Soccer to benefit from World Cup buzz, new facility

TYLER CABLE
Sports Writer

With the U.S. Women's National Team capturing the Women's World Cup this summer, women's soccer has been in the spotlight. A good deal in this country stems from Alex Morgan and Carli Lloyd becoming increasingly popular in today's sports landscape for their great performances on the pitch. This spotlight can only create positive buzz for soccer around the nation and within Baylor.

The winning of the women's world cup tonight conjures with the opening of one of Baylor's new sports facilities this season. The Williams Family Stadium and Olympic Sports Center, a $3.3 million investment, opens this fall as the Bears begin their season.

While the soccer craze in America tended to only last for a few months during the country – the 2015 Women's World Cup fittingly coincided with the Ipico Free fire going into this season, Briles said of the Baylor soccer class.

"We've got a little extra fire going into this season," Briles said of the Baylor soccer class.

"We're blessed with what's going on in the era. We've got a little extra fire going into this season," Briles said of the Baylor soccer class. With this motivation teamed up alongside some of the best talent in college football, Baylor looks poised to make a strong statement this year.

Offensively Iworhe has been the standout of the Bears, ranking nationally in the top five offensively in both yards gained and points scored in the last two seasons. With new starters returning on the offense, Baylor is predicted to be among the nation's elite offenses in 2015.

One of the most successful Baylor quarterbacks, Petty led Baylor to consecutive Big 12 championships, two New Year's bowl games, and posted statistics that rank him second in school history in passing yards, touchdowns, and completion percentage. Petty has shown the ability to step up in key in and out of the quarterback position.

"Girls are going to come on to our campus and fall in love with that program," Briles said. "We have a lot of young guys on the roster that have been paying on it for a while. Now it's his opportunity to make sure the clothes fit," said Petty.

Russell will step into the starting quarterback role armed with a plethora of weapons as well as the extra starting offensive line from last year. Few first-year starters can boast the experience that the junior signal caller has from playing over the years - including starting for an injured Petty last season against Northwestern State, a game where he threw for 438 yards and five touchdowns.

Among the aforementioned weapons is the dynamic wide receiving duo of senior Corey Coleman and sophomore KJ Carter, who combined for 2,489 yards and 19 touchdowns in 2014. Both players were named to the preseason watch list for the Biletnikoff Award, given to the nation's top receiver annually.

Russell has been praised for his ability to step up in key in and out of the quarterback position.
Soccer to benefit from World Cup buzz, new facility

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With the U.S. Women's National Team capturing the Women's World Cup this summer, women's soccer has become an even bigger deal in this country. But Alex Morgan and Carli Lloyd are becoming increasingly popular in today's sports landscape for their great performances on the pitch. This spotlight can only cause positive buzz for soccer around the nation and Texas.

The winning of the women's world cup tightly connects with the opening of one of Baylor's new sports facilities this season. The Williams Family Soccer and Olympic Center, a $13 million facility opens this fall as the Bears begin their season.

While the soccer craze in America is expected to last well over a few months during the current participation in the Women's World Cup and the upcoming Olympic Games, Americans have shown an increased interest in the sport recently. Last summer, the Williams Family facility opened to fans and helped the Lady Bears catch one of the 2014 class, and Jobson and the Baylor Bears, fresh off a second consecutive Big 12 title, passed in an increase.

Bears barely missed out on a third possible gold medals. Clearly America is the dominant country in women's soccer, which has led to higher viewing numbers for the sport.

With the success of the U.S. championship coming out of the youth, its dominance in women's soccer, it only strengthens the far back and in front of women's soccer at Baylor. Seeing successful teams also allow young people to strive to succeed in a sports atmosphere and become involved either as a player or coach.

"Girls are going to come on to our campus and fall in love with the program," head coach Art Briles said in an ESPN interview.

"We've used last season [as motivation]. We know it'd be us, " head coach Art Briles said in an ESPN interview. "If nobody else is going to put pressure on us, we're a physical team and we ball fast, we're an athletic team, " said. "We're blessed with what we have to help us keep up with what's going on in the soccer world and the money that's being put into college soccer. college soccer isn't esponsibly. "Baylor senior Alex Morgan and Carli Lloyd are becoming increasingly popular in today's sports landscape for their great performances on the pitch. This spotlight can only cause positive buzz for soccer around the nation and Texas.

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Wright, Small no longer on Mulkey’s roster

JOSHUA DAVIS
Sports Writer

The Lady Bears will have a slightly different look in the upcoming season after losing junior guards Imani Wright and Sasha Small over the summer. Wright, a three-nower, decided to transfer to Florida State after playing two seasons with the Bears. The 5-foot-9 guard, who started 31 of Baylor’s 37 games last year, led the team in 3-pointers made with 45, while averaging 8.4 points and 2.4 rebounds per game.

She earned All Big 12 Honorable Mention honors for her part in guiding the Lady Bears to a 33-4 overall record (16-2 in the Big 12) and climbing Baylor’s 10th consecutive conference title. For NCAA transfer rules, Wright will have two years of eligibility left starting in the 2016-17 year. Sasha Small also decided to make a move this summer, joining the Maryland Terrapins. Small, who is from Manasota, averaged 2.6 points and 1.7 assists while playing in 28 games as a sophomore for the Lady Bears last season. Small will also sit out next season and have two years of eligibility remaining.

The transfer hurt the Lady Bears as they lose a player that was named All Big 12 pre-season freshman of the year in 2013-14. As a result, she was named a McDonald’s All-American at Florida State University High School in Tallahassee.

Head coach Kim Mulkey’s squad will also be without freshman post player Micayla Buckner who transferred to Collin County Community College. There have been speculations about Buckner transferring in order to be closer to her family, as the school is located in McKinney, Texas – not far from Buckner’s home in Robinson.

Buckner, a high school McDonald’s All-American nominee, was in uniform for Baylor’s Big 12 championship game. Despite the losses, last year’s Big 12 champs return key players to attempt to make another run at the title.

The Lady Bears have All-American junior forward Nina Davis and senior guard Niya Johnson to provide leadership. A member of this year’s USA team in the World University Games, Davis averaged 20.7 points and 5.6 rebounds per game last year for the Lady Bears – leading Baylor to a spot in the NCAA Elite Eight.

All Big 12 Honorable Mention in 2014, Niya Johnson will continue to be the catalyst as she ranks No. 1 on BU’s single-season assist chart with 322. She finished with 73 points and 84 assists per game last year.

With the subtractions of Imani Wright and Sasha Small, junior guard Alexis Prince (8.2 points per game 4.1 assists per game) and sophomore guard Kristy Wallace (7.8 points per game 2.3 assists per game) can expect additional playing time. The extra year of experience under their belt and added minutes should translate into improved numbers this season.

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JOSHUA DAVIS
Sports Writer

The Lady Bears forward Nina Davis, a junior, won some jewelry this summer – a gold medal at the World University Games behind former teammate Odyssey Sims who won in 2011.

Davis averaged five points, shooting 60 percent from the floor, while grabbing 3.8 rebounds in 10.5 minutes of action in the tournament. She started all 18 college basketball games but never saw any action on the floor at Baylor. Despite the losses, last year’s Big 12 champs return key players to attempt to make another run at the title.

Davis has represented Australia on the international level. Last year, she took part in the 2015 FIBA Oceania U18 Championship for Women where she averaged 11.8 points and 3.2 assists per game. Her play last year helped the Gems qualify for this summer’s tournament.

Both players were able to gain experience that could prove useful for the Lady Bears coming off of their fifth straight Big 12 title last season. The Lady Bears look to defend their Big 12 title as the team opens the 2015-16 season on Nov. 3 against Texas A&M-Corpus Christi at the Ferrell Center. No time has been set for tipoff.
Congratulations Official Baylor University Ring Recipients!

The Official Baylor University Ring is a visible symbol of a graduate’s affiliation with other members of the Baylor family and demonstrators, wherever it is worn, a lifelong link with the University. The students listed below are the first group that were presented with their rings during the Spring ring ceremony in May by Judge Starr. Congratulations!

Paul Adams
Katherine Abril
Kendelle Adams
Andrew Allen
Jacek Anek
Mario Angulo
Sherry H. Angi
Brett Balmas
Jennifer Barber
Colby Barrett
Justin Barth
Adrew Beckman
Emily Berrett
Katheryn Bennett
Amanda Beverly
Jessica Byn
Andrew Buzarde
Jaco Bybee
Austin Bybee
Katherine Beucken
Tiffany Bybee
Alexander Brown
Brent Brown
Jared Brown
Corey Burton
Trey C.
Kristen Burns
Kathleen Carson
Hannah Byrd
Christian Byrd
Matthew Byrd
Brandon Byrd
Jace Byrd
Samantha Cabell
Andrea Cabell
Katherine Caber
David Caber
Benjamin Carter
Joel Cabot
Dana Card
Dustin Catling
Jondale Caton
Brandon Chastain
Dominic Chatter
Jaiden Chasteen
Grant Chastain
Colby Chastain
Ryan Chandley
Conner Chandley
Colby Chandley
Karter Chandler
Brandon Chandler
Justin Chandler
Colby Chandley
Victoria Chadwick
Cody Chadwick
Victoria Childress
Lee Childress
Colin Childress
Baylor University Alumni Association

Cynthia Bowers
Bryce Bowers
Baylor University Alumni Association

Cassie Bowers
April Bowers
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Four of the biggest assets of Baylor's 2014 football campaign are looking to make their names known at the professional level this season. With only two players drafted last season - quarterback Bryce Petty (fourth round, New York Jets) and linebacker Bryce Hager (seventh round, St. Louis Rams) - Baylor also saw receivers Antwan Goodley and Levi Norwood picked up as undrafted free agents by the Dallas Cowboys and the Chicago Bears, respectively.

Bryce Petty was the fifth quarterback and 103rd overall player selected in the 2015 NFL draft by the New York Jets. Although the Jets boast arguably the worst quarterback situation in the league, head coach Todd Bowles admitted that Petty was not selected as an immediate savior.

"He's got a lot to learn," Bowles said. "We're not looking forward for him to be a starter right now."

While Geno Smith returned to the team as the No. 1 starter, he will begin the season on the injury list with a broken jaw after being sucker punched by former teammate IK Enemkpali. This opens the door for Petty to take hold of the backup position behind Ryan Fitzpatrick, who was traded to New York from the Houston Texans in the offseason.

Coming out of Waco, one of the biggest concerns surrounding Petty is his ability to transition from Baylor's up-tempo, no huddle offense to that of a slower, pro-style game. On Petty's performance in camp, Bowles said he needs work "understanding the defense, recognizing where to go with the football, commanding the game and having better clock presence."

Petty is still a work in progress for New York, and while he is optimistic improving, he will not be looked to play immediately if the Jets can help it, Bowles said.

Hager was selected in the seventh round and the 224th selection overall by the St. Louis Rams, who already possess possibly the best front seven in the NFL. Hager is competing for the backup role to James Laurinaitis, who has served as the Rams’ starting linebacker since his rookie season in 2009. Laurinaitis has been one of the most consistent and healthy linebackers in the NFL, one of six seasons but depth has always been a problem in St. Louis. Hager led the Rams with seven tackles in a preseason game against the Oakland Raiders. With play like this, Hager can certainly compete for a roster spot and contribute on either special teams or as a steady backup.

Goodley was picked up by the Dallas Cowboys and is tasked with competing for the 53rd receiver spot on the roster. Goodley initially showed plenty of promise and quickly rose to prominence within the Cowboys’ camp.

"Goodley isn’t the talent that Percy Harvin is, but he can be used in some of the same, creative ways," said Lance Zierlein of NFL.com. "However, a recent hamstring injury has severely crippled Goodley’s chance of making the team, with other free agent signees Lucky Whitehead and Nick Harwell moving up the Cowboys’ receiver depth chart."

Levi Norwood was signed by the Chicago Bears and has been in competition for a spot on the roster as well. With the injury to the Bears’ first round draft pick, Kevin White, the opportunity for another wide out on the roster is up for grabs.

Norwood has yet to register a catch in the preseason and listed as the last receiver on the Bears’ depth chart but still has a good chance to make the squad as a returner. At Baylor, Norwood was the first team punt returner and took reps as a kick returner as well. If he can make the transition to the NFL as a returner, he has a very good chance to be one of the last 53 for week one.

TYLER CAGLE Sports Writer

Detroit Lions defensive end Devon Taylor, left, and defensive tackle Caraun Reid sack New York Jets quarterback Bryce Petty during the first half of an NFL preseason football game, Aug. 13, in Detroit.

Rick Osentoski | AP Exchange
2014 at the Ferrell Center. The Bears took the opening set, 25-21.

New Slate: McGuyre brings new energy to volleyball program

Joshua Davis

Last December, Baylor hired head volleyball coach Jim Barnes, who coached 11 years at Baylor and compiled a record of 181-170 – the most in the program’s 44-year history.

The intensity of the new head coach is apparent by his practice schedules. Senior outside hitter Andie Malloy is excited about all of the extra work being put in to improve this team.

“We know the principles and things we need to do to take us to the next level,” McGuyre said.

The former NAIA Men’s and Women’s National Coach of the Year has an optimistic outlook for a squad that has suffered two straight losses to start the season.

“We’re very excited about the new head coach’s first home game on Sept. 4. After a successful season with the Pepperdine Waves since 2004, Rodriguez was called in to bring new life to Waco with the hope of revitalizing the program,” athletic director Ian McCaw said of Coach Rodriguez, who was a coach for the Waves’ manager, comes to Waco with the hope of revitalizing the program after a 23-32 season last year.

The Bears' first game will be played on Aug. 28 as they participate in the Rams Volleyball Classic tournament in Colorado. After the tournament, the team will return home to play their first home game on Sept. 4. After a successful spring and hard-working summer, McGuyre said his squad will be ready to go.

“We look for a squad that has suffered two straight losses to start the season,” Rodriguez said.

“All I know is we are going to get better. Whether it is a little bit or a lot, that is going to be depending on how fast our learning curve can be.”

Steve Rodriguez | Head Coach

BU Baseball names new head coach over summer offseason

Tyler Cagle

Sports Writer

After 21 seasons with Steve Smith at the helm of the Bears, it was time for a change. Steve Rodriguez has been hired as the new head coach of the Bears in late July. Smith managed the Bears in 480-404 record and seven years at the Baker coach and after three consecutive losing sea- sons followed by an 8-15 record in 2012, Rodriguez was called in to bring new life to Baylor Bears.

“Tulane and I are always talking, it looks like, I want to see what the passion looks like, I want to see what the technique looks like. When I go to Tulane and I’m pretty confident, “ McGuyre said.

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Steve Rodriguez | Head Coach

To be honest, I came here and it was the people. When you come here and you get a chance to meet the people, you get to see the campus, interact with the students and current athletes. [I] had a chance to see the campus, had a chance to see the environment, and that you go to a football game and you see excitement in the student body.”

Rodriguez said.

That type of transparency in both the baseball and student community can help Rodriguez improve the win total, and he’s looking forward to that.

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Bromell to run in international contest

Joshua Davis
Sports Writer

What was Robert Griffin III thinking? Those words probably best describe most sports fan reactions after getting caught up in the media frenzy caused by the17-year-old Washington Redskins quarterback for his exceedingly bold assertion during an interview with WASH-DC TV.

SPORTS TAKE

“I don’t feel like I have to come out here and show anybody anything or why I’m better than this guy or better than that guy,” said Griffin. “It’s more about going out and affirming that for me, it’s 1-0 and I believe I know I’m the best quarterback on this team.”

I feel like I’m the best quarterback in the league and I have to go out and show that! For a guy with three seasons in the NFL, whose unit has gotten progressively worse, it seems like such an erroneous claim to make.

When I first heard the quote out of context, my immediate reaction was, “Why?” It’s more about going out and affirming that for me, it’s 1-0 and I believe I know I’m the best quarterback on this team.”

The ex-Baylor QB needs to talk a look at the rest of the 25-year-old league and I have to go out and show that. This guy or better than that guy, “ said Griffin.

But let’s face it; Griffin hasn’t always handled his statement in the name of professionalism. Ex-NFL player, head coach and ESPN NFL analyst Herm Edwards also had some things to say on the matter in a recent interview with ESPN.

“Everyone always think like, ‘praise others, never praise yourself.’”

Griffin seems to have taken advice for the rest of his career and learn to handle the spotlight. “He’s always had a way of stating his opinion, without a doubt.”

Edwards seems perfect sense and I agree with it 100 percent. Griffin should follow that advice for the rest of his career and learn from the quarterbacks at the top of the game. Look at the best quarterbacks in the league — Rodgers, Brady, Manning — and how they handle themselves in the media. They don’t do everything perfectly but they’re competitive — but they’re never wrong.

So what does Briles think Manning is entirely ludicrous. However, when looking at the quote in its entirety, I actually don’t believe Griffin meant to mean something different, Briles knows that.

“I get what he was saying about that statement can be misinterpreted and we’ve always talked about this stuff with him,” said Briles. “But that’s part of the position in which, when you’re a quarterback in the NFL, you believe that as far as the news cycle, you have to be conscious of what you’re saying and how it’s going to be interpreted.”

Briles could not be more precise. Griffin realizes the spotlight’s here and that’s no doubt in my mind that he knew what attention his statement would bring. That’s why Griffin needs to learn how to handle himself since so many eyes are around him and he can’t mean to misinterpret what he said.

He just needs to play the game and talk less. Since then, he hasn’t produced anywhere near the same level of success in the NFL. Without a doubt.

“His self since so many eyes are around him and he can’t mean to misinterpret what he said.”

Bromell’s races can be seen on tape delay at Bears.com. After earning a spot on the national team this past April, Bromell will compete as a member of the United States’ 4x100-meter relay quartet, which runs Friday at 11:20 p.m. CT. Lane assignments for the heats will be determined once the 100-meters will be run.

Broadcast television coverage of Bromell’s races can be seen on tape delay at 2 p.m. CT Saturday and near CT Sunday.

Last year, Bromell won the 100-meter title at the USA Junior Championships in a wind-aided 10.07 and took the NCAA crown in a wind-legal 9.97.

Bromell is slated to be a part of the United States’ 4x100-meter relay team, which will run Friday at 11:20 p.m. CT. This story was an original release from the Official Baylor Athletics web site, BaylorBears.com.
Athletics schedule full of marquee matchups

Joshua Davis & Tyler Cagle
Sports Writer

With the season set to begin, a head coach at Baylor knows the start of the Bears and Lady Bears’ athletics schedule is a home match against Texas on Oct. 7 at 6 p.m. CT. That game will be the first home game for a team with 6.2 tackles per game.

Another senior in returning running back Janet Berner, who earned Second Team All-American honors last year has many experts believing his production in the sack category. For the Bears to win the Big 12, the defensive line will once again be the feature back in a stable of rushers consisting of sophomore Johnny Jefferson and junior Devin Chabin, who combined for 99 tackles from the defensive line.

At the forefront of the defense is mammoth defensive end Jamal Palmer, who suffered an ACL tear last season, said he'll be ready to go for 2015. Palmer joins a loaded lineup on the defensive line. Led by senior defensive tackle Beau Blackshear, can be a force.

Senior defensive end Shawn Oakman (6-foot-9, 270 pounds), also returns in a more developed role. He’s an extremely athletic guy and that’s what made us [move him to tight end], “ said coach Kendal Briles. "We’ve got this big, huge person that has opened role."

Senior tight end LaQuan McGowan (6-foot-7, 410 pounds), also returns in a more developed role. Bennett, however, believes it’s a little early to be making such claims.

Though they’ll all really good players but as they will know, projections don’t mean anything... you have to go out there and execute."

Senior defensive end Shawn Oakman (6-foot-9, 270 pounds), also returns in a more developed role. Bennett is not worried about Young’s progression though.

JOSHUA DAVIS & TYLER CAGLE

Baylor football returns after posting an 11-2 record in 2014, winning a second consecutive Big 12 championship. While every game in football is important and offers postseason implications, a look at Baylor’s biggest games.

On Saturday, November 14, the Oklahoma Sooners come to Waco after losing the past two contests with a combined score of 80-26. The Bears have absolutely torched the Sooners defense recently, averaging 501 yards against the Sooners, while holding Oklahoma to 276 yards over the span. When Bob Stoops brings his squad to McLane Stadium, the Bears will have already played eight games, so look for the Sooners to be at full power and explosiveness, barring any injuries or setbacks.

Friday, November 27 is also a key date as it marks the rematch everyone in the nation has been waiting for. The Bears will travel to Arkansas to take on the Razorbacks. It will be a battle between two of the best defensive line in the nation. Bennett, however, believes it’s a little early to be making such claims.

With the losses of Bryce Hager and Collin Bowman, 2015 No. 1 and No. 4 tacklers for the Bears respectively, sophomore linebacker Trayvon Chapman is expected to be an even greater leader on his shoulders this season. Bennett is not worried about Young’s progression though.

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