

National Football League

QB Weeden to help with Oklahoma relief

BEREA (AP) — Browns quarterback Brandon Weeden is heading home to help his cherished Oklahoma heal.

Weeden will return to his home state over the holiday weekend to assist in any way he can in the aftermath of the deadly tornado that tore through Moore, Okla., killing 24 people and destroying more than a thousand homes in the Oklahoma City suburb earlier this week.

Weeden has been in contact with Oklahoma Lt. Gov. Todd Lamb and he plans to pitch in and contribute anyway possible.

"I'll do anything, whether it's getting in the rubble and doing whatever, it doesn't matter," said Weeden, who is from Edmond. "I'll be there to

help." The disaster touched Weeden's family. His wife, Melanie, is from Moore, and her mother and brother still live in the city, which has been hit by four tornadoes since 1998. Although they escaped injury from the latest monster twister, which had winds clocked at over 200 mph, their homes sustained some damage.

"It actually went right through my wife's hometown," Weeden said following Thursday's practice. "Fourth Street, the path they keep talking about, my mother-in-law lives on Main, which is four blocks north of it, and my brother-in-law lives two blocks south of it. It went right over the top of them. Very, very fortunate to have no injuries and everybody's

safe." Weeden, who starred at Oklahoma State, said there were some frantic moments for he and his wife when they couldn't contact family as the tornado took aim at Moore.

"There's a park, literally there's two blocks between my brother-in-law and my mother-in-law," he said. "They said, 'If you're at that park, get out of the way.' It was destroyed. Once we heard it was destroyed, obviously there's no cellphone service. We couldn't get hold of them for about an hour. So my wife's panicked and we're panicked. It was tough being so far away."

Weeden said family



WEEDEN

members were able to take cover in time.

"My brother-in-law got in the car and drove away from it," he said. "My mother-in-law works in the administration building for Moore Public Schools, so she was in a basement, fortunately. Very, very blessed, we got lucky. But being up here, seeing my wife, she was rattled and it was very tough."

Authorities believe about 33,000 people were affected by the tornado, and monetary damage is estimated to be around \$2 billion.

Weeden was 14 in 1998 when Moore was hit by a tornado referred to as the

"May 3 tornado," which had 300 mph winds and killed more than 40 people. While folks living in Tornado Alley are accustomed to the fierce storms, nothing could prepare them for a colossal tornado like the one that struck this week.

"Unfortunately living in that part of the country, it's just what you deal with," Weeden said. "You hope they're never as big as they were. That's a big-time tornado. We've been fortunate, we've only had a few of those since I've been around. They're tough. My best wishes go to every family involved. I hope everybody recovers and all well comes out of it."

Browns wide receiver Josh Cooper, too, was affected by the tornado.

His father, Mike, works as a construction manager

in Moore and was forced into an underground shelter. Cooper, who is from Mustang, Okla., said he felt helpless as he watched TV coverage of the disaster.

"It was really tough," said Cooper, a college teammate of Weeden's. "My heart was hurtin' pretty good that day. I was checking in with my family and friends and hoping they were safe."

Cooper said no one he knew was seriously injured.

Oklahomans are tough, and Cooper is sure they will emerge from the disaster together.

"Everybody is kind of helping everybody," he said. "We'll be fine. We get through things like this all the time. Oklahoma strong, you know?"

Baseball

Trojans

CONTINUED FROM 15

said. "Being on the bottom of that pile, you've got your whole family on top of you. There's no better feeling in the world."

After the pile-up was over, Kendall also received plenty of "I love you, man's" and "You're my hero's" from his teammates — as well as one offer to pay back the favor and carry him to the bus.

"He deserves that," Troy coach Ty Welker said of Kendall. "He came out and did what we asked him to, what we've been looking for out of him all year. He executed and threw really, really well tonight."

Kendall found himself in a jam to begin — but the way Troy got out of it set the tone for the rest of the night.

A leadoff single, a walk and a hit-batter loaded the bases with no one out to put Kendall's back to the wall. But he struck out cleanup hitter Nick Bertram looking on three pitches, and when the next batter whiffed on a suicide bunt attempt, the Trojans caught the runner on third in a rundown and sent him back to the dugout. Kendall then finished off another three-pitch strikeout looking, and Centerville (24-2) got nothing out of it.

"I just had to buckle down and throw strikes," Kendall said. "If you have faith in your defense — like I do — then all you've got to do is throw strikes."

Troy took a 1-0 lead in the top of the third after an errant throw on a grounder by Nick Sanders brought Cascaden all the way from first to score, but Centerville got a two-out RBI single in the bottom of the inning from Sean Murphy to tie the score — and thanks to Kendall and Elk starter Derek Hendrixson, it stayed that way until the top of the seventh.

And the game-winning hit couldn't have come from a more fitting source.

After Cam Weaver drew a leadoff walk and Devin Blakely bunted him to second, Cascaden scorched the first pitch he saw right at the third



STAFF PHOTO/JOSH BROWN

Troy's Dylan Cascaden makes contact during a game against Centerville Thursday in Xenia.

baseman — who couldn't get his glove up in time, giving Cascaden an RBI single to make it a 2-1 game.

"You know, I've never beat Centerville," Cascaden said. "All four years, every sport I play — baseball, football, basketball — never beat 'em. So I gave the team a speech the other night about it. And yeah, they made fun of me a little for it. But it worked."

"I just went up to the plate hacking. The first pitch came in, and I hit it hard, right over the guy's glove."

The Trojans were far from done, though.

Sanders blasted an RBI triple over the center fielder's head to score Cascaden and chase Hendrixson from the game, and then Sanders scored on a grounder by Magoteaux when the Centerville second baseman tried to throw home to prevent the run but threw it way too high.

The shell-shocked Elks could do nothing in retaliation this time as Kendall put the game away one-two-three — retiring eight straight to close out the win.



Troy's Alex Magoteaux makes a throw to first base Thursday.

"We didn't come into this game looking at it like a monumental task," Welker said. "We were talking the other night, and we said 'Why not? Why can't we win?' We didn't doubt ourselves, we didn't look at records. We just took care of business. We played the game like every pitch mattered, and we never lost focus. This was a complete team effort."

"We just came together as a team and really

believe in each other a lot," Cascaden said.

And even buried under the weight of his whole team," Kendall was on Cloud Nine.

"We all just played the game of our lives," he said. "There's just no better feeling."

Troy ...001 000 3 — 4 8 0
Cville ...001 000 0 — 1 4 2

Kendall and Nadolny, Hendrixson, Mroz (7) and Murphy. WP — Kendall. LP — Hendrixson. 2B — Zeller (C). 3B — Johnson (T), Sanders (T). Records: Troy 19-11, Centerville 24-2.

Tennis



CIVITAS MEDIA PHOTO/ROB KISER

Milton-Union's Jack Blevins hits a forehand shot during the Division II district Thursday at Mason High School.

Tennis

CONTINUED FROM 15 Head and Sam Ellis 7-6 (4), 6-2.

Division I CENTERVILLE — Two years, two wins — with Thursday's being a benchmark of sorts.

Troy sophomore Luke Oaks has had a solid start to his career.

Oaks defeated Miamisburg's Rafael Hidalgo 6-2, 6-3 in the first round of the Division I district tournament Thursday at Centerville High School, his second first-round win in as many tries. But in the second round, he fell 6-2, 6-1 to Mason's Miguel Cepeda, coming one win short of reaching the state tournament.

Oaks won as a member of a doubles team as a freshman, but Thursday's win was his first at district in singles.

"Luke's the first guy we've had win a district match in singles for a long time," Troy coach Mark Goldner said. "That's a real positive for him."

Troy senior Chris Schmitt played his final match, falling to Trent Hayden of Beaver Creek 6-1, 6-3.

"It's just tough," Goldner said of the district tournament. "St. Xavier is good, Sycamore is good ... Mason

qualified all seven of its players here. It's just another world."

Tippecanoe senior Sam Bollinger — who was the sectional runner-up to Oaks — was defeated by Mason's Jeremy Schneider 6-3, 6-1 in the first round.

"Sam didn't know anything about the kid going into the match," Tippecanoe coach Von Clendenen said. "Mason is the No. 1 team in the state, and they qualified all seven at district."

"Sam was right in it the first set. He was hanging with him, but the kid was very strong. He was about 6-foot-1 or 6-2. But Sam played his heart out. He was a senior who went out in style."

A slow start doomed Tipp's Jake Belcher and Michael Keller as the duo lost their match against Mason's Mike Dellon and Wyatt Heinz 6-1, 6-3.

"They are a team that starts slow. They did it in sectionals, and they did it in this match," Tippecanoe coach Von Clendenen said. "I think they went down 4-0 before they got their first point. Doubles is all about momentum, and once they got going in the second game, they couldn't stop it."

"They'll be back next year, so they'll get another shot at it."

High School Football

Zimmer

CONTINUED FROM 15 runner-up Trotwood-Madison.

"He's got great versatility," Brewer said of Zimmer. "He'll play safety for them, but he could play anywhere they wanted him to — that's pretty much what he did for us. We did everything we could to get the ball into his hands, because every time it was, the kid made plays."

Zimmer said the coaching staff at Ashland already has talked to him about his versatility.

"They like my versatility, my athleticism and my nose for the ball," the 6-foot-2, 195-pound Zimmer said. "They like my tackling. They are big on recruiting good tacklers. They run both a 3-4 and 4-

3 defenses and they told me they could bring me up into the box to help stop the run or they could roll me back and have me cover deep."

Zimmer — who also is a part of the Trojans' state-ranked 4x100 track and field relay team — certainly comes from good football stock. His father, Doug, earned All-America honors as a defensive back at the University of Dayton.

"We haven't talked a whole lot about it — but he's told me it's going to be a big step up, going from high school to college football," Zimmer said.

Brewer has no doubt Zimmer is ready to take that step.

"He's going to be a good one for them," Brewer said. "I have no doubts."

Golf

Palmer has 1st-round lead at Colonial

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP) — Ryan Palmer was standing in the fairway on his last hole Thursday when his longtime caddie and fellow Colonial member issued a challenge.

James Edmondson, who won his third Colonial club championship last year, told Palmer that a birdie would match the caddie's low round at Hogan's Alley.

"What do you do when you get that thrown at you," Palmer said.

Palmer hit his approach to 5 feet at the 388-yard ninth hole for an

8-under 62 that matched the lowest PGA Tour first round at Colonial. That put him a stroke ahead of John Rollins, who had his best round this season.

For all the rounds Palmer has played at Colonial, where he has been a full dues-paying member since 2010, he had never had such a low score. He generally plays there two or three times a week during the offseason and once or twice during weeks he's not playing the PGA Tour.

"These old men here make me grind because I

have to give them so many shots. Maybe that helps," Palmer said, smiling. "Usually in a practice round, I don't think I've shot below 65. You just don't grind a lot. In this situation, you grind a little harder. You are able to focus more. When I'm out here with the guys, I mean half the time I might grab a few (beers) for the back nine."

Graham DeLaet, wearing pants with a plaid design similar to the jacket Colonial winners get, matched Morgan Hoffmann, David Hearn

and John Peterson at 64. Matt Kuchar, No. 13 in the world ranking and the highest-ranked player in the 136-man invitational field, was in a group of six players at 65.

Rollins, who like Palmer lives in nearby Colleyville, has playing privileges at Colonial like other PGA Tour players though he doesn't play the 7,204-yard layout nearly as much as Palmer.

"He's a pretty permanent fixture in the men's group and everything that goes on out here," Rollins said.