in recent days are Coleman Hawkins (Illinois), Ven-Allen Lubin (Vanderbilt), Jamir Watkins (Florida State), and Achor Achor (Samford).

#### **Around the Gridiron and Campus:**

Nippert Stadium in Cincinnati is celebrating its 110th season this autumn and was the first college stadium to have lights during the 1909 campaign...Wichita State athletics has received a \$600,000 gift from College Baseball Hall of Fame retired coach Gene Stephenson along with has a \$20,000 annual pledge to the Wheat Shock NIL collective with special designations for student-athletes...Alabama A&M athletics has contracted INFLCR Local Exchange and InfluXer to augment the Bulldogs NIL initiatives...Florida A&M and Florida State suffered extensive damage to campus football and baseball facilities during a tornado on May 10 in Tallahassee, Fla...UCF has sold out of football season tickets for the fourth time since 2021...Sam Houston athletics inaugurated a new, secondary mascot for fall semester usage...Charlotte athletics joined Toledo, Arkansas State, Kent State, Ball State, Southern Miss, Arkansas, Miami (Ohio), Akron, and Wichita State among the Top 10 in the Excellence in Management Cup for the 2022-23 NCAA FBS academic year. The research study

from the Texas A&M College Sports Lab measures the success that athletics departments reach via fiscal resources and NCAA postseason contests...Arizona key athletics personnel and coaches are in the midst of a seven-city tour in the state to assist in alumni engagement and encourage financial contributions for the department...Penn State athletics will utilize the Elevate Group for ticketing, revenue opportunities and premium hospitality as Beaver Stadium is about to receive \$700 million upgrade in all areas...San Diego athletics has opened the NIL Torero Exchange collective via Teamworks Influencer and the USD Ole Foundation for student-athlete compensation...UCLA men's volleyball won last week's Division I title to bring the Bruins all-time NCAA team titles' total to 122 (second all-time to Stanford with 135) and men's NCAA crowns to 78 (also second to USC with 85) ...USF continues to utilize \$23 million in donations from retired president Dr. Judy Genshaft and her husband Steven Greenbaum for the university's Honors College and other scholastic ventures....

...California and Stanford are continuing to make administrative moves in athletics and have planned to keep their longtime rivalries in several sports active and intact under their new umbrella in the Atlantic Coast Conference...Several tunnels to provide escape areas for illegal casino wagering and also used by famed outlaws Bonnie and Clyde have been re-discovered and highlighted in news reports under the campus of Arlington Baptist U. in Arlington, Texas...Boise State athletics communications has begun accepting credential request through its online system for 2024 football...Auburn athletics went over overboard mode last week while hosting the SEC Softball Championship and a NCAA Men's Golf Regional simultaneously...Aramark Sports and Entertainment has introduced the Immerse consulting division...The Kentucky Wildcats Club Blue NIL collective garnered \$650,000 in commitments for the UK men's basketball program...Kansas City Kangaroos athletics has initiated a strategic plan for competitive excellence and funding assistance for UMKC varsity sports...The Student Athlete NIL group named Jason Belzer co-chair, Chris Brown chief operating officer, Rick Kanemasu president, Michelle Obetz chief financial officer...Virginia Tech football has begun presale tickets for the '24 season..Nebraska (1,466 dual victories) and BYU (1,401 wins) are the all-time NCAA Division I leaders in women's volleyball triumphs...The historic Millennium Harvest House Hotel, constructed in 1959 in Boulder, Colo., will be razed to accommodate U. of Colorado student housing units....

...University of Calgary (Canada) graduates athletics trainers and therapists Deane Leonard of NFL teams, Mike Frostad of the MLB Los Angeles Angels and Geoff Horne and Brent Andrews of the MLB

Toronto Blue Jays were featured in a recent story about Calgary's contributions to sports health in athletics over three-plus decades...Texas A&M baseball will enter the NCAA tourney (in all probability) with a 25-0 mark against non-conference opponents this season. It is the second time (along with a 26-0 non-loop mark in 2016) in school history with an unbeaten mark in 20-plus contests outside SEC activity....

...Tiny Blue Mountain (Miss.) Christian U. has made the NAIA Championships in baseball for the first time in BMCU annals and will meet Talladega College Thursday in Shreveport, La....Notre Dame (Ohio) College will be closing after 102 years due to financial challenges on Aug. 31.

Birmingham-Southern will cease to exist on May 31 after 158 years of learning....Proof of the Pudding CEO Adam Noyes mentioned that clients Georgia, Georgia Tech, Auburn, Alabama, Mississippi State, and Wake Forest are seeking additional premium fan experience areas at their 2024 home gridiron events...Rice is adding women's golf as a varsity sport in 2026-27...Florida A&M was supposed to net a \$237 million donation from the Issac Batterson 7th Family Trust and CEO Gregory Gerami for the largest donation in school history and was believed to be the most significant gift ever to an HBCU member. There was scheduled to be a \$100 million allocation to Rattlers athletics, but now the possible gift may be paused, delayed or downsized...Future SEC softball powers Oklahoma and Texas were matched in the Big 12 Conference Championship last week in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

#### **NFF College Hall of Fame, Other Notables:**

NFF College Hall of Fame member and Colorado head coach Deion Sanders was highlighted for his numerous feeds on X and how he does not lose sleep over social media posts – positive or negative...Former Arkansas-Monticello WR Lance Gasaway is part owner of 2024 Kentucky Derby victor (by an eyelash in a three-way photo finish) Mystik Dan...Micha Parsons of Penn State and the NFL Dallas Cowboys and CJ Stroud of Ohio State and the NFL Houston Texans just finished a goodwill tour and multiple football camps they hosted in China and Japan...College Baseball Hall of Fame member Ownie Carroll of Holy Cross had a 1927 game-worn jersey when he played for the MLB Detroit Tigers sell for \$23,000 at auction last week...The Montgomery (Ala.) School District and Montgomery YMCA hosted the 65th annual Jimmy Hitchcock Awards Dinner to commemorate the multi-sport career of the late Auburn star and bother of fellow Auburn football and baseball stalwart Billy Hitchcock...NFF Chris Schenkel Award recipient Eli Gold has captured the 2024 Johnny Stalling Award (in memory of the late son of NFF College Hall of Fame member Gene Stallings – Johnny Stallings) while Alabama head coach Kalen

DeBoer received the 2024 Gene Stallings Award for community service.

#### Media Musings:

Award-winning author Jeff Miller chronicled professional football integration with the short-loved NFL Dallas Texans in 1952 with such memorable stars as NFF College Hall of Fame RB Buddy Young of Illinois blazing the trail... Sportico's Eben Novy-Williams detailed Florida State's desire to net \$326.6 million from state revenue bonds for expenses incurred for the renovation of Doak Campbell Stadium and FSU's new football operations facility... FootballScoop.com reporter John Brice expects that a mini-coalition of Group of Five conferences may be formed to make selections in a Group of Five Top 25 football survey starting Aug. 1... JohnCanzano.com estimates that separate football telecast agreements by remaining Pac-12 Conference members Oregon State and Washington State may make between \$5-\$9 million apiece for FOX and CW live coverage... Sports Business Journal's Bret McCormick chronicled the new Seat Revenue Advisors Group and how the agency can help colleges add to ticket purchases in areas traditionally not filled to capacity or could benefit from special seating options... Under Armour tabbed Yuron White as head of footwear and senior vice president... The new EA Sports College Football 25 video game will feature voices of numerous college broadcasters instead of only Chris Fowler and Kirk Herbstreit of ESPN on the simulated contests...

Advertising on legal sports wagering dropped 21 percent in 2023 after peaking at \$1.4 billion in 2022... On3.com had several thoughts about the possible House v. NCAA settlement with a roster value maximum of \$20,000 – much less than the estimated \$100,000-150,000 benefits through training, nutrition, tutoring, etc., under current conditions... Tampa Bay (Fla.) Times newspaper's Matt Baker updated jurisprudence challenges between Clemson and the Atlantic Coast Conference with redacted copies of the ACC-ESPN agreement... Interlocutor John Canzano reports that Oregon State and Washington State are preparing independent television agreements for their combined 13 home football contests this fall... FootballScoop's Zach Barnett (former NFF assistant director of communications) and John Brice reported a number of updates from the National Football Operations Organization's annual clinic in Frisco, Texas. Panel discussions included additional security for student-athletes before and after contests, alleged tampering in the NCAA transfer portal and operational challenges facing gridiron schools on all levels... The Wall Street Journal's Douglas Belkin spoke of graduating college students along with current college student-athletes who started their four-year journey under the veil of COVID-19 and have endured through numerous challenges. He also applauded the NCAA for granting five- and five-year

competition waivers (similar to student-athletes in the time immediately after World War II) to those affected by curtailments and cancellations... The Field of 68 website evaluated 2024-25 coaching hires and the continued impact of the NCAA transfer portal... College Hockey Insider's Mike McMahon wrote that Central Hockey League players could end up back in the collegiate ranks through NIL funding... CBS Sports columnist Dennis Dodd illustrated the Alabama-to-Iowa-to-Alabama football transfer episodes and details of how he arrived back at the Capstone... Disney Corp. senior executive vice president Hugh Johnson noted a slight decrease in the sports division quarterly earnings due to some expenses incurred by ESPN... AL.com's Joseph Goodman related how one NCAA transfer portal student-athlete received dozens of calls and texts some 30 seconds after midnight on the first day of allowed portal activity... OneTeam Partners and Altius Sports Partners are combining for a long-term partnership... Learfield president of brand management and marketing and Collegiate Licensing Co. CEO Cory Moss explained their association with the upcoming EA Sports College Football 25 video game... Capital One posted the highest NCAA men's basketball brand awareness numbers in the 18th annual NCAA Sponsor Breakthrough study from the MarketCast Group with 62 percent fan identification...

#### FWAA, CSC, NCAA, Etc.:

Retired FWAA president Mark Blandschun penned a solid, reflective piece on retiring American Athletic Conference commissioner Mike Aresco and the veteran administrator's transition from college television affairs to the always-challenging role as a NCAA Division I conference commissioner... College Sports Communicators members featured in the news and on social media posts in recent days are Scott Sweegan of WKU, Mike Fragale of West Virginia, Adam Bodnar of Western Michigan, Brian Lucas of Wisconsin, and Tim Harkins of Wyoming... Florida, Kansas, LSU, Michigan State, Stanford, Tennessee, UCLA, and USC are convening with NCAA enforcement and compliance officials concerning possible issues and probes at their respective schools... The NBA Toronto Raptors are taking additional steps to prevent players from making illegal wagers... The NCAA Women's Basketball Rules Committee has advised a future one-game suspension to be added to the ejection of players, coaches or bench personnel who make physical contact or threaten referees... NCAA director of championships and alliances, playing rules and officiating Rachel Seewald covered a multitude of new playing rules in 2023-24 and upcoming 2024-25 rules' changes that have impacted and will impact safety and mental health for NCAA student-athletes as well as sportsmanship directives... There have been recent public

and media debates about the NCAA possibly restoring records of former Ohio State QB Terrelle Pryor after his five game suspension as well as the school's 12 wins from the 2010 season erased from the books by NCAA sanctions... 2024 NFL training camps will occur in five suburbs of Los Angeles in July and August: Dallas Cowboys - Oxnard; Las Vegas Raiders - Costa Mesa; Los Angeles Chargers - El Segundo; Los Angeles Rams - Woodland Hills; and New Orleans Saints - Irvine... College Football Players Association executive director Jason Stahl is calling for student-athletes to be considered as employees but with collective bargaining rights... Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, city attorneys did not evoke jurisprudence in an anti-sportsmanship shout at the Utah women's basketball team... New NCAA NIL regulations now allow for full NIL activity during practice, pre- and postgame, news conferences, and on-court or similar celebrations such as the "I'm going to Disney World" declarations... Private equity investors now are allowed to own as much as 30 percent of NFL franchises... U.S. District Court Judge Claudia Wilken remanded a four-week extension for numerous information deadlines in House v. NCAA jurisprudence... The UCLA Health Group is the official team of physicians of USA Basketball and the 2024 U.S. Olympic basketball squads... Texas

currently leads all states (with some teams' rosters still to be determined) with 14 standouts headed to the Paris Olympics while Florida is next with 11... Mobile sports betting continues to be illegal in Mississippi despite legislation and proposals to the contrary... The NCAA Division I Baseball Selection Committee again advised colleges not to cancel non-conference games to get an edge in Ratings Percentage Index compilations prior to conference tournaments.

#### 2024-25 College Football Playoff Bowl Schedule

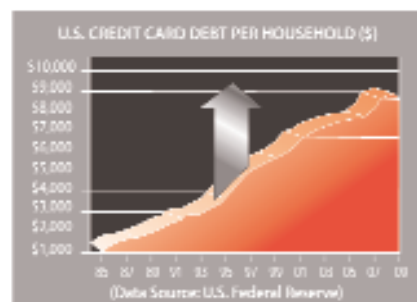
(All Games Televised by ESPN, Eastern Standard Time Airtimes TBD)  
Friday-Saturday, Dec. 20-21 – First Round (9-12 Seeds in CFP)  
Dec. 20 – One game with teams, time and site TBD  
Dec. 21 – Three games with teams, times and sites TBD  
Tuesday-Wednesday, Dec. 31-Jan. 1, 2025  
Dec. 31 – Vrbo Fiesta Bowl, Glendale, Ariz., teams and time TBD  
Jan. 1 – Chick Fil-A Peach, Atlanta, Ga.; Rose Bowl presented by Prudential, Pasadena, Calif.; Allstate Sugar, New Orleans, Dec. 20-21 winners vs. Top Four Seeds  
Thursday-Friday, Jan. 9-10, 2025  
Jan. 9 – Capital One Orange Bowl, Miami Lakes, Fla., winners of quarterfinals  
Jan. 10 – Goodyear Cotton Bowl,

## Credit Card Debt?

Solutions that can help you get out of debt.

Tom Hill  
CGA STAFF WRITER

Every three minutes another person falls behind on credit card debt. It's no wonder, since every major credit card company has nearly doubled the minimum monthly payment on consumers' bills. Federal Regulators forced the change because of their concern about the growing mountain of consumer debt, which stands at \$2.17 trillion. Many consumers can only pay the minimum payment, which can take up to 30 years to pay off. Now, relief is in sight for millions of Americans.



CreditGUARD of America, a non-profit licensed debt management service provider, is making a new program available to lower debt payments and become free of all credit card debt in only three to five years. Consumers need only \$2,000 or more in total credit card debt and at least 30 days behind on any account, to cut their payment by 35% to 50%, and reduce or eliminate interest charges altogether.

Over 200,000 families, located throughout the U.S. have regained financial independence with CreditGUARD's licensed, bonded and insured service. CreditGUARD of America has received high marks in consumer surveys showing high consumer satisfaction and confidence. The CreditGUARD debt management program can lower your monthly payments by hundreds and save you thousands!

One such case is Sandra L. who proclaimed "CreditGUARD cut my monthly payment by \$666 and saved me over \$29,206.53 in interest. They saved my way of life and gave me back my peace of mind! Now I can see myself on my way to becoming debt free." or Jeffrey C. who said "CreditGUARD of America helped me consolidate 3 of my credit cards into one affordable payment. They are now saving me nearly \$200 a month. Now I will be debt free in 2 years or less"

Certified Credit Counselors at CreditGUARD of America provide Debt Relief Consultations at no charge, when you call:

**1-866-253-0182**



**SERVED IN FINE ESTABLISHMENTS  
AND QUESTIONABLE JOINTS EVERYWHERE.**



Your friends at Jack Daniel's remind you to drink responsibly.  
JACK DANIEL'S and OLD NO. 7 are registered trademarks. ©2004 Jack Daniel's.  
Come visit us at [www.jackdaniels.com](http://www.jackdaniels.com)