

Saucier leads UMFK women by Villa Maria

BUFFALO, New York — The University of Maine-Fort Kent Bengals rolled to a 19-point lead after three quarters and then held off the Villa Maria Lady Vikings for a 77-67 women's basketball victory Monday.

COLLEGE ROUNDUP

Ericka Saucier turned in an impressive double-double of 24 points and 11 rebounds to propel the Bengals (15-3). Danielle Carrillo chipped in with 16 points, Ahjana Coleman added 14 and Romanalyn Inocencio had 12. Coleman and Ieoma Okaro each had seven rebounds.

Shaquana Owens paced Villa Maria (15-6) with 20

points and Magan Campbell put in 19.

St. Joseph's 68, Suffolk 50

At Standish, Morgan Cahill scored 13 rebounds and grabbed 10 rebounds to help propel St. Joseph's to the Great Northeast Athletic Conference victory.

Norma Waggett chipped in with 12 points for St. Joe's (12-3, 3-0 GNAC) and Emily Benway added 10 points.

Alexandra Nagri paced Suffolk (9-7, 1-2) with 14 points.

Villa Maria 73, UMPI 54

At Buffalo, New York, the Vikings outscored the UMaine-Presque Isle Owls 15-5 in the first quarter en

route to the win on Sunday.

Megan Campbell paced the Vikings (15-5) with 19 points, nine steals, seven assists and five rebounds while Shaquana Owens chipped in with 18 points and 14 rebounds.

Amanda Allen scored 14 points to lead UMPI (2-15) and Sydney Churchill grabbed nine rebounds.

UMass Dartmouth 94, Colby 91

At North Dartmouth, Massachusetts, UMass Dartmouth prevailed in the second overtime to beat Colby Waterville.

Colby is now 9-6 and UMass Dartmouth is 10-5.

UMass-Dartmouth needed a 3-point shot with 0.2 seconds left in regulation to tie the game and send it to overtime. There were eight lead changes in the fourth quarter.

There were five more lead changes in the first overtime when the Corsairs had the final shot. UMass-Dartmouth, though, never trailed in the second overtime.

Colby's Desi Smith finished with a game-high 25 points, including 3-for-6 shooting from 3-point range and 10-for-11 from the foul line. Mia Diplock went 5-for-10 on 3-point shots and finished with 21 points and five assists. Haley Driscoll had a dou-

ble-double with 18 points (8-for-8 from the line) and 11 rebounds, while Carylanne Wolfington scored 14 points and pulled down eight rebounds. Junior point guard MaryKate Caverly had six points, five assists, and five rebounds.

The Corsairs had five players in double figures, including Colleen Kane with 20 points on 5-for-8 shooting from 3-point range. Kane hit the 3-point shot with 0.2 seconds left in regulation.

Men's Basketball

Villa Maria 73, UMPI 71
At Buffalo, New York, Justin Stokes' basket in the final seconds gave the Vi-

king the win over the UMaine-Presque Isle Owls on Sunday, avenging an earlier loss.

UMPI had tied it at 71-71 when Derek Healy converted a conventional three-play following a Brandon McGill still with 31 seconds left.

Donte Campbell paced the Vikings (7-17) with 21 points and Stokes finished with 19 points and nine rebounds.

Maurice Harris scored 16 points and grabbed nine rebounds to lead UMPI (7-9). McGill chipped in with 14 points and six rebounds and Kevin Collins added 13 points. Chase Vicaire contributed 11 points and eight rebounds.

Cruz regains title; Maine's Boetsch KO'd

BY DAVE DOYLE
THE SPORTS XCHANGE

Two years after being stripped of his championship, Dominick Cruz regained the title he never lost in the ring.

MIXED MARTIAL ARTS

The wonderfully talented but injury-prone San Diego native had fought only once in the past four years due to knee and groin injuries, which in early 2014 necessitated the removal of the UFC bantamweight belt he won in 2010.



Cruz

However, Cruz (21-1) put on a superlative performance in Boston on Sunday night, winning a split decision from T.J. Dillashaw of Angels Camp, California, to regain the title. The judges' scores were 48-47 and 49-46 for Cruz and 49-46 for Dillashaw.

"No one is retiring me except for me, I've been through too much," said Cruz, who is 11-0 at 135 pounds.

After a close first round, Cruz turned on the heat in the second and third, using superior footwork and movement. Dillashaw air-balled strike after strike as Cruz landed brutal counters.

By the fourth, though, Dillashaw (12-3) began landing body and leg kicks, which cut down on Cruz's motion. While it was enough to make the fight close, it wasn't enough to sway the decision in Dillashaw's favor.

"I'm very disappointed," Dillashaw said. "Thought I was aggressor, pushed the pace, controlled the shots.



BOB DECHIARA | USA TODAY

Former Lincolnville resident Tim Boetsch is examined in the Octagon after his knockout loss to Ed Herman in the second round of their bout at UFC Fight Night at the TD Garden in Boston on Sunday night.

That's the way it is."

On the preliminary card, Ed "Short Fuse" Herman used a clean right knee to the chin to score a second-round technical knockout of Maine native Tim Boetsch in a light heavyweight bout.

The win improved Herman's record to 24-11 with one no contest overall, 10-7 in the UFC. Boetsch — a native of Lincolnville and graduate of Camden-Rockport High School in Rockport — fell to 18-10 overall and 9-9 against UFC competition after absorbing his third consecutive loss and sixth defeat in his last eight contests.

The decisive knee came as the combatants were locked in a clinch away from the Octagon wall, one of the few times Herman and Boetsch came together during a bout that otherwise was largely a striking duel.

Boetsch immediately fell to the mat, and as Herman

prepared to throw follow-up strikes, veteran New England referee Kevin MacDonald stepped in and stopped the contest at 1:39 of the second round.

On the main card, a battle of former lightweight champions went down to the wire, as former Bellator titleholder Eddie Alvarez of Philadelphia squared off with former UFC and WEC kingpin Anthony Pettis of Milwaukee.

Pettis (18-4) won a clear round two and Alvarez a clear round three. So the decision hinged on a close round one. Two judges saw it for Alvarez, who controlled the pace with his wrestling, giving him a split-decision victory. Alvarez (27-4) got two out of three 29-28 scores for his second consecutive win.

The heavyweight fight between Travis Browne (18-3) of Glendale, California, and Matt Mitrione (9-5) of

Springfield, Illinois, got ugly when locally assigned referee Gary Foreman let it get out of control.

Browne landed a pair of fight-altering, brutal eye pokes over the first two rounds, grounds for anything from a point deduction to a disqualification. However, Foreman issued no penalties, and Browne capitalized for a third-round TKO. Foreman compounded his mistakes by letting Mitrione take a lot of damage to the injured right eye before waving the bout off at 4:09.

Francisco Trinaldo (17-4) got the main card started with a methodical performance. The 37-year old from Brasilia, Brazil, outslugged the tough Ross Pearson (18-10, 1 NC) in a hard-hitting lightweight showdown. Trinaldo scored a unanimous decision, earning two 30-27 scorecards from the judges and a 29-28.

Patriots

Continued from Page B5

their era." Broncos defensive end Antonio Smith said. "We all know that. And, sometimes, even as a player, you will take a minute to sit back in the game and watch their greatness."

Brady has four Super Bowl wins in six appearances while Manning has one win in three trips to the NFL's championship game.

When Brady was asked on Monday about Manning he said he maintains a friendship with the Broncos quarterback but that he's not sure he'd be in touch with him prior to Sunday's meeting on the field.

"We've known each other for a long time, being in the same profession for all these years and at different events, we've developed a good friendship," Brady said during his weekly appearance on Boston's sports radio station WEEI.

"It's pretty remarkable for him, what he's accomplished this season.

"It will be fun to play another Peyton Manning-led team."

In Saturday's win, Brady had another record-type day. His final completion gave him his ninth 300-yard postseason game, tying him with Manning for the NFL record. He had his sixth postseason rushing touchdown — second on New England's all-time list and tied for second in NFL history. He also extended his NFL record with his 17th multi-touchdown game and

tied former teammate Adam Vinatieri for the all-time NFL record for playoff games, with 30. He will break that next week.

Broncos' defense a key

That Broncos defense played a big role in Denver beating New England in overtime in November, 30-24. Brady had three touchdown passes but the Patriots' offensive line was under siege, especially in the second half.

Denver led the NFL with 52 sacks and was No. 1 in the league in yards allowed (283.1) and pass defense (199.6). Only one quarterback had 300 yards passing — Ben Roethlisberger, who did it twice, including Sunday's loss.

"He ain't scared," Broncos cornerback Aqib Talib said of defensive coordinator Wade Phillips' plan against Talib's former teammates. "Sometimes defensive coordinators get scared and make their players scared because they call scary coverages. But Wade (goes all out) all the time and makes us stand up, and we do it. The difference between this year and past years is Wade."

Brady is 5-2 against Phillips' defenses in his career.

Patriots, Panthers early favorites in Vegas

Las Vegas is banking on the New England Patriots meeting the Carolina Panthers in the Super Bowl.

According to ESPN.com, the Patriots opened as a 2.5-point favorite over the host Denver Broncos in next Sun-

day's AFC Championship Game, but the line soon moved to New England by 3.5.

The Panthers, who will play host to the Arizona Cardinals in the NFC Championship Game, are a three-point favorite.

The Patriots beat the Kansas City Chiefs 27-20 on Saturday, covering a 4.5-point spread. The Broncos nearly covered a 7.5-point spread during their 23-16 win over the Steelers on Sunday, but Pittsburgh kicked a field goal in the final minutes.

The Panthers charged to a 31-0 halftime lead over the Seattle Seahawks on Sunday, then held on to win 31-24 and cover a 2.5-point spread. The Cardinals edged the Green Bay Packers 26-20 in overtime, but Arizona couldn't beat the 6.5-point spread.

NOTES: Patriots DE Chandler Jones, involved in an incident in which he reportedly had a reaction to synthetic marijuana last week, started Saturday. He forced a fumble and had a sack. ... Brady doesn't run often, but he ran 10 yards and dove for the pylon, com-

ing up just short before scoring on a sneak on the next play. "Anytime the Clydesdale gets running the crowd goes crazy," wide receiver Julian Edelman said. "I was lifted." ... Belichick said he had "a heavy heart" Saturday after the passing of Ted Marchibroda, who gave him his first NFL coaching job in 1975. "I wouldn't be standing here if it weren't for Ted Marchibroda," Belichick said.

Broncos

Continued from Page B5

Cornerback Aqib Talib was half talking, half singing after the 23-16 victory. He wanted everyone to know he's not concerned how the Broncos win, as long as they win.

"We could care less how they go," he said. "We could care less how they go."

He paused. "We could care less how they go," he said, in case anyone had missed his point. "I'm proud, man. I'm proud."

He should be proud. Yes, the Steelers were diminished by injury, but they were led by Roethlisberger, who carried a 15-8 playoff record into Sunday's windy wrestling match. The Broncos toppled one of the NFL's all-time greats. This ranks as an impressive accomplishment, even if the all-time great was hindered by a bum throwing shoulder.

But Talib and his teammates also should be worried. The Patriots arrive in Denver on their fifth straight trip to the AFC title game. They are led by coach Bill Belichick and quarterback Tom Brady, and I could make a strong, fact-based case that both men are the best ever at what they do.

"We'll start thinking about the Patriots on Wednesday," Talib said.

Get real, Aqib. We all know the Broncos started thinking about the Patriots about a minute after the Steelers were vanquished.

There is considerable reason for hope. The Broncos defenders were again ferocious, and defense rules in January and February.

And Peyton Manning, football's old man, awoke just in time to rescue what is likely his Final Hurrh.

This was not Manning at his finest. Not even close. But it was Manning at his most patient. He outlasted the Steelers' defense for his 12th win in 25 playoff games. He can even his career playoff record next week with a victory over his career-long tormentors.

We saw, on consecutive plays, Manning's worst and best. With 8:44 left, Manning threw a looping pass out of the shotgun in the general direction of Emmanuel Sanders. This wobbly throw, which resembled a wounded vulture, revealed everything lacking in Manning,

circa 2016. This pass was headed straight to the hands of Steelers cornerback William Gay.

Sanders once batted down passes as a superlative high school defensive back in Bellville, Texas. He pounced on Manning's errant throw, swatting the ball away from Gay.

He saved Manning.

He saved the season. Next play, Manning threw a fastball down the middle to Bennie Fowler. Manning could have gone to Demaryius Thomas, the \$14 million man. He instead looked to Fowler, who will earn \$480,000 this season.

The pass barely eluded the hands of cornerback Mike Mitchell and arrived safely in Fowler's arms for a 31-yard gain.

"Peyton has a lot of trust in me," Fowler said quietly. "He trusted me on 3rd and 12. It means a lot."

For three quarters, Manning barely remained above water. His receivers dropped a half-dozen passes, but Manning looked ancient and lost, collecting only 146 yards passing.

In the fourth quarter, he revived, completing 4 of 6 passes for 76 yards. The laser to Fowler ranks among the most crucial passes of his long career.

The fourth-quarter version of Manning looked ready to conquer the Patriots. The first-through-third-quarter version of Manning will direct the Broncos to a double-digit loss.

Manning, his body battered, lost his starting job after nine games. He watched six games on TV and from the bench. His long NFL ride looked over.

He refused to surrender. His reward is the chance to lead an oddly constructed contraption known as the Broncos to the Super Bowl.

He followed three baffling, frustrating, under-achieving quarters with a wise, precise fourth quarter.

The Broncos will require four of those dazzling quarters to conquer the Patriots.

TALES BEING TOLD

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2-3 ATOMIC Sports Project, Inc. 22 BDN 10 Elks Lodge #244 20 The Fitch Company 10	JUNIOR No games were held this weekend. BDN Dead River Company

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