



Aubrey student qualifies for state finals rodeo

Gallagher shines in racing with horse once thought too slow

By Daniel Burgess

For the Denton Record-Chronicle

Aubrey junior-to-be and 2016 North Texas High School Rodeo Association pole bending champion Autumn Gallagher is headed to the state finals after finishing second in the Region 3 finals.

“I figure if I can be top ten anywhere, that is with the best of the best,” Gallagher said. “I’ve done well, and I hope that I become something where I can touch a little girl’s life like the first time that I saw a horse.”

The Texas High School Rodeo Association state finals started Saturday in Abilene and will continue through next Saturday. Gallagher competes Tuesday and Thursday.

High school rodeo

Texas High School Rodeo Association finals

Pole bending is a timed race in which riders race to the end of a series of six poles, make a 180-degree turn, zig-zag back through the poles then run the course in reverse. Riders receive a five-second penalty for knocking over a pole. Times average about 20 seconds, and fractions of a second can mean the difference between winning and losing.

The top two riders and their horses at state will advance to the National High School Finals Rodeo in Gillette, Wyoming.

Gallagher, 16, continues a streak of success that began her freshman year, when she took first place at the M7 Youth Rodeo Association and first place in the North Texas finals.

But those victories were far from certain.

Gallagher is the only member of Au-

brey’s FFA rodeo team. Her obsession with horses and rodeo began at 3 years old when she took her first pony ride.

“We started going just to go ride — didn’t know squat about horses, never thought of doing anything with horses,” Gallagher’s father, Kevin, said. “The first time [Autumn] saw the girl come out with the flag on the horse at the stockyards, she said, ‘I’m going to do that.’ And it just stuck. She’s been riding ever since.”

Gallagher is racing on her first horse, Colonels Lil Tari, whom she received when she was 10. Tari was a cutting horse reject, and the local rodeo community never expected the horse to be competitive, calling Tari too small and too slow, Gallagher said. But Tari was what Gallagher’s family could afford.

“I never felt good enough, and I never felt she was going to be fast enough,” Gallagher said.

See GALLAGHER on 4B



Jake King/DRC

Autumn Gallagher, 16, stands with her first horse, Colonels Lil Tari, outside her stable Thursday in Sanger. Gallagher will compete in pole bending Tuesday and Thursday at the Texas High School Rodeo Association state finals in Abilene.

KRUM TAKES STATE



Julia Robinson/For the DRC

Krum pitcher Tristan Bridges, right, is embraced by teammate Avery Williams after they won the Class 4A state championship Saturday in Austin. The Lady Cats defeated Liberty Hill 4-3.

Bridges named MVP as Lady Cats win first title

By Steve Gamel

Staff Writer

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AUSTIN — Strength versus strength.

That’s how Krum coaches billed Saturday’s Class 4A title game: the Lady Cats’ near impenetrable pitching and defense against a Liberty Hill offense averaging just more than eight runs per game. But like so many big-stage games before this one, it’s still

High school softball

Class 4A state final: Krum 4, Liberty Hill 3

defense that wins championships.

Krum scored three runs in the second and leaned on a gutty performance from junior ace Tristan Bridges, who struck out eight while holding Liberty Hill’s vaunted offense to one earned run on five hits in a 4-3

See KRUM on 3B

This is why we do this



Steve Gamel
HIGH SCHOOLS
COMMENTARY

AUSTIN — My brother has always been the snarky one out of the two of us. If there is a jab to be taken at his big brother, he’s going to do it and show no remorse. A few months ago, he took a dig at my job, questioning why in the world I continue to cover high school sports.

I can hear him now saying something like — “Boring! You could be covering the pros.”

Yes, I could. And I’d be damn good at it, too. But I’ve never once wavered

See GAMEL on 3B

Red-hot Astros slip past Rangers

By Stephen Hawkins

Associated Press

ARLINGTON — Carlos Beltran had three hits and drove in three runs as the Houston Astros extended their majors-best winning streak to nine, beating the Rangers 6-5 on Saturday night.

Rangers

Houston 6, Texas 5

Jose Altuve also had three hits for Houston, including a key solo homer to lead off the ninth.

At 40-16, the Astros have the best record in the majors and their best start ever. They are 14 games ahead in the AL West over two-time defending division champion Texas, which is 3-10 since a 10-game winning streak that is still the longest in the majors this season.

Six Astros pitchers combined for 18 strikeouts only nine days after Rangers hitters matched a record for a nine-inning game with 20 strikeouts against five Boston pitchers.

Beltran’s seventh homer leading off the second tied the game at 1 after the Rangers got a run off Lance McCullers in his first start since being named AL pitcher of the month.

The Astros went ahead to stay after six straight batters reached with one out in the third, and four of them scored. Carlos Correa had a tiebreaking RBI single before Beltran’s two-run single. Correa then scored on a wild pitch by Andrew Cashner (2-5).

Chris Devenski (4-3) worked 1 2/3 scoreless innings after taking over for McCullers in the fifth. Ken Giles worked the ninth for his 15th save in 16 chances even while allowing an RBI single by Adrian Beltre.

Elvis Andrus, who got married Thursday when the Rangers had a day off, had three hits and drove in three runs. Beltre has 2,950 hits, including eight in five games since his season debut this week after having calf issues.

Preds rout Pens to pull within 2-1

By Teresa M. Walker

Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Pekka Rinne and the Nashville Predators are very hard to beat on their own ice this postseason, and now they have added their biggest piece of franchise history yet.

A victory in the Stanley Cup Final.

The embattled Rinne not only started, he made 27 saves. Roman Josi and Frederick Gaudreau scored 42 seconds apart in the second period, and the Predators beat the Pittsburgh Penguins 5-1 Saturday night to pull within 2-1 in the best-of-seven series.

The Predators capped the biggest party in Nashville history with a victory that gave thousands of fans inside and outside of the arena reason to celebrate

Pro hockey

NHL Stanley Cup Final: Game 3

Nashville 5, Pittsburgh 1

with even country star Keith Urban and actress Nicole Kidman, his wife, high-fiving.

And credit Rinne for coming through with a very stingy performance and improving to 8-1 in Nashville this postseason.

The Predators call the 6-foot-5 Finn their backbone, yet critics wanted him benched after looking so shaky in the first two games in Pittsburgh while giving up eight goals on 36 shots.

Coach Peter Laviolette benched him in the third period of Game 2 when Rinne gave up three goals in the

first 3:28 of a 4-1 loss.

Josi also had two assists. James Neal, Craig Smith and Mattias Ekholm also scored for Nashville as the Predators worked out some frustration against the Pens.

“Like our team has done the whole playoffs against Chicago, St. Louis, Anaheim, we showed really good composure,” said Nashville defenseman P.K. Subban, who had predicted a win in Game 3. “We’re going to take that into the next game.”

Game 4 is Monday night.

“I thought we gave them a couple of freebies where we didn’t force them to have to work for it, and that’s an area

See STANLEY CUP on 4B



Mark Humphrey/AP

Pittsburgh’s Sidney Crosby, left, is tripped by Nashville’s Ryan Ellis on Saturday in Nashville, Tenn.

Rice beats Texas Southern to stay alive

By The Associated Press

BATON ROUGE, La. — Tristan Gray homered twice and drove in five runs to help Rice prolong its postseason with a 13-6 victory against Texas Southern on Saturday in the NCAA tournament's Baton Rouge Regional.

Glenn Otto (7-4), who entered a tie game to start the sixth, pitched three scoreless innings for the victory. Andrew Dunlap and Ryan Chandler also homered for Rice (32-30), which pounded out 17 hits.

Robert Loza (2-2), who allowed three runs in the seventh,

College baseball NCAA tournament roundup

took the loss for Texas Southern (20-34), which was eliminated.

Houston 17, Baylor 3

HOUSTON — Jake Scheiner homered and drove in six runs while Lael Lockhart had four RBIs, helping Houston eliminate Baylor.

The Cougars scored eight runs before the Bears (34-23) got an out in the seventh, capped by Scheiner's three-run shot, his 18th. Houston (41-20) advanced

to face the Iowa-Texas A&M loser in another elimination game Sunday.

Virginia 6, Dallas Baptist 3

FORT WORTH — Derek Casey pitched seven innings, Robbie Coman had a two-run double and Virginia beat Dallas Baptist in the opening game of the rain-delayed Fort Worth Regional.

After the opening games at TCU were rained out Friday, the start of the Virginia-DBU game was delayed four hours Saturday because of more rain. TCU

played Central Connecticut State late Saturday.

The runs for Dallas Baptist (40-20) came on solo homers by Jameson Hannah, Tim Millard and Garrett Wolforth.

Oral Roberts 14, Oklahoma State 6

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. — Michael Hungate was 4-for-4 with 5 RBIs to help Oral Roberts stay alive with a win against Oklahoma State on Saturday.

Hungate also had a three-run home run and scored three times for the fourth-seeded

Golden Eagles (43-15), who advance in the losers bracket to face Missouri State or Arkansas on Sunday.

Michael Neustifter was 2-for-2, including a solo home run, and had three RBIs for the third-seeded Cowboys (30-27), whose season comes to an end after reaching the College World Series a year ago.

Louisville 11, Oklahoma 1

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Logan Taylor, Colby Fitch and Colin Lyman each had two-run hits during Louisville's seven-run eighth

as the Cardinals erupted for 10 runs in the final two innings for a rout of Oklahoma, which must beat Xavier on Sunday to avoid elimination.

Wake Forest 4, West Virginia 3

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. — Gavin Sheets singled home the winning run in the bottom of the ninth inning, and Wake Forest rallied to beat West Virginia.

The Mountaineers face Maryland on Sunday with the winner needing to beat Wake Forest twice to advance.

Baylor ousted

By The Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — Oregon pitcher Megan Kleist was thrown into the worst of situations in a Women's College World Series elimination game and got the best possible result.

College softball

Women's College World Series roundup

With the bases loaded and no outs in the seventh, Kleist stepped in and escaped unscathed, and Oregon held on to beat Baylor 7-4 on Saturday. She struck out the first two batters she faced and got the third to ground out to earn the save.

"Holy cow, that really saved our bacon," Oregon coach Mike White said.

Kleist got the job done against Baylor's Nos. 3, 4 and 5 hitters.

The Ducks (53-7) advanced to play LSU in an elimination game Saturday night.

Oregon took a 5-0 lead in the top of the fifth inning, but Baylor scored four runs in the bottom of the inning.

Gia Rodoni (18-4) was the loser. Kyla Walker had two hits for Baylor (48-15).

UCLA 8, Texas A&M 2

UCLA assistant coach Lisa Fernandez might have made the play of the day for the Bruins.

Fernandez was ejected in the sixth inning after protesting a play at home plate involving UCLA's Gabrielle Maurice and Texas A&M catcher Ashley Walters. A throw home led Walters to tag Maurice in the face. Fernandez argued there should have been an obstruction call, and she bumped the home plate umpire.

Rachel Garcia hit a two-run homer and got the win for UCLA. The fired-up Bruins scored five runs in the seventh and beat Texas A&M in an elimination game.

Celena Massey had a pinch-hit solo homer in the seventh for Texas A&M (47-13). The senior had four at-bats all season before the blast.

Trinity Harrington (14-4) took the loss for A&M.

Washington 1, UCLA 0

Ali Aguilar homered in the sixth, and Taran Alvelo threw a two-hitter in Washington's victory against UCLA in an elimination game.

Alvelo (34-8) struck out seven. Washington (50-13) will play No. 1 seed Florida on Sunday and will have to beat the Gators twice to reach the championship series.



Photos by Julia Robinson/For the DRC
The Krum Lady Cats hold their state championship medals Saturday in Austin after defeating Liberty Hill in the Class 4A final.

From Page 1B

Krum

win at Red and Charline McCombs Field.

Bridges was named MVP of the title game. It is Krum's first state title in softball.

"That last inning was intense, but I had confidence my team would back me up," Bridges said. "I knew even if they put it in play, there was a good chance we'd get the out. They never let me down.

"I just kept thinking, 'Don't mess this up, Tristan. Don't lose this for your team.'"

This was the first team in a major sport to represent Krum at state since girls basketball in 2013. The Lady Cats allowed only five runs in their last eight playoff games, and Bridges' eight strikeouts Saturday gave her 305 for the year.

Krum (39-4) had three uncharacteristic errors, but none of that mattered with Bridges dealing in the circle. Her last strikeout came during an intense top of the seventh with Krum nursing the 4-3 lead. Bridges got the first batter to pop out to second base, then walked the next two she faced. Nearly every at-bat in that frame was a battle as Liberty Hill fouled off several pitches.

With two on, Bridges got the next batter to pop up to the shortstop before notching the strikeout.

"I was playing to have the defense get that last out, but Tristan had a good pitch and the girl swung," Krum junior catcher Morgan Sebastian said. "That's what Tristan does. They could hit her, but she still stays calm. I'm still trying to process this [win]. It feels great."

The game featured the top two teams in the state. No. 1 Liberty Hill (39-3-1) had lost only once in its previous 30 games



Krum pitcher Tristan Bridges, left, embraces catcher Morgan Sebastian at the end of the Class 4A state championship game at Texas' Red and Charline McCombs Field.

and jumped out to a 2-0 lead in the first.

But Bridges held the Lady Panthers scoreless over the next four innings. Meanwhile, No. 2 Krum's offense strung together a three-run second off Abby Covington, who gave up only one earned run but surrendered 10 hits.

Maddie Goin was 3-for-4 with an RBI, and Bridges was 2-for-3 with a double. Goin's RBI single tied the game at 2, and Avery Williams followed one batter later with another hard single to take the lead for good.

Liberty Hill and Krum each stranded nine runners in what many expected would be a close game.

"That was a great game,"

Krum coach Bryan Chaney said.

"[Liberty Hill] has a good pitcher, and they are solid in the field, but their strength is at the plate. Ours is in the field and in that circle. If we were to play them 10 times, who knows how each game would go.

"That little girl right there [Bridges] wasn't named MVP by accident. Her nickname is Princess, but she's anything but in that circle."

STEVE GAMEL can be reached at 940-566-6869 and via Twitter at @Newspaper Steve.

Krum 4, Liberty Hill 3									
Liberty Hill	200	001	0	—	3	5	1		
Krum	030	100	X	—	4	10	3		
WP - Tristan Bridges, LP - Abby Covington, 3B - L: Kinsey Kuhlmann, 2B - K: Tristan Bridges, Records - Liberty Hill 39-3-1, Krum 39-4.									

Cavs try to adjust on both ends after rout

By Janie McCauley

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Tyrone Lue has a new No. 1 priority for LeBron James and his Cleveland Cavaliers in Game 2 of the NBA Finals: Stop the ball. First and foremost, then make sure Golden State's sharpshooters have a hand in their face.

Translation: Do anything and everything possible to stop Kevin Durant from driving through the paint and dunking at will with nobody even around him.

"Well, I'm pretty sure that won't happen tomorrow," Durant said with a grin Saturday. "They will be way more physical. They're going to be way more aggressive in the pick-and-roll on the offensive end and defensively. They're going to try to get their 3-point shooters going and rebound the ball. They're going to try to get more offensive rebounds. They're just going to muck the game up and be physical."

That's the plan for the defending champions Sunday night and will be key if they want to even the best-of-seven series and look respectable after the Warriors whipped them 113-91 Thursday night.

Pro basketball

NBA Finals: Game 2

Cleveland at Golden State, 7 p.m., Ch. 8

Durant scored 38 points and dunked easily, six times in the first half alone, and many of which he went untouched to the rim.

"We can't let Durant get easy baskets like that," Lue said as his team practiced at Warriors headquarters amid a media frenzy. "With him being probably one of the best scorers in the NBA, you can't give guys like that easy opportunities at the basket."

Taking care of the ball will be equally important after that became a major problem in the opener for Cleveland, which committed 20 turnovers in an uncharacteristically sloppy game.

The 13-0 Warriors are on a roll and matched a Finals low with only four turnovers, and if Klay Thompson finds his shooting touch at last, it could be another tough day on defense for the Cavs. They want to get physical, contest shots, somehow find a way to get Golden State out of its groove.

"Effort, effort, yep," Kyrie Irving said matter-of-factly.

Ex-Ranger Volquez throws no-hitter

By Tim Reynolds

Associated Press

MIAMI — Edinson Volquez's day was nearly over after three pitches. And he strongly considered leaving the game after five innings because of sharp ankle pain.

A couple hours later, nothing was hurting. He stuck around — and pitched the game of his life.

Volquez threw the sixth no-hitter in Marlins history, facing the minimum 27 batters on Saturday and beating the Arizona Diamondbacks 3-0. Tied for the major league lead in losses when the game began, he struck out 10, and the two baserunners who reached on walks were erased by double plays.

He needed 98 pitches, the last of those striking out Chris Owings to complete the masterpiece.

"When I passed the seventh, I said, 'I'm going to go for it,'" Volquez said. "And I got it."

It's the first no-hitter in the majors since Jake Arrieta did it for the Cubs on April 21, 2016, at Cincinnati, and the first time Arizona was no-hit since the Mar-

Pro baseball

National League: Miami 3, Arizona 0

lins' Anibal Sanchez threw one Sept. 6, 2006.

Volquez (2-7) was nearly knocked out of the game after just one batter, when he collided with Diamondbacks leadoff man Rey Fuentes as he covered first, rolled his ankle and took a hard fall to the turf.

"I thought I broke my ankle," he kidded after the game.

Alas, that was the only hit the Diamondbacks got.

Volquez threw a one-hitter for San Diego against Houston in 2012.

Volquez is the epitome of a journeyman. The Marlins are his seventh franchise in 13 seasons, and he came into Saturday with a 90-86 record.

A rookie in 2005, he played three years for the Rangers. He was an All-Star in 2008, when he went 17-6 with Cincinnati. In 2015, Volquez helped Kansas City win the World Series and started Game 1 on the day his father died.

From Page 1B

Gamel

in my decision to cover high school sports. Not once. And while this may sound cheesy, seeing the look on Krum pitcher Tristan Bridges' face after she struck out eight in a thrilling 4-3 win Saturday is a big reason why.

I've seen that pure elation and uncompromising passion for the game a million times over in the faces of young athletes I've had the fortune to meet in my 20 years as a sports writer. Honestly, there's nothing else like it, and it's one of the many reasons I keep coming back.

Bridges, a junior and Tarleton State commit, stood with me near home plate answering question after question with tears of joy welling up in her eyes

and arms wrapped around her state title game MVP trophy. She was squeezing it tightly to her chest, almost as if she thought someone might realize they gave it to the wrong kid and take it away.

She answered every question with a "Yes, sir." There wasn't an ounce of cockiness in her body, even though she could have gotten away with it — I wouldn't have blamed her one bit — after the performance she turned in against one of the hottest-hitting teams in the state.

Her final pitch, which she blew effortlessly past Liberty Hill's Kandyn Faurie, gave Bridges 305 strikeouts for the year. She's arguably the best pitcher we have in the Denton area, and she's already got my vote for *Denton Record-Chronicle* All-Area Softball Team MVP. But instead of talking about her per-

formance, she said this about being named state final MVP:

"This is an honor to think someone would think I come close to deserving this."

High school sports give sports writers like me a chance to connect directly with readers, players, coaches and families in our community — whether face to face or through social media. We get to cover high-profile games with teams rich in college-level talent under the bright Friday night lights, and we get to go beyond the field and meet people who have overcome tragedy.

When we screw up, we hear from our readers. When we tell a story that no one else was willing to take the time to tell, our readers praise us and beg for more.

I've covered countless state championship games like Saturday's. I've watched games in the biggest venues possible and the



Julia Robinson/For the DRC

The Krum Lady Cats celebrate their Class 4A championship Saturday in Austin.

tinest stadiums imaginable. I've even covered games for less money than someone might make at a garage sale. But I'd do it over and over again.

So to answer my brother's

snarky question: I cover high school sports because there's nothing else like it. Watching Krum and Tristan Bridges on Saturday only drove that point home further.

I want to close this column with this final thought. Many of you may have heard of some changes that were made to our sports department over the past few days. Some great people that I consider friends and much better writers than me lost their jobs due to staff reduction.

It's one of the more difficult things I've ever had to watch unfold.

I can tell you that each of those writers, just like me, loved their job covering high school sports in Denton. I think of them while I write this column, and I pray they will get back to what they love soon. Because honestly, it's an amazing job.

Regardless of what my brother thinks.

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