

# MLB pitchers, catchers begin to report

BY LARRY FINE  
REUTERS

The thaw from winter's teeth-chattering cold is underway, perhaps most noticeably for eager Chicago Cubs fans with this week's heartwarming arrival of pitchers and catchers at Major League Baseball spring training camps.

As Arizona Diamondback players report on Wednesday to Salt River Fields at Talking Stick, a half-hour drive from downtown Phoenix, the long-suffering Cubs are the unaccustomed, heavy 4-1 favorites to win

the 2016 World Series.

Hope springs eternal with the beginning of spring training in Arizona and Florida, with all teams gearing up to start all level when Major League Baseball's marathon 162-game season opens in April.

For the Cubs and their fans, it seems like an eternity since they ruled the baseball world having not won a World Series since 1908.

With a roster full of young talent including sluggers Anthony Rizzo, Kris Bryant and Kyle Schwarber, and a pitching staff topped by Cy Young winner Jake Arrieta,

the Cubs reached the NL Championship Series last year after posting the third best record in the majors.

Determined to snap the longest championship drought in North American professional sports, Cubs general manager Theo Epstein kept busy in the offseason, signing outfielder Jason Heyward and starter John Lackey from division-rival St. Louis and adding super-utility player Ben Zobrist.

Following the Cubs in preseason odds were the 2015 NL champion New York Mets and San Francisco Giants, both rated 8-1

choices to win the championship by online betting site Bovada.

The Los Angeles Dodgers and Washington Nationals follow at 10-1, with the National League's leading teams all priced ahead of the top American League choices.

The Boston Red Sox, AL East cellar dwellers in 2015, signed free agent starter David Price, who last year helped Toronto reach the postseason for the first time since 1993, and added closer Craig Kimbrel to rate a 12-1 choice with the Blue Jays.

To offset the loss of Price, Toronto expect young start-

er Marcus Stroman to return from injury to pick up the slack and strong-armed young Aaron Sanchez might join him in the rotation.

Reigning MLB champions the Kansas City Royals did not make major additions but re-signed free agent outfielder Alex Gordon and brought in starter Ian Kennedy to compensate for the loss of Johnny Cueto, who signed a free agent deal with the Giants.

Kansas City were rated 16-1 choice to repeat, followed by the up-and-coming Houston Astros at 18-1 while the Yankees were a joint sixth pick at 22-1.

Among teams making off-season splashes were the Diamondbacks, who bolstered their rotation by signing free agent Zack Greinke away from the Los Angeles Dodgers and trading for Shelby Miller.

Two other AL Central clubs made bold moves in hopes of challenging the Royals.

The Cubs' crosstown neighbors the White Sox beefed up their infield by dealing for second baseman Brett Lawrie and slugging third baseman Todd Frazier, while Detroit added starting pitcher Jordan Zimmermann and outfielder Justin Upton over the winter.

## C girls

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"We tend to get in foul trouble pretty easily because of the [aggressive] defense we play," Thompson said.

The Knights were able to consistently wear the Pirates down, and 6-foot-3 PCHS center Delani Bennett fouled out early in the 4th.

"We practiced all week for these guys and I feel we did our job shutting [Jordynne] Littlefield down on the fast breaks and we tried to work on Delani as best we could," said Thompson.

Littlefield did score 17 points and Bennett 11 for PCHS, but rebound proved to be an Achilles' heel for the Pirates.

"They killed us on the boards," said PCHS coach Brian Gaw. "I don't know how many second-chance points they had. They attacked the glass really well on defense and offense."

Cassidy Osgood added 11 points for Narraguagus, while Kelli Kennedy contributed nine more.

In the later game, as he walked down a Cross Insurance Center corridor, Dexter girls basketball coach Jody Grant breathed a sigh of relief that could've been heard back in Dexter.

The Tigers had roared out to an 18-5 halftime lead against Stearns, only to have the gritty Minutemen of Millinocket cut it to three in the fourth quarter.

But the Tigers had a response of their own in Megan Peach, who convert-



MICKY BEDELL | BDN

Stearns High School's Mackenzie Carter looks for a shot against Dexter Regional High School's Megan Peach (left) and Cidney Pratt (right) during a Class C North quarterfinal Tuesday at the Cross Insurance Center in Bangor. Dexter won 39-32 and will face Narraguagus on Friday.

ed a pair of crucial conventional 3-point plays late to help Dexter on for the victory.

The Tigers improved to 15-4 and Stearns finished at 13-7.

The Minutemen were able to claw their way back into the contest after a cold-shooting first half, and 10 second-half turnovers by Dexter helped fuel the surge.

"I figured they were going to try to mix it up, which they did at times," Grant said. "They're tough to

guard, that's a problem for some of our bigger kids away from the basket."

A follow-up bucket by Stearns' Mackenzie Carter with 3:35 left in regulation trimmed Dexter's lead to 27-24, but a 3-point play by Peach, who led all scorers with 17 points, helped restore the Tigers' lead to seven.

Stearns got no closer than four the rest of the way.

Grant attributed some of the turnovers to nerves, as many of the Tigers are new

to the bright lights of the Cross Center.

"This is the first time those kids have been on this floor in this particular situation," said Grant, whose team graduated seven seniors last year.

Stearns could only manage two field goals in the first half, and simply could not buy a basket.

"We just couldn't make a shot," said Minutemen coach Nick Cullen. "We knew we had to make some shots early."

Cullen figured the magic number would be 40 for his team against a Dexter club that prides itself on shutting down opponents and keeping the score low.

"We knew going into this game we needed to score 40 points or more to beat them and we didn't do it," Cullen said.

Grant added, "It's a good thing they didn't shoot the ball as well as they're capable of in the first half."

Carter was Stearns' leading scorer with 10 points.

## Rousey thought of suicide after loss

THE SPORTS XCHANGE

In the immediate aftermath of her loss to Holly Holm in November, UFC star Ronda Rousey considered ending her own life.

Rousey, in an appearance on "Ellen" with Ellen DeGeneres airing Tuesday, detailed her thoughts and was overcome with emotion explaining her mindset after her first career mixed-martial arts loss.

"Honestly, my thought, I was like, in the medical room and I was like down in the corner, I was in the corner and I was like 'what am I anymore if I'm not this?'"

I was literally sitting there and thinking about killing myself and that exact second I'm like 'I'm nothing, what do I do anymore and no one gives a (expletive) about me anymore without this,'" Rousey said, pausing with her eyes closed to choke back tears. "And to be honest, I looked up and I saw my man Travis (Browne) was standing up there and I looked up at him and I was like, 'I need to have his babies. I need to stay alive.' Really that was it. I haven't told anybody that. I think I only told him that."

Rousey, an Olympian who had a flawless record in her unprecedented rise through the UFC women's ranks, lost her father to suicide when Rousey was eight years old.

Holm is scheduled to fight Miesha Tate in UFC 196.

"I want to fight Holly," she said. "I want to beat her and make everything right again."



Rousey

## Swim

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"This is just a fantastic feeling for them. Excellent. They've all come down in times, and put out the very best effort."

Mount Desert Island's lone first-place medal came from Liam Sullivan, who narrowly topped Cooper Holmes in the 200 IM with a time of 1:57.08.

Sullivan also was part of an MDI relay team (Jacob Mitchell, Pierce DiMauro, Hutchin Gerrish) that took second place in the 200 medley with a time of 1:41.82.



CHRISTIAN SANDLER | THE TIMES RECORD

Ellsworth's Richie Matthews swims in the 100 butterfly during the Class B state swimming and diving championships Tuesday at Bowdoin College in Brunswick. He finished third in the event and Ellsworth won the team title.

Mitchell, DiMauro, Sullivan and Kristoph Naggert finished second in the 400 medley relay (3:21.84).

Individually, DiMauro placed fourth in the 200 free (1:50.01) and sixth in the 100

free (50.40), while Gerrish took fourth in the 200 IM with a time of 2:08.53. DiMauro's brother Bryce also placed second in the 1-meter diving event, with a total score of 294.50.

Old Town had a pair of

second-place finishes from Nick Gould, who swam the 100 backstroke in 55.42 and the 100 fly in 54.47.

Old Town's relay team of Drew St. Jean, Garrett Stoyell, Jake Ketch and Gould

also grabbed second place in the 200 free, with a time of 1:32.22. Nate St. Jean, Stoyell, Gould and Ketch finished fourth in the 200 medley relay, while Ketch took two top-five finishes individually — third in the 100 free (49.93) and fourth in the 50 free (22.85).

Camden Hills recorded a sixth-place team finish behind Crans, who also picked up a first place in the 200 freestyle (1:47.88) while teammate Julian Abaldo finished first in the 100 butterfly (53.46).

Both swimmers were part of the Windjammers' winning 200 free relay team along with Connor O'Farrell and Cooper Russell.

## AA girls

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Hanley and Sugars combined to make all eight of their free throws — all during the fourth quarter.

"We're told that we're very strong free-throw shooters at the end, and I thought we executed well at getting fast breaks, attacking the rim and getting to the line," said Hanley.

Junior guard Tashia Tith-

erington paced Deering with 15 points, five rebounds, three assists and three steals. Junior center Amanda Brett added nine points and five rebounds.

Oxford Hills, which defeated Deering 44-37 in their only regular season meeting on Jan. 18 at South Paris, used 50 percent (5-of-10) shooting from beyond the 3-point arc to build a 23-16 halftime advantage.

That compared with just six total field goals made by Deering, which shot just 30 percent from the field dur-

ing the first two quarters. But Deering tightened up its 3-point defense after intermission, and the entire game tightened up.

An inside move by Brett, a banked-in jumper from the key by Abi Ramirez and a free throw by Titherington narrowed the Rams' deficit to 27-25 midway through the third period, the first of five times Deering got that close.

A layup by Brett after Ramirez's dribble penetration pulled Deering within 33-31 with 5:12 left in the contest, but Morton coun-

tered with a drive and a free throw to extend the Oxford Hills lead back to 36-31.

Neither team settled for jump shots late in the game, with a drive by Titherington producing two free throws that made it 37-35 with 2:34 left.

After two missed free throws by Eastman, Deering had a chance to take the lead or tie but lost the ball out of bounds in the front court.

Colby converted a press-beating drive to make it a four-point game, and Sugars then induced a player-control

foul against Titherington.

Sugars and Hanley followed with two free throws each to give Oxford Hills a three-possession lead with 49 seconds left, and Sugars added two more from the line in the final seconds.

In the early game, Edward Little showed off scoring balance to record the win as Emily Jacques scored 15 points. Piper Norcross, Karli Stubbs and Jordyn Reynolds each put in 13.

Kristina Blais and Alasia Branche each scored seven points to lead Lewiston.

## PVHS

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division," Jamo said. "It's like guarding three kids sometimes. They were really aggressive, and their 1-3-1 zone really bothered us in the second half."

For Cyr, getting the win over Schenck proved extra special after falling to the Wolverines twice during the regular season. Those two games were decided by a combined three points. Penobscot Valley fell to Schenck twice during the regular season by a combined three points (37-35 and 38-37).



JOE CYR | HOULTON PIONEER TIMES

Penobscot Valley's Sami Ireland puts up a shot against Schenck's Kayla Falone during Tuesday night's Class C North quarterfinal. PVHS won 40-37.

## Goodell made \$34.1M

THE SPORTS XCHANGE

Roger Goodell made \$34.1 million in 2014 as commissioner of the NFL, which reported record earnings of more than \$13 billion.

ESPN obtained a copy of the league's public tax filing on Tuesday as Goodell was listed as the highest-paid employee by more than \$27 million. General counsel Jeff Pash made \$7.5 million, according to the report.

Goodell's salary was \$4 million and the remainder was reported as "bonus in-

come." The NFL office had collective earnings of \$618.97 million.

Goodell previously reported single-year earnings of \$44 million in 2012 and \$35 million in 2013.

The NFL relinquished its tax-exempt status on April 29, 2015, a change that eliminates the requirement for federal disclosure of employee salaries, including Goodell. The current return is the final version that will be fully transparent publicly because of the tax status change made in 2015.

## UMF names interim track coach

Dan Campbell has been named the interim head men's and women's cross-country and track and field coach at the University of Maine at Farmington.

"The opportunity to coach at my alma mater is not only exciting, but a dream come true," Campbell said in a news release.

A 1988 UMF graduate, Campbell brings over three decades of coaching experience to the Beavers' program.

Campbell coached three sports a year at Edward Little High School in Auburn, beginning in 1984. He started the indoor track and field team and coached the Eddies' boys and girls cross-country and Nordic skiing teams.