# Shaq, Iverson, Yao, Izzo lead Hall of Fame class

THE SPORTS XCHANGE

Shaquille O'Neal, Allen Iverson, Tom Izzo and modern-day basketball pioneers Yao Ming and Sheryl Swoopes headline the 2016 Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame class announced Monday.

Longtime Chicago Bulls owner and chairman Jerry Reinsdorf will be enshrined and posthumous inductees are NBA referee Darrell Garretson, John McLendon, the

first African-American coach in professional basketball and former stars Zelmo Beaty and Cumberland

O'Neal was an unstoppable force as a 7-foot-1 dunking machine who was named a 15-time NBA All-Star. He was a three-time NBA Finals MVP, won four NBA titles and was the NBA MVP in 2000. He was one of the first crossover stars to go beyond endorsements, earning regular roles on the big screen.

Iverson was a brash point and earned 524 career victories bounds and 1.9 blocks per game in guard who averaged 26.7 points despite standing just 6 feet tall. The 11-time All-Star known as "The Answer" was the No. 1 overall pick in the 1996 draft. He was named rookie of the year, won four scoring titles was the 2001 NBA MVP, leading the Sixers to the NBA Finals, where they lost to O'Neal's Lakers.

Izzo won a national title at Michigan State in 2000, has led the Spartans to seven Final Fours he averaged 19 points, 9.2 re-

since becoming the head coach at Michigan State in 1995.

Swoopes was the first WNBA player signed and won three MVP awards and four WNBA titles.

Ming, the No. 1 overall pick in 2002 of the Houston Rockets and a transcendent 7-foot-6 center, is recognized as much for opening the door to international stars as his statistics. Ming's career ended early because of foot injuries but eight seasons but played only five games combined in his final two

Reinsdorf also owns the Chicago White Sox but is identified for elevating the Bulls into consistent winners during the pairing of Michael Jordan and Phil Jackson. The Bulls won six NBA champi-

Garretson was an NBA referee for 27 years and spent 17 years as the league's chief of officiating.

onships in the 1990s.

# Rangers defeat Mariners in opener

THE SPORTS XCHANGE

ARLINGTON, Texas The Texas Rangers took advantage of two Seattle Mariners errors in the fifth inning to score

**MLB** times three ROUNDUP on just one hit

Mariners 3-2 on Monday. The Texas win snapped a nine-game opening day winning streak for the Mari-

Seattle ace Felix Hernandez didn't allow a hit until the fifth inning and could have gotten out of that inning unscathed if it weren't for the defense behind him.

Hernandez Rougned Odor to lead off the inning with the Mariners up 2-0, and after Odor stole second, Elvis Andrus hit a grounder to third. Seattle's Kyle Seager, who hit a solo homer in the second, booted the ball to put runners on the corners.

A one-out walk loaded the bases for Shin-Soo Choo, who drew a walk to force in a run and cut Seattle's lead to 2-1. Prince Fielder tied the game with an RBI bloop single to left to keep the bases loaded. Hernandez, who was making his eighth-straight opening day start, appeared to get out of the inning when Adrian Beltre hit a potential double-play grounder to short, but Ketel Marte couldn't handle the ball and Delino DeShields scored to put Texas up 3-2.

The Fielder single ended up being the only hit the

Rangers had in the game. Texas left-hander Cole Hamels (1-0) allowed a firstinning homer to Robinson Cano and the homer to Seager in the second, but that was it. He pitched seven innings, allowing just four hits and the two runs while striking out eight. Shawn Tolleson picked up his first save with a perfect ninth.



SMILEY N. POOL | DALLAS MORNING NEWS | TNS

Texas Rangers starting pitcher Cole Hamels is doused with water by second baseman Rougned Odor after their opening-day win against the Seattle Mariners on Monday at Globe Life Park in Arlington, Texas.

Hernandez gave up just the Fielder single in six innings. He struck out six and walked five and was charged with three runs (one earned). He's now 6-1 in season openers.

#### Giants 12, Brewers 3

MILWAUKEE — Denard Span drove five runs, Matt Duffy sent in four and the Giants clubbed four home runs, opening the 2016 season with a rout at Miller Park.

San Francisco had 15 hits against four Milwaukee pitchers and broke the game wide open in the eighth, scoring five runs on three consecutive home runs — by Joe Panik, Buster Posey and Hunter Pence

The Giants' offense helped pick up left-hander Madison Bumgarner (1-0) who wasn't feeling 100 percent after battling the flu for the past few days. He went five innings and allowed three runs on five hits with five walks and six strikeouts.

#### Reds 6, Phillies 2

CINCINNATI - Joey Votto's two-run single with the bases loaded highlighted a five-run eighth inning on Opening Day before 43,683 fans, the largest regular-season crowd in the history of Great American Ball Park.

Shortstop Zack Cozart went 3-for-3 with two doubles and an RBI to become the first Reds player with three hits on Opening Day since Barry Larkin in 2001.

Ross Ohlendorf (1-0) earned the victory.

Freddy Galvis hit a tworun home run and starter Jeremy Hellickson allowed one unearned run in six innings for the Phillies in a losing effort.

### Nationals 4, Braves 3

ATLANTA — Daniel Murphy hit a home run and top of the 10th inning to give Dusty Baker a victory in his debut as Nationals manager.

The Braves tied the score

with a run in the bottom of the ninth, and the Nationals won on an unearned run in the 10th after second base-Gordon Beckham threw away a grounder hit by Ryan Zimmerman with one out. Murphy knocked him in with his double and Nationals closer Jonathan Papelbon pitched a perfect 10th inning to record the

Bryce Harper and Murphy hit homers for the Nationals, while Freddie Freeman and Adonis Garcia connected for the Braves

#### Orioles 3, Twins 2

BALTIMORE — Matt Wieters lined a single to center with two outs in the bottom of the ninth that scored Chris Davis and gave the Baltimore Orioles a 3-2 victory over the Minnesota Twins on Monday.

Baltimore closer Zach Britton (1-0) earned the victory after he retired the Twins in order in the ninth.

# Olympian tells Hampden youth to go after dreams

BY ERNIE CLARK **BDN STAFF** 

HAMPDEN — Olympic luger Julia Clukey spoke with students at Reeds Brook Middle School on Monday afternoon armed with a new educational weapon — a college degree.

Clukey, the Augusta resident who finished 17th in the women's singles competition at the 2010 Winter Olympics Vancouver, British Columbia

Clukey

Canada, and narrowly missed making the U.S. squad again in 2014, recently graduated from DeVry University with a Bachelor of Science degree in engineering technology and electronics.

The 2003 Cony High School graduate has spent the last four years making time to take online classes between training, competitions and making motivational presentations to more than 12,000 students at Maine schools around through her relationship with the Maine Beer & Wine Distributors Association.

The 30-year-old Clukey completed her degree in conjunction with the U.S. Olympic Committee's partnership with DeVry University.

'Both my parents were educators, so I grew up valuing the importance of academics," she said. "My degree means a lot to me, and I am really grateful for the support of the USOC and the program with DeVry University. The program allowed me to accomplish this goal while competing in the sport I love. I also really appreciate the support from

my friends and family." Clukey spoke to the Reeds

Brook middle-schoolers as part of her "Julia Inspires' campaign that also included stops last week at Massabesic High School in Waterboro and Skowhegan Area High School.

The presentations focus on encouraging students to find their passion, create a plan and go after their dreams. As part of her message, she discusses overcoming adversity and sharing how she nearly qualified for the 2014 Olympics, missing the team by 13 thousandths of a second.

Upcoming presentations will take Clukey to Bonny Eagle High School in Standish on April 12, Whitefield Elementary School on April 29, John Bapst Memorial High School in Bangor on May 2, Auburn Middle School on May 6, Machias Memorial High School on May 10, Cony Middle School and Cony High School on May 11, and Erskine Academy of South China on May 19.

This summer, she also will host her annual Julia Clukey's Camp for Girls at Camp KV in Readfield.

Clukey was inspired to try the sport of luge with the promise of a free T-shirt at a USA Slider Search in downtown Portland at age 12, and she has competed in the sport for 17 years.

In addition to her Olympic appearance, she won the U.S. National Championship in 2012 and has earned two silver medals in World Cup competition.

Clukey, a Maine Sports Hall of Fame inductee, plans to train this summer to prepare for the 2016-17 season and eventually hopes to earn a spot on the 2018 U.S. Olympic team that will compete in PyeongChang, Korea.

## Red Sox

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The Indians last reached the playoffs in 2013, Francona's first year as manager. Expectations are soaring this year, but Francona said he isn't getting caught up in such predictions.

"The only expectations that are important to me are

the ones we set for ourselves," Francona said. "If we let other people's expectations get in the way of what we're trying to do, we're not very good any-

**NOTES:** The Indians and Red Sox will meet on opening day for just the fourth time ever, and the first since 1979. ... Indians OF Michael Brantley, on the DL following offseason shoulder sur-

gery, will have his streak of six consecutive appearances in the Indians' opening day lineup snapped. ... Boston LHP David Price's will be making his third consecutive opening day start for three different teams: the Rays, Tigers, and Red Sox. According to Elias, only two other pitchers have been Opening Day starters in three consecutive years for three different teams: Kevin

Brown from 1997-99 for the Marlins, Padres and Dodgers, and Jack Morris from 1990-92 for the Tigers, Twins and Blue Jays. ... The Indians will be the first opposing team to celebrate Red Sox DH David Ortiz's illustrious career in his final season. Ortiz announced his retirement in November on his 40th birthday and he will spend 2016 on a farewell

## Latvian hockey player commits to play at UM

BY NATHAN FOURNIER MAINE HOCKEY JOURNAL

The University of Maine men's hockey team has received a verbal commitment from 2015-16 Eastern Hockey League's Premier Division MVP, Eduards Tralmaks, for the 2017-18 season.

The 6-foot-2, 19-year-old from Riga, Latvia, recorded 28 goals and 27 assists in 40 games in his first season of junior hockey with the Boston Bandits. He spent the previous two seasons with the Bandits 16U and 18U Midget

"This is definitely a dream that has come true to me, and I'm really proud to be a part

more reason I chose the University of Maine was the coaching staff. They are really nice people with great coaching experience. I know I am in good hands now, and I want to thank them for giving me an opportunity to play for my dream university."

Bandits General Manager and coach Todd Sterling knew Tralmaks was a skilled player, but his performance at last season's International Ice Hockey Federation's World Under-18 Championships in Zug, Switzerland, really opened his eyes where Tralmaks had a goal and two assists in six games.

"They were playing in the

team and really dawned on me and struck me that he has played on a major league stage," Sterling said. "His Latvian team was playing against the best 20 kids from Canada and the U.S. It became very real for me. We knew he was a highly-skilled player. That was a world

stage he was on.' The Boston Bandits first saw Tralmaks at a Select Tournament in Portland four years ago, and Tralmaks had a chance to visit Maine during his first season with the

"When I played my first year here in the USA, we went to a showcase that was located of this incredible team," Tral- top pool, and I saw video of in Maine," Tralmaks said.

maks said in an email. "One him against the Canadian "After our game, there was an opportunity to see a UMaine hockey game as they played against [New Hampshire]. As soon as I walked into the arena, I suddenly got really excited seeing all those crazy fans cheering for the favorite team and atmosphere was just unbelievable. After that game, I said to myself: 'I wish I could have played here.

Tralmaks will go through the USHL Phase II Draft in May and go from there on where he will play next season before joining the Black Bears in 2017.

Tralmaks' coming to Maine is contingent upon his acceptance into the school and meeting NCAA eligibility requirements.

### **Masters**

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and we thought it would be cool to bring him out," said three-times PGA Tour winner Taylor, whose best Masters finish was a tie for 10th

'We probably stayed for a couple hours total and just had a good time.

"I had always been a little hesitant to come back. I wanted to wait until I got back in the tournament. And just the way I've been playing and the way things were going, I wasn't sure if I was going to make it back. This has been pretty amazing."

### McIlroy records ace

Rory McIlroy has grand slam ambitions in his sights at this week's Masters and he thrilled the fans with a holein-one during practice at Augusta National on Monday.

The Northern Ireland world number three aced the par-three 16th with a seveniron from 170 yards, sparking thunderous roars from the watching galleries.

"I don't think I have ever heard a roar that large during a practice round," a smiling McIlroy told reporters after his dramatic shot earned him a 3 and 2 win over England's Chris Wood in a friendly match-play encounter.

Just 26, McIlroy has already claimed four major titles and this week he will be bidding for his first Green Jacket at the picturesque Cathedral of Pines to complete a career grand slam of golf's four blue riband events.

Though he has not won a tournament this year, he came close with a tie for third Champions Tour.

at the WGC-Cadillac Championship last month and likes his progression at the Masters where he shared eighth place in 2014 before finishing a career-best fourth last year.

'I feel like my game is in good shape," said McIlroy, adding that he loved to play competitive matches during practice rounds. "It gets me into a nice mindset ... so I'm going to try to do the same tomorrow, play 18 and have a match with someone.

'That's the best way for me to prepare. It's competitive. You're trying to shoot a

Asked to assess the condition this week of the heavily contoured layout at Augusta National, McIlroy replied: "Not very different at all to

what we saw last year. "The way the course is now is probably like it played last year. a little soft and a bit slow. I am sure they are trying to get it faster and firmer as the week goes on."

### Couples out of Masters

Fred Couples, the 1992 Masters champion, withdrew from the year's first major citing back problems on Monday.

Couples was slated to start his 32nd tournament at Augusta National Golf Club, but pulled out after issuing a statement that he has been dealing with "acute back troubles the past two weeks"

The 56-year-old American has endured a chronic back condition throughout his career. He last competed on the PGA Tour at the Northern Trust Open on Feb. 19, when he missed the cut at Riviera. He had two starts earlier this year on the

## \$38,740 raised for Ronald McDonald House Charities

The 36th annual Maine McDonald's High School Senior All-Star Basketball Games raised a record-setting \$38,740 for Ronald Mc-Donald House Charities of

This year's event, held March 11-12 at Husson University in Bangor, marked Maine McDonald's Owner/Operator Associa-

tion's 28th consecutive year as lead sponsor of the event.

The Maine Association of Basketball Coaches founded and co-organized the event, which recognizes Maine's best senior high school basketball players, coaches and scholar-athletes, and bestows the prestigious Mr. and Miss Maine Basketball

High School Senior All-Star Basketball Games are the second-largest fundraiser for Ronald McDonald House Charities of Maine. The nonprofit operates Ronald McDonald Houses in Bangor and Portland, which provide lodging to families of children with life-threatening ill- eastern New Hampshire.

The Maine McDonald's nesses during their stay at a local hospital. Since its founding in 1998,

Ronald McDonald House Charities of Maine has granted more than \$3 million to more than 250 nonprofit organizations that positively impact the health and well-being of children and families in Maine and