

College football predictions

Page A8

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Northeast Taekwondo students from Washington D.C. demonstrate their skills Saturday at the Saranac Lake Baptist Church. (Enterprise photos — Lou Reuter)

Visitors earn black belt promotions

By LOU REUTER
Senior Sports Writer
SARANAC LAKE — There was a family gathering at the Saranac Lake Baptist Church on Saturday, but it wasn't necessarily a church-related event.

The occasion was the advancement of 20 students of the Northeast Taekwondo school to higher black belt levels.

Nineteen members of the Northeast Taekwondo school in Washington D.C. traveled to Saranac Lake for the event and were joined by one member of the Saranac Lake-based school: Lidia O'Kelly. All 20 were promoted from third- to sixth-degree black belts based on their years of involvement and progress in the martial art.

They are all students of Grandmaster Jon O'Kelly, who owns both schools and travels between Saranac Lake and Washington D.C. on a regular basis.

O'Kelly said that the stu-



Students from the Saranac Lake Northeast Taekwondo school perform a sword pattern during Saturday's black belt promotion event at the Saranac Lake Baptist Church.

dents from Washington D.C. were originally scheduled for their promotions this October but they were hoping it could happen earlier, as a large group of them were heading off to college. O'Kelly said he made a deal with them; stating if they

wanted to do it earlier they would have to come to Saranac Lake for the promotions.

So, with their families present on Saturday in a festive and intense atmosphere, the students displayed some of their abilities and what

they learned in front of a packed gymnasium at the church. On hand was O'Kelly's teacher from New Jersey, Grandmaster Bai, as well as some special guests who were seated at a long table in the front of the gym. O'Kelly said all the stu-

dents had already fulfilled their requirements for the promotions during years of training, and likened Saturday's testing to "final exams." He said the 20 who were promoted have combined for hundreds of years of experience in Taekwondo.

Local Northeast Taekwondo students also took part in Saturday's event, presenting a sword pattern to Grandmaster Bai and the rest of those in attendance.

"Grandmaster Bai was happy," O'Kelly said. "He loved the demo, he loved the tests. It couldn't have been a better day."

On Friday, the students from D.C. joined those from Saranac Lake for a meet and greet, as well as a workout at the school in the village.

"Taekwondo is a family, and it was great seeing everyone come together," O'Kelly said. "A lot of the students from Washington and their families made this a summer vacation."

U.S. hoops finds groove in tune-up for World Cup

By JUSTIN BERGMAN
Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — With his team playing on a raised basketball court in a stadium normally used for soccer and cricket, U.S. coach Gregg Popovich said he felt like he was on a movie set.

"I kept looking behind me because I knew I was going to fall off the stage," he said.

But once the game started, Popovich thought it all seemed normal. And if it had been a movie, Popovich surely would have liked the ending.

Kemba Walker scored 23 points, Myles Turner added 15 points and 14 rebounds, and the U.S. topped Australia 102-86 on Thursday before a crowd of 51,218 — billed as the largest crowd ever to watch a basketball game in Australia.

"We have guys that are just starting to play with each other," said U.S. guard Donovan Mitchell, who had 13 points. "We got off to a little bit of a rough start in the first half, but the third quarter, we really picked it up defensively."

Patty Mills and Chris Goulding scored 19 points each for Australia, which stayed with the Americans for about 2 1/2 quarters before seeing chances slip away at Marvel Stadium — transformed into a make-shift basketball arena for two games against the Americans, tune-ups for both sides before the World Cup starts next week in China.

"It was an awesome opportunity," Mills said. "I think basketball in this country has been waiting for something like this."

After Australia briefly took the lead at 45-44 early in the second half, the Americans scored 13 unanswered points, including three

straight 3-pointers by Turner, Harrison Barnes and Mitchell, to go up 57-45. Walker was one of the keys for the second-half resurgence for the Americans, scoring 21 of his 23 points after halftime.

"I'm one of the leaders of this team, so it's important for me to set that tone," the Celtics guard said.

The roof of Marvel Stadium was closed and the court was placed in the middle of the field surrounded by hundreds of white chairs, more than 20 rows deep, for fans who paid for floor seating.

Despite the huge crowd, Australian media reported that some fans were issued refunds because they bought tickets based on promotional materials depicting Stephen Curry and LeBron James — who were part of the U.S. player pool when the deal was struck last year to play these games. Neither Curry nor James is on the U.S. roster for the World Cup.

Australia was also without its biggest star, Ben Simmons, who has opted not to play in the World Cup. Still, the Boomers starting lineup included four NBA players: Mills, Aaron Baynes, Joe Ingles and Matthew Dellavedova.

And the Aussies gave their crowd some thrills — like a run just before halftime that cut the U.S. lead to 44-43 after back-to-back 3-pointers by Goulding and six straight points by Mills.

The win was the 78th in a row in major international exhibitions and competition for the U.S. national team, a streak that started with the bronze medal game of the 2006 world championships. It encompasses gold-medal runs at the 2010 and 2014 World Cups, the Olympics in 2008, 2012 and 2016, and the FIBA Americas tournament in 2007.

No. 22 SU shifts focus to defense

By JOHN KEKIS
AP Sports Writer

SYRACUSE — Here's a switch for Syracuse coach Dino Babers — defense rules.

Known for his up-tempo offenses, the fourth-year coach is looking to his defense to help lift the No. 22 Orange to even greater heights this fall.

"Our defense is really, really good right now," Babers said. "I really think the strength of our football team is our defense. I think that we have an outstanding defense and ... they need to play that way."

After two straight 4-8 seasons under Babers, Syracuse went 10-3 in 2018 and finished the year ranked No. 15 by the AP after a victory over former Big East rival West Virginia in the Camping World Bowl. With red-shirt sophomore quarterback Tommy DeVito replacing dual-threat quarterback Eric Dungey, the catalyst for an offense that averaged just over 40 points a game, Syracuse begins the season Aug. 31 on the road against Liberty ranked in the preseason for the first time since 1998.

The defense, which produced 31 turnovers (18 interceptions and 13 fumble recoveries), is a big reason why. Among eight returning starters on defense are ends Kendall Coleman and Alton Robinson, who each recorded 10 sacks, helping Syracuse produce the most turnovers of any Power Five team in the nation.

Also back is the entire secondary, including Devin Foster (86 tackles, one interception), Andre Cisco (60 tackles, seven picks) and Chris Fredrick (56 tackles, three interceptions). The trio ranked third through fifth in tackles behind linebackers Ryan Guthrie (107) and

Syracuse eliminates mention of Carrier in media guide

SYRACUSE (AP) — Syracuse University has eliminated mention of Carrier from references to the school's domed stadium in the 2019 football media guide.

Several sections in the media guide are identical to the 2018 version, the only change the removal of the company's name. A page that was devoted to the Carrier Dome in previous years now calls the facility "The Loud House" and the mailing address has been shortened to simply The Dome instead of Carrier Dome.

The Carrier Corp. contributed \$2.75 million of the nearly \$27 million in construction costs in 1979 in exchange for naming rights. Details of the original deal, believed to be the first naming rights agreement in college sports, have not been made public.

The facility is currently undergoing a \$118 million renovation.

Carrier Senior Director of Communications Ashley Barrie said in a statement to The Post-Standard of Syracuse the company would be contacting the university to discuss the matter further.

Kielan Whitner (100) and will be joined by often-injured safety Antwan Cordy, who received a medical redshirt for a sixth year.

Cisco, a free safety, became the second freshman in NCAA history to lead the country in interceptions, tying Boston College's Hamp Cheevers for the top spot and earning ACC Defensive Rookie of the Year recognition. He also set the program record for most passes defended by a freshman (18) and is more physically imposing this year.

"I learned a lot last year playing in such a physical conference," said Cisco, a first-team preseason All-American along with Orange place-kicker Andre Szymt. "I put on my agenda that I needed to add a lot of weight, add a lot of muscle, and the coaches helped me do that. I feel like I'm in a good place right now."

Said Babers: "He's got an upper body that is no joke. I

want to see if he can now physically do some of the things from a skill set that we saw him do from an athletic ability as far as getting interceptions and doing other things on the back end."

DeVito, who exudes confidence even though he has never started a game for the Orange, gave a playful sneer when asked about the defense after the third day of preseason camp. After the first scrimmage, that sneer was gone. The 90-minute session was 144 plays and the defense recorded seven sacks, an interception and a safety when Robinson took down DeVito on the first play on a day the retooled offensive line struggled.

"I saw a defense dominate the entire scrimmage," Babers said. "If you've got a good defense, suppose you have a chance to win, right? So I'm excited about that, we need to do some more things on offense."

Mayfield ready to get playing time

By The Associated Press

Baker Mayfield wants to play half of Cleveland's third exhibition game at Tampa Bay on Friday night.

"But it's not my call," the quarterback said.

It's up to coach Freddie Kitchens, who said he will use his starters some but seems inclined to keep them fresh and uninjured heading into the Sept. 8 opener with Tennessee. He said his decision will be made on "a player-by-player basis."

Mayfield played one series in the preseason opener against Washington before sitting out last week's game at Indianapolis.

Star wide receiver Odell Beckham Jr. has yet to make his debut with Cleveland as he deals with a hip injury the team insists is not serious.

It has been an eventful week for Mayfield.

In a GQ article on Mayfield published Tuesday, the former No. 1 overall selection said he was shocked the Giants drafted QB Daniel Jones with the No. 6 pick this year and questioned why New York would take a player without a proven track record of winning.

Claiming he was taken out of context in an interview conducted four months ago, Mayfield said Wednesday that he reached out to Jones to make sure he understood he didn't mean any harm.

Mayfield acknowledged he told GQ that he was stunned by the choice of Jones — "blows my mind" — but that he didn't mean any disrespect toward Jones and that other comments in the article were pieced together.

As for the rest of the Browns, the team has only a couple of unanswered roster questions nearing the end of August. One is at right guard, where Kevin Zeitler's departure in the trade with the Giants for Beckham has opened a spot. Eric Kush seems to be the front-runner, with rookie Drew Forbes making a recent push.

Also, the Browns need either incumbent Greg Joseph or rookie Austin Seibert to grab hold of the kicker's job. Both have been inconsistent throughout camp and it's gotten to the point where general manager John Dorsey may have to sign a free agent.

Newly signed receiver Braxton Miller could see some action. He was recently released by the Eagles, but the Browns like the former Ohio State quarterback's speed and versatility.

Friday's matchup features teams with the longest postseason droughts in the league. Cleveland hasn't made the playoffs since 2002. The Buccaneers haven't earned a berth since 2007 and haven't won a playoff game since their 2002 Super Bowl run.

Tampa Bay starters linebacker Lavonte David, defensive lineman Vita Vea and wide receiver Mike Evans will not play. Several other players who are dealing with injuries will be game-time decisions, according to coach Bruce Arians.

James Winston will start and play as long as the No. 1s are in the game. Arians said he doesn't have definitive plans for how long the regulars play.

BILLS AT LIONS

When the Lions host the Bills, two quarterbacks may be competing for one spot on Detroit's roster.

Josh Johnson and David Fales will likely get a lot of snaps because the Lions are trying to keep Matthew Stafford healthy. Stafford has not stepped on the field during a preseason game this year and coach Matt Patricia refused to say if that would change against Buffalo.

Johnson started three games for the Washington Redskins last season and has 33 games of experience in seven years. Fales hasn't started an NFL game, but he does have three games of experience with Miami and Chicago.

Josh Allen gets what's expected to be his final preseason opportunity to oversee the Bills' new-look offense, with running backs LeSean McCoy and Frank Gore expected to split most of the duties through the first half.