

Sports

Thursday, October 17, 2024

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SECTION B

H.S. ROUNDUP

Freedom's Kania wins NWC Tourney for 3rd time

FROM STAFF REPORTS

SAWMILLS — Freedom girls tennis senior Emily Kania is a three-peat Northwestern 3A/4A Conference singles champion.

Kania won the NWC singles title for the third straight year at the NWC Tournament, hosted on Monday by South Caldwell High School.

In the semifinals, Kania was victorious by a final score of 6-2, 6-3. Kania followed that up by winning the championship match 6-3, 6-2.

Draughn, NCSSM-Morganton at WHC Tournament

The Lady Wildcats played host to the Lady Dragons and the rest of the Western Highlands 1A/2A field at the conference tournament on Monday in Valdese.

NCSSM-Morganton swept the titles as Manya Nallagangu won in singles and two Lady Dragons doubles teams met for that championship.

For DHS, Aubrey Childers advanced to the second round in singles before falling to Avery County and the doubles teams of Maria Medrano/Sasha Duckworth and Mati Kincaid/Addelynn Honeycutt also reached the second round before falling to NCSSM-Morganton. Peyton Dale lost in the first round in singles.

GIRLS GOLF

Draughn at WHC Tournament

The Lady Wildcats participated in the Western Highlands 1A/2A Conference Tournament on Monday at Morganton's Silver Creek Club.

The Lady Wildcats were led by second-place Ellie Cline (91; All-WHC Tournament), along with a personal-best from Kennedy Stroupe. The two were joined as NCHSAA 1A/2A West Regional qualifiers by teammate Laney Hodge.

Hodge and Cline also were named All-WHC, along with NCSSM-Morganton's Claire Gamache.

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NFL | ANALYSIS

Panthers to open window for Brooks

STEVE REED

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE — The Carolina Panthers are preparing to open the practice window this week for rookie running back Jonathan Brooks, the team's second-round draft pick from Texas.

Brooks tore the ACL in his knee last November while playing for the Longhorns and has not practiced with the Panthers since being drafted.

The 21-year-old Brooks is likely at least a few weeks away from being added to the 53-man roster given his lack of on-field practice time. The Panthers will have 21 days to activate him to the roster once they open the practice window.

"He has explosive ability and a combination of size and speed and his body control is really rare from what we've seen in the past couple of years," Panthers coach Dave Canales said. "Really fluid (pass)-catcher out of the backfield with an ability to hit the home run. He has a natural patience in his run style, so he has a combination of a lot of great traits that you hope for."

Of all the areas in which the Panthers (1-5) have struggled this season — and there are certainly plenty — running back hasn't been one of them.

Chuba Hubbard has been excellent this season, having his fourth straight game of at least 90 yards rushing in Sunday's 38-20 loss to the Atlanta Falcons. Hubbard is averaging more than 5.8 yards per carry over the past five weeks and has run extremely hard.

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H.S. FOOTBALL | WEEK 9 PREVIEW

WILDCATS RETURN



JUSTIN EPLEY, THE NEWS HERALD

Draughn football players huddle up following a win over the Greenville Hurricanes on Aug. 30 in Valdese.

Draughn hits field after monthlong hiatus for homecoming vs. Mitchell

JUSTIN EPLEY

Sports editor

VALDESE — After a month off due to Hurricane Helene, which devastated many of the mountain communities that belong to the Western Highlands 1A/2A Conference, the Draughn football team finally will hit the field again this weekend.

The Wildcats will host Mitchell at 2 p.m. on Saturday in Valdese for DHS' homecoming.

Draughn (3-2, 1-0 WHC) have had the 1A powerhouse's number the last couple seasons, including a 57-42 shootout win on the road in Bakersville last fall that helped the Wildcats secure second place in the WHC. DHS defeated Mitchell twice in 2022, winning 56-21 in the regular season and 35-10 in the second round of the NCHSAA 1A state playoffs, both in Valdese, as the Wildcats won the WHC title, the first in program history, and advanced to the 1A Western Regional finals.

Those three wins give Draughn a 3-1 all-time lead in the series following a 62-14 loss at Mitchell in 2021, the teams' first year to-

gether in the WHC.

This year's Wildcats are led by senior quarterback Sterling Radabaugh, who has taken over as the fulltime starter with a full complement of targets in Kayden Lytle, Cayden Roscoe, Jacob Mull and Connor Houston. Marshall Brinkley is the team's top running back.

The Mountaineers (4-1, 1-0 WHC) are led by senior quarterback Caleb Cook, who has completed 59 of 85 passes for 890 yards and nine touchdowns with three interceptions. His favorite targets are junior DeShawn Orr (16-269-4) and fellow seniors Fernando Flores (18-235-1), Chris Wences (5-89-1) and Jace Blanton (4-83-1). Mitchell also is effective on the ground, led by junior running back Kaj Pittman (44-342-5), sophomore Owen Riddle (20-179-2), senior Cole Young (23-169-1) and the dual-threat Cook (49-155-2).

Mitchell's only loss this season came in the season-opener versus NCISAA member Charlotte Latin, 28-14 at home.

Prediction: Mitchell.

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NASCAR CUP SERIES

Hendrick won't appeal disqualification

JENNA FRYER

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE — Hendrick Motorsports said Monday it will not appeal Alex Bowman's disqualification at the Charlotte Motor Speedway road course that eliminated him from NASCAR Cup Series title contention.

Bowman finished Sunday's race at the Roval in 18th-place — high enough to eliminate Joey Logano of Team Penske from the playoff field by four points.

But NASCAR said the No. 48 Chevrolet failed a post-race inspection and disqualified Bowman for failing to meet minimum weight requirements. It dropped him to 38th and Logano claimed that spot in the playoff field's round of eight.

Hendrick had the right to appeal, but said in a statement it would not.



CHUCK BURTON, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Alex Bowman drives out of Turn 3 during a NASCAR Cup Series auto race at the Charlotte Motor Speedway road course in Concord on Sunday.

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