

# SportsDay

The Dallas Morning News

Section C



COLLEGES  
**Old rivals meet**  
Texas Tech scored on a sacrifice fly in the seventh inning to beat defending champion Oklahoma, setting up the final against Texas in the Women's College World Series starting Wednesday. **7C**

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## Thanks, but C you later

Benn's contributions are clear, but time has come for a new captain

When the Stars slowly made their way off the ice Thursday night following the handshake line with the victorious Edmonton Oilers, Jamie Benn waited at the gate and tapped his teammates as they skated past. I thought Benn was leaving the AAC in a Stars uniform for the final time.

I think now I was wrong



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about that. Not only has Benn said he hopes to come back, owner Tom Gagliardi and management have indicated a willingness to make it happen. So, at an extremely reduced rate from the average of \$9.5 million he has been making for years, Benn might be coming

back for a 17th season.

But it can't be as captain of the Dallas Stars.

I don't say this maliciously, but the team needs to cut ties with that. This is Team Finland now. Slap the C on Mikko Rantanen's chest, and away you go. It is time to move on.

When I moved to the Stars' beat in 1995, it was the team's third season in Dallas and Derian Hatcher was its third captain. Benn has been captain of the Stars for 12 seasons. That's incredible staying power when you look at the kinds of

players that have held their jobs longer. Sidney Crosby, The Kid himself, for 17 years in Pittsburgh. Alex Ovechkin, the Gretzky record-breaker, for 16 years in Washington. Gabriel Landeskog, the Colorado warrior who missed three full seasons and came back to put a scare in the Stars in the first round in April.

I don't think Benn could see losing the captain's C as any kind of demotion. If they bring him back to finish his career

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Smiley N. Pool/Staff Photographer

**The Stars' Jamie Benn (left)**, tussling with the Winnipeg Jets' Adam Lowry in a second-round playoff game three weeks ago, had a big drop in production in the playoffs.



Chitose Suzuki/DMN

These are options for Mavs at PG

**Mike Curtis:** With Kyrie Irving (above) sidelined at the start of the seasons, the Mavericks have a few players on the roster who can fill in if another player isn't acquired. **5C**  
■ The Mavericks will get an early look at Luka Doncic and the Lakers during a preseason game on Oct. 15 in Las Vegas. **5C**

### HIGH SCHOOLS

#### Keller reprimanded for alleged violations

The swim titles will be kept, but the program will have to make some alterations after a district executive committee ruled on the allegations. **7C**

### ALSO INSIDE

■ French wild card pulled off a big upset at Roland Garros, topping No. 3 Jessica Pegula. **6C**

### SCORES

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**RANGERS AT RAYS** | 6:35 p.m. today (RSN, Victory+)

## Looking up



Elias Valverde II/Staff Photographer

**The Rangers' Marcus Semien** has been slumping this year, but he went 7 for 8 with three walks Friday through Sunday against the St. Louis Cardinals.

Semien's big weekend offers hope that offense can support the stellar pitching

### RANGERS INSIDER



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ARLINGTON — So begins the longest road trip thus far of the Texas Rangers' season.

And, dare we say, that may be a fine thing? The Rangers have been a better offensive team away from Globe Life Field this season than in it. They've slashed .223/.287/

.335 for a .622 OPS at home. On the road, though, they've slashed .221/.280/.380 for a .660 OPS.

The difference is in the power numbers. The Rangers have hit 76 of their 132 extra base hits (or 57%) on the road despite the fact that they've

had more at bats at home. Because of that, the nine-game trip against the Tampa Bay Rays, Washington Nationals and Minnesota Twins may offer the Rangers a chance to flex their muscles.

But, anyway, that's the next week. Let's talk about the week

that was.

**Marcus Semien on the rise:** He is no longer the team's leadoff hitter, but because of his weekend performance, Semien will lead off the first of these five thoughts.

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Smiley N. Pool/Staff Photographer

**Scottie Scheffler**, preparing to hit from the 18th tee during the final round of the CJ Cup Byron Nelson in McKinney on May 4, won the tournament by eight strokes.

## Nelson extends TPC Craig Ranch pact through 2030

CJ Cup tourney deal reached as phase II of course overhaul speeds

It was hard to imagine the CJ Cup Byron Nelson having more momentum than late afternoon of May 4, when world No. 1 and Dallasite Scottie Scheffler completed his eight-shot victory at McKinney's TPC Craig Ranch.

Until Monday, that is, when officials told *The Dallas Morning News* that the contract with the PGA Tour to keep the tournament at TPC Craig Ranch has

been extended through 2030. Since his Nelson triumph with a tour-record-tying score of 253 (31 under par) Scheffler has continued to roll, winning the PGA Championship and the Memorial. Likewise, good news continues for the 57-year-old CJ Cup Nelson.

### GOLF



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Women's PGA Championship heads to PGA Frisco. **3C**

Roughly an hour after last month's Nelson concluded, phase II of a \$22.5 million reinvestment project to overhaul TPC Craig Ranch began. Work is scheduled to be completed well before next year's Nelson, May 21-24.

"I think what's really impressive here is the strength of the partnerships," said David Pills-

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KPMG WOMEN'S PGA CHAMPIONSHIP | PGA Frisco's Fields Ranch East, June 19-22

# Top golfers keep flocking to Frisco

South Korea's Yang previews course ready to host its 2nd major

By BRAD TOWNSEND  
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FRISCO — On Sunday, Amy Yang finished the final round of another grueling U.S. Women's Open, at Erin Hills in Wisconsin, caught a 5 p.m. flight to Dallas and arrived in Frisco at about 10 p.m.

She awoke in time Monday to play the PGA Frisco's Fields Ranch East Course and, at 1 p.m., attend media day of the KPMG Women's PGA Championship, where she will defend her title June 19-22.

"Why not take the opportunity to see the course this morning, even though I'm a little tired?" she said with a smile, as she did throughout media day. "I think I made a good decision."

Indeed, Fields East has only been open since spring 2023, meaning South Korea's Yang will be among the relative few of the 156 players in the Women's PGA field to play the course before tournament week.

The Women's PGA will be the second major tournament played at Fields East, on the 660-acre home of the PGA of America. It also will be the first Women's PGA played in Texas and the first women's major in North Texas since the 1991 U.S. Women's Open at Fort Worth's Colonial Country Club.

The first major played at Fields East was the May 2023 KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship, won by Steve Stricker in a playoff against Padraig Harrington.

When the PGA of America in August 2022 relocated from Palm Gardens, Fla., to its state-

BRAD TOWNSEND

## Nelson pact goes through '30

Continued from Page 1C

bury, CEO of Invited, which with the city of McKinney jointly announced the extension. "We're just really proud to be one of the key partners in that remarkable equation."

The partnership includes the 650-member host-organization Salesmanship Club of Dallas. Since 1968, the Nelson has generated \$190 million for the Salesmanship Club's Momentous Institute, which uses mental health services, education and professional training to strengthen children, families and communities.

Since 2021 the tournament's partnership has included the city of McKinney and Craig Ranch founder David Craig, which for more than a decade worked to lure the tournament north to Collin County, after runs at Preston Trail (1968-1982), TPC Las Colinas (1983-2017) and Trinity Forest.

Last but not least the partnership includes CJ, Korea's leading food culture company. In 2024 CJ replaced AT&T as the Nelson's title sponsor, with a tournament-stabilizing 10-year agreement.

Pillsbury said CJ's sponsorship was the final impetus for Dallas-based Invited, which owns 150 golf and country clubs worldwide, to make the largest single-course reinvestment in its history in TPC Craig Ranch, which was designed by Tom Weiskopf, opening in 2004.

Invited hired Wadkins Design Group, led by 1973 Nelson champion and World Golf Hall of Famer Lanny Wadkins, to complete the TPC Craig Ranch overhaul.

"We're thrilled about the incredible investment Invited is making in TPC Craig Ranch," said Jon Drago, tournament director of the CJ Cup Nelson. "The thoughtful redesign and enhancements envisioned by the Invited team will undoubt-

Along with the Nelson, Mc-

edly elevate the course even further.

"The city of McKinney and Invited continue to be outstanding partners, and we're looking forward to what's ahead. We can't wait to showcase the reimagined course to players, fans and the world next May."

The course renovation includes new turf varieties to enhance conditions and durability; complete bunker redesign and repositioning to improve the strategy of play; enhancing drainage and aesthetics; and resurfacing and reshaping of greens to allow expanded pin placement options, smoothness and undulation.

Pillsbury told *The News* he visited the site about two weeks ago.

"I couldn't believe the amount of work that's been done," he said. "We're moving extraordinary amounts of dirt. The progress has been incredible. Lanny's team is putting pedal to the metal, and it shows."

For the city of McKinney, the lure of the CJ Cup Nelson and commitment through 2030 is part of the legacy of Mayor George Fuller, whose two-term limit expires after this week's runoff election.

Along with the Nelson, Mc-



Photos by Steve Hamm/Special Contributor

**Amy Yang, the defending** Women's PGA Championship winner, helps promote the upcoming Women's PGA Championship to be played at PGA Frisco's Fields Ranch East Course later this month.

of-the-art, \$33.5 million headquarters building in Frisco, it promised many big tournaments to come.

The PGA Championship will be here in 2027 and 2034. The Senior PGA Championship returns in 2029 and the Women's PGA in 2031.

"Oh, I had so much fun this morning," Yang said. "The course is playing tough, but still fair. I think it's gonna test all aspects of your game. So I can't wait to come back and play the championship."

Yang, 35, won't have to wait

long. Championship director Jason Mengel said the PGA sold out both its initial and expanded plans of 25-person skybox units.

Mengel said the pro-am is only one group shy of a sellout, 1,000 volunteers are committed to help run the tournament, and only a limited number of Club PGA and general admission tickets remain.

Along with getting to watch the world's best women golfers, those who buy corporate suites, tickets or work as a volunteer also gain the opportunity to

purchase 2027 PGA Championship tickets.

"The reason I like this championship is certainly the greatest players in the world will be playing inside the ropes, but I think you need to look outside the ropes," PGA of America president Don Rea Jr. said. "You're going to see [fans] with their kids, their granddaughter or grandson in tow. It's going to be older men, older women, all age groups."

Joining Yang at PGA Frisco on Monday was Katelyn Sepmoree, PGA assistant profes-

sional at Willow Brook Country Club in Tyler.

Sepmoree qualified for the Women's PGA, as one of 10 PGA/LPGA Professionals on the Corebridge Financial Team, by winning the February's PGA Women's Stroke Play title at PGA Golf Club in Port St. Lucie, Fla.

Sepmoree led Tyler Legacy to district championships in 2008 and 2009 and earned All-Big 12 honors at Texas, but her vocation is teaching golf and helping to manage operations at Willow Brook. She has



**Championship director**  
Jason Mengel says a limited number of Club PGA and general admission tickets remain for the tournament.

been told that multiple busloads of supporters plan to come from Tyler.

Willow Brook head professional Chris Hudson is Sepmoree's teacher.

"I work with great people that allow me to do both my job and practice at the same time," Sepmoree said. "[Hudson] has said, 'I want you to chase your dreams, and if that's playing in major championships, let's find a way to do that.' I'm very blessed to be in a spot that nurtures that."

Yang has won six LPGA titles, but her three-shot win in

last year's Women's PGA at Sahalee Country Club was her first major championship — in her 75th start in a major.

She finished second in the 2012 and 2015 U.S. Women's Opens and Sunday at Erin Hills tied for 36th. But there she was in Frisco on Monday, smiling as she and Sepmoree hit ceremonial tee shots from the Omni PGA Frisco Resort's rooftop pool deck toward Fields East's 9th green.

Being a major champion is tough work, but someone has to do it.



Smiley N. Pool/Staff Photographer

**Fans gather at TPC Craig Ranch** after Scottie Scheffler claims the CJ Cup Byron Nelson at TPC Craig Ranch.

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