

## Titans wrap up deal with 2nd-round pick Kristian Fulton

## Goodell sends letter to NFL fans explaining plans for season

NEW YORK, July 28, (AP) — NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell has sent a letter to fans outlining the league's plans to play during the coronavirus pandemic.

As veterans begin reporting to training camps this week, Goodell noted Monday how COVID-19 has "turned the world upside down."

"COVID-19 will continue to present a major challenge to nearly every area of American life. Football is no exception," Goodell wrote.

"Every step of the way, our focus has been on the safety of players, coaches, personnel, fans and our communities. Our planning has followed the lead of medical experts and public health officials, including the CDC, the White House Task Force, governors and state health officials.

As we have developed our 2020 playbook for the return of football, safety continues to be our first priority; that commitment will remain paramount as players return to the field."



Goodell

The league and the players' union reached agreement on a plan last Friday, after all preseason games were canceled. Team facilities were shut down by Goodell in late March and only began reopening on a cautious basis this summer.

"The NFL in 2020 will not look like other years," Goodell added. "Players and coaches will be tested for the virus regularly, including every day for a while. Preseason games have been canceled. Everyone in the team environment must follow rigorous health and safety protocols to keep themselves and each other safe. When there is a positive test, strict regulations will be enforced to isolate and care for that individual and to contain the virus before it spreads.

"Even the sideline will look different. And, state and local health guidelines will help determine whether fans will attend the games. These adjustments are necessary to reduce the risk for everyone involved."

Goodell stressed the need for adaptability on all levels, citing how a virtual draft was held in April. All 32 teams held remote offseason training sessions, too.

The NFL has opted not to create a bubble environment, something the NHL, NBA, WNBA and MLS have done. With Major League Baseball experiencing difficulties on its first weekend of play with a plan similar to the NFL's, there is added anxiety about what Goodell's league has planned.

"This week training camps across the country are starting and before we know it, the NFL season will be here," he wrote. "This is always the most optimistic time of year for our fans, and for all 32 teams. In a year that has been extraordinarily difficult for our country and the world, we hope the energy of this moment will provide some much-needed optimism."

The Tennessee Titans now have only their first-round draft pick left unsigned after agreeing to terms with cornerback Kristian Fulton, their second-round selection.

The Titans announced the deal with Fulton on Monday night.

The No. 61 pick overall, Fulton started two seasons at LSU and helped the Tigers win a national title last season. He defended 14 passes, second on the team. He finished his career with 65 tackles, 25 passes defended and two interceptions.

That leaves only offensive tackle Isaiah Wilson, the No. 29 pick overall, left unsigned out of Tennessee's six-man draft class. The other Titans' rookies and quarterbacks reported for training camp earlier Monday.

Running back Cam Akers and the Los Angeles Rams' other eight draft picks have all signed their contracts ahead of training camp.

The Rams announced the nine signings Monday while their rookies, quarterbacks and undrafted free agents reported for the start of camp and coronavirus testing.

Akers will compete with Darrell Henderson and Malcolm Brown to replace Todd Gurley, who was released in the offseason after five prolific years with the Rams. Akers, the 52nd overall pick, rushed for 2,875 yards and 27 touchdowns in three seasons at Florida State.

Receiver Van Jefferson was the Rams' other second-round pick. Los Angeles didn't have a first-round draft choice for the fourth consecutive season.

Tom Telesco was optimistic after the Los Angeles Chargers rookies reported to training camp over the weekend without any positive tests for the coronavirus.

Even though the Chargers remain virus free so far, news of 13 Florida Marlins and the Minnesota Vikings trainer/infection control officer testing positive reiterated to the team's general manager how quickly things can turn.

Los Angeles' 33 rookies and first-year players got on the field to start conditioning drills on Monday. Veterans will begin reporting for testing and physicals on Tuesday.

Washington put quarterback Alex Smith on the physically unable to perform list Monday on the eve of the start of training camp.

A physical showed Smith's right leg has medically recovered 20 months after he broke the fibula and tibia in it during a game. But the 36-year-old veteran hasn't been fully cleared for practices, contact or full football activity.

Putting Smith on the PUP list allows the organization's medical staff to monitor his progress.

Smith is signed through 2022, though his playing future remains murky. He hasn't played since the gruesome injury in November 2018 that required multiple surgeries.

The team's previous regime acquired Smith in a trade with Kansas City in 2018 and signed him to a \$94 million, four-year extension.

Smith threw for 2,180 yards, 10 touchdowns and five interceptions in 10 games with Washington. During his career that included previous stops with San Francisco and Kansas City, the 2005 No. 1 pick has thrown for 34,068 yards, 193 TDs and 101 INTs.

The day before the scheduled arrival of returning players to training camps around the NFL, the Minnesota Vikings served as a sobering example of the challenge of running a football team during a global pandemic.

Vice president of sports medicine Eric Sugarman, who's in charge of the organization's virus prevention strategy, has tested positive for COVID-19, the team announced.

About four hours later on Monday, the Vikings placed four rookies - including first-round draft pick wide

## FOOTBALL

receiver Justin Jefferson - on the league's newly created reserve list for COVID-19. Those players, the Vikings said, were not infected by Sugarman.

Joe Douglas fully envisioned Jamal Adams being a big piece of what he wants to build for the New York Jets.

The general manager raved about the All-Pro safety's abilities as a playmaker and leader when he took over the franchise just over a year ago. Douglas also insisted he'd love Adams to remain "a Jet for life."

Douglas dealt Adams and a 2022 fourth-round draft pick to Seattle on Saturday for first-rounders in 2021 and '22, a third-round pick in 2021 and safety Bradley McDougald. It was a stunning end to Adams' short but productive Jets tenure.

San Francisco 49ers postseason breakout star Raheem Mostert rerolled his contract after previously requesting a trade.

Agent Brett Tessler announced the new deal Monday that ensures the running back will report to camp with his teammates later this week.

Tessler had made a public trade demand on July 8 after talks with the 49ers failed to lead to a new deal to replace the three-year contract Mostert signed in 2019, when he was still mostly a special teams standout.

Nobody really had any idea what training camp would look like until the NFL and its players' union came to an agreement late last week to dramatically alter the collective bargaining agreement to ensure football in the age of the coronavirus.

Andy Reid might well have been the first one with a plan when the details were finally decided.

The coach of the Super Bowl champion Kansas City Chiefs has always been a stickler for planning. He might take a couple weeks off once the season ends, but even at his offseason home in Southern California he can't help but dream up plays and plot out practices.



In this Feb 27, 2020 file photo, LSU wide receiver Justin Jefferson runs a drill at the NFL football scouting combine in Indianapolis. (AP)



Tampa Bay Rays' Tyler Glasnow pitches to the Atlanta Braves during the first inning of a baseball game on July 27, in St Petersburg, Florida. (AP)

## Renfroe homers twice, Rays 'fan' 19 Braves in 14-5 romp

Tatis, Grisham power Padres to beat D-backs

ST PETERSBURG, Florida, July 28, (AP) — Hunter Renfroe homered twice and Tampa Bay pitchers set a team nine-inning record with 19 strikeouts in the Rays' 14-5 romp over the Atlanta Braves.

Atlanta starter Mike Foltynewicz (0-1) gave up six runs, four hits and four walks in 3-1/3 innings. The 2018 All-Star was designated for assignment after the game.

Tyler Glasnow struck out nine and allowed one hit over four innings in first start after missing part of sum-



mer camp with the Rays after testing positive for the coronavirus. Diego Castillo (1-0) struck out two in a 10-pitch fifth and Jalen Beeks fanned seven over his three innings.

## BASEBALL

Dansby Swanson and Matt Adams homered for the Braves. Swanson tied a career-high with five RBIs and stopped a 41-game homerless streak in Atlanta's 14-1 win Sunday night over the New York Mets.

Cubs 8, Reds 7  
In Cincinnati, Anthony Rizzo homered for the third time and Chicago let most of a seven-run lead slip away before Jeremy Jefferson closed out a victory over a Cincinnati team coping with coronavirus uncertainty.

Down 8-1 in the seventh inning, the Reds cut it to 8-5 on Joey Votto's two-run single. Craig Kimbrel walked the bases loaded with one out in the ninth, and then hit Freddy Galvis and walked Tyler Stephenson to cut it to 8-7.

Jeffers fanned Phillip Ervin and retired Votto on a liner to center for his first save with the Cubs.  
Jon Lester (1-0) left after five innings with a 6-0 lead, having thrown 76 pitches without allowing a hit on a muggy night. Cincinnati's Wade Miley (0-1) allowed six runs in 1-2/3 innings.

Athletics 3, Angels 0  
In Oakland, California, Mark Canha homered for the first time this season, Chris Bassitt (1-0) escaped a big jam and Oakland beat Los Angeles as the teams concluded their season-opening wraparound series.

A's slugging first baseman Matt Olson began wearing a mask at his position when runners reached amid a coronavirus outbreak among the Miami Marlins that kept the club in Philadelphia. Olson could be seen chatting with Mike Trout - also masked up - in the top of the eighth

after the Angels star drew a walk from Jake Diekmann.  
Joakim Soria allowed a pair of singles before closing it out for his first save, retiring Trout on a 93-mph called third strike that the slugger argued. He removed his batting helmet while speaking to plate umpire Adam Hamari. Manager Joe Maddon also had a word with the umpire.

Right-hander Griffin Canning (0-1) surrendered Canha's drive to start the fourth just after the Angels' missed opportunity in the top half of the inning.  
Brewers 6, Pirates 5, 11 Innings  
In Pittsburgh, Eric Sogard doubled home Brock Holt in the 11th inning and Milwaukee rallied for a rain-delayed win.

The Brewers trailed by four entering the ninth but took advantage of another shaky performance by the Pittsburgh bullpen to force extra innings. Ryan Braun's two-out, two-run double off Kyle Crick drew Milwaukee even.  
Pirates reliever Dovydas Neverauskas (0-1) escaped the 10th unscathed under Major League Baseball's new rule that puts a runner on second base to start each extra frame. The only Lithuanian-born player in MLB history couldn't do it again in the 11th. Sogard scorched the pitch down the left-field line to plate Holt and give the Brewers their first lead.

David Phelps (1-0) struck out Pittsburgh's Bryan Reynolds with the potential tying run on third in the bottom of the inning to end it.  
Colin Moran homered twice, including a 438-foot shot that

## MLB Results/Standings

WASHINGTON, July 28, (AP) — Results and standings from the MLB games on Monday.

Oakland	3	LA Angels	0	NY Mets	7	Boston	4
Toronto	4	Washington	1	SD Padres	6	Arizona	2
TB Rays	14	Atlanta	5	Chic Cubs	8	Cincinnati	7
Houston	8	Seattle	5	Milwaukee	6	Pittsburgh (11 Ins)	5
KC Chiefs	14	Detroit	6				

American League				National League					
East Division				East Division					
W	L	Pct	GB	W	L	Pct	GB		
Tampa Bay	3	1	.750	—	Miami	2	1	.667	—
Baltimore	2	1	.667	½	Atlanta	2	2	.500	½
New York	2	1	.667	½	New York	2	2	.500	½
Toronto	2	2	.500	1	Philadelphia	1	2	.333	1
Boston	1	3	.250	2	Washington	1	3	.250	1½
Central Division				Central Division					
W	L	Pct	GB	W	L	Pct	GB		
Cleveland	2	1	.667	—	Chicago	3	1	.750	—
Minnesota	2	1	.667	—	St Louis	2	1	.667	½
Detroit	2	2	.500	½	Milwaukee	2	2	.500	1½
Kansas City	2	2	.500	½	Cincinnati	1	3	.250	2
Chicago	1	2	.333	1	Pittsburgh	1	3	.250	2
West Division				West Division					
W	L	Pct	GB	W	L	Pct	GB		
Houston	3	1	.750	—	San Diego	3	1	.750	—
Oakland	3	1	.750	—	Colorado	2	1	.667	½
Texas	1	2	.333	1½	Los Angeles	2	2	.500	1
Los Angeles	1	3	.250	2	San Francisco	2	2	.500	1
Seattle	1	3	.250	2	Arizona	1	3	.250	2

bounced into the Allegheny River, for the Pirates.

Astros 8, Mariners 5  
In Houston, Alex Bregman hit his 100th career homer, a three-run shot, and Jose Altuve added a solo drive to give Houston a win over Seattle.

Josh James was not sharp in his return to the rotation after spending last season in the bullpen. He allowed three runs and needed 75 pitches to get through three innings. But Brandon Bielak (1-0) ate up the next 3-1/3 innings to win his major league debut and save Houston's bullpen.

Roberto Osuna worked a scoreless ninth for his first save.

Mariners starter Kendall Graveman (0-1) yielded six hits, seven runs and struck out seven in four-plus innings in his first game in 807 days after recovering from Tommy John surgery.

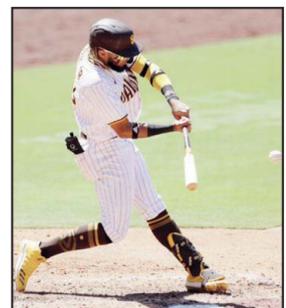
Padres 6, Diamondbacks 2

In San Diego, Fernando Tatis Jr raced around the bases on a three-run triple that highlighted a five-run rally and Trent Grisham hit his first home run for San Diego, which took three of four games in its opening series.

The Padres, who feel they're built for success in this pandemic-shortened 60-game season, outscored the Diamondbacks 21-9 in the four games.

The Padres scored five runs in the fourth inning before Luke Weaver (0-1) recorded an out.

Cal Quantrill (1-0) allowed one hit



San Diego Padres' Fernando Tatis Jr hit a three-RBI triple in the fourth inning of a baseball game against the Arizona Diamondbacks on July 27, in San Diego. (AP)

in 1-1/3 scoreless innings for the win.

Blue Jays 4, Nationals 1  
In Washington, Teoscar Hernández hit two of Toronto's four solo homers off Anibal Sánchez (0-1) to account for all the Blue Jays' scoring.

Rowdy Tellez and Danny Jansen also went deep for the Blue Jays, who were without two key players. Closer Ken Giles went on the injured list Monday, and shortstop Bo Bichette was scratched from the lineup about 15 minutes before the first pitch with a tight left hamstring.

Ryan Borucki (1-0) got four outs to earn the win, and Anthony Bass - filling in for Giles - got his first save of the year.

Royals 14, Tigers 6  
In Detroit, Maikel Franco hit two of Kansas City's six home runs, spoiling Detroit's fan-free home opener.

Whit Merrifield had three hits and three RBIs, finishing a triple shy of the cycle on a night when the Royals rallied from an early 5-1 deficit. Foster Griffin (1-0) won in relief, but he also had to leave his major league debut with a left forearm strain.

Detroit's Michael Fulmer allowed three homers in his first start back from Tommy John surgery.

Salvador Perez, Jorge Soler and Brett Phillips also homered for Kansas City. JaCoby Jones and Victor Reyes went deep for Detroit.

Kansas City took the lead for good with a six-run fourth. Kyle Funkhouser (0-1), making his big league debut in relief of Fulmer, allowed a two-run single by Ryan O'Hearn that made it 7-5.

Mets 7, Red Sox 4  
In Boston, Michael Conforto, Pete Alonso and Dominic Smith all homered, Michael Wacha pitched well over five innings and New York beat Boston.

Red Sox opener Josh Osich (0-1) escaped trouble in the first thanks to two Mets baserunning mistakes but gave up a two-run shot to Conforto in the second that cleared both the usual visitor's bullpen and the auxiliary tent behind it.

That was plenty for Wacha (1-0), who was a 22-year-old St Louis rookie when he faced the Red Sox in the 2013 World Series, beating them in Game 2 before taking the loss in the deciding sixth game.

## Pro Fighters League plans streaming service, int'l expansion

LOS ANGELES, July 28, (AP) — The Professional Fighters League will unveil an over-the-top streaming service next month as it aims to keep growing despite the cancellation of its 2020 season due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The PFL will create its own video content for the largest media venture yet by the league-based mixed martial arts promotion, which has a broadcast deal with ESPN and distribution to 160 countries.

The PFL also plans to announce a new collection of international broadcast deals next month despite postponing its next competitive fights to 2021.

The promotion hired longtime One Championship executive Loren Mack this month to play a major role in those international development plans. Mack also will work for the New York-based promotion in Las Vegas, where the PFL intends to increase its presence in 2021.

## MIXED MARTIAL ARTS

The PFL canceled its season in April, but offered a monthly stipend to its fighters. Most other MMA promotions have since returned to competition or announced plans to fight later in 2020, but

the PFL still plans to start fresh next year with its unique regular season/playoff competition format.

PFL President Ray Sefo said the promotion didn't believe it could complete its entire season of competition due to the worldwide uncertainty around the COVID-19 pandemic. While recent signee Rory MacDonald and other PFL fighters accepted the decision, it has been criticized by key fighters including Lance Palmer, Brendan Loughnane and Justin Willis, who all would rather be fighting than receiving a stipend.

The PFL was formed as the World Series of Fighting in 2012, changing its name to the PFL in 2017.