



NASSAU KNIGHTS UNDEFEATED



The Nassau Knights 3v3 Basketball team went undefeated at the Special Olympics Area Tournament on Saturday. As a result, they earned the No. 1 seed for regional tournament to be held in April in Daytona. More than 300 athletes and 100 volunteers and coaches participated in the all-day event held at The Sports Edge facility in Jacksonville. The Nassau Knights practice regularly at the Peck Gym, and the players include Joseph Coles, Michael Dugan, Diego Martinez-Brown, Luis Martinez-Brown and Andrew Strickland. The team is coached by Kathleen Brown and Robin Gasparini and managed by Meg Guile. Huge thanks to P5 Productions for donating the cost to personalize the team's new warm-up jackets. The team looked sharp on Saturday.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Rinaldi, other women's tennis pros back at AIP

The Amelia Island Plantation Community Association will host a free exhibition doubles match at 4 p.m. Saturday, March 23, recalling the heyday of Women's Tennis Association championship tennis at AIP.

Three outstanding pros who competed in the WTA championships at AIP – Kathy Rinaldi, Ann Grossman and Brenda Schultz – will return to AIP as part of the community's 50th anniversary celebrations in 2024. The WTA championships took place in AIP from 1980-2008.

Expect a friendly exchange of jokes, serves and volleys as Rinaldi, Grossman and Schultz will be mic'd during the exhibition in Center Court at Racquet Park, 102 Racquet Park Drive. The exhibition will be followed by a question-and-answer session with the stars.

Rinaldi, who made her professional debut at AIP at the age of 14, was a WTA Top 10 professional tennis player in singles and doubles and reached the semifinals at all Grand Slam tournaments in singles/doubles or mixed. She captained the Team USA Billy Jean King Cup from 2017 until last year and is currently the United States Tennis Association head of women's tennis.

Grossman played in more than 40 Grand Slams and made the fourth round of the U.S. and French Opens and third round of the Australian Open and Wimbledon. She's founder of the first and only existing organization dedicated to coaches working



Rinaldi



Grossman



Schultz

with female athletes – the Women's Tennis Coaching Association.

Schultz's career-high rankings were No. 7 in doubles, No. 9 in singles. She won 16 WTA Tour titles (seven singles and nine doubles) and reached the quarterfinals or better at three of the four Grand Slams. She represented The Netherlands at the '92 and '96 Olympics.

She shares the record for the second fastest women's serve of all time at 130 mph.

"This event will bring back a lot of great memories for people who came to Amelia Island Plantation to watch top seeds and up-and-coming WTA players compete," said AIPCA Executive Director Colby Shear. "It's going to be a fun afternoon of tennis and nostalgia."

Public parking is available directly off AIA/First Coast Highway in the Verandah restaurant public lot. Bring a lawn chair or a blanket to sit on. Snacks and non-alcoholic refreshments will be available for purchase.

Sailing club holds its third race of the season

The club's next race scheduled for April 27

Amelia Island Sailing Club held its third race of the 2024 season on Saturday, March 16, in Cumberland Sound. The 10-nautical mile race started at 11 a.m., with the addition of an extra two legs in the Amelia River added to allow time for a submarine to pass by on its way to Kings Bay.

The weather was beautiful, slightly overcast with breaks of sunshine and temperatures in the mid-70s. Winds from the south/southwest were light and variable in the range of 5-10 knots with no gusts, and the tide was incoming for the whole event, resulting in challenging currents impacting the race.

A marvelous turnout of nine boats competed in the race involving 31 sailors. The racing was nice and close for the first several legs and mark roundings, after which the performance boats increased their leads over the cruising sailboats in the light winds and currents.

Bill Kavanaugh extended his winning streak on Tiger Tale with wife Anne and several of their children and grandchildren as crew. Finishing second was Wilby Whitt's Misty, with Fred Eichmann on the helm. Steve Boice and crew skillfully sailed Miss Marsha to finish third for the day.

The other boats competing and finishing in order were Graeme Nichol on Fin, Jos Wolke on Lola, Rene Brand at the helm of Justin Pelham-Webb's Valkyrie, Gary Sanders on Salty Sally, Norm Wentworth on Morning Glory and Tom MacArthur on Rebecca's Reach.

The next AISC race is on Saturday, April 27, and the annual Coastal Cup Race from Amelia Island to St. Simons Island is on Saturday, May 18.

The sailing club also wishes good luck to Justin Pelham-Webb on Valkyrie and Norm Wentworth on Morning Glory, who will be racing the ocean races in the annual Saint Augustine Race Week April 13-15.

Complete results and more race photos along with 2024 racing schedule are available on the AISC website 2024 Racing and Photos web pages at ameliaislandsailingclub.wildapricot.org.

All are welcome to race with AISC, requiring only a club membership at \$100 per year. Visit the club's website to learn more, and anyone with a boating interest is invited to join.

Members have sailboats, power boats and pontoon boats, and many have no boats. The club holds monthly dinner meetings, monthly races and other social events throughout the year.



The fleet heads to the second mark, above. Valkyrie and the submarine, below left. Tiger Tale, below right. *More photos, 2B.*

SUBMITTED PHOTOS



RACE NO. 3



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

The Amelia Island Sailing Club held its third race of the season on Saturday. Lola, Miss March, Valkyrie and Misty at the start, top. Rounding the first mark, above left. Fin and the submarine, above right.

SPORTS SHORTS

Diamond Classic

Fernandina Beach High School hosts the 40th annual Diamond Classic this week during spring break.

Thursday FBHS vs. First Coast at 1 p.m., Episcopal vs. Columbia at 4 p.m. and Trinity Catholic vs. Bishop Snyder at 7 p.m.

Friday Bishop Snyder vs. Columbia at 1 p.m., First Coast vs. Episcopal at 4 p.m. and FBHS vs. Trinity Catholic at 7 p.m.

Saturday Episcopal vs. Trinity Catholic at 10 a.m., First Coast vs. Columbia at 1 p.m. and FBHS vs. Bishop Snyder at 4 p.m.

Sunshine Showdown

The Sunshine Showdown, Florida State vs. Florida baseball game, is back, and this year's neutral site game will be held March 26 at 121 Financial Ballpark in Jacksonville. First pitch is at 6 p.m.

Tickets for the game on sale at www.taxslayergatorbowl.com/baseball or through the VyStar Veterans Memorial Arena box office, located at 300 A Philip Randolph Blvd. Box office hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Babe Ruth opens

Fernandina Beach Babe Ruth is holding a banner drive, and the cost is \$350 for one or \$600 for two. Banners are 4 feet by 6 feet. Umpires are needed. Contact Tom Camera at 240-460-5500. March 30 is opening day at Buccaneer Sports Complex on Beech Street.

Pirates on the Run

It will be a fast, flat course for the Pirates on the Run 5K. The Amelia Island Runners event starts at 7:30 a.m. March 30 at the Atlantic Recreation Center at 2500 Atlantic Ave. in Fernandina Beach. The Fun Run will start at 8:30 a.m. at the Pirate Playground area of the Atlantic Recreation Center.

There will be T-shirts and custom race medals for all participants in the 5K. Overall and masters winners receive the coveted custom embroidered pirate hat. Age group winners receive a cool custom fun foam pirate hat and a picture opportunity wearing your hat and shaking hands with a pirate.

The Fun Run starts at the Pirates Playground and is out and back on the Egans Creek Greenway. T-shirts are not included but can be purchased at registration. Pirate running costumes are an option for both children and adults, and awards will be given in both categories.

Packet pickup for both the 5K and Fun Run is Thursday, March 28, and Friday,

March 29, at Mythic Running Company located at 815 S. Eighth St. in Fernandina Beach. Packet pickup after store closing until 7 p.m. on Thursday evening.

Final race registration and packet pickup for the 5K is 6:30 a.m. on race day. Final race registration and packet pickup for the Fun Run is 7:45 a.m. at Pirate Playground on race day.

The 5K starts at 7:30 a.m., and the awards ceremony is at 8:45 a.m. Unique awards will be presented to the top three men and women overall, first masters male and female overall, top three male and female age group winners.

The race will be timed using the bib chip. Cost is \$35 through March 16, \$40 March 17-23 and \$50 March 24 through race day. Fun Run cost is \$15 until March 16 and \$20 March 16 through race day. T-shirts available for purchase at \$15 at registration.

Proceeds benefit charitable outreach of Amelia Island Runners.

If you have any questions about this race, contact the race director at brianspatter-son1@gmail.com or visit <http://ameliarunners.com>. Sign up at <https://runsignup.com/race/fl/fernandinabeach/piratesontherun5Kfl>.

Adult flex tennis

Registration is open for Amelia National Tennis Club's spring men's and women's singles flex leagues. This is an eight-week flex league open to both members and non-members.

League runs through April 27, with prizes awarded to the overall winners in both leagues. Visit www.nassau-county.tenniscourts.com or email courts@amelianation-altennis.com.

Run for your life

Trying to just get in shape or maybe go faster? If so, check out the Amelia Island Runners club's "Runners Love Company" workouts at the Fernandina Beach High School track on Wednesdays at 6 p.m.

Whether to stay healthy by jogging or to run hard training for races, all types of goals are appreciated and respected. AIR offers sensible, safe workouts led by veteran coach Roy Benson.

All ages, from middle school to all masters age groups and all levels of ability, are encouraged to come out and sample our friendly, supportive group environment. Join in and breathe more with AIR.

Visit www.ameliainlandrunners.com for more information.

Email information for this column to bjones@fbnews-leader.com.

GOLF NEWS

Tees Fore Keys tourney

Registration is open for Nassau Habitat for Humanity's third annual golf tournament, Tees Fore Keys.



Proceeds from this event will be used to construct affordable housing in the local community — building family strength, stability and self-reliance through home ownership.

Nassau Habitat's goal is to build six affordable new homes annually by 2026, and it needs everyone to come

together to support this important cause. Join them as a player or event sponsor or contribute at <https://nassauhabetatfl.com/habitat-events>.

Your gift will make the dream of homeownership come true for a deserving family in our community.

The event will be held on Friday, April 19, at the Golf Club of Amelia Island, 4700 Amelia Island Parkway in Fernandina Beach.

Special features of this scramble event include a \$10,000 cash hole-in-one prize, skill prizes, lunch bag and music and refreshments after golf.

An online silent auction will be held, beginning April 12, and be open

throughout the event.

Men's blitz

All golfers are invited to the Fernandina Beach Golf Club men's bi-weekly 18-hole blitz Wednesdays and Fridays. Shotgun start is 10 a.m. Entry fee is \$20. Contact John Rudd at jrudd9404@gmail.com.

Ladies play Tuesdays

The Fernandina Beach Women's Golf Association welcomes women of all levels. Play is 9 a.m. Tuesdays; registration at 8:30 a.m. Membership is \$40 per year. Email fbwga18@gmail.com.

PRO GOLF WEEKLY UPDATE

Golf News, Tips, Trivia & Stats

This Week in Pro Golf

The PGA Tour's Florida Swing wraps up at the Valspar Championship

Located just north of Tampa, the tree-lined, Innisbrook's Copperhead course puts a premium on positioning off the tee. The course, opened in the early 1970s, features a tough closing trio called the 'Snake Pit' that includes two tough par-4s sandwiched between a bruising 200-yard par 3. The Copperhead Course was the second course built at Innisbrook and has long been considered a favorite by many on the PGA Tour. Last year, Taylor Moore won for the first time on the PGA Tour, overcoming a two-stroke deficit in the final round to win by one over Adam Schenk.



Course Stats
Yards: 7,340
Par: 71
18-hole record: 61
Tournament record: 266
Defending champion: Taylor Moore

TV Coverage

Day	Time	Network
Thursday	2-6pm	GOLF
Friday	2-6pm	GOLF
Saturday	3-6pm	NBC
Sunday	3-6pm	NBC

Pro Golf Trivia

In the 1980s only one PGA player won two Masters titles. Who was it?

- a) Seve Ballesteros c) Ben Crenshaw
b) Bernard Langer d) Nick Faldo

Answer: a) Ballesteros won the Masters in 1980 and 1983.

Top News Stories

PGA Tour player directors prepare for meeting with Saudi leader of LIV Golf

Players on the PGA Tour board negotiating with Saudi Arabia's sovereign wealth fund have a meeting planned Monday with the Saudi leader backing rival LIV Golf, something Rory McIlroy said Sunday should have happened long ago. He also said Yasir Al-Rumayyan, the governor of the Public Investment Fund, wants to be "productive" in golf, while Greg Norman and others involved in LIV are disruptive. McIlroy won't be part of the meeting, and details remained vague on where it would be held and whether it would be anything more than an ice breaker with Al-Rumayyan. "I doubt we will get into anything substantive in the first meeting," said Patrick Cantlay, one of six player directors on PGA Tour Enterprises. McIlroy gave up his seat on the board in November and was replaced by Jordan Spieth. The other four player directors are Tiger Woods, Adam Scott, Peter Malnati and Webb Simpson.

Lessons from the Golf Pro

One of those shots that we do not get the opportunity to practice very much, but comes in handy at times is the lob shot. In essence, the lob shot is a complete feel shot, so there are a few tricks to follow. The first step is to make sure that your grip pressure is soft and your hands stay quiet. You want to keep your grip pressure constant throughout the entire stroke. Your best course of action is to make a long, lazy swing with as much wristcock as you can get on your backswing. You need to make your stance much wider than what you are used to and open the clubface up dramatically to get the ball in the air immediately. The final point is to play the ball off of your left instep with almost all of your weight being placed on your right foot.

Last Week in Pro Golf

Scottie Scheffler won the PLAYERS Championship



On Sunday, Scottie Scheffler, won the PLAYERS Championship at TPC Sawgrass for the second year in a row. This made him the first player to achieve this milestone in the 50-year history of the "fifth major" tournament. Scheffler trailed Xander Schauffele by five strokes at the start of the final round but he closed with a brilliant 8-under 64 for the victory. "It's tough enough to win one Players," said Scheffler. "So to have it back-to-back is extremely special."

FedEx Cup Standings

Through March 17, 2024

- 1) Scottie Scheffler**
2,298 pts. / 6 top tens
- 2) Wyndham Clark**
1,531 pts. / 3 top tens
- 3) Hideki Matsuyama**
1,220 pts. / 2 top tens

FedEx Cup Standings continued...

Player	Points	Top 10s
4) Xander Schauffele	1,121	5
5) Sahith Theegala	1,074	4
6) Matthieu Pavon	987	3
7) Byeoung Hun An	948	3
8) Chris Kirk	916	1
9) Ludvig Aberg	893	3
10) Brian Harman	815	2

2024 SCHOOL SCHEDULES

School	Event	Date	Time	
FERNANDINA BEACH HIGH SCHOOL	Varsity Baseball	March 21-23	DIAMOND CLASSIC	
	March 28	STANTON	6:30	
	March 29	ST. AUGUSTINE	7:30	
	April 2	OAKLEAF	7:00	
FERNANDINA BEACH HIGH SCHOOL	March 29	ST. AUGUSTINE	5:00	
	April 2	OAKLEAF	4:30	
	April 5	BOLLES	6:30	
	April 9	at Episcopal	6:00	
	April 11	WOLFSON	6:30	
	April 12	KEYSTONE HEIGHTS	6:30	
	April 18	WEST NASSAU	6:30	
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