

BRIEFLY

COLLEGE SOFTBALL

Burns earns more AAC honors

Milligan College senior Sidney Burns was named the Appalachian Athletic Conference pitcher of the week on Monday for the third consecutive week.

"Sidney is just in her groove now and pitching really well," Milligan head coach Wes Holly said. "I am very pleased at her approach her senior season, and look forward to seeing what she can accomplish the rest of the way."

Burns went 2-1 with a no decision in four games against King College last week. She recorded 26 strikeouts and allowed four earned runs on 19 hits in 23 innings. Burns is ranked 15 in the NAIA in strikeouts with 107 and holds a 9-6 record in the circle.

The Lady Buffs have won 13 of their last 14 games and hold a 17-12 record. Milligan was scheduled to open AAC play today against Bryan College, but the game has been postponed to April 13. The Buffs will play host to Bluefield College on Saturday. First pitch is 2 p.m.

COLLEGE TENNIS

Buff split with Tenn. Wesleyan

Milligan College women's tennis team won its first Appalachian Athletic Conference match on Monday, edging Tennessee Wesleyan 5-4 in Athens. The men's team lost 9-0 to the Bulldogs.

The Lady Buffs trailed 2-1 after the doubles matches, but Albany Kelly, Caitlin Conley, Hallie Winfrey and Jolynne Heidt posted wins in singles to give Milligan the win.

"I am proud of how we fought back after a slow start to take the victory," Milligan head coach Ryan Reynolds said. "Tennessee Wesleyan is a really strong program, and this is a huge win for us."

The win made the Lady Buffs 7-3 overall and 1-0 in the AAC. The men fell to 3-6. Milligan plays at Bluefield College on Thursday at 3 p.m.

PREP SOFTBALL

Elizabethton crushes Hampton

Reazyn DeMoss hit two home runs and Elizabethton defeated Hampton 16-2 on Monday.

DeMoss went 3-for-4 and drove in five runs for the Lady Cyclones. Erin Kiser had two hits including another homer, while Kristin Powell hit a triple and drove in four runs.

Amanda Schultz got the win in the circle, improving to 5-1 on the year.

Elizabethton's game against Happy Valley scheduled for today at 5 p.m. has been moved to Elizabethton. The game was originally scheduled to be at Happy Valley.

NFL

Bills to host Newton in pre-draft visit

The Buffalo Bills will host former Auburn quarterback Cam Newton in what will be the Heisman Trophy winner's best chance to make a final impression on a team with the No. 3 pick in next month's NFL draft.

Coach Chan Gailey confirmed the player will spend Tuesday at the team's facility in what will be Newton's fourth — and longest — visit with the Bills.

Gailey considers this meeting as potentially having the most impact on him, because he'll get to spend the entire day getting to know Newton. Gailey spoke after addressing Bills season ticket holders at a downtown ballroom on Monday.

Though the Bills have numerous needs to address following a 4-12 season, they haven't ruled out selecting a quarterback with their first pick.

NBA

Parker, Ginobili, Duncan all out

Tony Parker, Manu Ginobili and Tim Duncan are all injured and the San Antonio Spurs don't know when they'll be back.

None of San Antonio's Big 3 will play Monday night against Portland. Parker is out with a left knee contusion and Ginobili won't play after injuring his left quad in Sunday's loss at Memphis.

Duncan missed his fourth game since spraining his ankle a week ago. Coach Gregg Popovich said before tipoff Monday that he hoped some of his stars would return before this weekend.

Forward Antonio McDyess is also out with a lower back contusion.

In all, the NBA-best Spurs will be down four starters against the Trail Blazers.

NHL

Ovechkin back at practice

Alex Ovechkin was back on the ice, skating through Monday's practice in a light blue jersey that looked more suitable for Chapel Hill than the nation's capital. He was done with the week off he needed to heal an undisclosed injury and pronounced himself "ready to go," possibly as soon as Tuesday's game against the Carolina Hurricanes.

"I was skating over there, like, to see if it bothered me on the ice," he said. "It's not bothering me."

Coach Bruce Boudreau was more cautious, saying Ovechkin could perhaps return by the end of the week.

The coach has no need to rush. The Capitals are doing fine as they head into the regular season homestretch, even if they've deviated to the nth degree from the script anyone would have written for them back in September.

Ovechkin has scored only 29 goals — far below his usual pace — and has missed the last three games to recover from what Boudreau said was an unspecified "nagging ailment" that had apparently been bothering the star left wing for months. Defensemen Mike Green and Tom Poti have missed huge chunks of time. The power play has plummeted from first in the league last season to 21st this season. The battle for No. 1 goalie hasn't been settled because the top contenders kept getting hurt.