

NINA MOINI: This weekend, Minnesota skiing star Jessie Diggins celebrated her retirement with more than 2,000 fans in St. Paul. She shared photos and stories from her final season with a crowd at Allianz Field.

JESSIE DIGGINS: This feels like the most incredible close to my career in skiing, getting to be here with the community that raised me. You all supported my career from when I was racing without even having my hair in a ponytail. I didn't even have glitter yet.

NINA MOINI: [CHUCKLES] Diggins is known for wearing glitter on her cheeks on race day and, as she said, sharing it with anyone who would let her as a reminder to have fun. Fans at Allianz were happy to carry on the tradition.

CHILD 1: I'm wearing glitter on my face.

REPORTER: Why?

CHILD 2: To support Jessie Diggins?

CHILD 1: Because I want to support Jessie Diggins.

CHILD 2: Because it's fun.

CHILD 3: Yeah, because it's--

CHILD 1: And two, because it's fun.

CHILD 3: Yeah.

NINA MOINI: The nation's most-decorated cross-country skier said she's not sure what comes next, except that she plans to continue speaking about mental health and climate change. And as Jessie Diggins enters her next chapter, it's still the beginning for some other Minnesota athletes in this year's NBA and NHL playoffs.

The Timberwolves and the Wild play tonight in each of their second games of their best-of-seven series. Joining me with updates on this and other sports news are our contributors, Wally Langfellow and Eric Nelson. I hope you have your glitter on, guys.

[LAUGHS]

WALLY LANGFELLOW: Oh, boy. I don't think so.

ERIC NELSON:

ERIC NELSON: All that glitters is gold.

NINA MOINI: [LAUGHS] All right, well, you're here to talk about hockey and basketball anyway. So, Wally, let's start with hockey. How did the Wild do in game 1?

WALLY LANGFELLOW: They couldn't have done much better. They couldn't have had a better start to the postseason, that's for sure, rolling over the Dallas Stars 6 to 1 on Saturday. And they lead now the series, as you mentioned. Game 1, they lead the series 1-0. Game 2 is tonight.

Jesper Wallstedt was in the nets playing goalie, and he's played really well down the stretch. There was a question of whether it would be him or Filip Gustavsson. But they went with Wallstedt, and he stopped 27 out of the 28 shots that Dallas took. And so here they are.

Now, here's an interesting fact for you. Of course, most Wild fans realize that the Wild, they have not advanced out of the first round of the playoffs since 2015 when they beat the St. Louis Blues, OK?

NINA MOINI: Hmm.

WALLY LANGFELLOW: So that's nine consecutive playoff series without making it out of round 1. Here's another one that I didn't realize until I found this little factoid out yesterday. They have never, in their 25 year history, they have never led a series two games to none. So we'll find out tonight if they can actually break that string and go up two games to none against the Dallas Stars.

And of course, they have the third-best record in the West, and they're playing the second-best team in the West. It seems unfair the way the NHL has this thing set up. But if the Wild can advance out of this, then they'll likely get the Colorado Avalanche.

And that'll be a treat as well because Colorado, of course, had the best record in the West. So interesting things ahead for the Wild. But tonight, 8:30 PM, and the game is on ESPN tonight.

NINA MOINI: OK, nice. So, Eric, I understand the Timberwolves were close to a comeback in their game against Denver, but not quite close enough. Tell us about that game, and what's next?

ERIC NELSON: Yeah, Nina, they could not pull it off on Saturday. And they lose game 1 to Denver, 116 to 105. Jamal Murray was blazing hot for the Nuggets. He scored 30 points. He was 16 of 16 from the free throw stripe.

And the guy they call the Joker out in the Rocky Mountain time zone, Nikola Jokic, had a triple-double, which is par for the course for this guy. He's a multiple MVP winner, might get it again this season-- 25 points, 13 rebounds 11 assists, very physical game. 42 fouls were called.

And the Nuggets are scorching hot. They've won 13 straight games and haven't lost since March 18. So what do we got tonight? Game 2, Minnesota at Denver, 9:30 PM Central tip-off on NBC and Peacock. So it's going to be late-night hoops at elevation 5,280 in Colorado.

They have that on the floor. They want the opponent to know they're a mile above sea level so they don't have enough oxygen to win. We'll see if that works again for Denver, but there will be sleep-deprived Minnesota fans in the AM, no doubt.

And Anthony Edwards scored 22 for Minnesota Saturday, playing on a sore right knee Denver knows this, and they're coming at Ant. He's not 100%. Christian Braun was very solid on defense, trying to slow him down, make him work on every possession.

And by the way, these teams are Northwest division rivals in the NBA. This is the fourth time they have met in the playoffs. Minnesota won a series back in 2004 and 2024. Denver won in 2023, which eventually, that season, the Nuggets were the NBA champions. Game 3 Thursday night in Minneapolis. That will start at 8:30 PM.

NINA MOINI: OK. Wally, let's talk about the Twins and how they're doing. They played extra innings against Cincinnati yesterday. What happened there?

WALLY
LANGFELLOW: Well, it's unfortunate because their bullpen just really let them down. Bailey over-pitched really well. Their starting pitcher went six-plus innings, struck out 10, didn't give up any earned run. But they lose the baseball game.

As you mentioned, they lose in extra innings, 7 to 4. They were leading 3 to 1 in the ninth inning, and the bullpen gave it up. They gave up 3. They trailed 4-3. They scored one in the bottom of the ninth to tie it at 4. And then their bullpen gave up 3 more in the top of the 10th. So an unfortunate way for them to end the series with the Reds. They lost 2-1 run games and an extra inning game.

Joe Ryan pitching well on Friday night. They lose 2 to 1. And then Taj Bradley pitched well on Saturday. But again, the bullpen let them down, and they lost 5-4. So the Twins drop down into third place. They're even-Steven on the year now. They're 11 and 11. The good news is they're going to New York to play the Mets. And the Mets are on an epic losing streak right now, having lost 12 in a row.

NINA MOINI: Wow.

WALLY
LANGFELLOW: So the folks in New York, at least on that side of the river, are not real happy with the baseball club. And we'll see if the Twins can right the ship by going into New York and continuing the Mets losing ways. And that's tomorrow night. They're off tonight. It's a travel day. The Twins begin that three-game series with the Mets tomorrow night in New York.

NINA MOINI: OK. So, Eric, we talked at the beginning about Jessie Diggins, who was at Allianz Field celebrating a wonderful career. But the day before, the Minnesota United were there playing a home match against Portland. What happened there?

ERIC NELSON: Yeah, good news on the Midway, Nina. MinnU gets a 2-0 win over Portland. Tomas Chancolay and Kelvin Yeboah scored for the Loons. They've now won three-straight matches and have 14 points, which is good enough for sixth place in the MLS West. Yeboah, by the way, has 5 of Minnesota United's 10 goals this season.

Their goalkeeper, Drake Callender, stopped two shots. He got the clean sheet for MinnU and he's been playing well. And he's had to fill the cleats of the outstanding goalkeeper Dayne St. Clair, the Canadian Olympic star who's now down there with Inter Miami CF. The Loons have not given up a goal in three games at Allianz Field this season. They'll play at FC Dallas on Wednesday.

And then of course, we do have the NFL draft coming up later in the week. Nina, that will be Thursday through Saturday. The Vikings have nine choices in seven rounds, barring a trade. Minnesota has the 18th selection in the opening round. And some primary needs for the purple are safety, defensive tackle, and center.

And this will be the 91st NFL draft. It's being staged in Pittsburgh. Now, the 2025 draft in Detroit drew an NFL record 770,000 fans to Motown--

NINA MOINI: Wow.

WALLY --generating \$213 million of economic revenue. Last year, 605,000 showed up to Green Bay for the 2025 draft, so
LANGFELLOW: this event is now a cash cow. And cities bid on the draft like a Super Bowl, which is why Minneapolis wants its piece of the draft pie and hopes to get the NFL draft in 2028. And if it happens, believe me, the Twin Cities will have a ton of football fans coming into town.

NINA MOINI: All right, Wally and Eric, thank you so much, guys. We've got to go. Thanks, everybody, for listening. Join us back here tomorrow at noon.

[MUSIC PLAYING]