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SUNDAY, AUGUST 29, 2021

Wildcats dig deep in 29-25 win over Saints

By **ANDREW GRIMM**
Staff writer

RICHMOND — For the second week in a row, Edison found itself down multiple scores in the second half.

This time, however, the Wildcats dug deep and clawed their way back from an 11-point deficit, scoring the final 15 points to stun Tuscarawas Central Catholic, 29-25.

"I'm just so proud of the guys, this is all about them," Edison head coach Mike Collopy, who got his first win as the Wildcats football coach, said. "They played their guts out for 48 minutes."

"This was a big game, no-doubt. Our guys did an outstanding job." Collopy's club racked up 294 yards and all four of its touchdowns on the ground, but it was a big play through the air that sparked the comeback.

Facing a third-and-long in its own end and down 11 points, Gage Cline fired a deep ball to senior Jacob Cusick, who is quickly emerging as the Wildcats (1-1) top threat on the outside, for a 54-yard gain deep into the Saints (1-1) end.

"There's nobody that works harder (than Cusick)," Collopy said. "We have

a lot of guys that work hard. We have some seniors that have been around a while. Our offensive line did a heckuva job, too."

A couple plays later, Talan McClurg plunged in from 3-yards out, and a Cline two-point pass that followed, made it a three-point game headed to the fourth quarter.

After the defense forced a three-and-out on the next possession, Edison went on a 15-play march that took about eight minutes off the clock to capture the win.

On fourth-and-3 from the four, Gage Cline kept the ball himself from under center, slipping into the end zone before the Saints defenders even reacted to the snap for the go-ahead score with 3:11 left on the clock.

Cline finished with 113 yards through the air and 46 more on the ground to go with the winning touchdown.

"(Edison proved at the end of the first half there was no quit in them, we knew there was a tidal wave coming," Tusky Central head coach Casey Cummings said. "They had a nice crowd; we don't often play in front of a crowd this

See **WILDCATS** Page 3C ↪



Andrew Grimm

TOUGH YARDS — Edison's Talan McClurg fights his way through the Tuscarawas Central Catholic defense for some tough yards during Friday's game at the new Edison Athletic Complex. The Wildcats pulled off a comeback win to give first-year coach Mike Collopy his first as the Edison football coach, 29-25.



Arlia

Madonna offense has a big night

From staff reports

BEALLSVILLE — The Blue Dons offense was rolling Friday night, compiling 576 yards of offense in a 58-14 win on the road at Beallsville in the season-opener.

Santino Arlia threw for 202 yards and five touchdowns to lead the Blue Dons to a 1-0 start, finishing 8 for 12.

Madonna racked up another 374 yards on the ground, led by 125 from Coleton Littleton and 122 from Seth Humberson.

The Blue Dons open the home portion of their schedule next week, hosting Carrick.



Michael D. McElwain

BIG CATCH — Brooke's Anthony Bachinski goes up to make a grab during Friday's season-opener at Brooke Memorial Stadium. The Bruins opened the season with a win for a second-straight season.

Bruins open season with big win over Ripley

By **RICK DeLUCA**
Sports writer

WELLSBURG — Brooke High showed that its young team is a tough one Friday night at Brooke Memorial Stadium.

With a rugged defense that limited Ripley to just 113 total yards and a very

effective offense that racked up 362 yards, the Bruins opened the new season with a very impressive 28-7 win over the Vikings.

Coming off a wild year affected by COVID-19, Bruin head coach Mac McLean opened the 2021 season entertaining Ripley Vikings from Jackson County

with a 64-player roster that includes just six seniors.

"I told the kids that I couldn't be prouder of them," McLean said after the win. "We struggled for a long time and it's good to get a win, but every coach on this staff spoke and reiterated that we

See **BROOKE** Page 4C ↪



Jimmy Joe Savage

RUNNING HARD — Indian Creek's Jayden Irizarry runs past East Liverpool defenders in Friday night's Buckeye 8 North Conference match up.

Redskins fall to 0-2 with tough loss at East Liverpool

By **MIKE BROWN**
Sports writer

EAST LIVERPOOL — East Liverpool rushed for 380 yards, including a career-best 207-yard effort by senior running back Devin Toothman, to roll past Buckeye 8 North rival Indian Creek 35-14 at Patterson Field Friday night.

With the Buckeye 8 North Conference win, the Potters evened their overall record to 1-1 and they are 1-0 in league play. Indian Creek is now 0-2 overall and 0-1 in the league.

East Liverpool used its big offensive line to rush for 380 yards on 40 carries as Toothman rushed for a career-high 207 yards on just 12 carries and scored three rushing touchdowns.

"I was thinking we have the best line tonight and it showed," said Toothman. "That's definitely what we needed, we needed this win after what happened last week (in a season-opening loss to West Branch). "We came out here and we bounced back."

"That's awesome," said East Liverpool head coach Josh Ludwig of Toothman's single-game career best effort. "It was very nice to bounce back. We changed some things this week offensively and defensively and the kids responded."

Indian Creek had three turnovers in the game and East Liverpool capitalized on two of them.

"We just have to regroup, we hurt

See **REDSKINS** Page 3C ↪

Huskies hold off Buckeye Trail, 21-14, still looking to improve

By **KIM NORTH**
Sports writer

OLD WASHINGTON — Harrison Central might be 2-0 in the early stages of the high school football season. However, you couldn't tell by Anthony Hayes' demeanor Friday night. Although his team rallied

past homestanding Buckeye Trail, 21-14, inside the Baker Activity Complex, the Huskies head coach was not a happy camper.

"We played well defensively but we made way too many mistakes," the fourth-year Harrison Central head coach said. "We dropped touchdowns.

We had too many missed assignments. We allowed them to stay in the game and make it a game down the stretch.

"We can't afford to do that down the road with our schedule. We can't afford to self-destruct at times and give teams second opportunities because sooner or later it's going to

catch up with us."

One player that Hayes was pleased with was freshman wide receiver/defensive back Cam McAfee.

He caught an 8-yard touchdown pass from Hayden Cassidy to cap a nine-play, 64-yard opening drive of the game. McAfee caught a swing pass in

the left flat and eluded a pair of would-be tacklers inside the 5 to waltz into the end zone. Keying the drive was a clutch 25-yard hookup between Cassidy and Tre Rex on third-and-10. Senior fullback Nathan Bertolino rumbled for 21 yards a play before the TD. Jace Madzia's

See **HUSKIES** Page 3C ↪

Darnold throws 2 TDs, Panthers smother Steelers backups

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Sam Darnold felt the Carolina Panthers needed a night like this before the regular season.

Darnold completed 19 of 25 passes for 162 yards and two touchdowns, and the Carolina Panthers defeated the Pittsburgh Steelers 34-9 on Friday night in the preseason finale for both teams.

Darnold, who has seen most of his action in joint practices rather than games this preseason, spent much of the first quarter under duress despite playing against a defense resting all of its starters.

But the 2018 No. 3 overall draft pick acquired this offseason from the New York Jets stayed calm and rebounded, finding rookie Terrace Marshall Jr. for a 13-yard touchdown pass and Robby Anderson for an 8-yard score before exiting at halftime. D.J. Moore caught six passes from Darnold for 48 yards.

"There was some good and some bad, but it was good to get out there and get that game feel," Darnold said.

Christian McCaffrey sat out, but the rest of Carolina's offensive and defensive starters played the entire first half.

With this being the Steelers' fourth preseason game — most teams played three — coach Mike Tomlin rested all but four starters, including quarterback Ben Roethlisberger, wide receivers JuJu Smith-Schuster and Diontae Johnson, and running back Najee Harris. Even backup QB Mason Rudolph got the night off.



SACKED — Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Joshua Dobbs is sacked by Carolina Panthers defensive end Yetur Gross-Matos during an NFL preseason football game, Friday, in Charlotte, N.C.

Tomlin called his team's effort a "junior varsity performance."

Dwayne Haskins started and struggled, completing just 9 of 16 passes for 108 yards with one interception and one late touchdown on Pittsburgh's final drive. He was replaced by Joshua Dobbs, but then returned to the game after Dobbs injured his toe.

"It wasn't the performance he wanted or we wanted," Tomlin said of Haskins.

Haskins, viewed coming into training camp as

in a battle with Rudolph for the Steelers' No. 2 QB spot, called it a "tough one," adding "I feel like I've done a great job of showing I'm coachable, wanting to learn, wanting to get better."

The Panthers built a 10-0 lead midway through the second quarter after Marshall, one of the most productive receivers in the NFL this preseason, caught a pass from Darnold in the flat and eluded two defenders en route to the end zone. The score was set up when Pittsburgh's Matthew Sexton

muffed a punt and Carolina's Keith Kirkwood recovered at the Steelers 15.

Darnold's second TD was a perfectly lofted pass over the head of linebacker Robert Spillane and into Anderson's arms in the middle of the end zone.

Panthers coach Matt Rhule said he feels like Darnold is developing into the leader and gaining respect from his teammates through his work ethic and the amount of time he's putting in.

"I see a more mature player and he seems more comfortable out there," Anderson said of Darnold, his former teammate with the Jets.

Undrafted rookie running back Spencer Brown from Alabama-Birmingham, helped his chances of making an NFL roster by running for 57 yards on 11 carries, including a 20-yard touchdown. Backup quarterback Will Grier added a 24-yard TD run for the Panthers.

KICKING BATTLE
The Panthers traded

for kicker Ryan Santos on Thursday, providing competition for the struggling Joey Slye.

Now he may have won the kicking job.

Santos made the most of his opportunity, banging a 52-yard field goal attempt off the right upright and through the goal posts in the first quarter. He later added a 27-yarder and three extra points. Slye missed wide right from 49 yards in the second quarter, his third miss of the preseason.

After Slye's miss, former Panthers wide receiver Steve Smith Sr., who now works as a commentator for the team's TV broadcast team, remarked "Where's my fork? 'Cause he is done."

Said Santos: "The last 24 hours have been whirlwind, but it's been a blessing."

TEPPER: I CAN AFFORD IT

Panthers owner David Tepper used a curse word on the Panthers' halftime show. When Smith replied, "You just did. They're going to fine you," the billionaire owner replied "I can afford it."

INJURIES

Steelers: Linebacker Marcus Allen (leg) left in the first half and did not return.

Panthers: Cornerback Rashaan Melvin (groin), wide receiver Shi Smith (shoulder) and running back Darius Clark (knee) left with injuries.

UP NEXT

Steelers: open regular season at Buffalo on Sept. 12.

Panthers: host Jets on Sept. 12.

Cardinals ride J.A. Happ, Tommy Edman to 4-3 win over Pirates

PITTSBURGH (AP) — By his own admission, J.A. Happ can get inside his head too much sometimes, particularly when the St. Louis Cardinals left-hander faces the same team over and over.

Taking on the Pittsburgh Pirates for the third time in 17 days, the 38-year-old took a deep breath, relaxed and let the guys behind him do most of the hard work.

Tommy Edman hit a two-run homer and drove in three runs, Paul Goldschmidt had three hits and the Cardinals made a handful of spectacular defensive plays to hold on for a 4-3 win on Friday night.

Edman went deep off Dillon Peters (0-2) to finish a three-run outburst in the fifth and the St. Louis bullpen — which imploded on Thursday — kept Happ unbeaten since St. Louis got him from Minnesota at the trade deadline. Alex Reyes overcame a leadoff single by Anthony Alford in the ninth to pick up his 29th save.

Happ (8-6) improved to 3-0 with a 2.22 ERA in five starts with the Cardinals, allowing two runs on three hits in 5 2/3 innings



GETTING THE START — Pittsburgh Pirates starter Dillon Peters pitches against the St. Louis Cardinals in the first inning Friday's game in Pittsburgh.

with three walks and four strikeouts.

A perfectly executed pickoff throw by catcher Yadier Molina in the fourth, a diving grab by Edman at second base in the fifth and a strike from center fielder Harrison Bader to throw out Colin Moran at the plate to end the eighth helped the Cardinals bounce back from a miserable 11-7 loss

to the Pirates on Thursday.

"I can't say enough about the defense," Happ said. "Yadi had that pickoff that was huge today, too. Our outfielders have done a great job. Bader's out there flying around every night. You try to rely on those guys."

Pittsburgh has managed five runs in three games this month against the play-

er who was a key addition for the 2015 Pirates team that won 98 games.

Those days are long gone in Pittsburgh. Happ, however, finds himself in the same position now as he was six years ago: trying to keep an NL Central team in the playoff chase.

The Cardinals have plenty of work to do. They entered Friday night five games back in the wild-card race and are getting ready for a bruising stretch that includes series against playoff contenders Milwaukee, Cincinnati (twice) and the Los Angeles Dodgers over the next two weeks.

A day after a four-run seventh-inning lead morphed into a four-run loss, St. Louis rebounded behind Happ and just enough of-

fense (and defense) to prevent another gut-wrenching loss to an also-ran.

"We got punched pretty hard (on Thursday) and we punched right back," Cardinals manager Mike Shildt said.

Goldschmidt tripled in the first, singled in the fourth and doubled in the fifth. Needing a home run for the cycle, he struck out looking in the seventh.

Peters kept the Cardinals in check until the fifth, when Edmundo Sosa doubled. Bader followed with an RBI double to the gap in right-center and moved to third on a groundout by Happ. Pirates pitching coach Oscar Marin trotted out to the mound to chat with Peters, who has performed well since joining Pittsburgh's constant-

ly evolving rotation two weeks ago.

Whatever they chatted about didn't help. Edman sent a 2-1 offering from Peters to the bleachers in left field to make it 3-0.

The Pirates drew closer with one run in both the sixth and the eighth. Moran singled home Michael Chavis in the eighth to make it 4-3 but was nailed at home on a perfect throw by Bader.

Jacob Stallings had three of Pittsburgh's eight hits but the Pirates left eight runners on base on a night they wore uniforms honoring the Homestead Grays, a Negro League team based in the city's Homestead neighborhood during the first half of the 20th century.

"We had opportunities to score and we just did not break this game open," Pittsburgh manager Derek Shelton said. "It goes back to early in this game, when we had opportunities and just did not score."

TRAINER'S ROOM

Cardinals: RHP Dakota Hudson will make his first appearance since undergoing reconstructive elbow surgery last September on Saturday when he pitches for Class A Palm Beach. Hudson is expected to throw around 30 pitches.

Pirates: Catching prospect Henry Davis, the top overall pick in the first-year player draft in June, remains out indefinitely with an oblique strain. General manager Ben Cherington said Davis is "feeling a little bit better every day" but has not been cleared to return to baseball activities. Davis is playing at Class-A Greensboro.

UP NEXT

Cardinals: Adam Wainwright (12-7, 3.10 ERA) will look to continue his mastery of the Pirates on Saturday. The 39-year-old is 20-7 against Pittsburgh in his career and threw a two-hit shutout at PNC Park earlier this month.

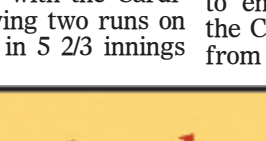
Pirates: Steven Brault (0-2, 1.93) will look for his first victory in nearly a year on Saturday. The left-hander allowed one run in four innings in a loss to St. Louis last Sunday.

September in Steubenville

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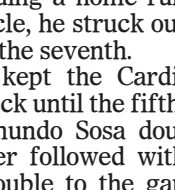
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Delayed round of Buckeye 8 championship completed

From staff reports

CADIZ — Local golfers competing in the first round of the Buckeye 8 Golf Championship, which was delayed last week due to severe weather, were finally

able to hit the links at Cadiz Country Club on Friday, as the opening round of the tournament was completed. St. Clairsville, with a team score of 309 on the par 72 course, leads the way after the opening

round. Harrison Central sits fourth with a 362, while Indian Creek is fifth at 370. Edison is ninth at 436. Brodi Foster of the Red Devils and Luke Eyster of Beaver Local lead the individual leader board

with scores of three over 75. Indian Creek's Noah Tweedy is tied for 10th with a score of 85, while Harrison Central's Aiden Silva and Nash Roberts are tied for 12th with scores of 86.

Also, for Indian Creek, Logan Kuczykowski shot a 90, Luke Merriman a 93 and Connor Garbade a 102. The Huskies got scored of 95 Wyatt Foreman and Heath Clay, while Edison's top-four are Tristin

Arnold at 103, Ryan Dinger at 111, Aiden Ferguson at 111 and Nicole Zullo with a 111. The second and final round of the Buckeye 8 Championship takes place at Belmont Hills Country Club on Tuesday.

Redskins

ourselves more than anything else and we have to fix that," said Indian Creek head coach Andrew Connor. "We made mistakes and that's something that falls on me and we're going to get better."

Indian Creek quarterback Eli Powell rushed for a team-best 144 yards on 20 carries and scored both of the Redskins' touchdowns on runs of seven and 26 yards.

For East Liverpool, Toothman wasn't the only Potter to have a big night on the ground as fullback Cam Irvine rushed for 81 yards on 13 carries and quarterback Eric Williams added 91 yards on 11 rushes.

"I think the thing that we're most proud of tonight is a 22-play drive we put together in the first half and we were able to execute behind our O-line and get the ground game going," said Ludwig.

In a reversal of last week's Potter loss to West Branch, East Liverpool forced two turnovers (both interceptions) on the Redskins' first two drives and turned them into touchdowns on runs of four and eight yards by Toothman, who had 115 yards rushing at halftime. The scores were set up by interceptions by the Potters' Dashon Slappy and Cam Irvine, the

latter occurred in the Potters' end zone and stopped an Indian Creek scoring drive. The Potters' scoring drives covered 65 yards in 14 plays and 84 yards in three plays. Jacob Myers added both PAT boots and the hosts led 14-0 with 5:48 left before the break.

"We were able to get some takeaways which is always our goal on defense and get the ball back on offense and we took advantage of those turnovers," Ludwig said.

But Indian Creek responded on its ensuing series, marching 53 yards and scoring when Powell bolted seven yards up the middle. Kicker Gavin Gross added the PAT and the Redskins pulled within 14-7 with 3:55 showing before the break.

"I'm proud of our kids, I thought they played hard," said Connor. "They never quit and that's what I asked them to do. Sometimes you face adversity and you have two choices in life and sometimes you back down from it and sometimes you fight through it and our kids fought right to the end."

Just before halftime, Indian Creek elected to go for it on fourth-and-4 at their own 48 and failed to convert. East

Liverpool got the ball with 19 seconds showing and drove 52 yards on two pass plays, the last coming on a 19-yard scoring strike from quarterback Eric Williams on a 19-yard look-in to Slappy as time expired in the half. Myers added the PAT kick and East Liverpool took a 21-7 lead into the locker room.

East Liverpool led in total offense, 268-151 at the break.

Indian Creek closed within 21-14 on its second series of the third quarter, marching 66 yards and scoring when Powell sprinted 26 yards down the middle. Gross added the PAT boot at the 5:31 mark of the third.

But East Liverpool responded on its next drive. Aided by two 15-yard penalties on Indian Creek, the Potters marched 53 yards to score on a two-yard run by Irvine with 2:24 left in the third. Myers added the PAT kick and East Liverpool went up 28-14.

In a heated, penalty-filled contest.

East Liverpool iced the game away when Toothman broke loose and outraced everyone 76 yards to the end zone with 5:36 left. Myers added the PAT kick, making it 35-14.

"We had a good week of

practice and I told them to keep their heads up because our opponent (West Branch) last week was really, really good and Indian Creek always brings their best game here and coach Connor does a great job," said Ludwig of his team's impressive win.

INDIAN CREEK 0-7-7-0 - 14 EAST LIVERPOOL 7-14-7-7 - 35

SCORING	
EL - Devin Toothman 4 run, 56.4 1st (Jacob Myers kick)	
EL - Devin Toothman, 8 run, 5:48 2nd (Jacob Myers kick)	
IC - Eli Powell, 7 run, 3:55 2nd (Gavin Gross kick)	
EL - Dashon Slappy, 19 pass from Eric Williams, :00 2nd (Jacob Myers kick)	
IC - Eli Powell, 26 run, 5:31 3rd (Gavin Gross kick)	
EL - Cam Irvine, 2 run, 2:24 3rd (Jacob Myers kick)	
EL - Devin Toothman, 76 run, 5:36 4th (Jacob Myers kick)	
IC EL	
First downs	18 22
Total yards	332 468
Rushes-yards	39-281 38-380
Passing	52 88
Comp-Att-Int	4-14-3 4-8-0
Punts	2-36 1-43
Fumbles-Lost	0-0 3-1
Penalties-Yards	6-65 13-151
INDIVIDUAL LEADERS	
RUSHING - Indian Creek, Jadyr Irizarry 7-50, Zion McGee 7-32, Eli Powell 20-141; Isaac Robinson 4-35; East Liverpool, Devin Toothman 20-207, Eric Williams 11-91, Cam Irvine 13-81	
PASSING - Indian Creek, Eli Powell 4-14-52-0-3; East Liverpool, Eric Williams, 4-8-88-1-0	
RECEIVING - Indian Creek, Paul Mazur 2-25, Sam Coleman 1-15, Caleb Bodo 1-12; East Liverpool, Cam Irvine 1-32, Devin Toothman 1-2, Dashon Slappy 2-44	
INTERCEPTIONS - East Liverpool, Dashon Slappy, Cam Irvine, Stephen Dorsey	

Continued from Page 1C

Continued from Page 1C

Wildcats

big a lot of times. I'm proud of my kids. We had our opportunities, it just got away from us.

"They have an unbelievable complex here."

Tusky Central got the ball with a chance to go back on top, but a last ditch fourth down pass in the final minutes was broken up to seal the Edison win.

A couple of big, momentum-shifting plays put the Wildcats in the hole after leading 14-13 at halftime.

Tusky Central recovered a short squib kick to start the second half, which resulted in a Jordan Cherry (125 passing yards, 102 rushing yards) touchdown run to put the Saints on top.

Edison drove deep into the Saints' end on the ensuing possession, but a 95-yard James

Brooks interception return for a touchdown made it a 25-14 ball game.

"After that pick-six, a lot of things could have went south, but we kept our composure," Collopy said. "We started making plays and the defense really stepped it up."

Edison got touchdown runs from McClurg, who finished with 116 yards and two scores, and Mason Eisnaugle, who also hit the century mark with 113 and a score, in the second quarter, taking the lead with just :28 seconds before the break.

UP NEXT:

Tusky Central: Is slated to take on Wheeling Central.

Edison: Travels to Harding Stadium to test Catholic Central.

Edison 29, Tuscarawas C.C. 25

Tusky Central 0-13-12-0 - 25 Edison 0-14-8-7 - 29

TCC: Fumble recovering in endzone (Greathouse kick) E: Eisnaugle 3 trun (Montgomery kick) TCC: Sabin 11 pass from Cherry (kick blocked) E: McClurg 3 run (Montgomery kick) TCC: Cherry 5 run (pass failed) TCC: Brooks 95 interception return (pass failed) E: McClurg 3 run (Cline pass) E: Cline 4 run (Montgomery kick)

RUSHING: Tusky Central 23-124-TD (Cherry 13-102-TD, Mahaffey 3-7, Brooks 7-15); Edison 57-294-4TD (Cline 15-46-TD, McClurg 19-116-2TD, Eisnaugle 20-113-TD, Wright 3-19). PASSING: Tusky Central 12-22-125-TD (all by Cherry); Edison 7-19-113-2INT (all by Cline). RECEIVING: Tusky Central 12-125-TD (Renicker 1-15, Ciekanski 4-43, Sabin 4-74-TD, Brooks 3-(-1)); Edison 7-113 (Wright 1-13, Griffith 2-7, Cusick 4-84, Lancaster 1-9).

FIRST DOWNS: Tusky Central 13; Edison 20. PENALTIES-YARDS: Tusky Central 5-40; Edison 7-55. FUMBLES-LOST: Tusky Central 3-1; Edison 4-2. PUNTS: Tusky Central 2-35; Edison 0-0.

Huskies

first of three placement tries was good for a 7-0 advantage.

Buckeye Trail (1-1) didn't waste any time in retaliating.

Fleet-footed Franko Rome took an inside flip from quarterback Nick Neuhart and scooted 52 yards around his left end to the Huskies' 5. One play later, the same combo clicked for a 5-yard scoring connection. The two-point run failed as the margin stood at 7-6.

The hosts took their first lead at 14-7 on the last play of the first quarter. Rome went off right tackle and sped 70 yards down the far sideline to paydirt. Neuhart ran for the two points.

Harrison Central couldn't take advantage of good field position on its next possession and Madiz pinned the Warriors down inside their 5 with a bouncing punt.

On third down, a mixup

in the backfield resulted in a fumble that the Huskies' Colton Tanner fell on at the Buckeye Trail 2. On the first play, Trevor Carman bulled into the end zone. Madzia's PAT knotted the contest at 14.

A fake punt by the Warriors came up shy of the first-down sticks, giving the Huskies good field position at their own 45.

Eight plays later, Cassidy swept around his left end and found the end zone from a yard out. Ma-

diz made it 21-14 with 2:55 left in the first half.

The Huskies were driving when they lost a fumble in the final minute of the third quarter, but the Warriors couldn't capitalize.

Buckeye Trail did reach the end zone midway through the final quarter, but a holding penalty negated the score and stalled the drive.

"We had opportunities. We really did," Buckeye Trail head coach Donnie Kerns said. "Every time we started moving the ball we shot ourselves in the foot. They (Harrison Central) are a really good football team. We went toe-to-toe with that team, so there's a lot to be optimistic about. I think they were predicted in The Times Leader to win seven games. I think we can win seven games."

"We had a touchdown called back due to a penalty and we fumbled deep in our own territory that basically gave them a touchdown," Kerns added. "I feel that if we didn't get that penalty, we win that game."

"I'm proud of our guys. They battled and battled against a really good football team in Harrison Central."

The Warriors had one last chance, but Neuhart's pass was intercepted by McAfee to seal the deal. The freshman also caught a 32-yard pass on third-and-14 from his own 7.

"We're growing. We're young. We're figuring it out," Hayes noted. "This is the first time we've dealt with adversity this season, and we came out with a win."

"That's a 14-year-old having to grow up really

Continued from Page 1C

fast," Hayes said of the 5-9, 165-pound McAfee. "We expect those guys to make plays. I've watched them playing around town in backyards. They've been doing it all their lives, so I don't think he flinched one time."

Hayes also praised the play of fellow freshman running back Michael Quito who was forced into extended action when senior Nathan Bertolino went down early with an unknown injury.

"Nathan got a little dinged up there, but Michael came in and did a very good job. He ran hard," Hayes pointed out. "We'll get him looked at, get him evaluated and go from there."

Cassidy completed 14-of-23 passes for 139 yards and the touchdown. He also ran for 20 yards and a score.

Rome finished with 143 yards rushing and caught five passes for 64.

Harrison Central returns to Wagner Field as Bellaire visits next Friday. Buckeye Trail hosts Barnesville the same night.

Harrison Central 21, Buckeye Trail 14 Harrison Central 7 14 0 0 - 21 Buckeye Trail 14 0 0 0 - 14 HC: McAfee 8 pass from Cassidy (Madzia kick) BT: Rome 5 pass from Neuhart (run failed) BT: Rome 70 run (Neuhart run) HC: Carman 2 run (Madzia kick) HC: Cassidy 1 run (Madzia kick)

RUSHING: Harrison Central 38-143-2tds (Bertolino 9-57, Quito 9-54, Cassidy 13-20-td; Carman 4-15). Buckeye Trail 31-205-td (Rome 8-143-td, Neuhart 13-54, Bates 2-10, Smith 5-2, Hinkle 1-(-3); team 1-(-1)) PASSING: Harrison Central 14-23-139-td (all by Cassidy). Buckeye Trail 6-15-61-td-int (all by Neuhart) RECEIVING: Harrison Central 14-139-td (Carman 6-57, J. Vermillion 3-13, McAfee 2-40-td, Quito 204, Rex 1-25) FIRST DOWNS: Harrison Central 13. Buckeye Trail 9 FUMBLES: Harrison Central 3-1. Buckeye Trail 1-1 PENALTIES: Harrison Central 5-33. Buckeye Trail 5-39

PREP SCHEDULE

Monday GIRLS SOCCER Steubenville at Indian Creek, 6 p.m. Wheeling Central at Weir High, 6 p.m. Madonna at Magnolia, 6 p.m. Brooke at Oak Glen, 6 p.m. St. Clairsville at Harrison Central, 7 p.m. VOLLEYBALL Edison at Beaver Local, 7 p.m. Buckeye Local at Toronto, 7 p.m. East Liverpool at Harrison Central, 7 p.m. GOLF Steubenville, Buckeye Local at Catholic Central, 3:30 p.m. Brooke at East Liverpool, TBA

Tuesday BOYS SOCCER Catholic Central at Brooke, 6 p.m. Indian Creek at St. Clairsville, 6 p.m. Harrison Central at Edison, 6 p.m. Wheeling Central at Oak Glen, 7:30 p.m. VOLLEYBALL Indian Creek at Steubenville, 7 p.m. Madonna at Catholic Central, 7 p.m. John Marshall at Brooke, 7 p.m. GOLF Steubenville at Toronto, 3:30 p.m. Buckeye 8 2nd round, 8:30 a.m. Brooke, Oak Glen, University at John Marshall, 2 p.m.

Wednesday GIRLS SOCCER Steubenville at St. Clairsville, 6 p.m. Catholic Central at Madonna, 6 p.m. Wheeling Park at Brooke, 5:30 p.m. VOLLEYBALL Madonna at Linsly, 7 p.m. Oak Glen at Beaver Local, 7 p.m. Monroe Central at Toronto, 7 p.m. St. John's Academy at Buckeye Local, 7 p.m. GOLF Catholic Central, John Marshall at Harrison Central, 3:30 p.m. Toronto at Indian Creek, 3:30 p.m. Boardman at Edison (girls), 4 p.m. Oak Glen at Buckeye Local, 3:30 p.m.

CROSS COUNTRY Buckeye Local at Barnesville, 4:30 p.m. Thursday FOOTBALL Brooke at Indian Creek, 7 p.m. BOYS SOCCER Oak Glen at Steubenville, 5:30 p.m. Beaver Local at Catholic Central, 5:30 p.m. Brooke at Parkersburg South, 6 p.m. Harrison Central at Caldwell, 6 p.m.

GIRLS SOCCER Edison at Harrison Central, 6 p.m. Magnolia at Oak Glen, 6 p.m. VOLLEYBALL Toronto at Steubenville, 7 p.m. Wheeling Park at Weir High, 7 p.m. Catholic Central at Madonna, 7 p.m. Harrison Central at Edison, 7 p.m. Linsly at Buckeye Local, 7 p.m. GOLF Catholic Central, Harrison Central at Steubenville, 3:30 p.m. Edison (boys), Toronto at Weir High, 3:30 p.m. Weir High, Beaver Local, John Marshall at Oak Glen, 3:30 p.m. East Liverpool at Buckeye Local, 3:30 p.m.

Friday FOOTBALL Wheeling Park at Steubenville, 7 p.m. Weir High at John Marshall, 7 p.m. Madonna at Carrick, 7 p.m. Taylor Alderdice at Oak Glen, 7 p.m. Lisbon at Toronto, 7 p.m. Bellaire at Harrison Central, 7 p.m. Shadyside at Buckeye Local, 7 p.m.

Saturday FOOTBALL Edison at Catholic Central, 7 p.m. BOYS SOCCER Weir High at Trinity Christian, noon Catholic Central at Cambridge, noon Carrollton at Indian Creek, 10 a.m. Liberty Harrison at Brooke, noon Edison at John Marshall, noon Oak Glen at Parkersburg South, noon GIRLS SOCCER Steubenville at Harrison Central, 11 a.m. Weir High at Edison, 1 p.m. Ridgewood at Catholic Central, 11 a.m. Indian Creek at St. Clairsville, 11 a.m. Liberty Harrison at Brooke, 10 a.m. North Marion at Oak Glen, noon VOLLEYBALL Steubenville at Edison, noon Weir High at Catholic Central, 11 a.m. Cabell Midland, Wheeling Park at Oak Glen, 10 a.m. Toronto at Conotton Valley, noon CROSS COUNTRY Newcomerstown Invite, 8:30 a.m. Martins Ferry Rider Run, 9 a.m. Marty Uher Invitational, 10 a.m.



Kristen Mazgaj

FINDING ROOM — Harrison Central's Trevor Carman eludes a Buckeye Trail defender during the Huskies 21-14 on the road Friday night.

Cavs getting Markkanen from Bulls

CLEVELAND (AP) — Lauri Markkanen was in search of a new team. The Cavaliers needed to add another outside shooter.

They found each other. The Cavaliers have agreed to acquire Markkanen, a restricted free agent forward from Chicago, in a three-way trade that will send forward Larry Nance Jr. from Cleveland to Portland, a person familiar with the deal told The Associated Press on Friday.

Markkanen is coming to the Cavs in a sign-and-trade agreement, said the person who spoke on condition of anonymity because the deal needs NBA approval before it can be completed. It could be a few more days before the trade becomes official.

The 24-year-old Markkanen will receive a four-year, \$67.4 million contract, the person said.

ESPN first reported the three-way swap.

Browns' Mayfield playing in preseason finale

CLEVELAND (AP) — Baker Mayfield will get a summer tune-up after all. Browns coach Kevin Stefanski surprisingly said Friday that Mayfield and some "select" Cleveland starters will play in Sunday night's nationally televised exhibition finale against the Atlanta Falcons.

Not wanting to risk injuries, Stefanski had kept his starting quarterback and the majority of his starters on the sideline for the team's first two preseason games.

"We're just making decisions individually based on who needs to get some reps, making those decisions based on these practice reps, based on the joint practice reps, based on game reps," Stefanski said following practice. "So we'll hold some other guys out."

There have been a range of methods — and opinions — across the league for playing starters in preseason games. Most teams have played their first-stringers at least a little, often giving their starting QBs a series or two.

Stefanski did not say how long Mayfield will be in the game or which oth-

er starters will see action with him.

"We have a plan, but I want to see how it goes," he said.

Mayfield will likely be protected by Cleveland's starting offensive line, one of the league's best units. But Stefanski was coy about that as well.

"I'm not going to go through who's playing, who's not," he said. "I gave you Baker. You've got to tune in Sunday night. NBC wants me to keep it a secret."

Stefanski understands the risk in playing Mayfield.

"It is football. We try to be smart about everything we do," Stefanski said. "That is why I think the joint practices are so important because it is a controlled environment where our No. 1's got close to 60 reps against their No. 1's in a controlled environment."

"It is all part of it. The way you practice and the way you play is similar, and it is all good work is the way I look at it."

Center JC Tretter was held out of team drills this week and could be one of the regulars who doesn't play. It would also be hard to imagine Ste-

fanski putting either star running back Nick Chubb or Kareem Hunt on the field for very long — if at all.

Wide receiver Odell Beckham Jr. took his first snaps in team drills this week as he recovers from knee surgery. The Browns have been cautious with Beckham and will likely go that direction against the Falcons.

It's possible several defensive starters could play since the unit has not had much time together this summer due to injuries.

Last week, the Browns held two joint practices against the New York Giants before beating them in an exhibition game. Cleveland's first-teamers played extensively in the heated workouts with the Giants but then watched from the sideline Sunday.

NOTES: Stefanski said rookie LB Jeremiah Owusu-Koramoah will not play Sunday. He needed stitches in his forehead to close a cut following a weight-room accident this week. ... Rookie LB Tony Fields II practiced for the first time this summer. He's been slowed by two foot injuries since being drafted.



Associated Press

EXPECTED TO PLAY — Cleveland Browns quarterback Baker Mayfield warms up before an NFL football game against the New York Giants, Aug. 22, in Cleveland. The Browns won 17-13. Mayfield and some "select" Cleveland starters will play Sunday night.

Beckham continues comeback, joins Browns' team drills

CLEVELAND (AP) — Odell Beckham Jr.'s comeback is closer to completion.

Beckham, who has slowly increased his activities since the Browns opened training camp last month, took his first snaps in team drills during Thursday's practice — a major step in his return from season-ending knee surgery.

Beckham was on the field for a handful of plays in the 11 on 11 period, and the star wide receiver also caught passes in 7 on 7 drills, his most significant work to date.

Beckham suffered a torn anterior cruciate ligament in Week 7 last season against Cincinnati and wasn't a part of Cleveland's run to the playoffs. He arrived at camp in phenomenal shape and well ahead of schedule.

The Browns have taken a cautious approach with Beckham, with the idea of having him ready for the Sept. 12 season opener against the two-

time defending AFC champion Kansas City Chiefs.

That seems more possible now.

Before Thursday's practice, Beckham had only done individual drills and worked on the side with quarterback Baker Mayfield.

A few plays into the team drills, Beckham lined up to the far right side for two plays and blocked as the Browns executed running plays to the left. Later, he ran an out pattern in 7 on 7s and caught a short pass from Mayfield while being covered by rookie cornerback Greg Newsome II.

Earlier, offensive coordinator Alex Van Pelt expressed optimism that Beckham will be ready for the Chiefs, who beat the Browns in last year's division playoffs.

"I hope so. We're all hoping for that," Van Pelt said. "I'm not sure where that's going right now, but he looks really good. He's running well.

He's coming in and out of his breaks. He's cutting well. Hopefully we can get him up there for the opener."

Before Beckham got injured last season, he and Mayfield struggled to find chemistry. But the pair worked together in Texas during the offseason and Cleveland's coaches have scripted plays for them to do while the Browns are practicing special teams.

"They're in a really good place right now as far as their mind space, all the work they did in the offseason, spending time together, just continuing to build that bond," Van Pelt said. "And hopefully that will show this year on the field."

Mayfield played better after Beckham got hurt. His confidence grew, his statistics improved, and more importantly, the Browns won.

And while there is debate whether Mayfield's success is linked to him not forcing the ball to Beckham, Van Pelt be-

lieves the Browns are stronger when that duo is connecting.

"Anytime you can add an elite athlete and a great player like Odell back, it is only going to make you better," he said.

Late in the practice on an overwhelmingly hot and humid day, Mayfield and Beckham spent time going over some pass routes as they fine-tune things with the season just more than two weeks away.

Beckham's in his third season with the Browns, who acquired him from the New York Giants in 2019. In 23 games for Cleveland, he has 97 catches for 1,354 yards and seven touchdowns.

Van Pelt praised Beckham's resolve to return faster than expected, and his diligence in making himself better.

"Always his work ethic, his ability to go out and just do anything you ask him to do," Van Pelt said when asked

about Beckham's drive. "We stressed him on it last week with some of those series drives and he responds."

"The guy will just do anything you ask for him and he wants to be great and he works at it. All those guys that are great players, they all have that work ethic — and he does."

Beckham hasn't spoken to reporters during camp.

NOTES:

RT Jack Conklin returned to practice after being out ill Wednesday. ... Coach Kevin Stefanski will announce Friday whether he'll play his starters in Sunday's exhibition finale against Atlanta. Van Pelt seemed to hint that Stefanski will continue resting his top players. "You do not win a championship in the preseason if you go undefeated," he said. "Keeping your guys healthy for the season is important."

Ronaldo makes sensational return to Manchester United

Associated Press

Cristiano Ronaldo is heading back to Manchester United, the team that turned him into a global superstar.

In a fast-moving deal that stunned the world of soccer, Ronaldo secured a return to Old Trafford on Friday — a day after telling Juventus he no longer wanted to play for the Italian club.

"Welcome back, Cristiano," read a tweet posted by United. Within minutes, the club's official website had crashed.

Ronaldo is 36 years old, a completely different player to the skinny, outrageously skillful 17-year-old winger who first arrived at United from Sporting Lisbon in 2003 with a box of tricks

but little end product. In the following six years, he scored 118 goals in 292 appearances and swiftly became one of the most fearsome strikers in the world, winning the first of his five FIFA world player of the year awards.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, the current Man United manager, knows that all too well. He was once a teammate of Ronaldo.

"He is the greatest player of all time, definitely," Solskjaer said Friday after Ronaldo's return was sealed.

Ronaldo will join for a fee of 15 million euros (\$17.7 million), with 8 million euros (\$9.4 million) in add-ons. The transfer is subject to agreement of personal terms, visa and a medi-

cal examination.

It is the latest blockbuster move of the transfer window, coming barely two weeks after Lionel Messi — Ronaldo's long-time rival — joined Paris Saint-Germain after his contract at Barcelona expired.

PSG forward Kylian Mbappe is also the subject of a bid of about 160 million euros (\$188 million) from Real Madrid. Yet Ronaldo returning to United was not long in the making.

Indeed, the team did not expect him to leave Juventus in this transfer window and only made a move when it became clear he would be available.

On Thursday, Ronaldo met with Juventus coach Massimiliano Allegri

and told him he wanted to leave the club where he had spent the last three years after joining from Madrid. He had one year left on his contract.

By Friday, Ronaldo was boarding a private jet from Turin to Lisbon, in his native Portugal, and saying the world would soon be made aware of his next move.

By then, United was the clear front-runner after fierce rival Manchester City pulled out of the running for his signature.

"Everyone at the club looks forward to welcoming Cristiano back to Manchester," United said in a brief statement.

Ronaldo soon took to Instagram, saying he gave his "heart and soul for Juventus."

"I'll always love the city of Turin until my final days," he wrote.

He never won the Champions League with Juventus, like he did with United in 2008 and four times with Madrid, but was the top scorer in Serie A for the last two seasons and scored 101 goals in 134 appearances.

"In the end," Ronaldo said, "we can all look back and realize that we achieved great things, not all that we wanted, but still, we wrote a pretty beautiful story together."

Solskjaer had already dropped hints that United would be trying to sign its former star when speaking at a news conference on Friday, revealing that its playmaker from Por-

tugal, Bruno Fernandes, had been talking to Ronaldo.

"Agent Bruno," Fernandes later tweeted with a laughing emoji.

Before playing his first game back at United, Ronaldo will feature for Portugal in World Cup qualifiers and has the chance to become the leading scorer in men's international soccer. He has 109 goals for his national team, tied with former Iran striker Ali Daei.

The landscape in English soccer has changed in the 12 years Ronaldo has been away. United and Chelsea were the top teams in the Premier League when he left, but Man City has been the dominant force over the past decade, winning the title five times from 2012.

Brooke

won the opener last year and lost the remainder of the schedule.

"As a young squad, we have to win and then teach them how to deal with a win. Individual records tonight, I think Braelyn Sperringer, a star was born tonight. Our defense played in the backfield with a lot of tackles for losses.

"A lot of coaches cliches. We got to clean up putting the ball on the turf, we can't kill drives with 15-yard penalties. Stuff like that, but I'm proud of my boys and I'm proud of my staff. They work their butts off. I'm really happy and that was a good win for Brooke. I think that was our best defensive effort that I have seen in my eight years here."

After a scoreless first quarter with two highlights coming from both defenses, scoring came quick in the second. Virgil Myers provided a defensive gem in the opening frame for the Vikings with a 55-yard return of an interception. That theft failed to result in a score. Later the Bruins got a key pass deflection from Jace Campinelli near the endzone

to thwart a Viking drive.

Brooke got on the board first in the second finishing up a drive that started late in the first. Rushes of 37 yards by Sperringer, followed by a 22-yarder by Campinelli. Two plays into the next quarter, Sperringer sprinted off the left side to score from the five. Bailey Serevich booted the first of three PATS in the frame for the Bruins.

Ripley bounced right back on the heels of a 45-yard kick return by Brady Anderson to the Bruin 38. Two plays later, Viking QB Ty Stephens found Anderson in the endzone for the score with 10:01 on the board. Carter Cochran added the PAT.

Before the half, Brooke added two more scores as Sperringer connected with Anthony Bachinski for a 25-yard score with 6:02 on the board and later the pair hooked up from 15 yards with 1:05 left in the half. The first score was set up by a 38-yard completion from Sperringer to Bachinski while the second was set by a fumble recovery by Bachinski at

the Ripley 36.

Ripley attempted as 30-yard field with five ticks left in the half, but the kick was wide.

In the third quarter, play nearly matched the scoreless first until the 2:30 mark as Sperringer broke through the middle, juked a defender to cut right and raced untouched on a 38-yard scoring run. Serevich booted the PAT for a 28-7 lead.

Brooke's last score came compliments of a bobble punt attempt by the Vikings that resulted in a fumble that turned the ball over to the hosts at the Ripley 37. The Bruins last a yard on the first carry before Sperringer added his score.

Brooke was threatening earlier in the third, but the drive ended in a fumble recovered by the Vikings Hunter Brown. Neither team mustered much of an offensive attack in the final frame, but the Bruins managed to make one more threat late in the frame on a 40-yard punt return by Bachinski. That drive went nowhere.

Continued from Page 1C

In the final seconds, the Bruins regained possession on the visitors 16 following another Viking fumble, but after one play, the lights in the stadium went out twice before the Bruins took the knee to run out the clock.

Brooke 28, Ripley 7

RIPLEY 0-7-0-0 - 7

BROOKE 0-21-7-0 - 28

SECOND QUARTER

B - Sperringer 5 run (Serevich kick)
R - Anderson 41 P from Stephens (Cochran kick)
B - Bachinski 25 P from Sperringer (Serevich kick)
B - Bachinski 15 P from Sperringer (Serevich kick)

THIRD QUARTER

B - Sperringer, 38 run (Serevich kick)

RUSHING: Brooke (36-354-2) - Sperringer, 10-117-2; Campinelli, 15-95; Gaschler, 3-6; Moore, 6-24; Mazingo, 1-10. Ripley (23-26-0) - Ramsey, 7-(-5); Miller, 4-13; Anderson, 7-2; Stephens, 1-6; Domico, 4-6; Durst, 1-(-2); Martin, 1-6.

PASSING: Brooke (6-11-108-21d-11nt) - all by Sperringer. Ripley (5-12-87-1Td) - all by Stephens.

RECEIVING: Brooke - Gaschler, 1-10; Bachinski, 4-83-2; Moore, 1-15. Ripley - Anderson, 2-45-1; Ramsey, 1-4; Miller, 2-38.

Brooke Ripley

First Downs 16-5

Penalties 9-100 5-35

Fumbles/Lost 1-1 1-1

Punts 4-31.0 5-28.0

Another earthquake leaves college football teetering

By PAUL NEWBERRY
AP sports columnist

The Southeastern Conference is getting bigger and, somehow, even stronger.

Three other major conferences have formed an alliance, whatever that means.

And the Big 12 is dead man walking.

After a period of relative stability, college football heads into a new season wobbling from the aftershocks of another major earthquake.

Not even Nostradamus would be willing to venture a guess on how it's all going to shake out.

But this much is clear: the SEC will become a 16-team behemoth with the addition of Big 12 powerhouses Oklahoma and Texas, a move that occurs by 2025 at the latest and probably sooner.

The Big Ten, Atlantic Coast Conference and Pac-12 have all dropped back on defense, hoping that some sort of vague partnership will somehow keep the SEC from spreading its tentacles even farther.

Which leaves the Big 12 as the odd man out, seemingly destined to join the Southwest Conference and others in

the pantheon of defunct leagues, remembered only by those who pick up a history book.

The SEC's motives are clear: consolidate its stranglehold on college football — and, by extension, all of college athletics.

But the hastily assembled partnership announced this week between its three most viable Power Five challengers (plus Notre Dame, a quasi-ACC member) must come up with a clearly defined vision if it wants to keep the SEC in check.

That's not an easy task. Consider the unwieldiness of the Big Ten-ACC-Pac 12 alliance — 41 schools stretching from Boston to Los Angeles, from Miami to Seattle, a hodge-podge of institutions that have little in common other than making sure the SEC doesn't block all the sunlight.

Given how quickly this all had to come together, maybe it's not surprising that little was offered in the way of details.

"There's no contract. There's no signed document," Pac-12 Commissioner George Kliavkoff said.

"There's an agreement among three gentlemen and a commitment from 41 presidents and

chancellors and 41 athletic directors to do what we say we're going to do."

Well, we all know how much gentlemen's agreements and non-contractual commitments are worth in the cut-throat world of college athletics.

Frankly, we'll bet a thousand bills to your dollar that all 41 schools will continue to focus mainly on what benefits them individually, not the collective good.

Heck, they couldn't even agree to agree on what stance they'll take on a proposal to expand the College Football Playoff from four to 12 teams (a move that looked certain to happen until everyone hit the re-set button after the SEC gobbled up the Oklahoma and Texas like some sort of Pac Man run amok.).

"This is not a voting bloc. We've not committed to voting together on anything," Kliavkoff said, each word making this sound less and less like a viable alliance. "We've committed to discuss all of these issues, and to try to come up with solutions that are in the best interest of long-term college athletics."

Okey-dokey. For now, the alliance's only real objective seems

to be some sort of loosey-goosey commitment not to go after each other's members.

But suppose the SEC comes sniffing around Clemson — an ACC powerhouse that has been one of its few serious challengers? Or perhaps Florida State, if the Seminoles can once again become relevant in college football?

As we know, the SEC usually gets what it wants.

The conference has pretty much been the sun that the rest of college football revolves around since its first major expansion three decades ago, which blew up the familiar conference model that had governed the sport through its modern existence.

When the SEC poached Arkansas from the Southwest Conference (as part of an expansion that also included then-independent South Carolina), split into two divisions and set up a conference championship game, it forever changed the look of the sport.

The Southwest Conference crumbled, the Big Eight conference swooped in to pick through the remains (becoming the Big 12),

the Atlantic Coast Conference grabbed Florida State before the SEC could, and the Big Ten began scrambling for schools to join its 11th member, Penn State.

The SEC made its next big move in 2011, swiping Texas A&M and Missouri from the Big 12. The Big Ten and ACC were busy expanding, too, becoming 14-team leagues, while the Pac-10 grew into the Pac 12.

The Big 12 shrank to 10 schools but managed to survive by keeping Texas and Oklahoma in the fold.

But that was always a tenuous arrangement at best, and it finally feel apart with word this summer that both the Longhorns and the Sooners had secretly been in talks to join the SEC — pulling the trigger on a lucrative move that has pretty much been on the radar since the beginning of this 30-year-long realignment scramble.

Now, there's no hope for the Big 12 — especially after it wasn't included in the new alliance arranged by the other Power Five members.

All it got were hollow words.

"We want and need the Big 12 to do well,"

ACC Commissioner Jim Phillips said. "The Big 12 matters in college athletics."

Not for much longer.

Iowa State and Kansas could wind up in the Big Ten. Oklahoma State and TCU are possible candidates for the Pac-12 (despite the league insisting Thursday it has no plans to expand). West Virginia fits geographically with the ACC. Texas Tech, Baylor and Kansas State might have to drop down to a Group of Five conference such as the American or Mountain West.

If nothing else, let's hope a viable challenger emerges to the SEC.

The conference has ruled college football for far too long, claiming 11 of the last 15 national championships and showing no signs of slowing down, certainly not as long as Nick Saban is at Alabama.

When Oklahoma — ranked No. 2 behind the Crimson Tide in The Associated Press preseason poll — and Texas come aboard, the balance of power will tip even further in its favor.

That's great for the SEC.

It's not so good for college football.

Plenty of familiar faces playing in new places around NFL

NEW YORK (AP) — Wait a second. He's playing where now?

With the NFL season about to kick off, it's time for a quick refresher on some familiar faces in new places. Otherwise, you might be scratching your head while drafting your fantasy football team or doing double takes when you flip on the games in Week 1.

So, if you missed some free agent signings or trades in the offseason — or forgot — and spent your summer days and nights sipping cocktails by the pool rather than watching preseason games, we're here to help.

QUARTERBACKS

- Matthew Stafford (Lions to Rams)
- Jared Goff (Rams to Lions)
- Carson Wentz (Eagles to Colts)
- Sam Darnold (Jets to Panthers)
- Teddy Bridgewater (Panthers to Broncos)
- Ryan Fitzpatrick (Dolphins to Washington)
- Andy Dalton (Cowboys to Bears)

Goff, two first-round picks and a third-rounder were dealt by Los Angeles to Detroit for Stafford in an offseason blockbuster. Both will start for their new teams. ... Wentz was traded to Indianapolis, where he was reunited with current Colts coach and former Eagles offensive coordinator Frank Reich, for a third-rounder and a 2022 conditional second-rounder. Wentz had surgery to repair a broken bone in his foot earlier this month, but could be ready for the opener. ... The Jets moved on from Darnold and dealt him to Carolina for a sixth-rounder this year and second- and fourth-rounders in 2022. New York drafted

Zach Wilson with the No. 2 overall pick. ... After getting Darnold, the Panthers traded Bridgewater to Denver for a sixth-rounder and he has taken the Broncos' starting job. ... FitzMagic is still going strong and the 38-year-old well-traveled vet will be under contract for Washington in Week 1 • the ninth NFL team for which he'll start. ... Dalton, in Dallas last year after nine in Cincinnati seasons, is Chicago's expected starter. But the calls from Bears fans for Justin Fields, the No. 3 overall pick, have already begun.

Others: Joe Flacco (Jets to Eagles), Tyrod Taylor (Chargers to Texans), Mitchell Trubisky (Bears to Bills).

RUNNING BACKS

- Tevin Coleman (49ers to Jets)
 - James Conner (Steelers to Cardinals)
 - Kenyan Drake (Cardinals to Raiders)
- Coleman, who spent two injury-plagued seasons in San Francisco, joins a backfield in New York where he's likely to complement Ty Johnson, La'Mical Perine and rookie Michael Carter. ... Conner was Pittsburgh's backfield workhorse most of the last three seasons, but will be part of a 1-2 punch in Arizona with Chase Edmonds. ... Drake broke out during his two seasons with the Cardinals, scoring 18 touchdowns in 23 games. Las Vegas is doubling down with Drake and Josh Jacobs.

Others: Sony Michel (Patriots to Rams), Mark Ingram (Ravens to Texans), Phillip Lindsay (Broncos to Texans).

WIDE RECEIVERS

- Julio Jones (Falcons to Titans)
- A.J. Green (Bengals to Cardinals)

• Kenny Golladay (Lions to Giants)

Jones, the Falcons' career leader in catches and yards receiving, was traded along with a 2023 sixth-round pick to Tennessee for the Titans' second-rounder in 2022 and a fourth-rounder in 2023. He hasn't practiced much in training camp because of a leg ailment, but will form a formidable 1-2 receiving duo with A.J. Brown when healthy. ... Green signed with Arizona after 10 years in Cincinnati, where he's second to Chad Johnson in various team career receiving marks. ... Looking to give Daniel Jones more weapons, the Giants signed Golladay to a four-year, \$72 million contract.

Others: Corey Davis (Titans to Jets), DeSean Jackson (Eagles to Rams), Marvin Jones (Lions to Jaguars), Cordarrelle Patterson (Bears to Falcons), Sammy Watkins (Chiefs to Ravens).

TIGHT ENDS

- Hunter Henry (Chargers to Patriots)
 - Jonnu Smith (Titans to Patriots)
- Life at tight end without Rob Gronkowski hasn't been great for New England, which brought in two of the more productive players at that position over the last few years.

Others: Jared Cook (Saints to Chargers), Kyle Rudolph (Vikings to Giants).

OFFENSIVE LINE

- Trent Brown (Raiders to Patriots)
- Joe Thuney (Patriots to Chiefs)
- Corey Linsley (Packers to Chargers)
- Morgan Moses (Washington to Jets)

The 6-foot-8, 380-pound Brown returns to New England, where he played left

tackle in 2018, after two years with the Raiders. ... Thuney bolsters the line in front of Patrick Mahomes after five years with the Patriots. ... All-Pro Linsley, a fixture on Green Bay's line the past seven years, signed a five-year, \$62.5 million contract with the Chargers, making him the NFL's highest-paid center. ... Moses signed a one-year, \$3.6 million deal with the Jets to play right tackle and form bookends with left tackle Mekhi Becton in front of Wilson.

Others: Marcus Cannon (Patriots to Texans), Rodney Hudson (Raiders to Cardinals), Alex Mack (Falcons to 49ers).

DEFENSIVE LINEMEN

- J.J. Watt (Texans to Cardinals)
- Jadeveon Clowney (Titans to Browns)
- Yannick Ngakoue (Ravens to Raiders)

Watt became one of the faces of the league during 10 years with the Texans, so it'll surely be strange seeing him rush the passer in another uniform after signing a two-year, \$28 million deal with Arizona. ... Browns fans are drooling over Clowney teaming with Myles Garrett to wreck opposing backfields. ... Ngakoue split last season between Minnesota and Baltimore and finished with eight sacks, a total he has reached or surpassed in all five of his NFL seasons.

Others: Everson Griffen (Lions to Vikings), Solomon Thomas (49ers to Raiders).

LINEBACKERS

- Melvin Ingram (Chargers to Steelers)
- Bud Dupree (Steelers to Titans)
- Matt Judon (Ravens to Patriots)

Ingram was a consistent

pass-rushing threat during nine seasons with the Chargers except for last year, when knee injuries limited him to seven games and no sacks. ... Dupree was a key performer on Pittsburgh's defense the last six seasons, getting 39 1/2 sacks. He signed a five-year, \$82.5 million contract with Tennessee in the offseason and appears healthy after a torn ACL ended last season prematurely. ... Judon was one of New England's big free agent signings, getting a four-year, \$56 million deal after being selected for the Pro Bowl the last two seasons.

Others: Benardrick McKinney (Texans to Dolphins), Haason Reddick (Cardinals to Panthers).

DEFENSIVE BACKS

- Patrick Peterson (Cardinals to Vikings)
- Malcolm Butler (Titans to Cardinals)

Peterson was a three-time All-Pro and established himself as one of the game's top cornerbacks in 10 years in Arizona. ... Butler, whose goal-line interception sealed New England's Super Bowl win in 2014, spent the last three seasons in Tennessee.

Others: Shaquill Griffin (Seahawks to Jaguars), Adoree Jackson (Titans to Giants), William Jackson III (Bengals to Washington).

KICKERS

- Matt Prater (Lions to Cardinals)

Prater, who still holds the NFL record with his 64-yard field goal while with Denver in 2013, kicked for seven years in Detroit before signing a two-year deal with Arizona in the offseason.

Others: Randy Bullock (Bengals to Lions), Sam Ficken (Jets to Titans), Zane Gonzalez (Cardinals to Lions).

Bob Huggins gets 2-year contract extension at West Virginia

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. (AP) — West Virginia's Bob Huggins has agreed to a two-year contract extension that includes the option for him to step aside or continue coaching after the 2023-24 season.

Under the agreement announced Friday, Huggins, who turns 68 next month, will earn \$4.15

million in each of the next three seasons.

Huggins earned his 900th coaching victory when the Mountaineers beat Morehead State in the NCAA Tournament in March.

Huggins entered similar arrangements during contract extensions in 2012 and 2017.

"As I said with our

last announcement in 2017, I want Bob Huggins leading our basketball program for many years to come," WVU athletic director Shane Lyons said in a statement.

Starting with the 2024-25 season, Huggins can choose to assume an appointment of at least two years in

public relations and development along with other duties within the athletic department if he is no longer the coach. That status will be determined by an annual mutual agreement between Huggins and the athletic director before May of each year. If Huggins continues to coach beyond June 2027,

he will have a minimum of two fiscal years of post-coaching status.

His base salary in the post-coaching arrangement will be \$50,000 per year plus deferred compensation from the previous agreement.

"I certainly appreciate the opportunity that I've been given to represent this great uni-

versity and state that I love so much," Huggins said.

Huggins is entering his 40th season as a head coach. The Mountaineers have gone to the NCAA Tournament in 10 of Huggins' 14 seasons.

West Virginia opens play Nov. 9 against Oakland in Morgantown.

NBA memo: Those around players, refs must be vaccinated

Associated Press

All NBA team personnel who will be near players and referees must be fully vaccinated against the coronavirus this season, the league told its clubs in a memo on Friday.

It essentially covers anyone who will travel

with teams, be around the bench areas, have access to home, visiting and referee locker rooms and those working at the scorer's table. The league also said in the memo, a copy of which was obtained by The Associated Press, that the policy may be updated when federal agencies

release "expected guidance related to booster shots."

Team personnel will need to be fully vaccinated by Oct. 1; game-day personnel by the time of a team's first home preseason game, which means early October.

Among the groups of personnel required to

have vaccinations: coaches, medical and performance staff, equipment staff, front office members, team and arena security, media relations, social media producers, facility operations workers and more.

The NBA said exemptions will be made in the cases of unionized work-

ers who cannot be forced to be vaccinated, and for those with religious or documented medical reasons.

Those not fully vaccinated, the NBA said, "will be prohibited from having in-person interaction with, or being within 15 feet of, any player or referee." They would

also not be permitted to travel with teams and would have to wear face masks at all times inside team facilities.

Training camps for all 30 NBA clubs begin in late September, with preseason games in early October and the start of regular-season play Oct. 19.