

## UCLA-USC WOMEN'S ROUNDUP

## Bruins secure the No. 2 seed

STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

It was midway through the first quarter, and UCLA already had a 13-point lead. The Bruins hadn't yet allowed a field goal. A first-round Pac-12 tournament bye was already in place. But coach Cori Close still shouted as if there were seconds left in a championship game.

"I wanted them to feel from me that I'm going to treat it" like the postseason, Close said after UCLA's 77-54 rout of Utah (13-16, 6-12) on Sunday at Pauley Pavilion. "It's here. You cannot rest for one second."

No. 9 UCLA kept its focus through shooting woes and senior celebrations, and secured the program's best Pac-12 finish in Close's nine-year tenure. The No. 2-seeded Bruins (25-4, 14-4) will face No. 7 seed USC or No. 10 seed Colorado in the Pac-12 tournament quarterfinals in Las Vegas at 6 p.m.

on Friday.

Japreece Dean, who was honored during senior-day festivities along with Ally Rosenblum, had a game-high 16 points with eight assists, scoring just one field goal but going 14 for 14 on free throws.

With their coach imploring them to compete every possession, the Bruins overcame miserable 31.9% shooting from the field with sustained energy. They had 29 offensive rebounds and a season-high 55 total rebounds. They pulled down five offensive rebounds in one possession.

— THUC NHI NGUYEN

**at USC 66, Colorado 55:** The Trojans (16-13, 8-10) beat Colorado on senior day to wrap up the regular season and secure the No. 7 seed in the Pac-12 tournament. Freshmen Alissa Pili and Endyia Rogers each scored 20 points. Pili also had 13 rebounds for her 11th double-double of the season.



KATHARINE LOTZE Getty Images

**UCLA'S** Japreece Dean shoots against Utah at Pauley Pavilion. She went 14 for 14 at the free-throw line.

## Cronin's magic is working at UCLA

[Hernández, from D1]

Members of UCLA royalty who attended the team's most recent game — Gail Goodrich, Bill Walton, Jamaal Wilkes and Baron Davis — were living reminders of what these Bruins aren't.

Under Cronin, the 11-time national champions have exchanged the glamour of Hollywood for the tenacity of Los Angeles, their triumphs a result of them hurling their bodies after loose balls rather than punctuating fast breaks with high-flying dunks.

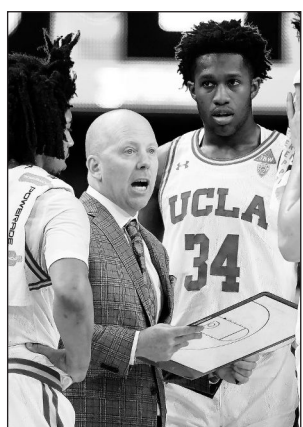
The magician himself couldn't envision this.

"There were days I didn't know if I'd make it through the year, physically," Cronin said. "I was just hoping in December I could make it to January. Then I was hoping I could make it to February and stay upright all year."

Cronin had to do more than impart a new mind-set. Convinced the players to prioritize defense and to exert effort on that end of the court was only the start.

"Lot of people talk about playing hard," Cronin said. "It's not enough. We really, really didn't play smart for a couple months. It deflates your energy when you play defense and somebody doesn't do something smart."

Cronin couldn't identify



JAYNE KAMIN-ONCEA Getty Images

**DAVID SINGLETON** and the Bruins are on a roll under Mick Cronin.

when everything came together for the team.

"That's the million-dollar question I don't have the answer to," he said.

The Bruins have won 11 of their last 13 games. Right before that stretch, they were beaten at home by Stanford, prompting Cronin to verbally administer a dose of his trademark tough love on the players.

But Cronin believes the team's transformation was a gradual process, not the byproduct of a singular event.

"We had been practicing better than we played for a long time," he said.

Cronin recalled a practice in December that he

described as one of the best of his career. But when UCLA played North Carolina in Las Vegas the next day, the Bruins were taken apart 74-64.

"It just wasn't manifesting itself in the games," he said.

It is now.

A 69-64 victory over Arizona at Pauley Pavilion on Saturday night was a perfect representation of the team UCLA has become.

The Bruins made only a third of their shots from the field, including 23.1% in the first half. Leading scorer Chris Smith finished with 17 points but on only five-for-15 shooting. Point guard Tyger Campbell banked in a go-ahead basket with 49 seconds to play, but missed his previous 10 shots.

The heroics of Smith and Campbell were made possible by a defense that stopped Arizona on six consecutive possessions over a 3-minute 27-second stretch. The Bruins turned a 62-58 deficit into a 68-62 advantage.

Cronin made it a point to mention how the Bruins didn't just play defense. They played smart defense.

The Bruins didn't commit their seventh foul of the second half until there were only 10 seconds to play. Because they didn't have to worry about sending their

opponents to the free-throw line, they were able to defend more aggressively.

They also were smart with the ball, committing only one turnover in the second half.

Cronin has reeducated more than the players. He also has reconditioned the fans.

Less than two minutes into the game, Arizona was unable to pass the ball inside and moved it around the perimeter. As the shot clock wound down to five seconds, then four, the crowd started to applaud in appreciation of the Bruins' defensive effort. The claps became full-blown cheers when UCLA forward Jalen Hill collected the rebound from the low-percentage shot the Wildcats misfired.

The fans were like this the entire game, celebrating when Jules Bernard blocked a shot or Jaime Jaquez Jr. leaped to save a ball from falling out of bounds.

The sounds in the arena were familiar. These were the cries of a crowd that was looking forward to March.

Cronin presumably will have better teams in the future. But this season always will be special, as he did something few UCLA coaches before him have done: He has delivered the unexpected to a fan base that expects it all.

## TOP 25 COLLEGE BASKETBALL ROUNDUP

## St. John's threes top Creighton

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Greg Williams Jr. made seven three-pointers and scored a career-high 21 points as St. John's slowed No. 10 Creighton with a surprising 91-71 rout on Sunday.

Rasheem Dunn had 19 points, a career-high 10 assists and six rebounds for the Red Storm (15-14, 4-12 Big East), who stopped a three-game skid. LJ Figueroa added 16 points and 12 rebounds, and Julian Champagnie scored 13.

One of the worst three-point-shooting teams in the country, St. John's went a season-best 14 for 22 from long range in its biggest victory under first-year coach Mike Anderson. It was the school's first win over a top-10 team at Carnesecca Arena on campus since beating Bernard King and No. 7 Ten-



KATHY WILLENS Associated Press

**ST. JOHN'S** Damien Sears, from left, Marcellus Earlington and Greg Williams Jr. enjoy an upset win.

nessee in December 1975.

**at No. 11 Louisville 68, Virginia Tech 52:** Jordan Nwora had 20 points and 12 rebounds, and Louisville moved into first place in the Atlantic Coast Conference. The Cardinals (24-6, 15-4) rebounded from last week's loss at No. 6 Florida State and took a half-game lead over the Seminoles, who swept the season series and hold the tiebreaker with two games to play.

**at No. 23 Ohio State 77, No. 19 Michigan 63:** Duane Washington Jr. tied a career high with 20 points and Ohio State surged late to beat Michigan. CJ Walker had 15

points, and brothers Andre and Kaleb Wesson each added 14 for the Buckeyes (20-9, 10-8 Big Ten). They have won three straight and eight of their last 10. Ohio State swept the season series and reached 20 wins for the third straight season. Franz Wagner had 18 points and 10 rebounds for the Wolverines (19-10, 10-8).

**at No. 25 Houston 68, Cincinnati 55:** Marcus Sasser scored 21 points — 12 in the second half — going five for 12 on three-pointers for Houston. Nate Hinton added 16 points and Caleb Mills added 15 for the Cougars (22-7, 12-4 American Athletic Conference).

## PAC-12 BASKETBALL

## Stanford upsets Colorado

STANFORD 72 NO. 21 COLORADO 64

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**PALO ALTO** — Bryce Wills scored 19 points, including a key layup in the final minute, and Stanford beat No. 21 Colorado 72-64 on Sunday.

Oscar da Silva added 16 points, and Daejon Davis and Tyrell Terry each had 12 as the Cardinal (20-9, 10-7) won their fourth straight.

The Buffaloes (21-9, 10-7), who lost a third consecutive game for the first time this season, were led by Tyler Bey's 17 points and McKinley Wright IV with 13 points and 11 rebounds.

## PAC-12 STANDINGS

TEAM	Conf.		Overall	
	W	L	W	L
UCLA	12	5	19	11
Oregon	11	5	22	7
Arizona State	10	6	19	10
Colorado	10	7	21	9
USC	10	7	21	9
Stanford	9	7	20	9
Arizona	9	7	19	10
California	7	9	13	16
Washington State	6	10	15	14
Utah	6	11	15	14
Oregon State	5	11	15	13
Washington	3	13	13	16

## SUNDAY'S RESULT

Stanford 72, Colorado 64

## Wilder will get Fury rematch

Ex-champion exercises right for a third fight; it's slated to be held July 18 in Las Vegas.

BY MANOUK AKOPYAN

The first significant heavyweight championship trilogy of the 21st century is slated to take place in a summer showdown in Sin City.

Almost a week after Deontay Wilder lost via technical knockout to Tyson Fury, the former champion exercised his right to a rematch against newly crowned World Boxing Council and lineal champion Fury, and a third fight between the heavyweights is being planned for July 18 at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas, according to Top Rank head Bob Arum, Fury's co-promoter.

"We received a letter from Wilder's team on Friday night, and we agreed with the networks and the hotel that July 18 was the optimal date," Arum said. "We had a seamless promotion last time with Al Haymon, PBC [Premier Boxing Champions] and Fox. We look forward to working with them again."

Fury, of Britain, battered and bruised Wilder through

all seven rounds Feb. 22 at the MGM Grand, prompting Wilder's corner to throw in the towel. The contract for the sequel contained a bilateral clause that gave the losing fighter a 30-day window to ask for a rematch and for it to take place by July.

The third Fury-Wilder fight will be another Fox and ESPN pay-per-view event, marking the second time the networks have cooperated to put on a boxing showcase. Their first foray yielded nearly 800,000 PPV buys.

Wilder and Fury had a 50-50 split in purses for the second fight, but Fury will get a 60-40 pay advantage in the third fight, per the previous contract that was signed ahead of the rematch.

The first Wilder and Fury encounter in 2018, a controversial split-decision draw at Staples Center, netted roughly \$25,000 buys on premium cable provider Showtime.

Another Fury and Wilder meeting will mirror the glory days of heavyweight trilogies in boxing.

It will join the likes of Muhammad Ali versus Joe Frazier as well as Ali versus Ken Norton from the 1970s; Evander Holyfield versus Riddick Bowe from the 1990s; and the three Ingemar Johansson-Floyd Patterson fights from 1959 to 1961.

## Sierra Canyon gets No. 1 seed

Southern California Open Division will include only Southern Section playoff teams.

BY ERIC SONDHEIMER

Chatsworth Sierra Canyon already proved it is the best boys' basketball team in Southern California by winning the Southern Section Open Division title. Now the Trailblazers will have to defeat some of the same teams again if they want to repeat as Open Division state champions.

On Sunday, Sierra Canyon was awarded the No. 1 seed for the Southern California Open Division regional playoffs. The six-team, single-elimination tournament is made up entirely of Southern Section Open Division playoff teams that will play games Wednesday, Saturday and March 10. The champion advances to play the Northern regional champion at the Golden 1 Center in Sacramento on March 14. Divisions I through V will begin action Tuesday.

Sierra Canyon and No. 2-seeded Santa Ana Mater Dei drew first-round byes. The CIF decided to stick with competitive equity and didn't allow a City Section or San Diego Section representative to be included in the Open Division.

Sierra Canyon will play the winner of Wednesday's game between No. 4 Studio City Harvard-Westlake and No. 5 Corona Centennial.

## STATE BASKETBALL PLAYOFF PAIRINGS

## SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

## BOYS

## OPEN DIVISION

Quarterfinals, Wednesday, 7 p.m. unless noted  
No. 1 Sierra Canyon, bye  
No. 5 Corona Centennial at No. 4 Harvard-Westlake  
No. 6 Rancho Christian at No. 3 Etiwanda, 8 p.m.  
No. 2 Mater Dei, bye

## DIVISION I

First round, Tuesday, 7 p.m.  
No. 1 St. John Bosco, bye  
No. 9 Westchester at No. 8 Ribet Academy  
No. 12 Fairfax at No. 5 Windward  
No. 13 Chaminade at No. 4 San Diego Torrey Pines  
No. 14 Renaissance Academy at No. 3 San Diego Cathedral  
No. 11 Serra at No. 6 Santa Clarita Christian  
No. 10 Riverside Poly at No. 7 San Diego St. Augustine  
No. 15 Damien at No. 2 St. Anthony

## GIRLS

## OPEN DIVISION

Quarterfinals, Wednesday, 7 p.m. unless noted  
No. 1 La Jolla Country Day, bye  
No. 5 Corona Centennial at No. 4 Etiwanda, 6 p.m.  
No. 6 Sierra Canyon at No. 3 Windward  
No. 7 Long Beach Poly at No. 2 Mater Dei

## DIVISION I

First round, Tuesday, 7 p.m.  
No. 1 San Diego Cathedral, bye  
No. 9 Chula Vista Bonita Vista at No. 8 Orangewood Academy  
No. 12 Marlborough at No. 5 Troy  
No. 13 North Torrance at No. 4 Harvard-Westlake  
No. 14 Carlsbad La Costa Canyon at No. 3 Lynwood  
No. 11 El Cajon Christian at No. 6 King  
No. 10 Fairmont Prep at No. 7 West Torrance  
No. 15 San Diego Westview at No. 2 Rosary

Notes: Regional quarterfinals (Div. I-V), Thursday, 7 p.m. at higher seeds; regional semifinals (all divisions), Saturday, 6 p.m. at higher seeds; regional finals, March 10, 7 p.m. at higher seeds. State championship, March 13-14 at Golden 1 Center, Sacramento.

Find all divisions on the web at latimes.com/sports

## NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

## BOYS

## OPEN DIVISION

Quarterfinals, Wednesday, 7 p.m.  
No. 1 Sacramento Sheldon, bye  
No. 5 San Jose Bellarmine at No. 4 Dublin  
No. 3 Oakland Bishop O'Dowd, bye  
No. 2 San Jose Mitty, bye

## DIVISION I

First round, Tuesday, 7 p.m. unless noted  
No. 16 Modesto Christian at No. 1 San Francisco Riorand  
No. 9 Fairfield Vanden at No. 8 Fresno Clovis West  
No. 12 San Ramon Dougherty Valley at No. 5 Atherton  
Menlo-Atherton, 8 p.m.

## GIRLS

## OPEN DIVISION

Quarterfinals, Wednesday, 7 p.m.  
No. 1 San Jose Mitty, bye  
No. 5 Santa Rosa Cardinal Newman at No. 4 Stockton St. Mary's  
No. 3 Fresno Clovis West, bye  
No. 2 Alameda St. Joseph Notre Dame, bye

## DIVISION I

First round, Tuesday, 7 p.m. unless noted  
No. 14 San Jose Valley Christian at No. 1 Richmond Sells  
San Jose, 6 p.m.

No. 9 Danville San Ramon Valley at No. 8 Antelope  
No. 12 Granite Bay at No. 5 Los Altos Hills Pinewood  
No. 13 Fresno at No. 4 Orinda Miramonte  
No. 14 San Francisco St. Ignatius at No. 3 Fresno Wood North

No. 11 Sacramento McClatchy at No. 6 Brentwood Herit-age  
No. 10 Atherton Menlo at No. 7 El Dorado Hills Oak Ridge  
No. 15 Clovis Buchanan at No. 2 Oakland Bishop O'Dowd

## COLLEGE BASKETBALL RESULTS

**MEN**  
**TOP 25**  
St. John's 91, No. 10 Creighton 71  
No. 11 Louisville 68, Virginia Tech 52  
No. 23 Ohio St. 77, No. 19 Michigan 63  
No. 21 Stanford 72, Colorado 64  
No. 25 Houston 68, Cincinnati 55

## WEST

UC Riverside 49, Hawaii 43  
Rider 65, Fairfield 51  
State Univ. N.Y. Delhi 94, Pine Manor 42  
St. Louis 72, Rhode Island 62

## SOUTH

St. Joseph 64, Temple 58  
St. Joseph 88, Albertus Magnus 84  
Towson 75, Northeastern 72  
Tufts 102, Colby 94, 2OT  
Xavier 66, Georgetown 63

Yeshiva 86, Purchase 74  
**SOUTH**  
Centenary 77, Texas Lutheran 56  
Centre 72, Berry 69  
Florida International 67, Charlotte 52  
Old Dominion 85, Florida Atlantic 80, OT  
Transylvania 49, Rose Hulman 48  
N.C. Pembroke 88, Ga. Southwestern 65  
**MIDWEST**  
Illinois 67, Indiana 66  
Northwestern 81, Nebraska 76, OT  
Wisconsin 71, Minnesota 69  
**SOUTHWEST**  
North Texas 78, Western Kentucky 72, OT  
Rice 77, Middle Tennessee 66  
Texas El Paso 75, Southern Miss. 56  
Texas San Antonio 66, Ala. Birmingham 59  
Wichita State 66, Southern Methodist 62

## WOMEN

**TOP 25**  
No. 1 So. Cal. 60, No. 12 Texas A&M 52  
No. 3 Oregon 92, Washington 56  
No. 4 Stanford 55, No. 24 Arizona 34

No. 5 Louisville 70, Virginia Tech 53  
No. 7 Maryland 59, Minnesota 44  
No. 8 North Carolina State 75, Virginia 64  
No. 9 UCLA 77, Utah 54  
No. 10 Mississippi St. 84, Mississippi 59  
California 55, No. 13 Arizona 54  
Vanderbilt 70, No. 15 Kentucky 64  
Marquette 90, No. 16 DePaul 83  
No. 17 Oregon St. 73, Washington St. 58  
Rutgers 78, No. 18 Iowa 74, OT  
Notre Dame 70, No. 19 Florida State 67  
No. 21 Missouri State 69, Bradley 66  
No. 22 Indiana 78, Michigan 60  
Texas Tech 87, No. 25 Texas Christian 83  
**WEST**  
USC 66, Colorado 55  
Air Force 60, Colorado State 48  
Newova 74, New Mexico 64  
**EAST**  
Boston College 88, Syracuse 81  
Drexel 63, Towson 60  
Lehigh 82, Loyola (Md.) 64  
Seton Hall 66, Butler 53

St. John's 74, Xavier 67  
Villanova 74, Providence 33  
**SOUTH**  
Alabama 73, Missouri 61  
Coll. of Charleston 66, Northeastern 61, OT  
Duke 73, North Carolina 54  
Georgia Tech 56, Clemson 44  
James Madison 69, Delaware 64  
Miami 73, Pittsburgh 54  
Tennessee 56, Auburn 55  
N.C. Wilmington 56, Hofstra 43  
**MIDWEST**  
Creighton 95, Georgetown 78  
Drake 83, Valparaiso 79  
Illinois State 66, Southern Illinois 56  
Michigan State 59, Penn State 80  
Northern Iowa 73, Loyola of Chicago 70  
**SOUTHWEST**  
Arkansas 75, Louisiana State 71