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IIISECTION B

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## Nice'sums up Bonds' induction



s layered and complex as Barry Bonds' legacy is in Pittsburgh — and throughout all of baseball he summed up Saturday's induction to the Pirates Hall of Fame in the simplest words possible.

"It's nice," Bonds said with a smile. "It's just very nice. The word ... very nice."

That wasn't always the word to describe how things were during Bonds' time

in Pittsburgh. Whether it was frustration with fans, occasional dust-ups with the media, an all-too-public argument with his manager or anger with the franchise over his contract status, "nice' was rarely a word used to describe his Pirates career or the PED controversy that followed him after he left.

Dynamic. Legendary. Unforgettable. Breathtaking.

Those words are much more elaborative, yet far more appropriately applied to describe Bonds' seven years in black and gold.

But, yeah. For what happened Saturday, "nice" will



New Pirates Hall of Famers (from left) Jim Leyland, Manny Sanguillen and Barry Bonds pose for a photo after the induction ceremony Saturday at PNC Park.

# Leyland revels in joining star pupil

Entering Pirates Hall of Fame with Bonds holds extra meaning for longtime manager

#### BY KEVIN GORMAN

Being inducted into the Pittsburgh Pirates Hall of Fame with Barry Bonds made it "extra special" for Jim Leyland, even if their roles were reversed Saturday at PNC Park.

Where the brash Bonds was humbled by the honor, the low-key Leyland got to gloat about another accolade after the former Pirates manager

» Pirates stumble vs. Reds; Stratton hurt in collision **B2** 

was enshrined last month into the National Baseball Hall of

"I will say this — and I guess I'm bragging: I do sit at home once in a while at night and say, 'Holy (crap)! You're in the Hall of Fame,'" Leyland said. "That's unbelievable. ... I have a great appreciation for it. I never took my players for granted. I don't take this award for granted. But it's awful special to end up in Cooperstown."

**PIRATES HOF** · B2



ABOVE: GETTY IMAGES; BELL: CHRISTOPHER HORNER | TRIBLIVE

# PUWEKM

### Realignment, NIL drastically alter framework of college football

BY JERRY DIPAOLA

Before kickoff next Saturday when Pitt opens its 2024 season against Kent State, tradition will prevail, and players — properly dressed in shirt and tie will follow coach Pat Narduzzi into Acrisure Stadium.

Inside, more memories will be made over the course of the season, perhaps similar to M.J. Devonshire's game-winning pick-6 against West Virginia in 2022 and Ryan Lewis' end-zone interception that nailed down a victory against Penn State in 2016.

There will be disappoint-

ments, too, but all of it — goodand bad — is what brings fans on both sides of stadiums from all over the U.S. back for more year after year, chasing the same thrills that attracted them to college football in the first place.

Yet college football doesn't look the same.

For example:

• The ACC used to be a tidy, little league of seven South Atlantic schools when it was founded in 1953, but it has expanded from coast to coast into a 17-team conglomeration (18 for basketball). While Florida State

**REALIGNMENT** · B4

#### The new Power 4

A look at the Power 4 college football conferences for the 2024 season. Teams in bold are new to that conference.

#### ACC (17 teams)

Boston College, Cal, Clemson, Duke, Florida State, Georgia Tech, Louisville, Miami, North Carolina, NC State, Pitt, SMU, Stanford, Syracuse, Virginia, Virginia Tech, Wake Forest

### Big Ten (18 teams)

Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Michigan State, Minnesota, Nebraska, Northwestern, Ohio State, **Oregon**, Penn State, Purdue, Rutgers, **UCLA**, **USC**, **Washington**, Wisconsin

#### Big 12 (16 teams)

Arizona, Arizona State, Baylor, BYU, Cincinnati, Colorado, Houston, Iowa State, Kansas, Kansas State, Oklahoma State, TCU, Texas Tech, UCF, **Utah**, West Virginia

#### SEC (16 teams)

Alabama, Arkansas, Auburn, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, LSU, Mississippi State, Missouri, **Oklahoma**, Ole Miss, South Carolina, Tennessee, **Texas**, Texas A&M, Vanderbilt

# Pitt's fortunes hinge on new offense

**KADE BELL** 



» PSU counting on Allar to take next step » Big Ten breakdown



» West Virginia puts faith in ground game » Big 12 breakdown

Panthers to rely on coordinator Bell's hurry-up, no-huddle attack

BY JERRY DIPAOLA

When Pat Narduzzi spoke to his team one day early in training camp, he made the 2024 season personal for

his players. "I told the guys .. 'This is team 135. This is the 135th edition of Pitt football. The 2024 team will be one team — it's you. What are you going to do?" " Yes, Pitt

football history goes all the way back to 1890, when the school was called Western University of Pennsylvania for

> You think college in the past five years? At the end of the 1800s, Pitt did not have a coach in four seasons, played only two games in

> > 1894 and lined up



Indiana State Teachers College and the Sewickley AC. Just guessing, there prob-

ably was no Panther Pitt. No one sang "Sweet Caroline.' Thanks to many factors, Narduzzi has a tougher job

 $\textbf{PITT} \cdot \text{B4}$ 

**LIONS 24, STEELERS 17** 

# **Steelers** offense revs up

Wilson, Fields direct TD drives in 1st quarter as team wraps up preseason with loss

#### BY JOE RUTTER

DETROIT — Like a battery in need of some juice, the Pittsburgh Steelers offense got the recharge it had sought for much of the preseason Saturday

A trip to the Motor City cured some of the ills that had beset the first-team unit the first two weeks.

No longer looking like a clunker off the used-car lot, the Steelers

hummed with the efficiency of a BMW as Russell Wilson and Justin Fields directed first-quarter touchdown drives in a 24-17 loss to the Detroit Lions at Ford

Field. Starting at quarterback for the second game in a row, Wilson led the Steelers on a five-play, 60-yard march that resulted in the first points by the first-team offense

this preseason. His exit after that initial series all but cemented Wilson as the starter when the Steelers open the season Sept. 8 in Atlanta.

**UP NEXT:** 

**STEELERS** 

1 p.m. Sept. 8

Fields took over and immediately guided the Steelers to a second touchdown—the scores transpiring before nine minutes had elapsed from the clock — to provide a 14-0 lead.

"They both moved the ball, they won possession downs and they were able to put the ball in the end zone," coach Mike Tomlin said, "things we hadn't done to this point sufficiently enough in the preseason.'

Under Wilson, the Steelers generated two first downs - and zero points — in five possessions last week against Buffalo. This time, it took only five plays — and one long completion to George Pickens — to end that drought.

**STEELERS** · B4



Steelers quarterback Russell Wilson went 2 of 2 for 26 yards on his only drive Saturday against the Lions.

### Things get ugly for Bucs in loss to Reds

Stratton injured after crashing into backstop; Cincy chases Woodford

#### BY JUSTIN GUERRIERO

A sellout crowd of 38,137 take on the Cincinnati Reds after the club inducted Barry Bonds, Jim Leyland and Manny Sanguillen into their Hall In what ended as a 10-2 beat-

down by the Reds, the pregame Hall of Fame festivities undoubtedly proved to be the highlight of the day for the Pirates and their fans. With things well out of

reach, first baseman Rowdy Tellez was inserted on the mound to pitch the top of the There were also scarier

scenes, namely reliever Hunter Stratton getting carted off the field in the fourth inning after a violent collision into an unpadded, stone section of After the game, the Pirates

(61-68) announced Stratton suffered a left knee patella tendon rupture and was being examined by team doctors.

now, but it did not look good," manager Derek Shelton said after the loss. "I would say this is going to be significant Jake Woodford started for

the Pirates and for the fourth straight game took a loss, allowing eight runs (seven earned) on seven hits, walking and striking out three before an out in the top of the fourth. Woodford (0-6, 8.01 ERA)

walked Elly De La Cruz and Tyler Stephenson, both of whom came around to score, as the Reds put up four runs in the first inning Tellez produced the only of-

fense on the night for the Pirates, hitting his 11th homer of the year, a two-run shot in the second that made the score 4-2.

Tellez's homer bounced into the Allegheny River, the 80th such occurrence in PNC Park

Stratton's injury came with runners on second and third, on the fourth pitch against Stephenson, the first batter

After a wild pitch, Jonathan India broke for home and slid in safely, beating a throw from

E—India (3), Stra	tton (	2)	D Do	La	C	(2)	
Cincinnati Pirates		00 20	402 000		00 ·	- 10 - 2	12 1 3 2
Totals	30	2	3	2	2	6	
Bae cf	2	0	0	0	1	1	.186
Triolo 3b	3	Ō	Ō	Ō	0	Ō	.197
McKinney If	3	ŏ	ŏ	ŏ	ŏ	1 2 0	.230 .231
B.De La Cruz rf	3	Ō	Ō	Õ	Ö		230
Tellez 1b-p	4 3 4 3 3 2	1	1	2	1	0	.273
O.Cruz ss Bart c	4	0	1	0	0	0	.203
Joé 1b	0	0	0	0	0	0	.209 .279 .230 .263
Reynolds dh	4	0	0	0	0	Ţ	.2/9
Williams 2b	1 4	0	0	0	0	1	.209
Kiner-Falefa 2b	3	0	1	0	0	0	.222
Pirates	AB	R	H	BI	BB	S0	Avg.
Totals	36	10	12	8	3	7	
Benson rf	4	1	1	1	0	0 2 2 0 3 <b>7</b>	.192
Espinal 3b	4	0	1	0	0	0	.262
Smith dh	5 4 3 1 5 3 0 3 4	1	1	0	0	2	.143
France 1b	3	Ō	Ō	1	Ō	2	.215
Fairchild If	Ó	Ō	Ō	Ō	Ō		.215
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Friedl cf	5	ĭ		ĭ	Ŏ	ŏ	.228
Maile c	í	Ō	1	ñ	1	ő	.157
Stephenson c	3	1	1	1		0	.254
E.De La Cruz ss	Λ	2	2	2	1	0	.264

E—India (3), Stratton (2), B.De La Cruz (3).

LOB—Cincinnati 3, Pirates 3. 2B—Steer (30), Friedl
(4), Smith (1), E.De La Cruz (29), O.Cruz (29).

HR—Tellez (11), off Aguiar. RBIs—Friedl (35),
Steer 2 (81), France (7), Benson (38), E.De La Cruz
(58), Stephenson (52), Tellez 2 (44). SB—E.De
La Cruz (61), Steer (22). SF—France. Runners left
in scoring position—Cincinnati 1 (France); Pirates 1
(Tellez). RISP—Cincinnati 1 (France); Pirates 0 for
3. Runners moved up—Espinal, Bart. GIDP—India,
Maile, O.Cruz. DP—Cincinnati 1 (E.De La Cruz,
France); Pirates 2 (O.Cruz, Williams, Tellez; O.Cruz,
Joe).

Joe). <b>Cincinnati</b> Aguiar, W, 1-0 Kelly, S, 1-1 <b>Pirates</b> Woodford, L, 0-	1P 6 3 1P	<b>H</b> 3 0 <b>H</b>	<b>R</b> 2 0 <b>R</b>	ER 2 0 ER	<b>BB</b> 2 0 <b>BB</b>	<b>SO</b> 4 2 <b>SO</b>	NP 91 38 NP	3 0 <b>E</b>
Stratton 3	0 2 <sup>2</sup> / <sub>3</sub> 2 1	7 0 0 3 1	8 0 0 2 0	7 0 0 2 0 0	3 0 0 0 0	3 0 2 1 1 0	74 4 20 28 14 9	6 3 0 10 2 0
Stratton pitche runners-scored Umpires—Hom Rackley; Second T—2:28. A—38,	—St e, N d, Jo	ratt ate nat	on Ton han	2-2. nlins Parr	WP- on; F	-Stra irst,	tton. David	

catcher Joey Bart to Stratton. Stratton did not catch the

toss, however, with the ball instead rolling all the way into the dirt section of the backstop. Reading the play, De La

Cruz, who began on second base, accelerated for home, at which point Stratton awkwardly fell into the wall while trying to retrieve the ball. He immediately went down

in visible pain and remained on the ground, attended to by Pirates medical officials before a cart arrived to take him off the field. Jalen Beeks finished the frame. The Reds added a pair of

runs in the sixth off Ben Heller, partially thanks to a fielding error by Bryan De La Cruz

Bryan De La Cruz committed a miscue on an India single and made several other ill-advised throws back into the infield that allowed Reds runners to advance

Justin Guerriero is a TribLive staff writer. He can be reached at iquerriero@triblive.com.

# Bonds, Leyland get emotional

**PIRATES HOF · FROM B1** 

From the back of the press conference room at PNC Park, Bonds interrupted by shouting for Leyland to gloat about being one of 23 managers in the Hall of Fame. Ironically, it's a museum from which Bonds, baseball's all-time home runs leader, has been excluded. So Leyland reveled in being reunited

with and inducted alongside Bonds, whom he called "the best baseball player I ever managed." While Leyland became legendary for berating Bonds at spring training in 1991, the two talked about how their relationship has transcended time. "We're back together again," Ley-

land said. "I've often said sometimes, 38 years of friendship gets disrupted by a two-minute argument."

Where the third member of their Hall of Fame class, catcher Manny Sanguillen, accepted his honor with enthusiasm, Bonds' and Leyland's voices cracked as they extended their thanks to the Pirates, the City of Pittsburgh and its fans. Bonds talked about baseball's Black

icons dying, from his father, Bobby, and godfather, Willie Mays, to Willie McCovey, Joe Morgan and Hank Aaron, whose career home runs record he

broke. Leyland expressed his gratitude for the Pirates "believing in a no-name minor-league manager" and quipped that his hiring in 1986 inspired headlines of "Jim Who? "We didn't know anything about Jim

Leyland, and he didn't know anything about us," said Bonds, who made his major-league debut in '86. "When he first came in, he simplified everything. His expectations weren't high. Just demanded respect and for us to do Leyland inherited a 104-loss team

and won 85 games two years later, then three consecutive NL East Division titles from 1990-92 as Bonds matured into a superstar who won two NL MVP awards and three Gold Gloves with the Pirates before leaving for the San Francisco Giants.

"I was so happy because, hey, we grew up together," Leyland said. "He was a rookie player, I was a rookie manager. So we suffered some time to learn the game up here at this level, to learn what it took to play at this level. I needed to find out what it took to manage at this level. But we were always together.

"Pittsburgh is a funny place. They supported us so much. I'm so grateful for (the fans). I can remember our

first year here, it was corny, actually If we ran a ball out, we got a standing ovation because things had not been very good here for a while. I took to this place and, hopefully, some of the

"They got to watch one of the greatest players to ever play this game. I don't get into who's the greatest. I don't want to get into any controversy. But you can make an argument that they got to watch one of the top three, five players

of all time play. That's pretty special." So entering the Pirates Hall of Fame together was extra special, even if the fact that Leyland is enshrined in Cooperstown and Bonds isn't doesn't sit well with either of them.

In his acceptance speech, Bonds alluded to his exclusion. After falling short of the necessary 75% vote by the Baseball Writers Association of America, he's eligible for consideration at the December 2025 meeting of the Hall's Contemporary Baseball Player Committee.

"Ĭ just hope my mom is still around if anything else comes along in my life," Bonds said. "Big 'if' — I hope my mom is alive to see it.

Kevin Gorman is a TribLive staff writer. He can be reached at kgorman@triblive.com.

## Honor washes away bad times for 1 night

It's nice that the organization's best player of the last 45 years came back to be enshrined. It's nice that, for the first time in a decade, the two-time MVP was applauded by the fans and acknowledged as the franchise icon that he is. It's nice that his face is on a plaque in the outfield at PNC Park as a permanent memory of his days dominating the National League as a Pirate instead of the angst associated with the memories of his departure. It would've been even nicer if

Bonds had never left. Fantasies usually are ... nice.

'No question he was a great player here. With the accomplishments, celebrating that portion of his career committed to Pittsburgh seemed appropriate," Pirates chairman Bob Nutting told TribLive. "He's a fantastic Pirate and becoming a great ambassador for the game.

Listening to Bonds talk Saturday, it's almost like there were never any bad times to remember at all.

He gushed about his connection to the city and the Pirates for drafting him. His first apartment on Mt. Washington. His neighbors. The fact that his kids were born at Magee-Women's Hospital. His Pirates teammates and manager Jim Leyland, who was also inducted

He even waxed poetic about Pittsburgh fans when they did get on him.



Barry Bonds gives his Pirates Hall of Fame induction speech on Saturday.

They booed us when we needed it. We were always grateful for that,' Bonds said. "And you cheered us when we needed your help. And we always appreciated that, too. We respected that. And I will always remember that about Pittsburgh fans."

Of course, there were more complexities to Bonds' stint here than just those fond memories.

On Saturday, though, those things were forgotten for Bonds.

Well, maybe not forgotten, but not

important. Not close to as important as knowing that his Pirates career was being immortalized in the same way as Roberto Clemente's, Willie Stargell's and Dave Parker's.

Now, 32 years removed from the last time Bonds patrolled left field at Three Rivers Stadium, those memories need a little help to stay alive. Bonds' enshrinement should help in

"They got to see one of the greatest players to ever play this game," Ley land said of Pirates fans who were around when Bonds was in Pittsburgh. "It was an honor to sit back af ter 33 years managing and think I got to manage one of the greatest to play this game. That's something awfully

As was getting to see Bonds and Pittsburgh reconnect.

Though Leyland and two-time World Series champion Manny Sanguillen also were inducted, Saturday was about Bonds and his fans who once cheered for him before he headed off to San Francisco, where so many of his personal records were written.

Bonds left after the 1992 NLCS heartbreak. He often came back to boos as a Giant.

Saturday, it was all cheers.

Tim Benz is a TribLive staff writer. He can be reached at tbenz@triblive.com or via Twitter @TimBenzPGH.

#### BASEBALL

NATIONAL LEAGUE W L Pct GB

Atlanta ...... Atlanta ...... New York.... Washington . Miami ...... .58 71 .450 16.5 .46 83 .357 28.5 Central Division W L Pct GB ..75 54 .581 — ..65 65 .500 10.5 ..64 65 .496 11 ..63 67 .485 12.5 ..61 68 .473 14 St. Louis ... Cincinnati . Pirates W L Pct GB ..77 52 .597 — ..74 56 .569 3.5 ..73 57 .562 4.5 ..66 65 .504 12 San Diego ...... San Francisco..

48 82 .369 29.5 New York.. ..76 55 .580 .5 ..67 61 .523 8 ..64 64 .500 11 ..62 68 .477 14 Raltimore Boston...... Tampa Bay.. Central Division W L Pct GB Cleveland

 
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 Detroit.... West Division W L Pct GB ..69 60 .535 — ..65 65 .500 4.5 ..60 69 .465 9 ..55 75 .423 14.5 ..54 76 .415 15.5 Texas .. 

N.Y. Mets at San Diego (n)

American League
Toronto 3, L.A. Angels 1
Baltimore 3, Houston 2
Detroit at Chicago White Sox (n)
Texas at Cleveland (n)

Texas at Cleveland (n)
Interleague
Colorado 9, N.Y. Yankees 2
Milwaukee 9, Oakland 5
Arizona 4, Boston 1
San Francisco 4, Seattle 3
Minnesota 6, St. Louis 0

Millinesota 6, St. Louis 0 Philadelphia at Kansas City (n) Tampa Bay at L.A. Dodgers (n) **Today's games National League** • Washington (Herz 2-6) at Atlanta (López 7-4), 12:05 p.m.

LOPATICH-BRINKER FUNERAL HOME. LLC

N.Y. Mets (Quintana 6-9) at San Diego

(Pérez 3-5), 4:10 p.m.

### Cincinnati (Spiers 4-5) at **Pirates** (Ortiz

Interleague

L.A. Angels (Anderson 10-11) at Toronto (Gausman 11-9), 1:37 p.m.

Texas (Bradford 4-1) at Cleveland (Boyd 0-0), 1:40 p.m.

Detroit (TBD) at Chicago White Sox (Cannon 2-7), 2:10 p.m.

Houston (Kikuchi 6-9) at Baltimore (Kronge 6-8), 7:10 ar Market

(Kremer 6-9), 7:10 p.m. Interleague • Arizona (Kelly 3-0) at Boston (Houck 8-8), 1:35 p.m.

8-8), 1:35 p.m.

- Colorado (Gomber 4-8) at N.Y. Yankees
(Stroman 8-6), 1:35 p.m.

- Philadelphia (TBD) at Kansas City (Lugo
14-7), 2:10 p.m.

- St. Louis (Fedde 8-7) at Minnesota (Matthews 1-1), 2:10 p.m.
• Milwaukee (Montas 6-8) at Oakland

Minwalkee (Mondas 6-8) at Oakland (Estes 5-6), 4:07 p.m.
San Francisco (Ray 3-2) at Seattle (Woo 5-2), 4:10 p.m.
Tampa Bay (Baz 1-2) at L.A. Dodgers (Stone 11-5), 4:10 p.m.
Monday's games
Mational League

National League Chicago Cubs at Pirates, 6:40 p.m. San Diego at St. Louis, 7:45 p.m. Miami at Colorado, 8:40 p.m.

**American League** Kansas City at Cleveland, 1:10 p.m., 1st game Toronto at Boston, 2:05 p.m., 1st game Kansas City at Cleveland, 6:40 p.m., 2nd

game Toronto at Boston, 7:10 p.m., 2nd game Detroit at Chicago White Sox, 8:10 p.m. Tampa Bay at Seattle, 9:40 p.m. Interleague
Houston at Philadelphia, 6:40 p.m.
N.Y. Yankees at Washington, 6:45 p.m.
Atlanta at Minnesota, 7:40 p.m.

#### **BASKETBALL**

RESULTS/SCHEDULE **Saturday's games** Connecticut 72, New York 64 Minnesota 90, Indiana 80 **Today's games**Las Vegas at Chicago, 12 p.m.
Los Angeles at Dallas, 4 p.m.

#### **GOLF**

SATURDAY'S SCORES

PGA TOUR BMW Championshi	p — Third round	
Keegan Bradley Adam Scott Ludvig Aberg Alex Noren	68-63-74—205 72-63-71—206	-11 -10

71-68-72—211 Patrick Cantlay .68-70-73—211 .69-72-70—211 .72-69-70—211 .70-71-70—211 Tommy Fleetwood.... Russell Henley ..... 72-68-71—211 68-70-73—211 Tom Hoge. Sungiae Im Rory McIlroy..... Sepp Straka..... Byeong Hun An . Sam Burns..... .70-71-70—211 .72-70-69—211 .72-69-71—212 .73-68-71—212 Brian Harman. 72-69-71—212 73-68-71—212 .73-68-71—212 .75-67-70—212 .71-69-72—212 .71-74-68—213 .71-71-71—213 .70-70-73—213 .72-70-72—214 .72-70-72—214 .71-74-69—214 .70-74-70—214 Billy Horschel Viktor Hovland Collin Morikawa Cameron Davis .... Thomas Detry..... Denny McCarthy.. J.T. Poston...... ...70-74-70-214 ...70-73-72-215 ...75-71-69-215 ...72-68-76-216 ...78-72-66-216 ...74-72-71-217 ...71-72-74-217 ...78-69-71-218 ...71-73-74-218 Tony Finau Akshay Bhatia.... Max Greyserman Matt Fitzpatrick. Scottie Scheffler Jason Day...... Austin Eckroat .76-69-73—218 .74-70-74—218 .76-68-75—219 .76-74-69—219 Davis Thompson .68-68-75—211 .71-70-71—212 .69-73-70—212 .74-68-71—213 Lydia Ko...... Jenny Shin.... Jin Hee Im....

...74-08-71-213 ...75-69-69-213 ...72-71-70-213 ...68-72-73-213 ...73-68-73-214 ...77-71-66-214 ...67-72-75-214 ...69-72-73-214

.. 74-74-66—214 .. 72-70-72—214 .. 72-72-71—215 .. 70-74-71—215

.74-73-69-216

Alexa Pano

Jeeno Thitikul.

Albane Valenzuela ...... Lottie Woad...... Ariya Jutanugarn ......

Hyo Joo Kim.

Patty Tavatanakit..

.74-70-73-217 Andrea Lee ... Amy Yang .... Angel Yin ..... Rose Zhang.. Carlota Ciganda. 75-73-70-218 Ally Ewing ...... Caroline Inglis . Nuria Iturrioz .. Yui Kawamoto. 73-69-76—218 78-66-74—218 75-70-73—218 73-72-73—218 Auston Kim ...... Mi Hyang Lee ...... Linnea Strom..... Lexi Thompson .... . 73-75-70—218 . 69-74-75—218 .... 71-73-74—218 .... 76-71-71—218 **PRO FOOTBALL** RESULTS/SCHEDULE

RESULTS/SCHEDULE Saturday's games Detroit 24, Steelers 17 Carolina 31, Buffalo 26 Green Bay 30, Baltimore 7 Houston 17, L.A. Rams 15 Minnesota 26, Philadelphia 3 L.A. Chargers 26, Dallas 19 N.Y. Giants at N.Y. Jets (n) Cleveland at Seattle (n)

Today's games
Tennessee at New Orleans, 2 p.m.
Arizona at Denver, 4:30 p.m.
New England at Washington, 8 p.m.

#### **HIGH SCHOOLS**

**FOOTBALL** Saturday's results
Nonconference
Beaver vs. Westinghouse (n)
Clairton 30, Steel Valley 7

Cornell 44, Brashear 0 Summit Academy 20, Frazier 16 Imani Christian 45, Philadelphia West Mars 47, Boone, Fla. 35 Susquehanna Township 36, Penn Hills 30 St. Frances Regional Academy (Md.) 44, Central Catholic 16

**GOLF** BOYS CLASS 3A Section 6 Moon 201, Montour 207 Medalists: Max Haag (Moon) 38; Drew Dress, Joel Altenhof (Mont) 37

SOCCER

BOYS Saturday's results Canon-McMillan tournament
Our Lady of the Sacred Heart 1, Blackhawk 0
Bentworth 3, Trinity 1
Canon-McMillan 1, West Allegheny 0 Chartiers-Houston tournament

Wilson 3, Quaker Valley 1 Mars tournament Fairview 5, Knoch 0 Mars 2, Allderdice 0 Pine-Richland tournament Kiski School 5, Central Catholic 1 North Allegheny 3, North Catholic 1 Central Valley 3, Winchester Thurston 2 Seneca Valley 3, Wheeling Park 2

Plum tournament Upper St. Clair 4, North Hills 0 Shaler at Plum (n) Moe Rosensteel Memorial Tournament **At Ringgold** Ringgold 4, Elizabeth Forward 3 South Allegheny tournament
Derry 3, Serra Catholic 2
Southmoreland 4, South Allegheny 0

Nonsection
Butler 6, Slippery Rock 1
East Allegheny 4, McKeesport 3, OT
Deer Lakes 3, Gateway 1 Leechburg 9, Redbank Valley 0 Montour 5, Latrobe 3 Montour S, Latrobe 3 Mt. Pleasant 4, Connellsville 2 Norwin 2, Franklin Regional 0 Obama Academy 5, Penn Hills 1 Penn-Trafford 9, Hempfield 1 Peters Township 6, Bethel Park 0 Seton LaSalle 8, Bishop Canevin 0 Freeport 8, St. Joseph 1 GIRLS

Saturday's results Chartiers-Houston tournament McGuffey 3, North East 0 Chartiers-Houston 1, Steel Valley 0 Indiana tournament Dubois 3, Indiana 1 North Catholic 3, Karns City 0 Mars tournament
Mt. Pleasant 6, Knoch 0
Mars 3, Kiski Area 1
North Allegheny tournament
Seneca Valley 8, Altoona 1
Cumberland Valley 2, North Allegheny 1 Moe Rosensteel Memorial Tourna Moe Rosenstean At Ringgold Avonworth 2, Latrobe 2 Ringgold 6, Hickory 0 Thomas Jefferson 3, Franklin Regional 1

South Allegheny tournament
Yough 5, South Allegheny tournament
Yough 5, South Allegheny 0
South Hills Classic
Upper St. Clair 6, Fort LeBoeuf 1
Winchester Thurston 2, Oakland Catholic 0
Mt. Lebanon 1, Burrell 1
Management 1, South Paul 1 McDowell 1, South Park 0
Nonsection
Ambridge 5, Riverside 4
Connellsville 7, Southmoreland 3
Seton LaSalle 1, Deer Lakes 1

All schedules are subject to change. To report scores or schedule changes, email ptrsports@triblive.com. Visit TribHSSN. triblive.com/scores for results, stats, standings and box scores from around

#### **ODDS**

Interleague

YANKEES..

American League

Favorite Odds (0/U) TODAY'S GAMES Underdog .....Astros ..... Angels -\$130 (9.0).... WHITE SOX Tigers. | \$150 (9.0) | WHITE SUA | Mational League | PIRATES | \$115 (9.0) | Reds | RAVES | \$180 (8.0) | National Cubs | \$160 (8.5) | MARLINS | PADRES | \$125 (8.5) | Mets | Mets |

-\$135 (9.5). -\$280 (8.5). -\$125 (8.5). -\$122 (8.5). TWINS ... ROYALS . Brewers.......-\$125 (8.5) DODGERS.....-\$195 (8.5) MARINERS....-\$135 (7.5) TODAY'S GAMES Favorite Points Points (O/U) Underdog

COLLEGE FOOTBALL THURSDAY'S GAMES
Favorite Points (O/U) Underdog
MINNESOTA......2 (50.5) ....... N Carolina
J'VILLE ST ......3 (55.5) ..... Coastal Caro FRIDAY'S GAMES OKLAHOMA .. 42.5 (59.5). ..STANFORD

Home team in CAPITAL letters; (0/U) = over/under; NL = no lines

#### RECREATION HOLE-IN-ONE

SATURDAY'S GAMES

 Bill Mercer, Shannopin Country Club, Ben Avon Heights, No. 7, 128 yards, 7-iron SOCCER **USL CHAMPIONSHIP** 

USL CHAMPIONSHIP
RESULTS/SCHEDULE
Saturday's matches
Riverhounds 3, Birmingham 0
Hartford 2, Louisville 1
Tulsa 1, Detroit City FC 0
Tampa Bay 2, Miami 0
Rhode Island FC 0, Loudoun 0, tie
Charleston 6, Orange County 0
New Mexico at Colorado (n)
Memphis at Oakland (n)
El Paso at Monterey Bay FC (n) El Paso at Monterey Bay FC (n) Indy at Las Vegas (n)

### San Antonio at Sacramento (n) North Carolina at Phoenix (n) **Wednesday's match**

TRANSACTIONS BASEBALL

AMERICAN LEAGUE
HOUSTON ASTROS — Designated SS Jacob
Amaya for assignment. Reinstated RHP
Kaleb Ort from the paternity list. Agreed to terms with RHP Hector Neris on a one-year

terms with RHP Hector Neris on a one-year contract. Optioned RHPs Seth Martinez and Shawn Dubin to Sugar Land (PCL).
MINNESOTA TWINS — Sent SS Brooks Lee to St. Paul (IL) on a rehab assignment.
Designated LHP Steven Okert for assignment. Selected the contract of RHP Scott Blewett from St. Paul.
NEW YORK YANKEES — Sent 2B Jon Berti and RHP Ian Hamilton to Somerset (EL) on a rehab assignment. a rehab assignment. OAKLAND ATHLETICS — Recalled LHP

OAKLAND A HILE ILLS — RECAIRED LTP Hogan Harris from Las Vegas (PCL). Optioned RHP Dany Jimenez to Las Vegas. TAMPA BAY RAYS — Reinstated C Ben Rortvedt from the bereavement list. Designated C Rob Brantly for assignment. NATIONAL LEAGUE CINCINNATI REDS — Designated RHP Alan Busenitz for assignment. Selected the contract of RHP Casey Kelly from Louisville

(IL). MIAMI MARLINS — Placed LHP Andrew Nardi on the 15-day IL, retroactive to Aug. 22. Recalled RHP George Soriano from 22. Recalled RHP George Soriano from Jacksonville (IL).
PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES — Reinstated LHP Ragner Suarez from the 15-day. IL. Optioned LHP Tyler Gilbert to Lehigh Valley (IL). SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS — Recalled RHP Camilo Doval from Sacramento (PCL).
Optioned RHP Landen Roupp to Sacramento
WASHINGTON NATIONALS — Recalled C
Drew Millas from Rochester (IL). Placed OF

FRONTIER LEAGUE NEW YORK BOULDERS — Signed OF Ryan McCoy. OTTAWA TITANS — Signed C Bradlee Preap. SUSSEX COUNTY MINERS — Signed OF

Jordan Smith. **BASKETBALL** 

WNBA LOS ANGELES SPARKS — Released G Odvssey Sims. Signed G Odyssey Sims to a NEW YORK LIBERTY — Released G Javlyn Sherrod. Signed G Jaylyn Sherrod to a rest-of-season contract.

#### **FOOTBALL**

CHICAGO BEARS — Waived DT Keith Randolph Jr. Released TE Tommy Sweeney. CLEVELAND BROWNS — Acquired a 2025 sixth-round pick from Chicago in exchange for DT Chris Williams and a 2025 seventh-

GOOD LUCK GREATER L

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HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL NOTEBOOK

### Greensburg Central Catholic's Crosby accounts for 6 TDs

BY BILL BECKNER JR.

Samir Crosby had an impressive performance in a wild opener for Greensburg Central Catholic at Shady Side Acad-

The Centurions rallied to win 46-40 as the junior quarterback accounted for six touchdowns. GCC trailed 32-10 in the second quarter before Crosby took command and led a come-

He scored four rushing touchdowns, one on a 60-yard dash, and threw for two more, both to Landon Honick.

Crosby rushed for 341 yards on 21 carries and completed 7 of 12 passes for 136 yards. He ran for 262 yards in the

second half.

Serra Catholic transfer Jerry Davis kicked a 22-yard field goal

#### for the Centurions. **400** game

#### Norwin became just the sixth Westmoreland County football program to reach 400 wins

when the Knights knocked off Penn-Trafford, 26-14, on Friday night in North Huntingdon. They join five teams that also

Jeannette (778), Greensburg Salem (712), Monessen (686), Latrobe (476) and Ligonier Valley (466). The Knights are 400-604-36

They hadn't won their season opener since 2018.

#### For kicks

Southmoreland kicker Jake Kaylor etched his name into the program record book Friday when he kicked a 50-vard field goal in the Scotties' 52-20 win over Valley at Russ Grimm Field.

According to Scotties historian Paul Brittain, the kick broke the 50-year-old mark of 48 yards set by Dave Trout in 1974 against Mt. Pleasant.

#### Defense strong

Latrobe could be one of the top defensive teams in 5A this season, and the Wildcats are off to a rousing start.

They forced six turnovers in Friday's 41-0 win over Connellsville. Four of them were interceptions to go with a fumble and a muffed punt. Safety John Wetzel, a

Marshall commit, picked off a pass and took it in for a 25-yard touchdown to open the scoring.

Alex Tatsch, the Wildcats' coveted Penn State commit, scored on a 51-yard fake punt.

#### Release the Hounds

Monessen whipped Charleroi, 59-12, for its first season-opening win since 2018.

TyVaughn Kershaw scored five touchdowns - three rushing and two on kick returns.

#### Start me up

Ligonier Valley is used to

season. The Rams, who beat Derry, 20-7, are 16-5 in season-opening games under veteran coach Roger Beitel.

winning its first game of the

That includes a 9-1 mark over the last 10 years.

#### Hard pass

It's rare for Jeannette to pass for more yards than it runs for, but the Jayhawks threw for 290 in a win over Mt. Pleasant and rushed for 80.

Bill Beckner is a TribLive staff writer. He can be reached at bbeckner@triblive.com.

### WPIAL football rankings

#### **CLASS 6A**

Team	Rec	Prv
1. North Allegheny	1-0	1
2. Central Catholic	0-1	2
3. Norwin	1-0	5
4. Canon-McMillan	0-1	4
5. Seneca Valley	0-1	5
Out: none		

#### **CLASS 5A**

Team	Rec	Prv
1. Peters Township	1-0	1
2. Pine-Richland	1-0	2
3. Upper St. Clair	1-0	5
4. Woodland Hills	0-1	3
5. Penn Hills	0-1	4
Out: none		

#### **CLASS 4A**

Team	Rec	Prv
1. Aliquippa	0-0	1
2. Montour	1-0	2
3. Mars	1-0	3
4. McKeesport	0-1	4
5. Thomas Jefferson	1-0	5
Out: none		

#### **CLASS 3A**

Team	Rec	Prv
1. Central Valley	0-1	1
2. Imani Christian	1-0	2
3. Avonworth	1-0	3
4. Elizabeth Forward	0-1	4
5. North Catholic	0-1	5
Out. DODE		

#### **CLASS 2A**

Team	Rec	Prv
1. Washington	1-0	2
2. Steel Valley	0-1	1
3. South Park	1-0	3
4. Ellwood City	1-0	4
5. Seton LaSalle	1-0	5

#### CLASS A

Out: none

Team	Rec	Prv
1. Fort Cherry	1-0	1
2. Clairton	1-0	2
3. South Side	1-0	3
4. Neshannock	1-0	4
5. Bishop Canevin	0-0	5
Out: none		•



CHAZ PALLA | TRIBLIVE

Norwin's Tristyn Tavares

# KICK SIX IN WEEK ZERO

#### BY CHRIS HARLAN

The spread offense. The no-huddle. The Gatorade shower.

High school football has borrowed plenty of trends from the college and pro ranks, but the NFL's new kickoff format is one that traditionalists hope never makes its way to Friday nights.

They say a long kickoff return nowadays is a rare thing of beauty.

"I think it's one of the most exciting things in the game," Kiski Area coach Sam Albert said. "Because they're so hard to get, and when you do, it's just excitement.'

Albert would know. Kiski Area junior Aven Shir-

ley returned the opening kickoff 80 yards for a touchdown Friday, sparking the team

to a 42-7 win over Knoch. Shirley's **THINGS** kick-return touchdown, which the junior predicted before the game,

was one of six scored by WPIAL

players in Week Zero. The longest was a 99-yard kickoff return by Woodland Hills' Scoop Smith, who flashed the speed as a reigning WPIAL

100-meter dash champion. Southmoreland's Cameron Phillips returned a kickoff 84 yards for a touchdown, New Brighton's Michael Veon scored on a 59-yarder, Waynesburg's Teagan Crouse had an 89-yarder and Hopewell's Brody Rock took one back 85 yards to the end zone.

"For us, it totally changed the momentum of the whole game," Southmoreland coach Tim Bukowski said. "When he ran that kick back, it sparked us and we took control of the whole game."

The NFL this season unveiled a new system called the Dynamic Kickoff Rule meant to reduce the number of touchbacks while maintaining player safety. It looks little like the kickoffs seen on high school fields.

"I get why they did it," Bukowski said, "but I'm still a football traditionalist. I'd prefer it stay the same at the high school level.'

Kiski Area had started slow in its scrimmage a week earlier, so Albert was encouraging his team to start fast Friday. That was when Shirley spoke up.

'He said, 'I'm going to run the kickoff back," Albert said. "I was like, 'All right, I'll take that.' Sure enough, he took it to the house. We were going crazy. What a way to start the season."

#### New Brighton snaps streak

As they'd done many times in the past two seasons, the New Brighton players arrived at the school Saturday still recovering from a hard-fought game the



Kiski Area's Aven Shirley (left) returned the opening kick for a touchdown Friday, one of six kick-return scores in Week Zero.

night before. But first-year coach John Macuga said they saw this week how much better it feels after a win than a loss.

"There were a lot of guys sore in the locker room today, but they came in on a high note,' Macuga said after New Brighton won its first game in more than two years.

The Lions defeated Shenango, 9-7, in their Week Zero opener to snap a streak of 21 straight losses. The win was the team's first triumph since a 21-20 playoff victory over Washington on Nov. 5, 2021. The Lions lost in the next round of the playoffs that year before going 0-10 in 2022 and '23.

New Brighton scored all nine of its points in the first quarter Friday — on a safety and a kickoff return — and then held on defensively.

"It was pure excitement from the time the clock said zero," Macuga said. "They were hooting and hollering. It was a really good feeling for them."

#### Running a 300-yard dash

California's Lee Qualk was best known as a standout track athlete and WPIAL long jump champion, but he safely can be called a multi-sport star. The senior running back carried the ball 37 times for 372 yards and six touchdowns Friday in a win over Serra Catholic.

His yardage was the most by a WPIAL rusher in Week Zero.

"He's one of those kids you hopefully get every couple of years," California coach Ed Woods said. "He's just a standout athlete, has a really good work ethic, is very strong for his size and, obviously, he can fly.

Qualk won the long jump title at the WPIAL 2A track championships last spring with a leap of 22 feet, 2½ inches. He also placed seventh in the 100 meters at 11.24 seconds. As a junior on the football field, Qualk rushed for 560 yards on 44 carries and scored 14

#### Dashing debut for some

Sixteen first-year head coaches in the WPIAL and City League made their debut this weekend with close to half of them having a victorious night.

The group combined went 7-9 with wins by Allderdice's Mark Matson, Blackhawk's Jack Wickline, Hopewell's Matt Mottes, New Brighton's John Macuga, New Castle's Fred Mozzocio, Neshannock's Mike Bongivengo and South Fayette's Marty Spieler.

Two more coaches could join the list next week. Aliquippa's Vashawn Patrick and Springdale's Chad Walsh didn't have games in Week Zero.

#### Points on the board

Count the scoreboard operators among those who got tested in Week Zero.

There were seven games where the teams combined for 75 points or more. That was up from last year when there were only three. The highest-scoring game was New Castle's 49-47 victory over General McLane for 96 combined

The others were California over Serra Catholic, 62-26; Greensburg Central Catholic over Shady Side Academy, 46-40; Mars over Boone (Fla.), 47-35; Neshannock over Mohawk, 42-37; Armstrong over Highlands, 38-37; and Thomas Jefferson over Baldwin, 63-12.

Chris Harlan is a TribLive staff writer. He can be reached at charlan@triblive.com.

#### **Week Zero football leaders PASSING**

310, Cedric Mack, East Allegheny (18 of 28) 305, Bobby Fadden, Mohawk (20 of 40)

289, Nolan DiLucia, Peters Township (16 of 21)

278, Ryan Cortes, South Allegheny (15 of 25)

273, Jaydon Oliver, Armstrong (18 of 25) 262, Jackson Keranko, Charleroi (15 of 29)

248, Drew Wehorsky, South Fayette (18 of 22)

246, Jake Fleischer, Deer Lakes (9 of 12)

244, Tanner Pfeuffer, Bethel Park (13 of 20)

239, Menage Lucas, Highlands (8 of 21)

231, Trey Hopper, Montour (12 of 21) 230, Colt Sprankle, Knoch (29 of 43)

205, Steven Rutherford, Central Valley (7 of 19) 201, Houston Guseman, Jeff.-Morgan (10 of 16)

194, Elvis Koutsakis, Gateway (15 of 25) 189, Chase Lemke, Franklin Regional (6 of 15)

188, Devonte Dean, Carlynton (9 of 16) 183, Antonio Perkins, Valley (16 of 26)

181, Ty Jansma, Canon-McMillan (23 of 36) 176, Denis Hawkins, Monessen (10 of 11)

176, Stephen Knally, Blackhawk (10 of 12) 169, Alec Teff, Butler (20 of 40)

165, Raidon Kuroda, Yough (9 of 15)

164, Alexander Clawson, Apollo-Ridge (10 of 15) 162, Pat Smith, Mt. Lebanon (18 of 25)

151, Kymone Brown, Jeannette (7 of 8)

#### **RUSHING**

372, Lee Qualk, California

341, Samir Crosby, Greensburg CC

214, John Sciulli, Carlynton 207, Cam Epps, South Allegheny

192, Menage Lucas, Highlands 182, Landon Kucic, Kiski Area

174, Drew Wehorsky, South Favette

174, Tasso Whipple, Penn-Trafford

171, Eric Doerue, South Park 171, Kyle Dupill, Franklin Regional

169, Tyvaughn Kershaw, Monessen

157, Amos Glenn, Freeport

144, Charlie Nigut, Elizabeth Forward 141, Ben Hays, Bentworth

139, Elijah Palmer-McCane, Ellwood City

132, Brayden McCarthy, Blackhawk 132, John Woodward, Jefferson-Morgan

131, Nasir Scott, Allderdice

128, John Jablunovsky, Ligonier Valley

#### RECEIVING

195, Drew Cook, South Allegheny (7 rec.) 190, Jayce Powell, Jeannette (6 rec.)

174, Nick McCullough, Peters Township (5 rec.) 163, Zack Grant, Deer Lakes (6 rec.)

163, Blake Logan, Mohawk (5 rec.) 158, De'reon Washington, Serra Catholic (8 rec.)

130, Kyan Kline, Armstrong (7 rec.) 109, Caleb Patton, Washington (3 rec.)

108, Rodney Johnson, Monessen (4 rec.)

107, Kacy Carter, Gateway (3 rec.)

106, Jahmar Wright, Highlands (3 rec.)

103, Deakyn Dehoet, Jefferson-Morgan (4 rec.)

103, Dan Nusida, Charleroi (8 rec.) 101, Preston Simko, Butler (10 rec.)

**NORWIN 2, FRANKLIN REGIONAL 0** 

### Knights show energy in opening win

champion shuts out FR BY BILL BECKNER JR.

Norwin continues to row in the

Defending WPIAL soccer

right direction. After senior forward Daniel Maddock scored the boys soccer team's first goal of the season, several Knights plopped their backsides on the ground along the sideline, lined up like they were sitting in a boat, and began to row

in unison for a few seconds. "We did it in practice just joking around within the team, Maddock said. "We said it would be funny to do it in a game. When I scored, we just kind of did it."

Maddock added a second impromptu celebration with a backflip after his second goal as Norwin blanked Franklin Regional, 2-0, on Saturday afternoon at Norwin Knights Stadium. "Adrenaline kind of took

over," Maddock said. "I don't know what I would have done (for a third goal).' Both goals for defending WPIAL 4A champion Norwin (1-0) came in the second half of the season opener after Class 3A

field in the first 40 minutes. Norwin is ranked No. 1 in 4A, Franklin Regional is No. 2 in 3A.

Franklin Regional (0-1) tilted the

Norwin coach Scott Schuchert is all for the goal celebrations, as long as they are not derogatory toward opponents.

"That's from the English Premier League," Schuchert said. "I loved it. Every goal we score is like a World Cup goal to us.' Franklin Regional outshot

Norwin, 9-5, with Knights' firstyear senior goalkeeper Ryan Dooen making seven saves. "I hope I can fill half the shoes

of Anthony (Scalise)," Dooen said of last year's standout goalie who graduated. "Today showed that we have a strong defensive core, from Daniel to the back four.' After limited opportunities in the first half, Norwin finally

found some spacing, with Mad-

dock pulling ahead on a break-

away for a goal in the 55th minute. Bill Beckner is a TribLive staff writer. He can be reached at bbeckner@triblive.com.

#### Steele sparks Jayhawks boys soccer team to victory for Latrobe (0-0-1) at the

McAlister Steele had a goal and an assist to lead Jeannette to a 3-1 season-opening victory over the hosts at the Chartiers-Houston boys soccer tournament Saturday. Stone Markham and Zion Harper also scored for the Jayhawks (1-0).

Montour 5, Latrobe **3** — Andrew Prunier had a hat trick, and Brady Tarquinio and Brayden Vlasach also scored to lead Montour (1-0) in a nonsection match. John Massaro, Warren Agostoni and Jake Limani scored, and Roman Agostoni had two assists for Latrobe (0-1).

Mt. Pleasant 4, Connellsville 2 - In nonsection play, Gavin Rummel had a goal and an assist

as Mt. Pleasant (1-0) beat Connellsville (0-1). Tyler Kurtz, Landon Stuart and Aydan Gross also scored for the Vikings. **Penn-Trafford 9,** Hempfield 1 - J.J. Por-

ter had three goals as Penn-Trafford (1-0) beat Hempfield (0-1) in nonsection play.
Southmoreland 4, South Allegheny 0 -Liam Smith, Ethan Kenney, Landon Delara and Hunter Ryan scored to lift Southmoreland (1-0) past

Gladiators. Girls soccer

Latrobe 2, Avonworth

**2** — Annalyse Bauer and

Emerson Shine scored

South Allegheny in the tournament hosted by the

Franklin Regional 1 -Olivia Della Lucia, Sami Maglicco and Cece Wessel scored for Thomas Jefferson (1-0) in its win over Franklin Regional (0-1) at the Moe Rosensteel Memorial Tournament at Ringgold.

Moe Rosensteel Memorial

Classic at Ringgold. Fiona

Avonworth (0-0-1).

Mt. Pleasant 6, Knoch

O — Morgan Gesinski and

Rylin Bugosh scored two

goals apiece to power

Mt. Pleasant (2-0) past

Knoch (0-2) at the Mars

tournament. Maddie Bar-

Thomas Jefferson 3,

rick and Carly Kapr also

scored for the Vikings.

Mahan scored twice for

— TribLive

# Panthers working to master new system

this year than Anson F. Harrold, Pitt's first coach, had in 1893 when his team was 1-4 and scored a total of 14 points. Like Harrold, who coached only one season, Narduzzi needs to improve matters on the offensive side of the ball.

To that end, he fired 58-yearold offensive coordinator Frank Cignetti Jr. the day after the 2023 season ended, hired 31-year-old Kade Bell to replace him with a hurry-up, no-huddle offense and hit the transfer portal hard. A total of 15 Pitt players attended classes at another institution of higher learning last year, including wide receivers Censere Lee and Poppi Williams and running back Desmond Reid, all of whom thrived in Bell's offense at Western Carolina against FCS opposition. The first test will be at noon Sat-

urday when Pitt meets Kent State of the Mid-American Conference at Acrisure Stadium.

After a slow start in the first

scrimmage two weeks ago, reports from practice have been nothing but glowing on how the fast pace is designed to catch the defense napping, how the football is snapped 15 seconds or so after the end of the previous play and how Bell has a knack for scheming his playmak-

"Are people ready for this here?" longtime ACC play-by-play man Wes Durham said when the ACC Network visited camp. Durham knows Bell's dad,

Kerwin Bell, a former NFL quar-

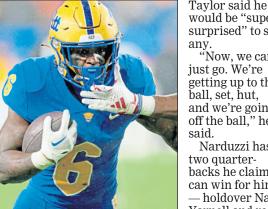
terback and currently the head coach at Western Carolina.

"I knew what Kerwin had done at Valdosta State (where he won a Division II national championship with his son calling plays in 2018)," Durham said. "Kerwin played in those Florida days where they were breaking ground with the way they threw the ball. Kade has taken all of that and now expanded it.

You can tell by the lineups and the formations that there is some NFL influence on this. Bell likes toys, and he has toys here.'

But Bell needs to make the toys work. Aside from the three transfers, Bell can design plays for veterans at running back (Rodney Hammond), wide receiver (Konata Mumpfield and Daejon Reynolds) and tight end (Gavin Bartholomew). If the offensive line remains healthy, Bell has a better chance to succeed. One positive: Delay of game

penalties have been eliminated. Offensive left tackle Branson



Pitt running back Rodney Hammond Jr. ran for 547 yards last season.

would be "super surprised" to see any.
"Now, we can

just go. We're getting up to the ball, set, hut, and we're going off the ball," he Narduzzi has

backs he claims can win for him — holdover Nate Yarnell and redshirt freshman transfer Eli Holstein, formerly of Alabama. The coach

hasn't named a starter, but there's a chance both will receive significant playing time. Narduzzi promised he won't make the same

mistake two years in a row after allowing quarterback Phil Jurkovec to play through a 1-4 start. Last year, we assumed too much and the offense assumed. Bad job, I

put that on me," Narduzzi said.
The defense has nine new starters after five left through the trans-

fer portal. The veteran presence at safety may be offset by the inexperience at cornerback. Pitt lost its pass-rush ferocity last season, but Narduzzi is counting on senior defensive end Nate Matlack, another transfer, to help get it back.

Now that the offense has been modernized, there's hope the defense will benefit when confronted with tempo systems on the other side of the ball.

"Going into the season, we're much more prepared for these spread offenses and all the gun runs and all that stuff," Narduzzi

Although there are questions on the field, Narduzzi likes the way his players have approached their "They got a business-like attitude

right now. You watch them, and it's like they're going to work. I just don't see as much clowning around. These dudes are a little bit more serious. Reason why, I don't have any idea. Even walking off the field. They seem to be more While there are high expecta-

tions in the locker room, Pitt is not getting much recognition nationally or even within the ACC. In The Athletic's weekly ranking of all 134 FBS teams, Pitt was 83rd, ahead of only two ACC schools - No. 84 Virginia and No. 87 Stanford. The ACC preseason poll ranked Pitt 13th of 17 schools.

That's where the players' attitude can help.

"We feel we're disrespected right now, and we have a lot to prove," safety Donovan McMillon said. "So obviously, it's going to be really serious.

Jerry DiPaola is a TribLive staff writer. He can be reached at idipaola@triblive.com.



#### **SCHEDULE** Date Opponent

3.31	vs. Kent State	Noon
9.7	@ Cincinnati	Noon
9.14	vs. West Virginia	3:30 p.m.
9.21	vs. Young. State	3:30 p.m.
10.5	@ North Carolina	TBD
10.12	vs. California	TBD
10.24	vs. Syracuse	7:30 p.m.
11.2	@ SMU	TBD
11.9	vs. Virginia	TBD
11.16	vs. Clemson	TBD
11.23	@ Louisville	TBD
11.30	@ Boston College	TBD



#### PREDICTED FINISH

. Florida State	10. Cal
. Clemson	11. Duke
. Miami	12. Syracuse
. N.C. State	13. Pitt
. Louisville	14. Boston Coll.
. Virginia Tech	15. Wake Forest
. SMU	16. Virginia
. N. Carolina	17. Stanford

#### **PLAYERS TO WATCH**

#### D.J. Uiagalelei Florida State QB

9. Georgia Tech

Redshirt sefrom Oregon State who

also spent three seasons at Clemson. Threw for 2,638 yards and 21 TDs last year. Holds 30-

10 record as starter.

#### **Cam Ward** Miami QB

Washington State transfer is preseason. ACC Player of the Year after totaling 6,963

yards and 48 touchdowns over two years with the Cougars.

#### Omarion Hampton

**North Carolina RB** Junior led ACC in rushing yards (1,504),touchdowns

(15) and yards from scrimmage (1,726) last season. Named second-team

All-American.



### No surprise, money is factor in NCAA's shakeup "But there has to be a framework conference championship since 1984. **REALIGNMENT** · FROM B1

was preparing to play Georgia Tech in Dublin, Ireland, on Saturday to start the season, the ACC's footprint now includes Stanford, Cal-Berkeley and SMU and covers 24% of the 50 • Overall, 12 power conference schools, plus SMU, have moved, with

Southern Cal, UCLA, Oregon and Washington joining the Big Ten; Oklahoma and Texas finding new homes in the SEC; and Arizona State, Arizona, Utah and Colorado bumping the Big 12 up to 16 schools. Penn State plays Southern Cal on the West Coast on Oct. 12 for only the third time during the regular season and the first since 1991.

• Players receive payouts through their name, image and likeness that occasionally reach \$1 million. Recruits play one school against another to see who is willing to ante up the

• Unhappy players or perhaps those just looking to get rich through NIL can transfer and play immediately at their new school. There are many people who be-

lieve giving players such leverage and money is long overdue. "I think in the long term, it gets us

closer to a real business model that, frankly, needed to occur," ESPN.com college football insider David Hale, who has been writing about the sport for 20 years, told TribLive. "You can't have a sport generating billions upon billions of dollars every year, and none of that is directly flowing to actual employees of the sport. This was inevitable, but there are going to be a lot of growing pains along Nonetheless, Hale said, the games

played out over 60 minutes on 100 yards of grass or turf remain largely the same.

'You can make a good case that the portal has allowed players you might not have even known about or watched on a Saturday to transfer from the Kent States and Miami (Ohios) of the world to move up and play at a higher level. That's good for it. ... You have to be careful not to risk the things that make college football great on Saturdays by chasing all the dollars that may be out

Chasing dollars is precisely what those 13 schools are doing, some in the name of survival.

ACC commissioner Jim Phillips was looking for strength in numbers when he recruited Stanford, Cal and SMU in the wake of Florida State and Clemson threatening to leave. Meanwhile, Stanford and Cal were looking to join a major conference and escape the sinking ship that is the Pac-12 after it lost all but two schools to the ACC, Big Ten and

On the field, SMU will add a quality team to the ACC. Quarterback Preston Stone threw for 3.197 vards and 28 touchdowns last season before uffering a broken fibula against Navy on Nov. 25. He missed the AAC title game victory against Tulane — the last of a nine-game winning streak that gave SMU its first

Cal's Jaydn Ott may be one of the best running backs in the ACC

after rushing for 1,375 yards and

12 touchdowns last season. But Cal has logistical issues with four games on the East Coast against Auburn, Florida State, Pitt and Wake Forest. "Leave a day early," coach Justin Wilcox said, "make sure you have plenty of food and water and Gatorade for the plane, and we got the biggest plane Delta makes, with laydown suites. A lot of the players will

have really comfortable seats, more comfortable than the chairs they sit in at home.' Stanford will play at Syracuse and Clemson on consecutive weeks, Sept. 20 and 28, but it won't be spend-

ing the week on the East Coast. We will turn back (after the Syracuse game) so our students can go to class," Stanford coach Troy Taylor said. "There are harder things to

Jerry DiPaola is a TribLive staff writer.

# Tomlin sees enough at QB

for the game.

STEELERS · FROM B1

When Cordarrelle Patterson burst up the middle on a 31-yard touchdown run, Tomlin pulled the plug on Wilson.

"I was ready to play however long coach wanted me to," Wilson said. "Whenever I came to the sideline, he gave me (the sign) that you're done.'

Wilson was 2 of 2 passing for 26 yards. He joined Najee Harris. Pat Freiermuth and Pickens on the bench for the second series.

"We just needed results that were indicative of how we worked," Tomlin said. "They were able to put together a scoring drive, and it provided an opportunity to get Justin in sooner."

Tomlin still hasn't named his starting quarterback for the opener, and he doesn't plan to do so until the end of practice next week. The Steelers will work Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday before players get an NFL-mandated four-day break.

Wilson doesn't mind waiting a few more days.

"Coach Tomlin is one of the best coaches to ever coach the game," Wilson said. "I don't ever question him. He knows what he's doing.

Fields played three series before ceding to No. 3 quarterback Kvle Allen with 9:37 left in the second quarter. Fields completed 3 of 4 passes for 42 yards and, like Wilson, directed a touchdown drive the first time he touched the ball.

"You never want to play games and struggle," Fields

DETROIT 24, STEELERS 17

First quarter
Pit—Patterson 31 run (Boswell kick), 12:47.
Pit—Perine 1 run (Boswell kick), 6:05.

Second quarter
Det—Funk 2 pass from Hooker (Bates kick), Det—J.Jefferson 1 run (Bates kick), :25. Third quarter Pit—FG M.Wright 26, 3:20.

Fourth quarter
Det—J.Jefferson 7 run (Bates kick), 12:39.
Det—FG Bates 46, 5:22. A-51,976. TEAM STATISTICS

	110	<i>D</i> C
First downs	11	2
Total Net Yards	215	363
Rushes-yards	24-78	41-187
Passing '	137	174
Punt Returns	2-16	3-30
Kickoff Returns	2-60	4-120
Interceptions Ret.	1-1	0-
Comp-Att-Int	11-15-0	18-28-2
Sacked-Yards Lost	4-29	5-29
Punts	6-45.833	3-50.0
Fumbles-Lost	2-1	2-
Penalties-Yards	7-54	10-4
Time of Possession	24:29	35:3
INDIVIDUAL STATIST	ICS	

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS
RUSHING—Steelers, Patterson 3-31, Perine
6-16, Shampklin 7-13, Harris 1-5, Plumlee
1-4, Fields 2-4, Ward 1-3, Edwards 2-3, Allen
1-(minus 1). Detroit, Hooker 10-93, Funk
10-40, Jefferson 9-29, Knight 10-27, Fromm

2-(minus 2). PASSING—Steelers, Allen 3-5-0-68, Fields 3-4-0-40, Plumlee 3-4-0-32, Ru.Wilson 2-2-0-26. Detroit, Hooker 12-20-1-114, Fromm 6-8-0-89. RECEIVING—Steelers, D.Fitzpatrick 2-64, Pickens 2-26, Jefferson 2-18, Miller 2-9, Pruitt 1-22, Jenkins 1-17, Watkins 1-10. Detroit, Alexander 4-60, Zylstra 4-29, Calhoun 2-37, K.Davis 2-27, Kennedy 2-9, I.Williams 1-17, McKeon 1-14, Knight 1-8, Funk 1-2. Knight 1-8, Fullik 1-2.

MISSED FIELD GOALS—Detroit, Bates 30.

production, putting points on the board, we can definitely take the good things from this game and move Although the top play-

makers were on the sideline when Fields entered, he played behind most of the first-team offensive line. We wanted to put some people around that could

protect him," Tomlin said. "That's appropriate. You can see I got nervous when we moved away from some of those groups, and I got him out of there.'

On the opening drive, the said. "I think that endgame Steelers got the type of big

plays that the first-team offense had lacked in the first two preseason games, although it looked like more of the same when a screen to Pickens lost 6 yards, bringing up a third-and-11 pre-

in the pocket long enough to find Pickens for a 32-yard gain down the left sideline. Two plays later, Patterson ran virtually untouched up the middle for the first points produced by the first-team offense in three

run hiked the Steelers lead

Fields was in the game. "We're just going to look

and what plays we could be better on and get better,' Fields said.

at the mistakes that we had

But Wilson bought time

Fields' first possession began at the Detroit 35 after the second Nick Herbig sack on the Lions' opening drive forced a fumble that Dean Lowry recovered. Fields gained 4 yards on a designed run around right tackle for a first down, then threaded a 22-yard pass to tight end MyCole Pruitt to the 2.

La'Mical Perine's 1-yard

Fields also was involved in a miscommunication with rookie center Zach Frazier on the next series. With Fields lined up in the shotgun and his head turned, he didn't see Frazier snap the ball early. The ball landed at Fields' feet, and he recovered for a 4-yard loss. It was the fourth fumbled snap of the preseason while

Joe Rutter is a TribLive staff writer. He can be reached at jrutter@triblive.com.

STEELERS NOTEBOOK

## Patterson provides highlight

**BY JOE RUTTER** 

DETROIT — The way he hit the hole and ran virtually untouched to the end zone, high-stepping on the way in, it looked like Cordarrelle Patterson might have been returning a kickoff Saturday for the Pittsburgh Steelers.

Instead, one of the NFL's most decorated returners made his impact on a rushing attempt that provided the Steelers with an early lead in a 24-17 loss to the Detroit Lions. Patterson burst through a

seam in the middle of the field

gave the Steelers' first-team

and scored on a 31-yard run that

offense its first points in three preseason games. It showed the value of a running back who had 1,166 scrimmage yards in 2021 and a career-high 695 rushing yards in 2022 with the Atlanta

"I've seen that a lot over the last decade or so," coach Mike Tomlin said. "It just hadn't been in a uniform I've been associated with, so it was pretty cool." Patterson has scored an

Falcons.

NFL-record nine touchdowns on kickoff returns, but he has yet to be used in that role with the Steelers, who signed him in free agency with the new dynamic kickoff rules in mind. 'I know what he's capable of

in that area," Tomlin said. "The National Football League knows what he's capable of in that area. I wanted to get a look at some others."

Injury report After missing a few days of practice, second-year cornerback Joey Porter Jr. didn't dress against the Lions because of an undisclosed injury.

back for Porter but did not go

into specifics and said he want-

Tomlin called it a "minor" set-

Cordarrelle Patterson rushes for a 31-yard touchdown in the first half Saturday.

ed to "exercise a little caution." Tomlin used the same rationale to withhold rookie inside linebacker Payton Wilson from the game. Wilson suffered a concussion against Buffalo but was medically cleared to suit up Saturday. Joining Porter on the sideline

were fellow defensive starters Cameron Heyward, T.J. Watt and Alex Highsmith. Heyward and Watt were rested. Highsmith is recovering from a groin injury. Cory Trice Jr. replaced Porter in the starting lineup and had

two tackles, including one for a loss, before he exited with a groin injury. Rookie outside linebacker Julius Welschof had two sacks before he injured his knee. Rookie safety Ryan Watts was on the field for several moments with what Tomlin described as a stinger. Watts left the field under his own power but was taken immediately to the med-Other players who didn't see

action because of injury were Roman Wilson, Jaylen Warren, Tyler Matakevich, Jeremiah Moon, Dylan Cook, Logan Lee and Troy Fautanu. Stepping up (again)

With Watt resting and

groin, Nick Herbig had another chance to shine in a starting role at outside linebacker. Herbig had two sacks in a three-play span on the Lions' opening drive, the second forc-

Highsmith resting his injured

ing a fumble that Dean Lowry recovered, which led to a touch-Keeanu Benton and DeMarvin Leal split another as the Steelers dropped Hendon Hooker on

three consecutive plays. Herbig had 31/2 sacks in the

preseason.

"He's behaving like a guy who has had a lap around the track,' Tomlin said. "We want to see significant growth in all those second-year players. He's an example of that, but he's not alone. ... He's making a jump. He's been there before. He's finding his footing. He wants to be impactful, and we'll find a role for a guy like that whether he's a 'starter' or not."

#### Playing the slots

One undecided starting position on defense remains at slot Thomas Graham Jr. got the

first-team reps for the second game in a row. Undrafted free agent Beanie Bishop started the opener before missing the second game with an injury and sitting the entire week of practice. Bishop remained on the

bench against the Lions until the second half. You've got to earn opportu-

nity," Tomlin said. "I'm glad he's healthy. We were going to give him opportunity, but when you go in a game is often reflective of the work you do leading up to the performance. To be quite honest, he's had limited avail-

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### Ga. Tech stuns **FSU** in Ireland

Aidan Birr made a 44-yard field goal as time expired, and Georgia Tech upset No. 10 Florida State, 24-21, on Saturday in Dublin in the first major college football game of the season.

Coming off an undefeated regular season but with a remade roster, the Seminoles tied the score 21-21 with 6 minutes, 33 seconds left in the fourth quarter on a 15-play TD drive that included two fourth-down conversions by DJ Uiagalelei.

Florida State (0-1, 0-1 ACC) never touched the ball again, and Birr came on with five seconds left on the clock to drill

#### Golf

Keegan Bradley finished with an 8-foot birdie putt, his eighth birdie of a round that only gave him a 2-under-par 70 on a day where Castle Pines took more than it gave and created plenty of possibilities in the BMW Championship.

Adam Scott hit one tee shot out of bounds and another in the water after just three holes and had to rally at the end to limit the damage to a 74, leaving him one shot behind.

Ludvig Aberg began his day with a nose bleed in high altitude but went from a four-shot deficit to a three-shot lead after just five holes. He had four birdies and an eagle and could only manage a 71, leaving him two shots back. He was tied with fellow Swede Alex Noren.

#### Little League

Luis Calo hit a go-ahead tworun double in the sixth inning as Lake Mary, Fla., beat Boerne, Texas, 10-7, in a wild game that sent the Southeast region representative to the Little League World Series championship. Florida will take on Taiwan, a 4-1 winner over Venezuela, on Sunday afternoon.

#### Horse racing

Fierceness held off Thorpedo Anna's late charge to win the \$1.25 million Travers Stakes by a head, denying the filly's attempt to become the first female winner of the Grade 1 race in more than a century.

### Auto racing

Three-time Supercars champion Shane van Gisbergen will drive full time in the NASCAR Cup Series in 2025 for Trackhouse Racing.

### **COLLEGE FOOTBALL** 2024

# Pressure on Allar to step up

Penn State QB looking for more big plays under new coordinator Kotelnicki

#### **BY JUSTIN GUERRIERO**

Few casual college football fans glancing at Penn State quarterback Drew Allar's statistics from last year could conclude anything other than he had a stellar season. Allar threw 25 touchdowns and

only two interceptions, completing 59.9% of his passes for 2,631 yards in his first year as a starter. Yet, from the vantage point of

Nittany Lions diehards, Allar had his shortcomings, particularly in critical losses against Big Ten rivals Ohio State and Michigan that led to a third-place finish in the conference. Allar went a combined 28 of 64

(43.8%) with only two touchdowns as the Nittany Lions were held to 12 and 15 respective points in defeats that defined their season.

Those losses didn't fall solely on Allar's shoulders.

Still, Penn State, which earned a No. 8 national preseason ranking, needs the 6-foot-5 junior to take the next step in running first-year coordinator Andy Kotelnicki's offense.

'Offensively, we talk about the three most important stats in the offensive football games: the turnover battle, explosive play battle and then scoring and red-zone conversion rate," Allar said.

"Those are the three most important stats that we can be good at. Obviously, we did a good job at taking care of the ball last year, but the explosive plays weren't where we wanted them to be as an offense."

Another recurring theme for the Nittany Lions this offseason has been getting the ball in the hands of their most talented players. Looking at Penn State's project-

ed starting offense, Allar has no shortage of teammates capable of producing big gains.

The Nittany Lions return their dynamic tailback duo from last year in Nicholas Singleton and Kaytron Allen, who rushed for a combined 1,654 yards while splitting handoff duties nearly evenly (172 carries for Allen, 171 for Singleton).

Ohio State transfer Julian Fleming leads a wide receivers room with several players looking to step up, such as Harrison Wallace and Liam Clifford. At tight end, Tyler Warren returns after a 34-catch, 422-yard



Penn State guarterback Drew Allar: "Obviously, we did a good job at taking care of the ball last year, but the explosive plays weren't where we wanted them to be as an offense."

"I think we've done a better job at being intentional of trying to be more explosive as an offense in both the run and pass game," Allar said. "Not every explosive play is going to be the 50-yard ball down the field. It's me being accurate on a flat route to Nick (Singleton) and Kaytron (Allen), allowing them to turn up field and get 15 yards.

"(It's) us being accurate on bubble passes, the receivers blocking on the perimeter — there's a lot more things that go into explosive plays than just chucking the ball downfield. ... We've got to do everything in our power to earn the right to throw the ball downfield."

This year, defending national champion Michigan is not on Penn State's schedule, but on Nov. 2, the Nittany Lions host No. 2-ranked Ohio State for what's sure to be a heated battle between College Football Playoff hopefuls.

Penn State also plays three former Pac-12 teams entering their first year in the Big Ten, starting with UCLA at home Oct. 5, at No. 23 Southern Cal on Oct. 12 and vs. Washington

But before all that, the Nittany Lions travel to Morgantown for their Aug. 31 season opener against West Virginia. Last year, Penn State beat the

visiting Mountaineers, 38-15. Allar was 21 of 29 for 325 yards and three touchdowns. As kickoff in Morgantown nears, what coach James Franklin has

seen from Allar, named one of Penn State's six captains for 2024, inspires confidence that the 20-year-old is primed and ready to make a big leap this fall. 'He's really done everything right," Franklin told reporters in

State College last week. "He's always been a really good preparation guy in terms of being in the building, studying the installs, watching a ton of tape, asking great questions. When you keep punching the

clock and keep doing the right things, you get better and you gain confidence, you gain experience, the game starts to slow down for you. ... So, it's just kind of total development in every area.'

Justin Guerriero is a TribLive staff writer. He can be reached at jquerriero@triblive.com.

#### **SCHEDULE**

Date	Opponent	Time
8.31	@ West Virginia	Noon
9.7	vs. Bowling Green	Noon
9.21	vs. Kent State	TBD
9.28	vs. Illinois	TBD
10.5	vs. UCLA	TBD
10.12	@ USC	TBD
10.26	@ Wisconsin	TBD
11.2	vs. Ohio State	TBD
11.9	vs. Washington	TBD
11.16	@ Purdue	TBD
11.23	@ Minnesota	TBD
11.30	vs. Maryland	TBD

#### **PREDICTED FINISH**

L. Ohio State	10. Washingto
2. Oregon	11. Maryland
3. Penn State	12. Minnesota
1. Michigan	13. Illinois
5. Iowa	14. N'western
S. USC	15. UCLA
7. Wisconsin	16. Mich. State
3. Nebraska	17. Indiana
9. Rutgers	18. Purdue

#### **PLAYERS TO WATCH**

#### Dillon Gabriel **Oregon QB**

Senior transfer from Oklahoma ranks fourth in FBS history with 152 career TD passes. Also ranks seventh with 14,865 passing yards. Threw 30 TDs and just six interceptions last

#### Emeka Egbuka Ohio State WR

Latest in pipeline of Buckeyes star receivers coming off injury-riddled season. Has 124 catches for 1,857 yards and 14 TDs in 35 career games.

#### Kyle Monangai

**Rutgers RB** Led Big Ten with 1,295 yards rushing last year and added eight TDs. Rushing total also ranked 17th in nation.

#### SPORTS BROADCASTS

HIGH SCHOOL

1 p.m. Rabun Gap-Na-

lor (Tenn.). ESPN

Orleans, NFLN

final round. GOLF

coochee School (Ga.) vs. Bay-

NFL PRESEASON

**2 p.m.** Tennessee at New

**4:30 p.m.** Arizona at Denver. CBS

**8 p.m.** New England at Washington. NBC, PEACOCK

**CHAMPIONS TOUR** 

**2 p.m.** The Ally Challenge

DP WORLD TOUR

KORN FERRY TOUR

**5 p.m.** The Albertsons

Boise Open final round. GOLF

LPGA TOUR

**7 a.m.** The AIG Women's

PGA TOUR

Noon The BMW champion-ship final round. GOLF **2 p.m.** The BMW champi-

**THOROUGHBRED** 

1 p.m. NYRA: Saratoga

**3 p.m.** NYRA: Saratoga

4 p.m. NYRA: Saratoga

**COLLEGE WOMEN** 

Noon Arizona at North

**2 p.m.** Mississippi St. at Wake Forest. ACCN

2 p.m. lowa at Texas. SECN

Noon Kansas City at Wash-

NWSL

ington. CBSSN

10 p.m. North Carolina at Seattle. ESPN2

SERIE A

2:45 p.m. Bologna at

SPFL

ATHLETES UNLIMITED

**5:30 p.m.** Team Corrick vs. Team Lorenz. ESPNU

**3 p.m.** Team Kilfoyl vs. Team Ocasio. ESPNU

6:55 a.m. Celtic at St.

Open final round. USA **Noon** The AIG Women's

Open final round. NBC

onship final round. NBC

Horse racing

Live. FS2

Live, FS1

Live. FS2

Soccer

Carolina. ACCN

Napoli. CBSSN

Mirren. CBSSN

Softball

6 a.m. The Danish Golf

championship final round.

#### Auto racing

ARCA MENARDS SERIES **1 p.m.** The Sprecher 150.

FORMULA ONF **8:55 a.m.** The Heineken Dutch Grand Prix. ESPN 8:55 a.m. Formula 1 Kids: The Dutch Grand Prix. ESPN2 **IMSA SPORTSCAR** 

**CHAMPIONSHIP Noon** The Michelin GT Challenge At VIR. USA

**INDYCAR SERIES 3:30 p.m.** NTT The Bitnile.com Grand Prix of Portland. USA

MOTOCROSS **9 a.m.** FIM Women Motocross World championship: The MX2. CBSSN 10 a.m. FIM Motocross

World championship: The MX2. CBSSŃ 11 a.m. FIM Motocross World championship: The MXGP. CBSSN

NASCAR TRUCK SERIES 4 p.m. The LiUNA! 175, Playoffs — Round of 10. FS1

#### Basketball

**WNBA** Noon Las Vegas at Chica-**4 p.m.** Los Angeles at Dallas. NBATV

Cycling

UCI 10 a.m. The Vuelta a Espana, Stage 9. CNBC Baseball

LITTLE LEAGUE **WORLD SERIES 10 a.m.** Teams TBD, third-place game. ESPN2 3 p.m. Teams TBD, World championship game. ABC

MLB 1:30 p.m. Arizona at Boston. MLBN 1:35 p.m. Pirates vs.

Cincinnati. SportsNet Pitts-burgh/93.7 FM, 1480 AM, Pirates Radio Network **4:30 p.m.** Tampa Bay at

L.A. Dodgers (joined in progress). MLBN 7 p.m. Houston at Baltimore. ESPN, ESPN2 (Stat-

#### Football

CFL 7 p.m. Edmonton at Montreal, CBSSN

### West Virginia to lean on potent rushing attack

White, Donaldson, Greene lead Mountaineers in new-look Big 12

ASSOCIATED PRESS

West Virginia has its potent ground game back, and if reinforcements on a leaky defense help avoid some of the embarrassments from a year ago, the Mountaineers could make some noise in the Big 12 this

West Virginia finished third in the Bowl Subdivision at 229 yards on the ground per game despite not having a 1,000-yard rusher. Jahiem White averaged 7.7 yards per carry as a freshman and compiled 842 yards, most of those in the final month of the season.

White understands his goal should be surpassing those numbers behind a veteran offensive line, coach Neal Brown said.

'There's a lot of room for improvement, but he can do a lot of things," Brown said. "There's not a whole lot of people talking about him. He's flying under the radar."

Running back CJ Donaldson, a 240-pound junior, has made a similar impact but has yet to play a complete season because of injuries, missing West Virginia's bowl win over North Carolina last season and sitting out five games in 2022.

West Virginia went 9-4 a year ago, by far its best under Brown, after being picked last in the Big 12. The Mountaineers are tapped to finish seventh this time as the league expands to 16 teams while losing Oklahoma and Texas to the SEC. "I'm fired up about this group," Brown

said. "Probably as excited as I've been."

### Greene's accuracy

Brown has made it clear that mobile quarterback Garrett Greene needs to be more accurate. The senior was last in the Big 12 with a 53% completion rate last year. That might have been the only down-

side for Greene, who averaged 201 passing yards, was the league's top rushing QB at 64 yards per game and finished with 16 passing and 13 rushing touchdowns. "I think Garrett's got a chance to be

elite," Brown said.

Brown expects a group of young wide receivers, including sophomore Hudson Clement, to make big steps, and they'll be joined by transfers Jaden Bray from Oklahoma State and Justin Robinson from Mississippi State.



West Virginia's Jahiem White averaged 7.7 yards per carry as a freshman.

#### No hot seat

For a change, Brown doesn't have to fend off questions about his job performance. The sixth-year coach received a one-year contract extension in March that includes a \$400,000 pay cut over the next three seasons. That enabled the school to boost the salaries of its assistant coaches, a priority for Brown.

But Brown is 31-29 overall, has lost three straight season openers and has a tough one this year, at home Aug. 31 against No. 8 Penn State.

### Defending the pass

The secondary needed shoring up after the Mountaineers allowed 26 TD passes, most in the Big 12. That included a 49yard Hail Mary pass on the final play in a loss at Houston. Departed All-American cornerback Beanie Bishop (now with the Pittsburgh Steelers) and safety Marcis Floyd combined for half the team's pass breakups. Also gone is leading tackler Lee Kpogba at linebacker.

Linebacker Trey Lathan returns from a season-ending leg injury. Safeties Aubrey Burks and Anthony Wilson will be joined in the secondary by cornerback transfers Ayden Garnes (Duquesne), Garnett Hollis Jr. (Northwestern) and TJ Crandall (Colorado State).

West Virginia defensive coordinator Jordan Lesley said having a deeper lineup this season will allow for more player rotations "so that if there's a performance lapse in a quarter, in a half, or in a game, we're kind of going to be 'next guy up' as opposed to waiting until the next game to make some changes.



#### CCHEUIII E

<b>SCHEDOLE</b>			
Date	Opponent	Time	
8.31	vs. Penn State	Noon	
9.7	vs. Albany	6 p.m.	
9.14	@ Pitt	3:30 p.m.	
9.21	vs. Kansas	TBD	
10.5	@ Oklahoma State	TBD	
10.12	vs. Iowa State	TBD	
10.19	vs. Kansas State	TBD	
10.26	@ Arizona	TBD	
11.9	@ Cincinnati	TBD	
11.16	vs. Baylor	TBD	
11.23	vs. UCF	TBD	



PREDICTED	FINISH
1. Utah	9. Texas Tech
2. Kansas State	10. TCU
3. Okla. State	11. Colorado
4. Kansas	12. Baylor
5. Arizona	13. BYU
6. Iowa State	14. Cincinnati
7. West Virginia	15. Houston
3. UCF	16. Arizona St.

#### PLAYERS TO WATCH

#### Ollie Gordon

Oklahoma State RB Junior All-American led the nation with 1,732 yards rushing and 21 TDs last season. Also won Doak Walker Award as nation's top running back.

#### Tahj Brooks **Texas Tech RB**

Ranked fourth nationally with 1,538 rushing yards last year. Stands seventh in program history with 3,052 rushing yards.

#### Shedeur Sanders Colorado QB

Senior threw for single-season school-record 3,230 yards with 27 TDs and three interceptions last year. Also named Pac-12 Newcomer of the Year.