



Antonio Brown

CUTS LIKE A KNIFE

IT'S OFFICIAL: TAMPA BAY BUCS TERMINATE BROWN'S CONTRACT— 4B

COLLEGE BASKETBALL



WILFREDO LEE/The Associated Press

Syracuse guard Joseph Girard III (No. 11) dives for a loose ball against Miami guard Wooga Poplar on Wednesday, Jan. 5, in Coral Gables, Fla.

Miami scores 58 points in 2nd half to beat Syracuse 88-87

CORAL GABLES, Fla. — Charlie Moore scored 25 points, Isaiah Wong had all 14 of his during Miami's 58-point second half, and the Hurricanes beat Syracuse 88-87 on Wednesday night for their eighth straight victory.

Miami trailed by as many as 18 points in the first half after 4-for-14 shooting from 3-point range. But the Hurricanes made their first six from distance after halftime, taking the lead, 50-48, for the first time since 8-7. Syracuse missed 5-of-6 shots to start the second half.

Miami took the momentum on Jordan Miller's lob dunk, followed by Kameron McGusty's three-point play with 2:24 left for a 76-69 lead. Moore sank a deep 3 with 1:01 left for a six-point lead before Syracuse buried three 3s in the final 11 seconds, including Cole Swider's at the buzzer.

McGusty added 17 points for Miami (12-3, 4-0 ACC), which has five wins over Power Five teams during its win streak. Miller scored 14 points.

Wong missed his first five shots of the game before converting layups on back-to-back possessions midway through the second half to give Miami a 61-55 lead. Syracuse had a season-high 17 turnovers with 10 minutes left.

Joe Girard led Syracuse (7-7, 1-2) with 26 points and seven 3s. Jesse Edwards had 22 points, eight rebounds and a career-high seven blocks before fouling out late and Swider added 20 points. Buddy Boeheim was held to nine points on 2-of-7 shooting.

Syracuse was 9 of 15 from 3-point range in the first half and led 44-30 at the break behind 14 points from Edwards and 12 by Girard. The Orange finished 17 of 32 from distance but committed 19 turnovers.

KEYS CALENDAR

TODAY IN THE KEYS

PREP BOYS BASKETBALL

Westwood Christian at Marathon, JV-4/V-5:30 p.m.
Keys Gate at Key West, JV-4/V-6 p.m.

PREP GIRLS SOCCER

Florida at Christian at Coral Shores, 4 p.m.
Palmer Trinity at Marathon, 4 p.m.

PREP WRESTLING

Key West at Somerset 1A Scuffle, 3 p.m.

SPORTS ON TV

For a complete TV listing, see Page 2B

FIND IT ONLINE

keysnews.com

More stars added to COVID-19 list

NFL

Dallas rookie linebacker Parsons, Cincinnati running back Mixon added to reserve list

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dallas star rookie linebacker Micah Parsons and Cincinnati running back Joe Mixon were the latest big-name players added to the COVID-19 reserve list Wednesday.

Parsons will likely miss the season

finale for the Cowboys on Saturday against Philadelphia when Dallas has a chance to improve its play-off seeding. Parsons will finish the season with 13 sacks, 1 1/2 behind the rookie record set by Tennessee's Jevon Kearse in 1999.

The NFL is allowing players to return five days after a positive COVID-19 test if they don't have symptoms. The reduction last week from the previous isolation time of 10 days includes unvaccinated players.

Mixon joins Bengals sacks leader Trey Hendrickson and a handful of other key players for Cincinnati on the COVID-19 list headed into Sunday's finale against Cleveland. The Bengals have clinched the AFC North, but have a slight chance at the top seed and a bye if things break the right way this weekend.

The Bengals also placed defensive tackle DT B.J. Hill on the list and activated receiver Trenton Irwin and cornerback Trae Waynes after they missed last week's game

on the COVID-19 list.

Minnesota activated quarterback Kirk Cousins from COVID-19 reserve, after he missed the game at Green Bay — the first unplanned absence of his career — and saw the Vikings eliminated from playoff contention in the loss.

Seven Vikings players remain on the COVID-19 reserve list, including three starters that are on track to be cleared in time to play in the

See COVID-19, Page 4B

POLE VAULTING: POLE VAULT IN PARADISE • SATURDAY 8:50 A.M.

FLYING HIGH



Photo provided

Sean Young clears a flight during a prior pole vault event. Young is expected to be part of the field entered in Saturday's Pole Vault in Paradise, which will be at 8:50 a.m., at Higgs Beach.

Six flights of vaulters set to compete at Higgs

BY J.W. COOKE
Key West Citizen

Last year Key West was declared a no-fly zone, at least that was the case for Pole Vault in Paradise as the third edition of the event was delayed due to

COVID-19 concerns.

Typically, the first outdoor track and field event of the year, the vaulters are set to return to Key West on Saturday, Jan. 8, with roughly double the number

See VAULTERS, Page 3B

COLLEGE FOOTBALL No. 1 Alabama peaking at right time

BY JOHN ZENOR
The Associated Press

Down to the last play of the regular season, this Alabama team managed to bounce off the ropes when it seemed most vulnerable.

It is unlike some previous Nick Saban powerhouses that have been seemingly destined for the national title game — barring a shocker along the way — from start to finish.

The 2020 team batted aside every opponent during the regular season with a seemingly unstoppable offense.

The 2011 defense was equally formidable, even in a regular season slipup against LSU (losing 9-6 in overtime). The 2009 team, like last season's, was unbeaten.

It wasn't always clear how good the 2021 version would end up becoming.

This team was flawed and seemingly vulnerable — at least until the Southeastern Conference championship game against No. 1 Georgia.

See ALABAMA, Page 2B

PREP SPORTS: CLASS OF 2022 SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

BEKKY VALENZUELA

CORAL SHORES

by J.W. COOKE
Key West Citizen



ATHLETE BIO

HEIGHT: 5-foot-8 • GPA: 4.396

PARENTS: Robert and Elena Valenzuela

SIBLINGS: Robbie Valenzuela

SPORTS: Volleyball, Basketball

volleyball in middle school.

Q: Why did you decide to stop playing soccer?

A: I always loved soccer but basketball and soccer were always in the same season, so I chose to pursue basketball instead.

Q: How much training do you do per day or week on a yearly basis?

A: I am active almost every day; during the offseason I play for the Miami Suns and travel to different places to play basketball.

Q: How does your training differ when you are in-season compared to offseason?

A: During season it is more drills with a ball rather than during offseason, I do more strength training to get ready for the season.

Q: Do you really have downtime away from sports?

A: In a way, yes, but no, I am usually always playing a sport and the time I do get off I spend as much time as I can with my family and friends.

Q: Rating the sports you play versus academics, what's more important in your life?

A: I love sports with a passion, but in the long run, I think academics is more important for me.

See VALENZUELA, Page 2B

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SPORTS

ON THE WATER



The Risners — Bill, Krisiti, Ben, Jack and Avery — from Brighton, Michigan, had some great fishing days from their boat while recently in Key West.

Photo provided

Upcoming Keys Fishing Tournaments

No matter what the season, there's always something to fish for in the waters surrounding the Florida Keys and Key West. The calendar lists select tournament highlights. A comprehensive schedule of Keys angling challenges can be found at <http://www.fla-keys.com/fishing>.

Through July 31, 2022: Key West Fishing Tournament. More than 40 species of fish are targeted during the multimonth tournament, with divisions for men, women, junior anglers (ages 10 to 15) and Pee Wees (younger than 10). The Key West Fishing Tournament strongly encourages the release of game fish. All participating anglers receive

certificates noting their catches and qualify for a variety of prizes. For information, visit <https://www.keywestfishingtournament.com>.

Friday and Saturday, Jan. 7-8: Fish for Holly Sailfish Tournament in Islamorada. Created to raise money for Keys scholarships and domestic violence initiatives, this memorial tournament honors the late Holly

Catch or fishing tip to share

- Fax: 305-295-8016
- Write: Daily Fishing Report
P.O. Box 1800, Key West, FL 33041
- Drop it off at The Key West Citizen building (3140 Flagler Ave.)
- Email: jwcooke@keysnews.com



Given, a Keys resident and avid angler. Participants are to gather at Postcard Inn to compete for top male, female and junior angler awards as well top team and fun fish categories. For information, visit <http://fishforholly.com/tournament>.

Jan. 13-16: Key West Kingfish Mayhem. This is the first tournament of the five-leg Kingfish Mayhem Pro Series. In the winter, Key West is the staging ground for King Mackerel before they start their annual migration in the Gulf. Big fish from the 50- to 70-pound range are common in these areas, which creates an exciting and competitive environment at the weigh-in. This event has been enhanced by adding tuna, mahi and wahoo, for a four-species tournament. Teams from all around travel to join this world-class event for their shot at claiming King of Key West. For information, visit <https://www.meatmayhemtournaments.com/event/leg-one-key-west-kingfish-mayhem-2022>.

Jan. 21-23: Cheeca Lodge Presidential Sailfish Tournament in Islamorada. The Presidential is one of the most prestigious offshore tournaments in the Florida Keys, and serves as the third and final leg of the three-pronged Florida Keys Gold Cup Championship. The FKGC is both an angler tournament and a team tournament. Each team

must fish aboard the same boat in all three events. At least one angler of each team entered must fish all three events. This format stems from a long history of sailfish trifectas. Teams compete to win the coveted Florida Keys Gold Cup Sailfish Tournament trophy. For information, call Liz Hill at 305-451-5094 or visit <https://www.cheeca.com/experience/fishing>.

Jan. 26-27: IFC Sailfish Tournament in Islamorada. Presented by the Islamorada Fishing Club, the event this year is the third and final leg of the three-pronged Florida Keys Gold Cup Championship series, attracting teams of elite sport fishermen. A total cash payout for a full field at the IFC Sailfish Tournament could reach \$30,000. For information, visit <http://theislamoradafishingclub.com>.

Jan. 30-31: Islamorada Bartenders Sailfish Open. Headquartered at the Lorelei Restaurant & Cabana Bar, this fun fishing event is only for actively employed bartenders and restaurant employees. Trophies awarded to individual anglers as well as the bar a team represents, with the huge perpetual trophy going to the winners along with bragging rights for a year. For information, call Dianne Harbaugh at 305-522-4868 or email ditournaments@aol.com.

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TENNIS

Djokovic in limbo as he fights deportation from Australia

BY JOHN PYE
The Associated Press

Locked in a dispute over his COVID-19 vaccination status, Novak Djokovic was confined to an immigration detention hotel in Australia on Thursday as the No. 1 men's tennis player in the world awaited a court ruling on whether he can compete in the Australian Open later this month.

Djokovic, a vocal skeptic of vaccines, had traveled to Australia after Victoria state authorities granted him a medical exemption to the country's strict vaccination requirements. But when he arrived late Wednesday, the Australian Border Force rejected his exemption as invalid and barred him from entering the country.

A court hearing on his bid to stave off deportation was set for Monday, while the 34-year-old Serb and defending Australian Open champion was forced to wait it out in Melbourne at a secure hotel used by immigration officials to house asylum seekers and refugees.

The tournament begins on Jan. 17. Djokovic is hoping to overtake rivals Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer in the record books and win his 21st Grand Slam singles title, the most by any player in men's tennis.

Djokovic's securing of an exemption so that he could play triggered an uproar and allegations of special treatment in Australia, where people spent months in lockdown and endured harsh



MARK DADSWELL/The Associated Press

Novak Djokovic holds the Norman Brookes Challenge Cup after defeating Daniil Medvedev in the men's singles final at the Australian Open in Melbourne, Australia, on Feb. 21, 2021.

travel restrictions at the height of the pandemic.

After his long-haul flight, the tennis star spent the night trying to convince authorities he had the necessary documentation, to no avail.

"The rule is very clear," Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said. "You need to have a medical exemption. He didn't have a valid medical exemption. We make the call at the border, and that's where it's enforced."

Health Minister Greg Hunt said the athlete's visa was canceled after border officials reviewed Djokovic's medical exemption and looked at "the integrity and the evidence behind it."

The grounds on which he was granted an exemption were not immediately disclosed.

While Djokovic has steadfastly refused to say whether he has gotten any shots against the coronavirus, he has spoken out against

vaccines, and it is widely presumed he would not have sought an exemption if he had been vaccinated.

Federal Circuit Judge Anthony Kelly adjourned Djokovic's case to Monday. A lawyer for the government agreed the nine-time Australian Open champion should not be deported before then.

"I feel terrible since yesterday that they are keeping him as a prisoner. It's not fair. It's not human. I hope that he will win," Djokovic's mother, Dijana, said after speaking with him briefly by telephone from Belgrade.

She added: "Terrible, terrible accommodation. It's just some small immigration hotel, if it's hotel at all." Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic said that he had spoken to Djokovic and that his government asked that the athlete be allowed to move to a house he has rented and "not to be in that infamous hotel."

Vaulters

FROM PAGE 1B

of participants signed up to take their leaps at Higgs Beach.

"I think that shows the popularity of Key West and now that the word has gotten out about the first couple of years, people want to come back," said event organizer Steve Hanes, who stated they moved the venue from Truman Waterfront to Higgs Beach this year in an attempt to keep things from becoming stale. "It was exposed at Truman Waterfront, one year we had really high winds and people were surprised how fast it was."

Hanes added that the biggest inconvenience is sand potentially getting in the vaulters' shoes.

"That really was the biggest consideration beforehand, but we are getting outdoor carpet for the vaulters to walk on so they don't get sand in their shoes," said Hanes, noting he received pointers at a similar vaulting event in New Haven Beach. "It's pretty level where we are setting up. The runway weighs tons, so it's not shifting, and we know how to secure the pits, so they don't shift."

For the participants, being the first outdoor event of the year, winners will set the standard for the upcoming season.

"Pretty much all the masters will set world leads and a lot of the younger guys will have world leads they can brag about for at least a few months, until the season starts elsewhere," said Hanes. "We have a reputation for a fast runway, and we are going to have 15- to 20-mph tail winds, so they

Pole Vault in Paradise 2022			
Benefiting Key West High School Track Team			
Flight Progressions			
Flight 1 - Red	Starting Height	3.80m	12' 5.61"
	Increments .15m		
Flight 2 - Blue	Starting Height	2.50m	8' 2.43"
	Increments .15m		
Flight 3 - Red	Elite Women		
	Starting Height	3.76m	12' 4.03"
		3.91m	
		4.06m	
		4.21m	
		4.36m	New Island Record (old 4.35m)
	4.46m		
	4.56m		
	4.66m		
	4.71m		World Qualifying is 4.7m
	Increments of .05m from here on		
Flight 4 - Blue	Starting Height	1.35m	4' 5.15"
	Increments .15m		
Flight 5 - Red	Elite Men		
	Starting Height	4.86m	15' 11.34"
		5.01m	
		5.16m	
		5.31m	
		5.46m	
	5.61m		New Island Record
	5.71m		
	5.81m		World Qualifying is 5.8m
	Increments of .05m from here on		
Flight 6 - Blue	Starting Height	3.10m	10' 2.05"
	Increments .15m		

will get a chance to run fast and hard on the runway."

The day will begin with a pancake breakfast at 8 a.m., ending at 10, with the two runways of flights starting at 9, 11:30, 2 p.m. and 4:30. The vaulters will be aged between 15-67, split nearly evenly between men and women, as 10 men have personal bests over 18 feet and 16 having previously cleared 17 feet.

Those elite men and women will be attempting to break the Key West Island record for prize money, which currently is held by Austin Miller at 18 feet, 4.75 inches. The women's record in 14 feet, 3.25 inches, set by Emily Grove, while Anicka Newell, who competed in both the Rio and Tokyo Games and has jumped 15 feet, 5 inches, will be competing. The

elite women vault is at 11:30 a.m. and the elite men at 1:30 p.m.

A total of 10 states are expected to be represented, plus Mexico and Canada, with 44 vaulters from Florida and six from the Florida Keys.

In the first two years of the event, Pole Vault in Paradise was able to donate \$24,000 and more than \$10,000 in equipment to the Key West High School track team. This year, with double the number of entrants, Hanes is expecting to give back even more to area schools.

"I'm so thankful they are still coming back, they seem to be very excited about it being back in Key West," said Hanes. "Come out and support the Key West High School track team as well as May Sands Montessori and watch some good vaulting."