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AROUND THE AREA

LOCAL NEWS OF INTEREST

Open to feature two former NFL QB's



51st Higginbotham Texas State Open Field to Feature Two Former NFL Quarterbacks

DALLAS, TEXAS – The 51st Higginbotham Texas State Open will feature two former NFL quarterbacks. The first is former Dallas Cowboys quarterback and amateur golfer Tony Romo. The second is Tyler, Texas, native Johnny Manziel who will also be competing as an amateur. Both players have received a sponsor's exemption into the event.

"I am honored to accept an exemption into the Higginbotham Texas State Open. This will be my fourth start in the tournament. I played back in 2004 and 2005 and then again a couple of years ago. The NTPGA conducts fantastic events and the hospitality at The Cascades Club and in Tyler is second to none. I am playing well, and I am excited to return and compete against a strong field this year," said Romo.

In his previous three appearances Romo has missed the cut. In 2019, when he last played, he posted rounds of 69-75-144 to finish at +4. The cut line that year was at even par, 140.

Manziel announced earlier this year that instead of football he is going to focus on golf for the next twelve years. This will be his first Texas State Open appearance.

"I am excited to play in the

Higginbotham Texas State Open later this month. I have been working hard on my game and I look forward to seeing how it stacks up against an incredibly strong field of professionals and amateurs," said Manziel. "I grew up in Tyler and have played countless rounds at The Cascades Club. It's a fantastic facility, always in great shape and it will be fun to play in front of family and friends. I'll be ready!"

The 51st Higginbotham Texas State Open is scheduled to play Tuesday, July 27 through Friday, July 30 at The Cascades Club in Tyler, Texas. The 72-hole stroke play event will consist of 156 professionals and amateurs competing for a \$200,000 projected purse. The field will play 36-holes before being cut to the low 55 scores and ties. All four rounds will be contested at The Cascades Club.



Meissner Becomes Three-Time All-American

SMU's Mac Meissner was named an All-American by the Golf Coaches Association of America on Monday. It marks Meissner's third consecutive All-America selection, and he joins his teammate Noah Goodwin as the only three-time All-Americans in program history.

Meissner, who was the Byron Nelson Award recipient this year, finished his senior season seventh in SMU history with a 71.46 scoring average and third all-time,

behind Goodwin and 2015 NCAA Champion Bryson DeChambeau, in career scoring average at 71.41. Meissner finished in the top-15 in six of his eight events, with a season-best solo-3rd at the Trinity Forest Invitational. Meissner had a busy golf schedule outside of SMU events in the Spring, earning a sponsor's exemption into the PGA Tour's Valero Texas Open and helped the United States win the Walker Cup, winning a match as a substitute player.

Meissner, who graduated with a B.B.A. in Finance this spring, earned All-AAC honors all three years the conference named a team while he was in school. He was the league's Freshman of the Year in 2018 and the Player of the Year in 2019.

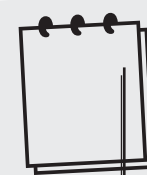
By virtue of finishing eighth on the PGA Tour U rankings, Meissner earned automatic status on the Forme Tour, a developmental circuit for the PGA Tour, one level below the Korn Ferry Tour. In his most recent event, and only his second after turning professional, Meissner shot -14 under, and held the 36-hole lead, at the Auburn University Club Invitational, where he would finish 18th.

2021 GCAA All-Americans (First Team announced previously) Second Team

Jacob Bridgeman, Clemson
Jonathan Brightwell, Oklahoma
Adrien Dumont de Chassart, Illinois
Michael Feagles, Illinois
Bo Jin, Oklahoma State
William Moll, Vanderbilt
Vincent Norrman, Florida State
David Puig, Arizona State
Brad Reeves, Arizona
Kieran Vincent, Liberty
Joey Vrzich, Pepperdine

NCAA BASEBALL - Top 25 NCBWA FINAL POLL

1. Mississippi State	50-18
2. Vanderbilt	49-18
3. NC State	37-19
4. Texas	50-17
5. Stanford	39-17
6. Virginia	36-27
7. Arizona	45-18
8. Tennessee	50-18
9. Arkansas	50-13
10. Notre Dame	34-13
11. Ole Miss	45-22
12. LSU	38-25
13. East Carolina	44-17
14. Dallas Baptist	41-18
15. Texas Tech	39-17
16. South Florida	31-30
17. Old Dominion	44-16
18. Oregon	39-16
19. UCLA	37-20
20. Nebraska	34-14
21. UC Irvine	43-18
22. Louisiana Tech	42-20
23. Florida	38-22
24. TCU	41-19
25. Southern Miss	40-21



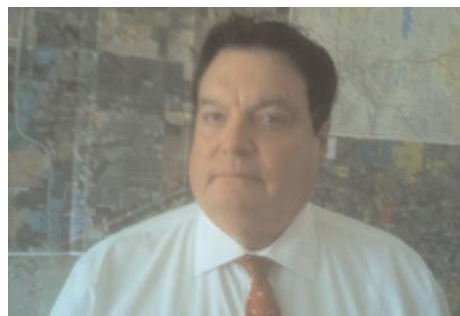
WEEKLY CALENDAR

	JULY 16 FRIDAY	JULY 17 SATURDAY	JULY 18 SUNDAY	JULY 19 MONDAY	JULY 20 TUESDAY	JULY 21 WEDNESDAY	JULY 22 THURSDAY
	Rangers at Blue Jays 6:07 / BSSW	Rangers at Blue Jays 2:07 / BSSW	Rangers at Blue Jays 12:07 / BSSW	Rangers at Tigers 6:10 / BSSW	Rangers at Tigers 6:10 / BSSW	Rangers at Tigers 6:10 / BSSW	Rangers at Tigers 6:10 / BSSW
	Roughriders vs Springfield 7:05	Roughriders vs Springfield 7:05	Roughriders vs Springfield 7:05		Roughriders at Amarillo 7:05	Roughriders at Amarillo 7:05	Roughriders at Amarillo 7:05
		FC Dallas at Portland 9:30				FC Dallas at Colorado 8:00	
	Thoroughbred Racing Post time: 2:35	Thoroughbred Racing Post time: 2:35	Thoroughbred Racing Post time: 2:35	Thoroughbred Racing Post time: 2:35			Thoroughbred Racing Post time: 6:35

MLB All-Star game and draft wrap up



Kyle Gibson pitched a scoreless third inning giving up one hit



BY DIC HUMPHREY
DHUMPHREY24@GMAIL.COM
MEMBER: USBWA

MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred gave his equivalent of the State of the Union address Tuesday in Denver. The most optimistic point for baseball fans was that meetings have been ongoing between the Players Union and management for a new collective bargaining agreement. A year ago, when the two sides worked on an agreement to play with the country shut down from the Pandemic, there were constant leaks to the press about the negotiations that worked to polarize the sides. It led to no agreement being made and Manfred using his power as commissioner to institute a 60-game season. This year, there is a strict gag order to allow the sides to work out an agreement without the glare of public opinion constantly getting in the

way. Hopefully, the sides can reach an agreement without a work stoppage.

Manfred did give some insight as to where the agreement is headed. The thrust is to bring baseball back to normal – the game we once knew a long time ago, like in 2019. He expects the runner on second base to start extra innings and the games of seven innings, when teams play double-headers, revert back to no runners on base to start extra innings and nine inning games in doubleheaders. Those rules were instituted for health and safety reasons, and with the Pandemic largely under control, at least to the point that almost all the stadiums are allowed to sell 100% on their tickets, there is no longer the need for these rules. In fact, he hinted that if they had known the COVID-19 situation would be so much improved by July, they may have done something different about these rules for this season.

He also spoke about the Oakland Stadium situation. The Oakland Alameda County Stadium, currently known as RingCentral Stadium, is either the worst or the second worst stadium in baseball. The Tampa Bay Rays' Park in St. Petersburg is the other ballpark competing with Oakland for title of "worst". Manfred intimated that MLB's patience is wearing thin with the situation and it is time for a resolution,

which likely will have the Athletics moving to another city.

The American and National League All-Star teams departed from the norm this year having special uniforms for the game, rather than each player wearing his own team uniform. Clearly Nike paid a bundle for this. I remember the 1995 All-Star game here in Arlington and the excitement of seeing all the home American League uniforms as well as the National League road gray uniforms. This was prior to interleague play, so those NL uniforms had not been seen by local fans except for pre-season exhibition games. The National League (home) uniform was a white jersey and white pants with a special cap. The American League version was truly awful with royal blue jerseys and pants. Nike has not designed uniforms for next year's All-Star game, but the plan is to again to have All-Star uniforms instead of the usual team uniforms.

As for Rangers in the game, Kyle Gibson pitched a scoreless third inning giving up one hit. He was saved by a marvelous catch by Aaron Judge in right field on a well hit ball by Brian Reynolds. Adolis Garcia admitted he was nervous when he got his first at bat in the seventh inning. He struck out but got another chance in the ninth and doubled. Joey Gallo leads the Major Leagues in walks, so naturally, he walked in his only plate appearance. Garcia in centerfield and Gallo in right field was an All-Star first for Texas. The Rangers have never had two outfielders in the game at the same time. Gallo and Hunter Pence played in the 2019 All-Star game, but Pence was elected as the designated hitter. Josh Hamilton and Nelson Cruz were All-Stars in the 2009 game, but Cruz did not play.

Next year's All-Star game is scheduled for Dodger Stadium.

The Rangers wrapped up the amateur draft on Monday and Tuesday. After selecting Jack Leiter on Sunday evening with the second pick in the draft, they settled in to fill out the first 10 picks with an outfielder, a shortstop, two catchers and five pitchers. The shortstop, one of the catchers and one of the pitchers were high schoolers, and the rest were college players.

Aaron Zavala, an outfielder from the University of Oregon, was the Rangers' second round pick, the 38th player taken in the draft. He was the PAC-12 Player of the Year this spring, when he hit .392 with nine home runs, while stealing 12 bases. He has also played second and third base, so versatility added to his attractiveness. He is a junior, so he could go back to school to try to improve his draft position,

but the Rangers do not foresee any signability problems.

Cameron Cauley was the high school shortstop taken with the third round pick, number 68 overall. He is from Mont Belvieu, Texas near Baytown and has committed to Texas Tech. He is extremely fast as evidenced by his being a very good wide receiver on the football team.

The fourth round pick was Ian Moller, a high school catcher from Dubuque Iowa. He likely will be signed for more than his slot value to turn down his scholarship with LSU.

The fifth round pick is Mitch Brett, who is from Canada, but moved to Atlanta because of the pandemic which allowed him to play this spring. He too is a high schooler committed to Florida State.

Players selected in rounds six through 10 are pitcher Chase Lee from the University of Alabama (6), pitcher Bradford Webb from Virginia Commonwealth University (7), pitcher Larson Kindretch from Biola University (8), catcher Liam Hicks from Arkansas State University (9) and pitcher C. J. Widger from Rowan College (10). Widger is the son Chris Widger, a catcher that played 10 seasons in the Major Leagues.

In rounds 11 through 20, the Rangers drafted seven pitchers, two outfielders and one catcher. Six were drafted out of high school and four out of college. The player of most interest is Will Taylor, taken in the 19th round. He was projected to be taken as high as the 20th overall pick in the draft, but when he was not selected in the first round, teams assumed he would not sign and instead honor his commitment to Clemson University, where he is signed to play both baseball and football. He is a quarterback. The Rangers basically took him just in case he changes his mind and decides to play baseball. The Rangers can not overwhelm him with money as the allocation is only \$125,000 per player in rounds 11-20.

With the amateur draft in the books, the Ranger's front office focus now goes to the July 31 trade deadline. With just two weeks to go, the Rangers should be busy.

NOTABLE:

- Ranger manager Chris Woodward indicated this week that Johan Heim likely will play in all three games this weekend against Toronto, catching twice and DHing in the other. He is from Buffalo, New York, so this weekend's games give him the rare opportunity to play in front of family and friends.

- Ranger catcher Jose Trevino is on minor league rehab assignment and could be activated this weekend.

Tom's Tip: Free Falling Swing Drill



TOM WARD
TOMPWARD@SBCGLOBAL.NET

Major League Baseball finished up their first half of their season with the home run derby and the All-Star game earlier this week.

Over my five decades in golf I've taught the game to a number of major league baseball players. Many of them are really fine golfers who have low-single digits handicaps. One reason Baseball players can adapt quickly to the golf swing is because of a lot of similarities between the two sports. I won't go into all the intricacies about the mechanics of a baseball swing and a golf swing because this column doesn't have enough space to handle that discussion. However, I do have an

excellent drill that can improve your shot making immediately and it has a baseball twist to it.

All you'll need to do this drill is one of your own golf clubs. Next, setup over the ball like you're about to take a swing. Many players think hitting a little white ball, that isn't moving and sitting up on a tee, can be much harder than trying to hit a 90+ mile- an-hour fast ball.

To help demonstrate the drill I have Jose Guzman, a former major league pitcher, to assist me. Jose played for the Texas Rangers and the Chicago Cubs. These days he does the Rangers spanish broadcast for all home games at Globe Life Field.

In the top left photo, Jose has taken his stance over the ball. In the same photo he has lifted the club off the ground. Ideally, I would like to see the club brought to at least waist level high. To his credit, this was his first time doing the drill.

In the top right photo, I asked Jose to place the club out in front of his body. As you can see, he has the club above waist level high.

Another key is to make sure you stay

bent over from the waist on the initial set-up. It's real easy to wander and start straightening up. Also, it's important to keep your head down as that will help to maintain good overall balance in your swing.

Where the baseball swing path has a more horizontal path than the golf swing, I had Jose slowly lowering his club shaft after each subsequent swing. Eventually you will have lowered the club all the way down to the golf ball. Each time you make a slow swing or pass over the ball you're letting the golf club drop down to a lower level until you have end up in a more vertical swing path.

I recommend you start out slow without a ball because it is quite demanding. I promise you, the dividends it gives you in the long run are well worth it.

By continuing this swinging action you will have gone from a baseball type motion to a golf motion all in a few seconds. You can actually hit golf shots doing this drill. By being disciplined in this technique your body will automatically respond to the perfect chain reaction that has been created.

The top left photo shows Jose at the top

of his backswing. As shown in the bottom right photo, the big payoff, hitting a great shot right down the middle with power and accuracy.

To play great golf you want a golf swing that stays in motion from start to finish, not a series of stagnant abrupt movements which create anxiety and tension leading to wayward shots.

In baseball, the players, once they get up to the plate, are always moving trying to stay loose and active as the pitcher gets ready to deliver the ball. In golf, they call it a waggle because it's a stress reliever and it works. So give this drill a try. It will help free up your swing with added power as a bonus.

A swing free of tension gives you added clubhead speed and that translates into more distance. The late singer Tom Petty had a big hit back in the 1980's called 'Free Falling,' and now with your new golf drill you'll be a big hit on the course once you implement this drill into your practice sessions.

Tom Ward can be contacted at www.tee-timewithtom.com

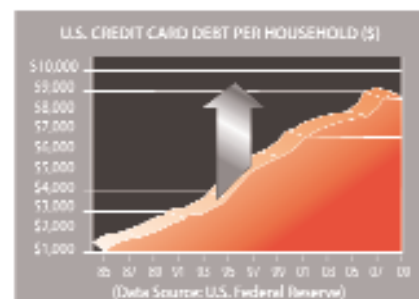


Credit Card Debt?

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.

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One such case is Sandra L. who proclaimed "CreditGUARD cut my monthly payment by \$656 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"

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This week: The Open Championship



Mickelson finished runner-up to Darren Clarke in the 2011 Open, contested at Royal St. George's... The Open Championship will be contested at St. Andrews in 2022, Royal Liverpool in 2023, and Royal Troon in 2024.

72-HOLE RECORD: 264, Henrik Stenson (2016 at Royal Troon).

18-HOLE RECORD: 62, Branden Grace (3rd round, 2017 at Royal Birkdale).

LAST TIME: Shane Lowry had the support of a nation as he captured his first-career major championship title. The quick-with-a-smile Irishman won the 2019 Open Championship by six shots. He shot a blistering 63 (a course record) on Saturday at Royal Portrush – the first time the magical links of Northern Ireland had hosted The Open since the 1951 – and despite a 1-over 72 it was his title for the taking. After leading by four through 54 holes, there were no challenges on Sunday to speak of from the chasers, as Tommy Fleetwood, who finished runner up, shot 3-over 74

in the final round. Tony Finau finished third while Lee Westwood and Brooks Koepka were tied for fourth. Koepka's top-five finish put him in some serious company. He was the fifth player to finish in the top five in all four majors in a single season joining Jordan Spieth, Rickie Fowler, Jack Nicklaus, and Tiger Woods.

HOW TO FOLLOW (All times Eastern)

Television: Thursday-Friday, 1:30 a.m.-4 a.m. (Peacock), 4 a.m.-3 p.m. (Golf Channel), 3 p.m.-4 p.m. (Peacock). Saturday, 5 a.m.-7 a.m. (Golf Channel), 7 a.m.-3 p.m. (NBC). Sunday, 4 a.m.-7 a.m. (Golf Channel), 7 a.m.-2 p.m. (NBC)

Radio: Thursday-Friday, 2 a.m.-3 p.m. ET; Saturday-Sunday, 4 a.m.-2 p.m. (SiriusXM 92)

Live stream: For complete live stream coverage, visit THEOPEN.COM.



149TH ROYAL ST GEORGE'S

The Open Championship
July 15 - July 18, 2021

Royal St. George's Golf Club
Sandwich, Kent, England
Purse - \$11,500,000

Winners share: \$2,070,000
2019 Champ - Shane Lowry

By Adam Stanley

The Open Championship returns this year after being cancelled due to COVID-19 in 2020. It was the first time since World War II the major was not played.

Shane Lowry, who captured his first major championship at The Open at Royal Portrush in 2019, will return the Claret Jug after his extended title defense ends.

FIELD NOTES: The top two golfers in the FedExCup standings – Patrick Cantlay and Harris English – will both look for their first major championship wins at The Open... Shane Lowry returns to defend his 2019 Open Championship title. Lowry is looking to become the first golfer since Pádraig Harrington (2007, 2008) to go back-to-back... Each of the other major winners this season except Hideki Matsuyama (Bryson DeChambeau, Dustin Johnson, Phil Mickelson, and Jon Rahm) will all look to add to their major trophy cases at Royal St. George's... A slot remains for the John Deere Classic's high-

est top-5 finisher who hasn't yet qualified... Some of the world's top golfers, including former PGA TOUR Rookie of the Year Sungjae Im, have decided to pass on The Open this year citing a variety of reasons (including travel). For Im, he's decided he wanted to keep his focus on winning an Olympic medal... All of the top 30 golfers in the world will tee it up at The Open with Im (at No. 27) being the only absence.

FEDEXCUP: Winner receives 600 FedExCup points.

COURSE: Royal St. George's GC, par 70, 7,211 yards (yardage subject to change). Royal St. George's was the first golf course in England to host The Open (1894) and this year will mark the 15th time for the storied course. The last Open Championship contested there was in 2011 (won by Darren Clarke at age 42) and prior to that it was Ben Curtis' surprising victory in 2003. The course is known for its rumpled and undulating terrain which often produces unpredictable bounces, plus dunes and deep bunkering. It's set over beautiful seaside land.

STORYLINES: Jon Rahm will look to become only the seventh golfer to ever win the U.S. Open and Open Championship in the same year... Louis Oosthuizen is trying to avoid becoming the first golfer since 2000 to finish runner-up in three straight majors... A major winner already, Bryson DeChambeau will debut his new caddie, Brian Zeigler, at Royal St. George's... Can Phil Mickelson keep his major mojo going? After winning the PGA Championship earlier this year, it should be noted

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Nine Things to Know: Royal St. George's



Darren Clarke won The Opne in 2011 at the age of 42

A closer look at the site of this week's Open Championship

By Ben Everill
PGATOUR.COM

The Open Championship returns to Royal St. George's this week for the first time in a decade.

It is the 15th time the Sandwich links has hosted The Open. The course will play to a scorecard yardage of 7,189 yards and a par of 70 this year.

Darren Clarke produced an emotional win here a decade ago, winning at age 42 in his 20th Open appearance. He bested Phil Mickelson and a young Dustin Johnson by three shots.

"Pretty amazing right now, to tell you the truth. It's been a dream since I've been a kid to win The Open, like any kid's dream is, and I'm able to do it, which just feels incredible, incredible right now," he said in the aftermath.

Clarke lost his wife, Heather, to cancer in 2006 and dedicated the win to her and his two sons. "In terms of what's going through my heart, there's obviously somebody who is watching from up above there, and I know she'd be very proud of me," he said. "But I think she'd be more proud of my two boys ... more than anything else. It's been a long journey to get here."

So as we return for the 149th playing of The Open, here are Nine Things to Know before play gets underway at Royal St. George's.

1. FIRST ENGLISH VENUE

Royal St. George's made its debut as

an Open venue in 1894. It was the first course outside of Scotland to host the championship. While nearby Royal Cinque Ports (1909, 1920) and Prince's Golf Club (1932) have hosted Opens in the past, Royal St. George's is currently the only course in the Open rotation located in southern England.

Only St. Andrews (29), Prestwick (24) and Muirfield (16) have hosted more Open Championships.

The course is situated in the town of Sandwich, which sits in the county of Kent. Sandwich is located a little over two hours' drive southeast of London and is a little more than a half-hour from the U.K. side of the Eurotunnel to France. The course sits on the coast of Sandwich Bay, north of the Strait of Dover on the North Sea side of England.

2. LEGENDS AND LONGSHOTS

The first Open winner at Royal St. George's was England's J.H. Taylor who won £30 after rounds of 84-80-81-81 in 1894. As while there have been huge names in the history of golf to have won at Royal St. George's, so too have some serious longshots.

Harry Vardon (1899, 1911) and Walter Hagen (1922, 1928) both won twice at Royal St. George's while Sir Henry Cotton (1934) won the first of his three and South African Bobby Locke won the first of his four Open Championships there. Greg Norman won his second Open off the Kent coast there in 1993.

But the last two winners, American Ben Curtis and Northern Ireland's Darren

Clarke came completely out of the blue.

Curtis was ranked 396th in the world when he pulled off his stunning upset – winning in his first major appearance. As a PGA TOUR rookie, Curtis started the year outside the top 1,000 in the world ranking and only moved inside the top 500 two weeks before The Open started.

After a great stretch of golf around the turn on Sunday, Curtis hit the skids, dropping four shots in a six-hole run on the back nine. But it was still enough to beat Thomas Bjorn and Vijay Singh by a shot.

"I came in here this week just trying to play the best I could and hopefully make the cut and compete on the weekend. Obviously I did that and went out there and probably played the best weekend of my life," Curtis, a Kent State alum, said after winning in Kent.

Clarke was 42 in 2011 and seemingly well past his prime. But the 200-1 longshot was as steady as they come over the four days and handled everything Johnson and Mickelson could throw his way Sunday.

An eagle on the seventh hole was huge for Clarke. Mickelson got within one early on the back nine. Johnson was within two when he went for the green in two on the par-5 14th, but his chances came to an end when he blocked his 2-iron out of bounds.

"It's been a long journey to get here. As I say, I'm 42 and I'm not getting any younger. But you know, I've got here in the end," he said.

3. LOST IN THE WOODS

Tiger Woods' first tee shot here in 2003 led to the first lost ball of his professional

career. He pushed his opening tee shot into the right rough and the sizable crowd was unable to locate it.

"It was a little disconcerting," Woods said at the time.

He hit the next one into the same rough and walked off the opening hole with a triple-bogey 7 that proved costly. Woods finished two shots back of Curtis and in a tie for fourth.

Woods' start wasn't the worst one that week, however. Jerry Kelly made an 11 on the same hole (without losing a ball). A dozen players made double bogey or worse on the opening hole in the opening round.

4. BOND, JAMES BOND

The famous works of author Sir Ian Fleming have a deep connection with Royal St. George's. Fleming, the creator of legendary MI6 special agent 007 James Bond, was one of the club's famous members.

In his 1959 novel "Goldfinger," Fleming used the course under the name Royal St. Marks. It is the setting of a colossal \$10,000 match between Bond and the villain Goldfinger.

In Fleming's words, you get a sense for his love of the course and the sport. He wrote this about the fictitious Royal St. Marks that is based heavily on his home club: "The first hole of the Royal St. Marks is 450 yards long – 450 yards of undulating fairway with one central bunker to trap a mis-hit second shot and a chain of bunkers guarding three-quarters of the green to trap a well-hit one. You can slip through the unguarded quarter, but the fairway slopes to the right there and you are more likely to end up with a nasty first-chip-of-the-day out of the rough."

For the record (spoiler alert), Goldfinger cheats a few times in the match but Bond gets revenge with a clever ball switch that once revealed sees Goldfinger lose the final hole and the match.

5. BACK TO THE PAST

After the 2011 Open Championship, the course underwent a historical review that led to some significant bunker work ahead of this year's event.

The infamous Himalayas bunker on the fourth hole had sleepers removed and it was restored to its older, rough-edged look.

"In 2017, thoughts turned to this year's Open, with the R&A commissioning a report on a few key areas such as the fifth and 18th," consulting architect Martin Ebert recently told The Quadrilateral newsletter. "The very flat area of thin rough to the left of the fifth was viewed as a weakness of the hole and the old photographs showed that this



Thomas Bjorn was penalized two shots for striking the sand in anger after a fluffed chip resulting in a quadruple bogey

was a bare, sandy area around the time of the Second World War. That has been restored.”

As for the 18th, Ebert said, “It was decided to reconfigure the two cross bunkers—there were previously three—to produce more options from the tee. ... Now there is a dangerous opportunity to take the tee shot on and that, in turn, will allow the flag position to be tucked away at the front left if the R&A want to set the hole up that way.

“The right-hand bunker is still in place but the left hand one has been moved on and to the left to provide a temptation for long drives if the conditions are right. So I hope that there will be more variation of strategy adopted for this key hole.”

6. NORMAN’S BEST EVER

Greg Norman undoubtedly had the game to win many more than the two majors he claimed during his career, the 1986 and 1993 Open Championships. History shows many heartaches for the Great White Shark but the 1993 Open Championship at Royal St. George’s was not one of these. Far from it.

With a scintillating 6-under 64 on Sunday, Norman overtook overnight leaders Nick Faldo and Corey Pavin to win by two. It was precision golf against stiff opposition. Eleven of the top 12 players on the final leaderboard either would win major championships during their career.

His 64 gave Norman the record for the lowest final round to win The Open (Henrik Stenson broke it with a 63 in 2016). He was the first Open champion with four rounds in the 60s (four others have since joined him) and his 267 was the lowest winning total in Open history (Stenson’ 264 from 2016 is now the record).

Bernhard Langer, who played alongside Norman that day, said, “He was invincible. It was fun to watch.”

Gene Sarazen, who was 91 when he witnessed Norman’s round, called it, “the greatest championship in all my 70 years in golf.” Sarazen is one of five men to complete the career Grand Slam.

Norman knew he’d showcased the best of his Hall of Fame career. “This means more to me knowing I have beaten great players,” he said. “I never mis-hit a shot. It was like playing a game of chess.”

7. BJORN’S BUNKER AWAITS

The life of Thomas Bjorn may have played out a little differently had the great Dane not found the bunker on the right side of the par-3 16th hole during the final round in 2003.

The patch of sand is now named “Bjorn’s bunker” after he needed three swings to extricate himself en route to a double bogey.

Bjorn had a two-shot lead after a birdie on the 14th. Up ahead, Curtis continued to stumble. A bogey on 15 cut into Bjorn’s lead, but his stumble on 16 and another

bogey on 17 led to a heart-wrenching collapse.

It wasn’t Bjorn’s first run-in with a bunker that week. In the first round, he was penalized two shots for striking the sand in anger after a fluffed chip. The two-shot penalty led to a quadruple-bogey 8 on the 17th hole.

Bjorn tied for second with Vijay Singh, a single stroke behind Curtis.

“It was an expensive mistake. You have to be totally ready, mentally. It came too fast. It was a hard moment. I played wonderful golf, but I let it slip,” Bjorn would say. “I stood on the 15th tee with one hand on that trophy, and I let it go.”

Eight years later, Bjorn was the first-round leader at Royal St. George’s en route to a fourth-place finish.

8. BROKEN BOTTLE BATTLE

In 1949, The Open Championship could well have gone to Ireland’s Harry Bradshaw if not for a broken beer bottle.

After an opening 68, Bradshaw’s sec-

ond round was stunted when an errant tee shot on the fifth hole ended up in the rough and inside the neck of the broken bottle. The rules allowed him a free drop but without a rules official to check with, he decided to play it as it lay to avoid possible disqualification.

Bradshaw shattered the bottle as he wedged his ball back into play. He made a double bogey and two days later finished tied with Bobby Locke before going down to the South African in a 36-hole playoff.

9. HUMPS AND BUMPS

Royal St. George’s is known for the humps and bumps that send balls bouncing in myriad directions. Perhaps it’s why we’ve had surprise winners in the past two Opens here. At the very least, the course’s quirks frustrate those who think golf should be fair.

“There are a bunch of fairways you can’t hit,” former Open champion Mark Calcavecchia told ESPN in 2011. “There are a few blind tee balls. And it seems like some of the angles, and where bunkers are, are kind of quirky.”

Tom Lehman, the 1996 Open champion, called Royal St. George’s the “most unpredictable” Open venue he’d ever played. Tee shots headed for the middle of the fairway can quickly bound into the rough or take an odd kick into a bunker. Several of the fairways are crowned, deflecting shots away from the center.

Scotland’s Sandy Lyle, winner of the 1985 Open, put Royal St. George’s in a class with Carnoustie and Royal Birkdale as “the beasts” of the Open rota. A combined four players have finished under par in the past two Opens at St. George’s.

“There are no adjoining fairways like a lot of links courses,” Lyle told ESPN. “You get deeper and deeper in to the rubbish. You have to be very accurate in places and it’s not a very friendly course if it is breezy.”



Norman shot 6-under 64 on Sunday to win by two

Royal St. George's Golf Club hole by hole

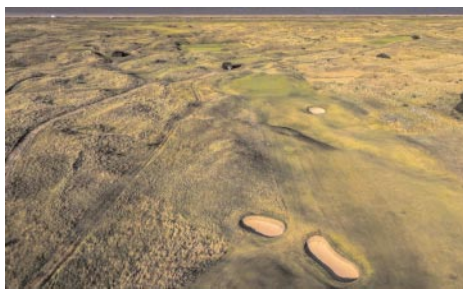


The first hole is the original design from 1887

HOLE #1

PAR 4, 445 Yards

Royal St George's opening hole is one of several on the course that has retained its original design from 1887. A challenging par 4 begins with a drive over a deep swale known as 'the Kitchen'. A trio of bunkers stretch across the front of the green to gobble up any approach shots that come up short and left, while the putting surface slopes from front to back. Tiger Woods famously started with a seven on this hole in the 2003 Championship after losing his tee shot, while Jerry Kelly carded an 11 in 1993. (Source: The R&A)



HOLE #2

PAR 4, 421 Yards

Known as 'Hogsback', the second sweeps from right to left, with two sand traps lurking on the corner of the dog leg. Given that those are avoided off the tee – either by driving over them or playing safe to the right – players face a relatively straightforward approach. Many will target the front of the green in order to leave an easier uphill putt. (Source: The R&A)

HOLE #3

PAR 3, 239 Yards

You can be aggressive off the tee and



try to catch the slope behind the bunker to leave a shorter iron approach. If you play One of two lengthy par 3 holes at Royal St George's, along with the 11th, the third is a stiff test featuring a large two-tiered green. Prior to Royal Portrush's recent return to hosting duties, it was the only par 3 on the Open rota not to feature a bunker. The hole does contain a solitary tree – the only one to be found at Royal St George's – in the form of a stunted blackthorn to the right of the green. (Source: The R&A)



HOLE #4

PAR 4, 491 Yards

Avoiding the spectacularly tall 'Himalaya' bunker is the first priority off the tee at the fourth, one of Royal St George's hardest holes. Those who clear the large dune with a straight drive will land on a flat area of fairway known as the 'Elysian Fields.' The green is cut at an angle and players must avoid overshooting it, with out of bounds posts running per-

ilously close to the back edge. The hole proved especially tough during the 1985 Championship, yielding a scoring average of 4.6. (Source: The R&A)



HOLE #5

PAR 4, 422 Yards

A first view of the sea is on offer from the tee, where players face an interesting decision of which part of the split fairway to aim for. The bold will take on a carry in excess of 300 yards over bunkers, dunes and rough, with the aim of leaving a short approach to an unprotected green. However, a safer shot down the right-hand side with an iron often brings a more profitable result. Players who take the latter option will hope to find a small area of flat fairway known as Campbell's Table, which earned its name after American Bill Campbell landed on the plateau four times in succession on his way to winning each of his matches in the 1967 Walker Cup. (Source: The R&A)

HOLE #6

PAR 3, 174 Yards

An iconic par 3 with four bunkers surrounding a long two-tiered green, the sixth is known as 'the Maiden' and named after the towering dune to the left of the putting



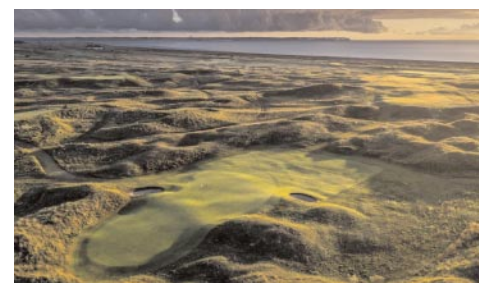
surface that reminded course designer Dr. Laidlaw Purves of the Jungfrau summit in the Swiss Alps. The original tee position resulted in a blind tee shot over the dune, but a more conventional test is now provided, one that wasaced by Tom Watson in 2011. The five-time Champion Golfer recorded a hole-in-one in round two, to the delight of the many spectators gathered around the green. (Source: The R&A)



HOLE #7

PAR 5, 566 Yards

One of only two par 5 holes at Royal St George's, the 'Strath' provides a welcome opportunity to improve your score. Plenty of eagles have been recorded at the seventh in previous Opens, with eventual Champion Darren Clarke and Phil Mickelson each making threes in the final round in 2011. The hole is not without its challenges, though. The crest of a hill hides the fairway from view off the tee, while three steep-sided bunkers guard the green and threaten to punish any errant approach shots. (Source: The R&A)



HOLE #8

PAR 4, 450 Yards

If the seventh offers a degree of respite, the same cannot be said of the eighth, which has the name 'Hades.' Traditionally the toughest hole in Championships at Royal St George's, it was originally a par 3 but was rebuilt as part of the course changes that pre-empted the return of The Open in 1981. Tee shots should be kept left to avoid two cleverly placed bunkers, while accuracy is also essential with the approach, over a swathe of rough, to a contoured green nestled between dunes and protected by two front bunkers.



A solid second shot at the ninth hole will be critical

HOLE #9 Par 4, 412 YARDS

The second shot is key at the ninth, a par 4 known as 'Corsets' that has changed considerably over the years and used to be played along the ridge to the right of the current fairway. Any approaches that miss left run the risk of finding two deep bunkers. Finding the right part of the green is also important, given the undulating nature of the surface. (Source: The R&A)



HOLE #10 PAR 4, 415 Yards

Much like the previous hole, the 10th demands a precise approach, with an elevated green tricky to hold due to the fact it falls away sharply on all sides. The fiendish slopes famously got the better of Tom Kite in the final round of the 1985 Open, as he conceded the lead with a double-bogey six. The hole used to be tougher still, with the original green located behind the present putting surface, meaning the second shot was totally blind. (Source: The R&A)



HOLE #11 PAR 3, 238 Yards

Originally played as a par 4, the length of the 11th presents a significant challenge, particularly on a windy day. Five bunkers surround the green, with the three on the left likely to be regularly found due to the presence of a right-to-left slope. Any player would be happy to simply make three here and move on. (Source: The R&A)



HOLE #12 PAR 4, 379 Yards

Low bump-and-run shots can often reap rewards on links courses, but they are unlikely to prove too effective at the par 4 12th, where five bunkers are positioned in front of the green and a huge ridge runs across the fairway. However, the fact this hole is Royal St George's shortest par 4 means players can afford to take an iron from the tee and still have a lofted club in their hand for the approach. The original hole was known as 'Lemonade or Gingerbeer' from the days when refreshments were served on the tee by vendors from the Bay Road. Nowadays, the Halfway Hut is situated by the green. (Source: The R&A)



HOLE #13 PAR 4, 456 Yards

A difficult stretch of closing holes begins with 'Princes,' a long par 4 that runs down to a green besides the old clubhouse of Prince's Golf Club, a venue that itself staged The Open in 1932. Finding the narrow fairway is not easy, with four bunkers lying in wait for anything slightly off line. One of the traps was created by a jettisoned bomb in World War II. When it comes to the approach to the green, much will depend on whether a player can land their ball on the correct side of a ridge running the length of the putting surface. Anyone overshooting the green runs the risk of going out of bounds.



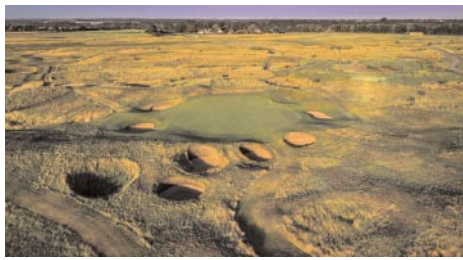
HOLE #14 PAR 5, 547 Yards

Par 5 holes often represent the best opportunities to pick up shots, but that cannot be said of Royal St George's 14th. This hole has been responsible for three of the eight highest par 5 scoring averages in The Open since 1982. In 1985 and 2011, the average score on the 14th was 5.19 and 5.07 respectively, while it was a whopping 5.3 in 2003. Out of bounds down the right is a clear danger from tee to green, as Dustin Johnson found to his loss when attempting to chase down Darren Clarke 10 years ago. The strength and direction of any wind can make a huge difference on this hole, but in any circumstances you simply cannot miss right. The hole is called 'Suez Canal' due to the ditch crossing the fairway approximately 330 yards from the Championship tee. (Source: The R&A)



HOLE #15 PAR 4, 496 Yards

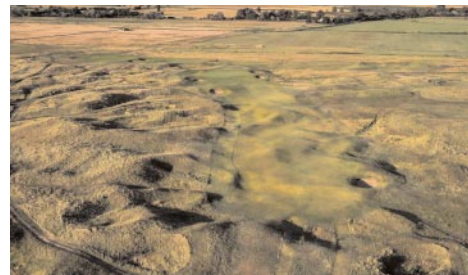
Yet another hole where staying out of sand is far from straightforward. Five bunkers are in play off the tee, with three more positioned in front of the green at this long par four. The traps to the right of the fairway were named 'the Marmalades' in an apparent reference to Rex and Lister Hartley, members of the famous jam-making family. Anyone missing the green to the left at this long par 4 could face a sticky situation in the form of a challenging pitch over a bank. (Source: The R&A)



HOLE #16 PAR 3, 162 Yards

The hole that proved the downfall of Thomas Bjorn in 2003. The Dane was firmly on course for victory until two successive shots from a bunker to the right of the green landed on the putting surface only to roll back into the sand. The painful scenes typified the danger posed by that particular trap, one of seven scattered

around the green. Remarkably, there were three holes-in-one on the 16th in 1981, with Gordon J Brand, Roger Chapman and Sam Torrance all recording aces and the latter pair doing so in the final round. Fourteen years earlier, in the Dunlop Masters, Tony Jacklin achieved the first live televised hole-in-one here. (Source: The R&A)



HOLE #17 PAR 4, 426 Yards

The penultimate hole is a gentle dog-leg from right to left that features a fairway full of swales and humps. Distance control is crucial with the second shot. Under-hit approaches will be punished by a false front, while anyone who goes over the back will have their work cut out to get up and down. Bunkers lurk to the left and right as well, meaning there really is no margin for error when approaching the green.



HOLE #18 Par4, 459 YARDS

One of the most fearsome finishing holes on The Open rota, the 18th at Royal St George's played to an average of 4.62 in 1985. That was the year Sandy Lyle triumphed despite failing to get up and down from 'Duncan's Hollow', the swale to the left of the green that got its name when George Duncan came to grief there in 1922 and lost to Walter Hagen. The approach to 18 has never been straightforward, while two bunkers make the tee shot tricky too. Defending a one-shot lead here on Sunday will be no easy feat. (Source: The R&A)



Oklahoma favored to win it all, again



Oklahoma is the unanimous pick to win the Big 12 again this year

Boomer, Sooner? Rest of Big 12 Conference Football Teams Try to Derail Perennial Football Powerhouse

In My Opinion

By Bo Carter

bcarter@footballfoundation.com

ARLINGTON, Texas – That question remains: can anyone overtake Oklahoma?

The six-year trend by the Sooners and a key topic at Big 12 Conference Football Media Days presented by Academy Sports Wednesday and Thursday at AT&T Stadium are things that all 10 head coaches (or at least the other nine chasing Sooners head coach Lincoln Riley) ponder daily.

And with six weeks remaining before college football season officially opens August 28 (Big 12 teams all start Saturday, Sept. 4), the question becomes even more pressing.

And just ask the head coach who is 2-0 in his career against the Sooners since coming to Kansas State in 2019, and you receive a humble reply.

“It really depends on the body of work,” said Klieman who is a solid 84-24 in eight seasons as a head coach at North Dakota State with four NCAA FCS championships and K-State. “Oklahoma has a great team and program. We found ourselves down 35-14 to them last year and came back to win 38-35 after Skylar Thompson threw a long touchdown pass

and we blocked a punt. I was proud our team rose to the occasion.”

Aside from Klieman’s immediate success, the rest of the Big 12 (even future NFF College Hall of Fame head coach Gary Patterson of TCU as he enters his 22nd season with the Horned Frogs) continues to do head scratching while moving ahead with a program that has gone to 17 bowl games with 178 overall victories since the final contest of the 2000 season.

“You have to enjoy the moment,” said Patterson. “This is the first time since 2017 that we have a returning starting quarterback (Max Duggan). You know I like to play below the water most of the time, but having a full spring practice and summer football this year really have helped this team.”

Other coaches assessed their individual squads and spoke like mentors who were undefeated heading into the campaign.

Runnerup head coach Matt Campbell, who helped the Iowa State Cyclones make the Dr Pepper Big 12 Football Championship for the first time in 25 seasons, expressed similar confidence in his own troops.

“Since the month of January, we’ve had 118 players going through the off-season program led every step of the way by our 25 seniors,” Campbell related. “Our seniors do a great job, with their leadership on and off the field to demand the standard day-in and day-out has been exceptional. There’s

great pride I take our football team this year - especially the leadership from the top.”

“We have \$55 million currently in enhancements for the football program,” said West Virginia head coach Neal Brown who is 46-27 with a 4-0 bowl record in six seasons at Troy and WVU. “We are one of just four teams playing 11 Power Five conference opponents (plus a contest against historic power Long Island U.) and having to face traditional rivals Maryland and Virginia Tech before we start Big 12 play is a challenge. We were the No. 1 pass defense in NCAA FBS last year, and I do believe Big 12 defenses are underrated. We will have several moving pieces on both sides of the ball in fall camp.”

“It is so good to get back to football officially,” said Baylor head coach Dave Aranda. “We have been dealing with the virus, NIL (names, images and likenesses) compensation for student-athletes, social justice and mental health issues for months. Now it is time to get connected and seek to win with character.”

“I’m excited to be head coach at Kansas,” said Lance Leipold who has rolled up a 146-39 overall record, 2-1 bowls’ mark and 34-1 NCAA playoff record with six NCAA Division III titles at UW-Whitewater and Buffalo. “It was an honor to be on the coaching staffs of Barry Alvarez at Wisconsin and Frank Solich at Nebraska, so this is not a totally new experience in this area for me. The big keys to improve in this program are being taught and game execution.”

Another first-year head coach in the Big 12 with previous experience of running nationally-ranked programs at Washington and Southern California is Texas’ Steve Sarkisian who also has a 2-2 mark as an assistant head coach in the College Football Playoff.

“We have to approach this season full-fledged,” noted Sarkisian. “We have the stadiums, facilities and resources to be successful, and this was a 7-3 team with three losses by a total of 13 points last year. We have a lot of work to do between now and the opening game against Louisiana with new schemes and 32 new players – six transfers and 26 freshmen.”

Ditto is the word from Texas Tech’s third-year head coach and former Utah State football guide Matt Wells.

“I have been pleased with the buy-in by our players over the last two seasons,” Wells said. “We wanted to get older quickly. And we have accomplished that with a number of Power Five team transfers. We also have a very good transfer in Troy’s Kaylon Geiger who had about 140 career catches before coming into our program.

He can play inside or outside receiver, and that is a plus. Then, of course, I have learned quickly that the Big 12 football championship runs through Norman every year.”

The “assistant dean” of current Big 12 head coaches behind Patterson is Oklahoma State’s all-time coaching victories’ leader Mike Gundy with a 137-67 overall mark and 10-5 record in 15 bowl games over 16 seasons from 2005-20, and he is juiced about the upcoming outing in spite of having to bang heads with the powerful Sooners some 81 miles southwest of Stillwater.

“We have the best staff of coaches, support personnel and others – 78 in all – I ever have had at OSU,” he stated. “I have been impressed and excited about how well our quarterback Spencer Sanders has progressed since this past spring and summer. We missed 2020 spring practice, and that was a setback for him, but he has progressed more in the last few months than he did in the previous two years. We have a veteran secondary, and to win in the Big 12 you have to have great players at safety and outside linebacker. We feel good about those two positions.

And the authority on OU football – none other than head coach Lincoln Riley (45-8 in four seasons with the Sooners and carrying on NFF College Hall of Fame retired Oklahoma head coach Bob Stoops’ tradition with Big 12 crowns in 2015 and ’16) – seems to be taking the whole matter in stride.

“This is like our second home,” he said as he sat down for media interviews at AT&T Stadium. “Oklahoma is a special place, and the school has us very well equipped to succeed. It is up to us and our team. We just need to keep finding the guys to get it done.”

The last six Oklahoma titles have come at the majestic Arlington facility since 2015, and the Sooners have been dominant in many, though Iowa State gave OU a scare before falling 27-21 in the 2020 Dr Pepper Big 12 Football Championship last Dec. 19.

Prophetic words possibly? Not a bold statement for a coach who manages to push the right buttons and continue to run a program near the top of the run nationally every season...

Venerable Austin American-Statesman columnist Kirk Bohls seconded the motion in his column last Thursday – it will be Oklahoma and whoever finishes second in the nine-game, round-robin Big 12 conference schedule when it is time to play in the Dr Pepper Big 12 Football Championship in this facility Saturday, Dec. 4.

-30-

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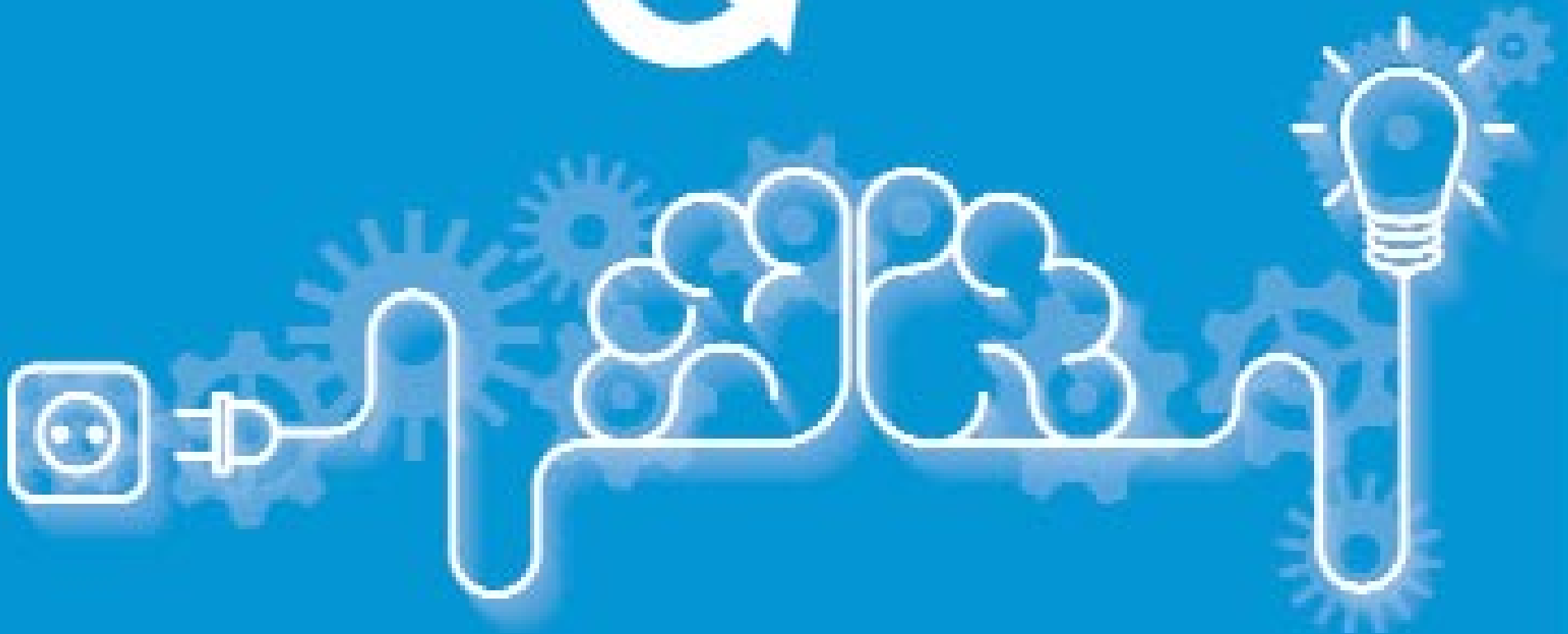


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College Football News and Notes



Oklahoma head coach Lincoln Riley sports a .849 winning percentage



BO CARTER

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National Football Foundation executives will be speaking at several upcoming conference football media days starting with COO Matthew Sign at the Big 12 Conference opening day Wednesday in his hometown of Arlington, Texas.

Nike co-Founder and 2009 NFF co-Gold Medal Award recipient Phil Knight and his wife gifted Oregon with another \$500 million to aid the Knight Campus for Accelerating Scientific Impact for research and training students and student-athletes. Knight also endows one of the annual NFF National Scholar-Athletes Scholarships.

There are now 500-plus colleges and universities requiring students to have complete COVID-19 vaccinations, and departments of athletics are considering advanced precautions such as masks and some social distancing at football and fall sports' events for those who have not received the COVID-19 vaccine.

The NFF highlighted 2020 NFF College Hall of Fame inductee +++ in last week's

summer biographies' series.

NFF College Hall of Fame Facts

Some notable birthdates in NFF College Hall of Fame annals in the July 13-19 are July 13 (1903) Lloyd Yoder, Salem, Ohio; (1912) Ed Sherman, Licking County, Ohio; (1922) Alex Sarkisian, Constantinople, Turkey; July 14 (1911) Riley Smith, Greenwood, Miss.; (1922) Robin Olds, Honolulu, Hawai'i; (1928) Brad Rowland, Hamlin, Texas; (1971) Bill Royce, Mt. Gilead, Ohio; July 15 (1892) Ray Eichenlaub, Columbus, Ohio; (1893) Orin Hollingbery, Hollister, Calif.; (1935) Alex Karras, Gary, Ind.; July 16 (1889) Percy Wendell, Roxbury, Mass.; (1939) Frank Girardi, Williamsport, Pa.; (1943) Jimmy Johnson (Arkansas), Port Arthur, Texas; (1951) Jerry Sisemore, Olton, Texas; (1968) Barry Sanders, Wichita, Kan.; (1974) Tommie Frazier, Bradenton, Fla.; July 17 (1927) Thurman "Fum" McGraw, Garden City, Kan.; July 18 (1905) George Wilson, Glenside, Pa.; (1939) Jerry Moore, Bonham, Texas.

Note: No NFF College Hall of Fame members were born or passed away on the date of July 19.

Notable anniversary death dates for Hall of Famers are July 13 (1992) Alex Wojciechowicz, Forked River, N.J.; July 14 (1982) Jackie Jensen, Charlottesville, Va.; July 15 (2017) Vito "Babe" Parilli, Parker, Colo.; July 16 (1992) Buck Buchanan, Kansas City, Mo.; (2018) Gabe Rivera, San Antonio, Texas; July 17 (1980) Ralph "Shug" Jordan, Auburn, Ala.; July 18 (2005) Jim Parker, Columbia, Md.

Happy birthdays to NFF College Hall of Fame members July 14 Brad Rowland (a

spry 93) Bill Royce, July 16 Frank Girardi (a spry 82), Jimmy Johnson (Arkansas – a spry 78), Jerry Sisemore (the big 70), Barry Sanders, Tommie Frazier, July 18 Jerry Moore (a spry 82)...

Oregon State and Boise State have moved their scheduled 2023 contest to '24 while the Beavers now will play at San Jose State in '23 instead of the 2024 campaign...Boise State and Michigan State will not play their previously slated skirmishes in 2022 and 2023 and will meet Washington in 2023 and 2029. The Broncos will host UT Martin in '22.

U.S. President Joe Biden (former Delaware football student-athlete) has nominated Pennsylvania president Dr. Amy Gutmann to serve as ambassador to Germany. She could be the first woman U.S. ambassador to Germany where her father fled the Nazi regime in 1934 and later moved to America from India. Several collegiate athletics people traveling for meetings and vacationing this summer have had to overcome long Transportation Security Administration check-in lines, flight delays and personnel shortages by major airlines to get to their final destinations...Mississippi's legislature is working on passage of bills to require on-campus students at public colleges and universities to receive COVID-19 vaccinations before the fall terms start...Vanderbilt's Alumni Association is preparing for a gala trek to Tuscany, Italy. The VU Commodore Classroom also is studying general society's responses to COVID-19 vaccinations' statistics and is urging those in Delta Variant states and areas to get immunized immediately.

Oklahoma head coach Lincoln Riley sports a .849 winning percentage (45-8 mark) to top all NCAA FBS head coaches with at least four years at the helms of programs...Tarron Williams has been tabbed as cornerbacks coach at Richmond...LSU athletics has added Beau Lowery as director of sports medicine...Former Florida State and NFL standout Mario Edwards has replaced Alabama and NFL Dallas Cowboys legend George Teague as head coach at Plano (Texas) John Paul II High School. Teague is moving up to director of athletics...North Forney (Texas) HS replaced retiring head coach Randy Jackson with former assistant coach Eric Luster.

Hometowns of more 2021 college head coaches – FIU: Butch Davis, Tahlequah, Okla.; Florida State: Mike Norvell, Irving, Texas; Fordham: Joe Conlin, Greensburg, Pa.; Franklin and Marshall: John Troxell, Phillipsburg, N.J.; Fresno State: Kalen DeBoer, Milbank, S.D.

Bethune-Cookman added former New

Mexico State and NBA Sacramento Kings head coach Reggie as both the director of athletics and head men's basketball coach...Green Bay officially tabbed Josh Moon as AD...The Alabama State AD's search has been narrowed down with two probable finalists in Lincoln Memorial AD Jasher Cox and Southwestern Athletic Conference senior associate commissioner Dr. Jason Cable...South Carolina State AD Stacy Danley requested that SCSU's Board of Trustees add \$1 million to the 2021-22 budget after the total budget over the last two years was decreased from \$12.7 million to \$7.8 million...Penn State selected Dr. Lauren Cavis Rhodes as senior associate AD for student-athlete performance, health and welfare and senior women administrator...Fort Wayne hired Michael Brown as associate AD for operations...Pittsburgh AD Heather Lyke spoke about NIL legislation, balancing college athletics' budgets, the student-athlete collegiate experience, and the process of hiring head coaches...Sacred Heart athletics selected Chris Fee as associate AD for strength and conditioning, development coordinator Kelsey Armstrong to assistant AD and former head equipment manager Christopher Velez to an assistant AD's spot...Kansas AD Travis Goff noted that he spoke with former Jayhawks head coaches Glen Mason and Mark Mangino about the possibilities and talents of new KU head coach Lance Leipold who came from the same post at Buffalo...Idaho State AD Pauline Thiros acknowledged that ISU NIL policies will be in place totally before any student-athletes return to campus for fall sports competition...Davidson AD Chris Clunie pointed out the major factor of self-education and homework for student-athletes as they enter NIL pacts...

Tennessee AD Danny White recalled the challenges of having to hire a new head coach – Josh Heupel – an make some major staff and budgeting overhauls since accepting the position with the Volunteers...Wake Forest AD John Currie estimated that college athletics provides \$3.5 billion in scholarship aid to student-athletes...Nevada AD Doug Knuth spoke of the new We Are Nevada Fan Zone for the upcoming football season and decisions he had to make about evaluating head coaches during the 2020-21 academic year...TCU AD Jeremiah Donati surmised that the early going of NIL compensation was not going to be perfect but sees the monetary inclusion as a new reality in college athletics and a thrilling time for the student-athletes...Retiring Gonzaga AD Mike Roth had satisfaction that all the pegs were in place for the transition to NIL compensation with up to 25 percent

engagement for social media posts by student-athletes and assistance from the INFLCR Group...Cincinnati Deputy AD and senior women administrator Maggie McKinley was on a recent podcast dealing with the initial and followup steps for individual schools on NIL disclosure and benefits...New William & Mary AD Brian Mann is seeking to utilize his fundraising experience from California athletics to help W&M get back on solid financial footing after challenges from COVID-19 conditions ...Purdue AD Mike Bobinski related that many of the “gloom and doom” predictions for the advent of NIL never came to pass after July 1...Nebraska interim AD Garrett Klassy recalled possibly the busiest week in his athletics’ career with the start of the new Husker Radio Network and NIL procedures from June 27-July 4...San Diego tabbed Brock Ungricht as its new head baseball coach...VCU tabbed Nicole Flores as its second head women’s lacrosse coach in Rams history...North Carolina named Erin Neppel as its head women’s rowing coach...Several new positions have been posted in college athletics such as associate director of compliance at East Carolina, associate AD for external operations at Siena, assistant AD ticketing initiatives at Penn State, assistant AD for communication and media relations at Minot State, associate AD for ticket sales and operations at UC San Diego, executive director of event and facility management at Utah, and both director and assistant director for fan engagement at Nevada... Texas head baseball coach David Pierce expects that most of the NIL revenue will go to football, men’s and basketball student-athletes...Iona men’s basketball head coach Rick Pitino has completed his association as head coach of the Greek national unit...Texas Tech athletics revealed publicly the lifetime contract for standout baseball head coach Tim Tadlock with multiple financial and performance incentives and automatic rollovers for the 52-year-old mentor...SIU Edwardsville named P.J. Finigan interim softball head coach... Oregon inked baseball head coach Mark Wasikowski to a new, five-year extension ...Arizona hired former Wildcats standout Chip Hale as baseball head coach – the second MLB Detroit Tigers assistant coach to take a college job this summer along with Jose Cruz Jr. at his alma mater Rice ...North Texas AD Wren Baker addressed the subject of the NCAA transfer portal and how it affects day-to-day functions and scholarship limits nationally in all intercollegiate sports...Former Rice and MLB standout Lance Berkman is the new head baseball coach at Houston Baptist...Rhode Island athletics tabbed Kacey Light as chief NCAA compliance officer...Manhattan softball head coach Tom Pardalis is retiring after 12 seasons at MU...Tulane named Adrian Myers as director of men’s and women’s track and field...Former Colorado deputy AD, women’s basketball head coach and senior women administrator Ceal

Barry is working on raising \$1 million for a permanent endowment for the Buffaloes women’s basketball head coach’s slot... ..California named Meagan Owusu head women’s volleyball coach...Long Beach State chose Alyssa Waite as women’s golf head coach...Idaho State added Andrew Rich as head softball coach...Outgoing Tennessee senior associate AD for regulatory affairs Andrew Donovan revealed the challenges of compliance with the various state, federal and NCAA directives ongoing...FIU selected Joseph Corey as senior associate AD and chief development officer for the Panthers...Hofstra named veteran MLB retiree Frank Catalanotto as head baseball coach...Alabama A&M tagged Kevin Missouri as assistant men’s basketball coach...Cowan added Jos Brown as assistant softball coach...Providence hired LaDontae Henton as special assistant to the men’s basketball coach...Rowan moved Mary Murray over to interim softball head coach...Southern Illinois named Colin Schneider assistant men’s basketball coach ...Rachel Kahan is the new women’s head tennis coach at Yale...Charleston Southern added Thomas Brittle as assistant baseball coach...Former Pacific men’s basketball head coach Damon Stoudamire has been named as assistant coach with the NBA Boston Celtics and will be spelled at Pacific by former assistant head coach Leonard Perry...Duke softball head coach Marissa Young received a contract extension through 2026...UTRGV athletics selected the university’s anthropology department chair Dr. Margaret Graham as faculty athletics representative...Purdue athletics chose Tom Moreland as chief revenue officer...Cal State Bakersfield chose Tiffanie Yabut as women’s golf head coach ...The North Alabama AD search appears to be down to three top candidates - Utah Valley deputy AD Chad Foote, Ball State deputy AD Haven Fields and a mystery candidate from the Midwest. Campus visits for the three finalists are scheduled in coming days...Virginia Tech extended contracts for men’s basketball head coach Mike Young, baseball head coach John Szeft, track and field head coach Dave Cianelli, women’s golf head coach Carol Robertson, men’s tennis head coach Jim Thompson, and women’s tennis head coach Terry Ann Zawacki-Holdren over various years from 2023-27...Utah State AD John Hartwell mentioned that he didn’t think any conference or college nationally was prepared fully for the implications of NIL legislation, the importance of COVID-19 vaccinations for USU student-athletes, coaches and support staff and pleasure about the 90 percent and counting renewal rate for Aggies season football tickets...West Virginia Governor James C. Justice is working with the Marshall Board of Trustees in hiring a new president, university provost and AD for the university... Longtime Auburn publicist and Southeastern Conference legend for 64 years since coming to AU as student assis-

tant in 1957 – Buddy Davidson – has been placed in Hospice care in Auburn, Alabama. Davidson once had a SEC-record streak of attending 700-plus consecutive Tigers football games from 1957-2019 before health challenges intervened.

Baylor is bringing standouts OL Connor Galvin and LB Terrel Bernard to Big 12 Conference media days this week while Iowa State’s star representatives are QB Breece Hall and DB Greg Eisworth II ...Joshua Mack is the NCAA FBS leading returning career rusher with 3,618 yards from 2018-20 while Utah’s Charlie Brewer (transfer from Baylor) tops all returnees for ’21 with 9,700 career passing yards...Texas quarterback Casey Thompson is donating NIL monies earned on his Cameo social media account to the No Kid Hungry Fund ...Oregon stalwart Kayvon Thibodeaux has signed a possible six-figure NIL compensation agreement with Nike, and the deal includes a memorabilia clause for profit... Oklahoma standout quarterback Spencer Rattler has signed a names, images and likenesses’ compensation pact with Raising Canes chicken specialty restaurants in the Southwest...North Carolina quarterback Sam Howell inked a pact with Everett Sports Marketing for his NIL compensation...Jacksonville State volleyball student-athlete Addie Halverson of Spring Grove, Illinois, became possibly the first client of NIL initiatives when she signed a contract with Barstool Sports at 12:01 a.m. on Thursday, July 1...Former Vanderbilt soccer star and football kicking specialist Sarah Fuller (now playing as a soccer goalie as a transfer to North Texas) became Wasserman’s first NIL client...Texas softball standout Lauren Burke also inked a NIL contract with Barstool Sports... Oklahoma RB Eric Gray has been pegged as 2021 Big 12 Conference Newcomer of the Year by media covering the loop... Former Oregon star LB Isaac Slade-Matautia has moved over to the SMU program...Former Auburn signee WR Hal Presley has transferred to Baylor...Former Auburn and Western Illinois Boobee Whitlow has re-entered the NCAA transfer portal...WR Jordan Hudson and OL Jacob Waller have selected SMU verbally for the 2022 signing period...CB Dylahn McKinney is an Oklahoma State pledge for ’22 while WR Xavier Brown has chosen Connecticut as his 2022 destination... DeVante’ Jones is transferring to Michigan and will remain a collegian for fall 2021...Record-setting North Texas softball Hope Trautwein (21 strikeouts in a seven-inning perfect game against UAPB in ’21) has transferred to Oklahoma... Simpson (Iowa) men’s tennis student-athlete Jake Brend has inaugurated the Jake Brend Tennis Experience to take advantage of NIL developments...Alonzo Verge is moving from Arizona State to Nebraska for August 2021...SMU’s Kendric Davis and Texas Tech’s Terrence Shannon are back on their schools’ respective rosters after debating not returning to these programs...Texas

A&M 2022 quarterback commitment Conner Weigman was mentioned for solid passing during the Elite 11 Football Camp this month...St. John’s (N.Y.) added 2021 signee Tareq Coburn...TCU now has a 2022 oral commitment in DL Joseph Adedire.

Western Athletic Conference commissioner (since 2011) and with the league office in various capacities since 1984 Jeff Hurd will finish his 50-year career in college athletics by retiring from the WAC Dec. 31...The Southeastern Conference’s 38th annual football media days (conducted virtually last year) will be live from Hoover, Alabama, Monday-Thursday, July 19-22. They were originally scheduled for Nashville, Tennessee, this month but will shift back to Music City in July 2023...The Southland named Thomas Samuel as senior associate commissioner for compliance services and Josh Yonis director of communications...Big 12 Conference football media days are set for Wednesday and Thursday at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas. To no one’s surprise, six-time (12 overall) Big 12 defending football champ Oklahoma is the choice by media to take all the 2021 Big 12 grid marbles...Big 12 commissioner Bob Bowlsby explained that initial expectation levels of mega-profits for student-athletes under NIL guidelines may be unrealistic...Missouri Valley Conference commissioner Jeff Jackson has assembled an NIL subgroup to serve as a think tank for conference guidelines while NCAA, state and federal legislation are in a bit of flux...The Mountain West Conference is seeking an assistant director of communications and internal operations ...The Atlantic Sun Conference has added UNC Wilmington and College of Charleston as beach volleyball affiliate members starting in spring 2022...The Big 12 Conference’s 25th annual Athletes of the Year are Baylor basketball’s Jared Butler (male) and Oklahoma gymnast Anastasia Webb (female). They join a cadre of stars including NFF College Hall of Fame members Grant Wistrom of Nebraska, Ricky Williams of Texas and Vince Young of UT, among others... The Atlantic Sun Conference will begin divisional play in 2022 with the East Division consisting of FGCU, Jacksonville, Kennesaw State, Liberty, North Florida, and Stetson. The West Division will feature Bellarmine, Eastern Kentucky, Jacksonville State, Lipscomb, and North Alabama...The Lone Star Conference selected its 2020-21 Athletes of the Year as West Texas A&M’s Benjamin Azamati in track and field and Shanna McBroom in softball...The Atlantic 10 Conference added Michael Jacobs as the associate commissioner for external relations and Michael Jacobs was named Associate Commissioner for External Relations, Derrick Coles as assistant commissioner for compliance and Emily Costello as the Don DiJulia Fellowship intern.

(continued on page 16)

Former Notre Dame, Stanford and Washington head coach Tyrone Willingham has been added to the College Football Playoff Selection Committee to replace NFF College Hall of Fame coach R.C. Slocum who is being treated for cancer...Bowls contracted with the Atlantic Coast Conference for post-2021 are Cheez-It, Duke's Mayo, TaxSlayer Gator Bowl, Transperfect, Music City, Outback, Vrbo Citrus, Chick-Fil-A Peach, and Allstate Sugar Bowls...AT&T Stadium will be the home for the Gold Cup World Soccer Tournament quarterfinals' doubleheader on July 25, and tickets now are available through SeatGeek.

Boise State athletics garnered its first \$1 million individual donation to the Lyle Smith Society from an anonymous donor and has raised \$8 million-plus from 65 members of the society this academic year...San Diego State's Mission Valley Stadium is making progress with almost all steel beams' construction completed and precast concrete set to be installed in August. The project is slated to be completed by August 2022...FGCU athletics totaled \$1 million-plus in 2020-21 donations from \$589,500 from three specific initiatives and just under \$693,000 from the Eagles Club...USF was one of the prime stops on last week's INFLCR's names, images, and likenesses' tour with Bulls administrators and student-athletes participating in discussions. INFLCR also has aligned Anomaly Sports Group for the Storyteller Playbook guidance for NIL compensation...Fanatics noted that Mississippi State enthusiasts topped Florida in 2017 for most NCAA Baseball World Series merchandise after MSU's first NCAA team championship in school history. In fact, MSU sales were higher than the 2017-19 CWS totals combined...Heitner Legal noted Arkansas joined Florida and others in not allowing student-athletes using NIL programs to adopt school colors in their endorsements...Hawai'i student-athletes have requested not to sign any NIL agreements until in-house school policies have been ratified...Hebron (Texas) HS in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex area Lewisville Independent School District won the Texas 7-on-7 Class 6A title in College Station, Texas...Jackson State athletics is working on corporate or individual naming rights for its football, men's and women's basketball locker rooms. There are 150 total lockers available with recognition of sponsors placed at each location...Tennessee athletics is working to complete payments for legal fees during its NCAA football investigation...Good news for recent college graduates: just under 150 companies in the Standard & Poor's 500 stock measurements are paying middle managers as much as \$100,000 in 2020. Groups such as Amazon and Starbucks are starting management trainees at approximately \$30,000 with ample room for advancement...Departments of athletics in such states as Oklahoma and Texas with

reliance on donations from the petroleum industries had their hopes raised by the rise of West Texas Intermediate crude oil to close to \$75 per barrel – a three-year high mark...There is new player on the NIL skyline as YOKE offers legal restrictions on the rights and types of businesses student-athletes may endorse...Texas is installing the FieldTurf CORE artificial playing surface at Darrell K. Royal-Texas Memorial Stadium...Mike Ballardie, CEO of Slinger Bag, was interviewed on Sky News last week about the present state and future of college and professional athletics...CheerleadingMix.com is providing new routines online to college cheerleading and spirit groups...La Salle athletics is working with BDB Collegiate Solutions for its enlarging corporate sponsorship programs...Opendorse now is working with MikeWorldWide as its new agency of record for student-athletes' marketing updates...Miami (Fla.) athletics has employed the BrandR Group for licensing assistance for former Hurricane student-athletes...The Clemson Board of Trustees Finance and Facilities Committee is discussing Phase 2 construction at Memorial Stadium with a second club level to the west end zone area, new video boards and a possible reduction of capacity from 81,500 to 80,500 with the new premium seating...OneTeam Partners, Altius Sports Partners and INFLCR have inked a cooperative pact for educational information and group licensing for NIL compensation...SMU unveiled its new, 2021 helmets in a recent post...American Top Team completed an agreement to offer \$500 monthly contracts to all Miami (Fla.) football scholarship athletes for at least 12 months. The total for the endorsements could be \$540,000 if each player signs a contract with ATT. American Top Team founder Dan Lambert is not sure how he will make additional contributions to Miami athletics after his NIL contributions to Hurricanes student-athletes...The Wright State Special Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics is employing MRJ Advisors, College Sports Solutions and Collegiate Sports Associates to study the university's athletics' operations and develop future plans...A study at New York University concludes that Americans 55 or older are either working or seeking positions in college athletics or similar professions – double the amount from 20 years ago...Job openings also rose again as of May 31 reports 16,000 to a high of 9.2 million openings nationwide...Also, several aspiring college student-athletes have helped to increase the number of law school applications over 28 percent from May 2020 to June 2021...St. Thomas (Minn.) inaugurated its new athletics website powered by SIDEARM...Fanatics has assured its partners and investors that it will not be purchasing the PointsBetUSA Group...Playfly Sports' CSL Esports is merging with NACE, Nerd Street and Mainline to start the NACE Starleague with 14,000-plus Esports competitors from

more than 600 colleges and universities...Opendorse has reinforced its agreements with Florida athletics for NIL guidance and carrying out the programs...Connecticut has reinstated its women's rowing varsity program...Dimensional Innovations had a recent webcast about best practices when designing athletics facilities and developing campus master plans on college campuses with enhanced visitor experiences....REVELxp has partnered with North Carolina, NC State and the Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl via the Colonnade Group and Tailgate Guys to upgrade premium seating, hospitality concepts, suites, and special areas for adult beverages at three settings on game days...William & Mary athletics inked with Paciolan for digital ticketing, fundraising, marketing, and access management...Playfly named former Turner Sports senior vice president and general sales manager Lorie McCarthy as senior vice president of sales and former Razorback Sports Properties general manager David Shoemaker as group vice president...The Nebraska's Football Lettermen's Association has asked that the hiring committee for NU's new director of athletics be made public.

Several friends and associates of NFF College Hall of Fame coach Terry Donahue saluted his life's accomplishments after his passing in Newport Beach, Calif., July 4...Teammates of NFF College Hall of Fame running back Dicky Maegle who also passed away July 4 remembered his exploits fondly in a post in the Rice Alumni Bulletin last week. The last two living members of the 1954 Owls Cotton Bowl Classic squad are Joe Durrenberger and Charles Christensen...Former Clemson stat WR DeAndre Hopkins has signed a long-term contract with the NFL Arizona Cardinals...The NFL San Francisco 49ers activated Deebo Samuel of South Carolina from the practice roster...Former West Virginia standout and NFL Indianapolis Colts kicking specialist Pat McAfee expressed happiness over NIL nuances and wished he had those advantages during his undergraduate career...U.S. Secretary of Defense and retired Gen. Lloyd Austin has approved a waiver for Navy graduate Cameron Kinley to play professional football in the NFL as a concurrent officer in the Inactive Navy Ready Reserve. He will return to regular Navy duty when he completes his NFL career...Former Notre Dame standout and college head coach Leo McKillip for his high school playing days in Nebraska and 14-year career as a college head coach before he passed away in 2013. Jerry Schemmel is the new radio voice of the Northern Colorado Bears...LSU athletics will begin the Walmart and PlayFly LSUSports.net with extensive coverage of football news, ticketing for all sports, live statistics, live webstreaming of multiple sports, and on-demand video of numerous events beginning in August...Award-winning sportscaster for 60 years and noted Syracuse broadcasting grad Marv Albert

signed off in retirement with NBA telecasts during the 2021 playoffs...Popular former Texas standout Sam Acho will have the lead studio position for ESPN2 college football and will handle analyst's assignments for selected ESPN encounters. Acho also has hosted primetime programming for ABC-TV...The Athletic conducted an extensive survey of 10 sets of parents whose youngsters were recruited for 2021 or '22 signing periods and how honest and genuine pitches about the college programs were major factors in the incoming student-athletes' final signing decisions....Former Rice student-athlete Clay Reichenbach is hosting a new podcast known as the Examined Athlete with guests such as former Rice All-America choice, British Olympian and current chair of Sport Psychology for USA Track and Field Lennie Waite...The New York Times had an audio report on the decision of ESPN to use former Georgia student-athlete and longtime college football reporter as sideline reporter for the NBA Finals instead of ESPN veteran basketball analyst and sportswriter Rachel Nichols of Northwestern. Taylor also has been in negotiations for a new contract with ESPN...The Nebraska Journalism Trust, which grants scholarships to some deserving college journalists, reports an operating budget for the 2020-22 era of \$2 million-plus...Matthew Hansen has initiated the Flatwater Free Press as a Nebraska non-profit journalism group sharing human interest, community service, investigative, and feature stories...TikTok has added a Shoutouts platform to allow birthday wishes, motivational talks and varied positive messages TikTok executives with payment through the group's inside applications' currency...The Athletic updated another in-depth football recruiting story with the latest feature highlighting Penn State...The Congressional Research Service has released a report on various NIL bills with NCAA bylaw updates, state legislative responses and legislative proposals since 2017...Sportico's JohnWallStreet column has projected that the previous six months through the end of 2022 will be banner times for sports mergers, acquisitions and media takeovers...ESPN is in the process of denoting its Game Day Powered by Home Depot, play-by-play commentators, booth analysts, sideline reporters, and on-air studio personnel for the coming season. The assignments could be revealed as early as midweek...Sports Illustrated opined that COVID-19 challenges might have cost Stanford its first IMG Learfield Directors Cup for all-sports excellence in 2020-21...ExtraPoints.com evoked the social media group OnlyFans as a possible cross-promotional outlet for college fans looking for additional updates on college sports and student-athletes...Sinclair Broadcasting has made a bid to purchase NBCUniversal's seven regional sports networks...Alexandra Cooper is leaving her podcast on Barstool Sports for a new program on Spotify....

...Lindy's Football magazine examined how Bowl Championship Series and College Football Playoff winners fared the next season. There have been seven different CFP title teams in the first seven years of that extravaganza...The Oklahoma City Oklahoman newspaper reported on new AD's Chad Weiberg's success in lining up future football series with Alabama and Colorado and is keeping 2021 football season ticket sales just ahead of the July 2020 pace this year...The NFL Dallas Cowboys will be featured again on the HBO and HBO Max specials Hard Knocks....

...Sportico examined possible federal income tax regulations and filling out 1099 forms for miscellaneous revenue derived from NIL...The Athletic noted that football alumni who made general contributions to their colleges' scholarship funds in the past may have to make a choice of using that money to sign endorsement agreements with individual student-athletes under NIL provisions.

The FWAA highlighted 2011 FWAA Outland Trophy recipient, 2012 NFF William V. Campbell Award and media personality OL Barrett Jones of Alabama in its weekly memories' post for memorable gridiron stars...The NCBWA selected Tennessee's Nick Vitello as its 2021 Division I Coach of the Year, Arkansas' Kevin Kopps as '21 Stopper of the Year and affirmed Malcolm Gray of East Carolina as 2020 NCBWA Russell D. Anderson/Wilbur Snyppe Award for contributions to college baseball...Mike Villamor of the Big West Conference, Ryan Sakamoto of the Patriot League, David Worlock of NCAA Communications, Jim Horten of Chattanooga, and Steve Kramer of Coppin State were featured subjects and opinion makers in the CoSIDA Open Forum online newsletter and magazine....

...Alabama, Albany, Arizona, Arizona State, Cincinnati, Kansas, Michigan, Michigan State, Syracuse, Tennessee, and UCLA are working with NCAA enforcement and compliance officials concerning possible issues and probes at their respective schools...Emory & Henry has been accepted as a provisional member of NCAA Division II and will join the South Atlantic Conference in 2022-23...UT Tyler has been accepted for full NCAA Division II membership beginning in 2021-22 as a member of the Lone Star Conference...

...Seven Hartford student-athletes formally sued the university over its planned move from NCAA Division to Division III over the next three years...The final court fees in the Alston Case vs. the NCAA have been roughly \$3.5 million, according to court records...Former Dallas (Texas) Carter HS and LSU sprinter standout Sha'Carri Richardson has been dropped as a possible member of the Team USA 4x100- or 4x200-meter relay teams at the Tokyo Olympics because of a drug use suspension by the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency.. Officials in Japan are testing athletes from all countries at the Tokyo International

Airport for COVID-19 and have quarantined one Serbian athlete....

...Former St. John's (N.Y.) pitching standout Alex Katz will play for Team Israel in Tokyo Olympics' baseball competition..U.S. Congresswomen Carolyn Maloney (Dem.-N.Y.), Jackie Speier (Dem.-Calif.) and U.S. Naval Academy graduate Mikie Sherrill (Dem.-N.J.) addressed NCAA president Dr. Mark Emmert about gender equity challenges....

...Jessica Springsteen, loyal fan of Blue Devils football and basketball and a Duke graduate, has been named to the Tokyo Olympics' USA equestrian team. She is the daughter of award-winning entertainer Bruce Springsteen. Last week the Olympics announced that no spectators will be allowed for the July-August event because of COVID-19 directives in Japan ...The NBA is projecting a 33 percent drop in 2020-21 revenue from the 2019-20 season due to COVID-19 conditions and other financial challenges....Adrian's Kali Bills has been named Uganda national women's lacrosse head coach...The U.S. Golf Association has proposed waivers for amateur status to college golfers who received NIL monetary advantages. These golfers earlier would have to be classified as professionals under standing USGA Rules of Amateur Status...

The National Football Foundation & College Hall of Fame continues to work as a key entity Preserving the Past, Promoting the Present, Preparing the Future, and Protecting the Game Through Programs and Initiatives that Support 765 Colleges & Universities, 81,000-plus College Football Players, 15,810 High Schools, and Over 1.04 Million High School Football Players. NFF corporate partners include Delta Air Lines, Fidelity Investments, Goodyear, Jostens, the New York Athletic Club, the Pasadena Tournament of Roses and the Sports Business Journal. Follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter @NFFNetwork and learn more at football-foundation.org.

2021-22 College Football Playoff Bowl Schedule with New Year's Six Games (All Games Televised by ESPN, EST)

Friday, Dec. 31, 2021 (CFP Semifinals)

Goodyear Cotton Bowl, AT&T Stadium, Arlington, Texas, 4 or 8 p.m.

Capital One Orange Bowl, Hard Rock Stadium, Miami Lakes, Fla., 4 or 8 p.m.

Monday, Jan. 10 - CFP Championship, Semifinal Winners, Lucas Oil Stadium, Indianapolis, Ind., 8 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 30, 2021-Jan. 1, 2022 (Other New Year's Six Bowls)

Thursday, Dec. 30 - Chick Fil-A Peach Bowl, Mercedes-Benz Stadium, Atlanta, Ga., TBD

Friday, Jan. 1 - PlayStation Fiesta Bowl, State Farm Stadium, Glendale, Ariz. TBD

Friday, Jan. 1 - Allstate Sugar Bowl, Mercedes-Benz Superdome, New Orleans, La., TBD

Friday, Jan. 1 - Rose Bowl presented by Capital One, Rose Bowl Stadium, Pasadena, Calif.



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VW Atlas midsize-crossover SUV



By Matt Degen

The Volkswagen Atlas is a midsize-crossover SUV with three rows of seating. In its usual form, it has accommodation for seven. An optional pair of captain's chairs for the second row brings that down to six. Volkswagen designed and developed the Atlas especially for North America, and builds it in the company's factory in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

The Atlas is therefore a specialized machine that still has to have a broad appeal. And it succeeds with family-friendly space and costs, smart ergonomics, decent-quality materials, and a pleasant driving experience with standard driver aids.

As with almost anything that looks like an SUV, though, this is a hotly contested arena. Principal rivals like the Honda Pilot, Toyota Highlander and Ford Explorer have been joined recently by the excellent Kia Telluride and Hyundai Palisade. Let's not forget the Chevrolet Traverse, either. At least the Atlas is strong enough to be in the game, rather than being left on the sidelines.

The Atlas has a comfortable ride quality approaching that of a luxury vehicle, yet still displays control and composure when the corners come along. That's the European influence in a vehicle designed and built for Americans.

The basic 4-cylinder engine (paired only with front-wheel drive) is adequate for suburban duties, but anyone planning longer drives might want to consider the V6. Then again, the Atlas is not light (around 4,500 pounds) and it's the largest

vehicle VW sells in the United States, so even this option is hardly a powerhouse. But it can come with all-wheel drive (AWD), a system that includes Snow and Off-road modes.

Eight inches of ground clearance means the Atlas can cope with a rural trail, but not the really rough stuff.

Yes, a third seating row is good enough to warrant a special mention. The way the second row slides forward to make the seats behind so easily accessible is just one aspect. Passengers will also find plenty of headroom and decent legroom, with space under the second row to place their feet.

Even if the Atlas isn't exactly breathtaking, there's still some VW spirit to be found. Clicking the driving modes over to Sport sharpens up the steering and throttle responses, and raises the transmission shift points. It even works with the adaptive cruise control engaged.

Because the Atlas is aimed at American buyers, there are 17 cup holders. However, the cabin still mixes simplicity with class. The high-quality plastics help in this regard.

The second row can fold and slide forward even when child seats are fitted, enabling accommodation for seven occupants, or six if the optional 2nd-row captain's chairs are selected.

In versions of the Atlas without the captain's chairs, the rearmost two rows of seats can fold to create a flat load-space floor. Behind the third row is a still-generous 20.6 cubic feet of cargo area, which expands to an impressive maximum of 96.8 cubic feet.

Clever packaging means the VW Atlas

is big on the inside yet capable of fitting within a regular garage. The rear-passenger doors are generously sized and open wide for easy entries and exits. And we like the large cargo-area aperture, especially when it's accessed by the hands-free power tailgate. Touches like these illustrate the detail Volkswagen has gone into when considering the needs of its potential customers. The standard wheel is an 18-inch alloy, going up to 21 inches on the highest trim. The R-Line variants have their own cosmetic additions.

The good news is that the Atlas in entry-level S trim comes with a lot of standard equipment that includes a few advanced driver aids. Other attractions include rain-sensing wipers, automatic LED headlights, heated side mirrors, roof rails, Apple CarPlay/Android Auto smartphone integration, and Wi-Fi.

Safety makes a substantial contribution with six airbags, automatic post-collision braking, and VW's Intelligent Crash Response System, which cuts the fuel supply, unlocks the doors and turns on the hazard lights in the event of a crash.

The not-so-good news is that there's only a 6.5-inch infotainment touch screen and one USB port.

To bring even more features into a new Volkswagen Atlas means heading for higher trims. For example, parking sensors aren't available until the mid-range SE w/Tech R-Line model, while the hands-free power tailgate comes in the SEL model. Those looking to spend more can always order the panoramic sunroof, 20-inch or 21-inch alloy wheels, and 2nd-row captain's chairs. The V6 with all-wheel drive

is available in the S.

Apart from all-wheel drive and the V6 engine (both of which are standard in SEL Premium), the only other main options are a trailer package for the first three trims with the V6, panoramic sunroof (available in the upper two SE variants) and 2nd-row captain's chairs. The first two trims are ineligible for that last feature.

To see which equipment goes where, check our Trims/Features section below.

The basic engine in the VW Atlas is a turbocharged 2.0-liter 4-cylinder unit making 235 horsepower and 258 lb-ft of torque. Front-wheel drive (FWD) is the only configuration.

The alternative is a 3.6-liter V6 generating 276 horsepower and 266 lb-ft of torque, and can drive either the front wheels or all four (AWD) with the 4Motion setup, which has modes for various treacherous conditions. The Atlas also has on-road driving modes of Eco, Normal and Sport.

Both engines connect to an 8-speed automatic transmission.

2.0-liter turbocharged inline-4
235 horsepower @ 4,500 rpm
258 lb-ft of torque @ 1,600 rpm
EPA city/highway fuel economy: 20/24 mpg

3.6-liter V6
276 horsepower @ 6,200 rpm
266 lb-ft of torque @ 2,750 rpm
EPA city/highway fuel economy: 17/23 mpg (FWD), 16/22 mpg (AWD)

The S trim is the lowest of the seven Atlas trim levels, with a Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price (MSRP) of \$31,545. Add the \$1,020 destination charge to make \$32,565.

Aim for the SE trim at least, from \$35,715, although a good balance of price and equipment is the SE w/Technology for \$38,065 (front-wheel drive). The SEL comes in at \$41,815, while the SEL Premium (with the V6, all-wheel drive and almost everything else as standard) is \$50,215. Adding the 2nd-row captain's chairs would be \$695. Where they're optional, the V6 is \$1,400 and all-wheel drive is an extra \$1,800.

These figures are similar to the Ford Explorer, Honda Pilot, Kia Telluride and Hyundai Palisade. The Chevrolet Traverse starts with a lower price, while a new-for-2020 Toyota Highlander costs more.

Check out KBB.com's Fair Purchase Price to see what other buyers in your area are paying for their new Atlas. The Pilot and Highlander outperform the Atlas in terms of resale values. Although the VW SUV has a transferrable 6-year/72,000-mile bumper-to-bumper warranty in its favor.



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