

CWS NOTEBOOK

Gators Hope To Help Break In New Omaha Stadium In 2011

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Moments after Florida was the first team eliminated from the final College World Series played at Rosenblatt Stadium, Gators coach Kevin O'Sullivan was already looking ahead to playing next year at the new TD Ameritrade Park downtown.

"To be a part of this tournament, the last year in Rosenblatt, that's something that can never be taken away from these players and coaches," O'Sullivan said Monday after the Gators lost 8-5 to Florida State. "But I can tell you we're looking forward hopefully breaking in the new one next year. So we'll see."

Seven freshmen or sophomores were among the Gators' everyday players. Austin Maddox and Mike Zunino, who combined for 26 home runs, are freshmen. Preston Tucker, who batted .333 and hit a three-run double in the ninth inning

against Florida State, is a sophomore, as is season wins leader Alex Panteliodis (11-3).

"If we get back here next year, everyone's going to be a little more experienced and be a little more confident, maybe," Tucker said.

The Gators won the Southeastern Conference regular-season title and were the No. 3 national seed. They won three straight games in the regionals and then swept Miami in the super regionals.

The Gators lost 11-3 to UCLA on Saturday in the opening round.

"I don't know if it was nerves," O'Sullivan said. "We obviously didn't play like we have all year. I don't want to take anything away from UCLA or Florida State, because they played obviously better than we did."

"I don't want it to be the focus, that we weren't used to playing in this type of a

crowd. We're a much better pitching team than this and defensive club than this. We have to improve on a few areas. And hopefully we'll be fortunate enough again to come back next year."

RAINOUT REWARD: First-time College World Series visitors Bobby Fulmer and Kaye Miller were rewarded for sitting through two long rain delays Sunday.

The two Clemson fans were able to sprawl out in the right-field bleachers for Monday morning's game between the Tigers and Arizona State.

The engaged couple from Columbia, S.C., were happy to see both Clemson and South Carolina in the final CWS at Rosenblatt Stadium. They had plenty of room in the bleachers as the morning attendance was announced at 14,198.

"We came to support the Gamecocks and Tigers," Fulmer said. "If you live where you live, it's a good year to come."

The trip to Omaha wasn't without a hitch. The couple missed their connecting flight out of Chicago on Saturday and didn't land until Sunday morning.

They sat through more than six hours of rain delays

to see Oklahoma's 4-3 win over South Carolina, then drove 55 miles to Lincoln, the closest city with hotel rooms available.

They were glad to see the sun come out Monday. The couple, sporting Clemson T-shirts, didn't hesitate when asked which of the South Carolina teams they wanted to win most.

"Clemson, absolutely," Fulmer said. "We'll root for Carolina if they're playing somebody else. We just like baseball, period."

As for the wedding, Fulmer said a date hasn't been set.

"We might wait until next year and do it in Omaha," he said.

NO MORNING HANGOVER: Clemson looked sharp in its 6-3 win over Arizona State on Monday, but that didn't surprise coach Jack Leggett. His team stuck around all day Sunday in the rain before finding out the game would be played Monday morning.

"It was frustrating not to play last night," Leggett said. "But I think we had the right approach. And we got up early, took showers, ate breakfast, tried to treat it like it was an afternoon ball game."



JUSTIN RUST/P&D
Terry Huber of the Yankton Breeze heads the ball during a U-16 boys' game Sunday at the Yankton Soccer Invitational at Lewis & Clark Soccer Complex. The three-day tournament brought 60 teams from South Dakota, Nebraska and Iowa to Yankton.

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One of three former USD players — Ko Quay (Jaguars) and Jake Arthur (Vikings) — to ink NFL deals after April's draft, Shepard said he is now considering his options after his two-month stint with the Packers.

"I'm just going to keep working hard and using this as fuel, to motivate me to get better," he said. "At the same time, I have to take what I learned in Green Bay to make me a better player. To me, this is a big stepping stone to whatever's next."

A realistic opportunity, according to Shepard, would be the United Football League (UFL), a five-member league that began play last fall. Shepard said he was in contact with UFL teams before the NFL Draft in April.

Comprised mostly of former NFL players and coaches, the UFL features teams in Orlando, Florida; Hartford, Conn.; Las Vegas, Nev.; Sacramento, Calif. and Omaha, Neb.

"That's something that may happen for me," Shepard said of the UFL. "I've built some relationships in that league. It's a solid alternative and another opportunity that's maybe there for me."

Though he admits he is still disappointed in last Friday's outcome, Shepard said it gives him more motivated to make a name for himself.

"I wasn't there very long, and that honestly hurts a little bit, but it's more fuel to my fire," he said. "I just have to keep my head up, keep working and stay positive."

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ly face the U.S. Premier League contingent.

"They have a lot of guys who are skillful on the ball and who like to get the ball in dangerous areas and run by guys or be creative in their own way and get shots," Bradley said. "Certainly Karim is good at that — his ability to use his speed to run by defenders and to get shots and crosses. I know that well. I play with him every week. So that's something that we need to keep an eye on. But when you look at their whole team, they have a lot of different threats."

With both teams facing elimination, it figures to be a fiercely fought game.

"Today's football is very physical. Skill is just for the final meters," Matmour said. "I'm quite happy to see everybody play the most simple game possible."

Algeria reached the World Cup for just the third time, following first-round elimination in 1982 and 1986. Egypt forced a tiebreaker playoff by beating Algeria 2-0 in Cairo, a match Algeria's Rafik Halliche and Khaled Lemmouchia played wrapped with head bandages after their team bus was pelted with stones. Four days later, Les Fenecs qualified by beating Egypt 1-0 in a tiebreaker playoff in Sudan.

The Americans have been toughened in a different way. Needing a three-goal victory over Egypt to reach last June's Confederations Cup final — and doing just that — taught them they can overcome adversity. That lesson was intensified in this World Cup, when the U.S. rallied to tie England 1-1 and then came back from a two-goal halftime deficit to tie Slovenia 2-2. The Americans nearly won that one, too, but Maurice Edu's 85th minute goal was disallowed for reasons that are still unclear since referees don't have to explain their decisions.

Donovan said the team is fortunate to have had a lot of experiences "that have brought us together, both good and bad."

"Being down 2-0 with your World Cup on the line is a difficult and daunting task to overcome," he said, "but the way we've been hardened in a lot of ways over the years has made that possible, and I think we're extremely excited for Wednesday."

Tony Kanaan Wins Iowa 250

NEWTON, Iowa (AP) — Tony Kanaan went to bed Saturday night in a foul mood after qualifying 15th at a track that's brought him nothing but frustration.

He woke on Sunday determined not to let his shaky past at the Iowa Speedway or anywhere else dictate how he ran the Iowa 250.

Kanaan overtook fellow Brazilian Helio Castroneves with 10 laps left and held on to win at Iowa on Sunday, erasing three crash-filled years of history at the speedy short oval.

It was the first win since 2008 for Kanaan, who last took the checkered flag in Richmond two years ago. Kanaan ran into contact in each of his first three starts at Iowa, but he zipped past Castroneves on lap 240 and cruised to victory by over four seconds.

"I've had three years to think about why I didn't finish. When I came here people kept reminding me of that," said Kanaan, who led for 62 laps. "I never finished, and then I finished. I finished first, so now we have a different story."

Castroneves finished second and E.J. Viso was a career-best third. Penske teammates Ryan Briscoe and pole winner Will Power rounded out the top five.

Dario Franchitti finished 10th. Dario Franchitti, a two-time winner in Iowa, had mechanical issues with 50 laps left and finished 18th, losing his points lead to Power in the process.

Kanaan started the race 15th, but he moved up quickly and took the lead about halfway through the race. Franchitti took the lead away from Kanaan with a quick pit stop 70 laps from the finish, but his quest for a third win in three starts at Iowa fell apart soon thereafter.

Castroneves leapfrogged Franchitti for the lead, and Franchitti soon went back to pit row when his gear box got stuck. It was the worst finish of the year for Franchitti, who dropped to third in the points race behind Power and Scott Dixon.

"I was shifting from sixth down to fifth and came up with a box full of neutrals," Franchitti said. "We had a winning car today, but it wasn't anybody's fault."

That left the race up to Kanaan and Castroneves, and



PHOTOS: CHARLIE GAUKER/FOR THE P&D

ABOVE: Tony Kanaan crosses the finish line during Sunday's Iowa 250, held in Newton, Iowa. **RIGHT:** Tony Kanaan gets some pre-race hydration.

Kanaan easily moved past his close friend Castroneves to pick up his 14th career IndyCar Series win.

"I should be happy, but with 10 laps to go it slipped right through my hands," Castroneves said.

Target Chip Ganassi teammates Dixon and Franchitti set the early pace, and Kanaan worked his way through the traffic in short order. Kanaan then hit his "push to pass" button and did just that, zooming past Franchitti for the lead just before the halfway point.

Kanaan had never run finished higher than 14th at Iowa before Sunday's win, but he felt confident in his setup despite a shaky qualifying run.

"When you win from 15th and you pass every car on the race track, it's definitely a winning car," Kanaan said.

Patrick was never a factor in her final race before resuming her split IRL/Nationwide schedule. Patrick quickly faded from her starting spot, ninth, and never threatened the lead pack.

"They're just more experienced. They know the game a lot better and they're not overwhelmed by the bright lights."

— BRAVES CLOSER BILLY WAGNER

hitting streak. The Giants still consider him their catcher of the future, probably starting next season after Bengie Molina's contract expires.

"He's quite an athlete," Oakland manager Bob Geren said. "Definitely adds more of an offensive dimension to a team."

Sure, some highly touted prospects have stumbled out of the gate, such as Pittsburgh third baseman Pedro Alvarez. But others who drew less attention are opening eyes, like St. Louis third baseman David Freese and Tigers outfielder Brennan Boesch (.337, 10 homers, 36 RBIs).

"It's all about where you come from and what path you took to develop. How seriously you took it coming up," Heyward said. "I learned at a very young age, nine or 10, as far as the cutoff man or taking a lead. I was fortunate to have that early start."

"They're just more experienced. They know the game a lot better and they're not overwhelmed by the bright lights," Braves closer Billy Wagner said. "When I came up it was, 'Wow! I'm facing Barry Bonds! Now it's, 'Billy Wagner? I'm not worried about him.'"

Starved for offense, the San Francisco Giants wanted Posey's big bat in their lineup so badly they brought him up May 29 to play first base — even though he's a catcher.

The fifth overall pick in the 2008 draft out of Florida State, Posey went 6 for 9 with four RBIs in his first two games and soon took off on a 10-game



KV Racing's Takuma Sato, an IndyCar Series rookie with just one top-20 to his credit entering Iowa, got as high as third before smacking the wall 73 laps from the finish. The former Formula One driver from Tokyo who finished 19th.

The Iowa 250's unfortunate tradition of early dustups continued, as Justin Wilson spun out late in the first lap and smacked Mario Moraes on his driver's side, sending Moraes into the wall.

The race went green 15 minutes earlier than scheduled because of some nasty spots on the local radar. The field and the fans got lucky, though, as the rain

stayed away from the track.

Kanaan finally got lucky at Iowa too, and his good fortune extended beyond the track.

Kanaan, who is a big soccer fan, planned to ask his radio crew to keep him up to date on the Brazil-Ivory Coast World Cup match happening at the same time as the race. He was too busy to keep track of Brazil's progress until after the race, when he received the news that his team had beaten Ivory Coast 3-1.

"We need a small reason to go party. Now we have plenty of reasons. We have two Brazilians on the podium, we won the game," Kanaan said. "I think it must be holiday at home."

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three runs.

McGee, who was playing left field, came on and gave up a single and hit a batter, loading the bases with one out. Shortstop Stephen Cardullo caught Mike Zunino's line drive and flipped to second baseman Devon Travis for a game-ending double play.

CLEMSON 6, ARIZONA ST. 3: OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Casey Hartman pitched six strong for Clemson, which handed top-seeded Arizona State's Seth Blair his first loss of the season in an opening-round game.

The Tigers tagged Blair (12-1) for five runs and seven hits with five walks in 4 1/3 innings to advance to a winner's bracket game against Oklahoma on Tuesday. The Sun Devils (53-9) meet South Carolina in an elimination game on Tuesday.

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