

ALL-COUNTY GIRLS SWIMMING & DIVING

Swimmer of the Year EMILY THORNETT

URBANA SENIOR

■ Top performer for an Urbana team that needed pretty much every point to capture the girls title at the Frederick County meet, beating second-place Oakdale 157-153.

■ Was involved in four wins at the Frederick County meet. Pulled out a dramatic win the 100 backstroke after winning the 100 butterfly earlier and was a member of Urbana's first-place 200-yard medley and 200-yard relay teams.

■ Will continue her career at Towson University.



Diver of the Year CHARLOTTE CLANEY

MIDDLETOWN SENIOR

■ Became just the second girl to win four straight Frederick County meet diving titles, joining Frederick's Halley Pack, who accomplished the feat in 2001-2004.

■ Claney's four-peat came down to her final dive, a back 1½ somersault, ½ twist to pull out a 195.00-171.00 win over second-place Tiffany Raines of Frederick.

■ Claney's ability to win year after year hinged on consistency and a gymnastics background. She learned to control the board, jump higher, spin faster and have cleaner entries into the water.



FIRST TEAM

CORA BEAVER SOPHOMORE URBANA

■ A key member for the county champion Hawks. At the Frederick County meet, she successfully defended her county crown in the 100 breaststroke and placed fourth in the 50 free.



BAYLEE CORDEN JUNIOR OAKDALE

■ A returning first-teamer for one of the county's top teams. At the Frederick County meet, she won the 100 free, placed second in the 100 back and swam on the winning 400 free relay team that broke the Bears' own county mark.



MIKAYLA GREEN SOPHOMORE OAKDALE

■ Was involved in two records at the Frederick County meet. She set the county mark in the 200 free (1:54.18) and helped the Bears break their own record in the 400 free relay (3:37.66). Also won the 50 free county title.



ADDISON HUNTER JUNIOR OAKDALE

■ Had a big day at the Frederick County meet, where she won the 200 IM, placed second in the 100 fly and swam on the 400 relay team that won and broke the Bears' own county record.



CARLY JACOBS JUNIOR OAKDALE

■ Another highly productive member of Oakdale's junior class. At the county meet, she won the 500 free, was second in the 200 IM and swam on the winning 400 free relay team that broke the Bears' own county record.



KATE MINER FRESHMAN URBANA

■ Got plenty of points for an Urbana team that needed practically every one of them to win the girls team title at the Frederick County meet. She placed second in both the 200 free and 100 free.



RILEY REEN JUNIOR TUSCARORA

■ Another returning first-teamer who led the way for the Titans this season. At the Frederick County meet, she placed second in the 50 free and third in the 100 fly.



DELANEY SARGEANT SENIOR URBANA

■ Capped off her high school swimming career by helping the Hawks reclaim the Frederick County girls team title. She placed second in the 100 breaststroke and third in the 500 free.



SECOND TEAM

NAME
CHARLOTTE AUTH
ELLIE ISLEIB
HAIDYN KINNEE
ASHLYN LACKEMEYER
MOLLY MCNEECE
TIFFANY RAINES
KYLIE ROLLINS
ANYA SMARIGA
SARAH THORNETT
CARLY TIMME

SCHOOL
T. JOHNSON
URBANA
OAKDALE
OAKDALE
OAKDALE
FREDERICK
OAKDALE
URBANA
URBANA
MIDDLETOWN

GRADE
SENIOR
SOPHOMORE
SOPHOMORE
SOPHOMORE
JUNIOR
SOPHOMORE
SOPHOMORE
SENIOR
SOPHOMORE
JUNIOR

HONORABLE MENTION

Brunswick—Emma Palmer, Delaney Price
Catoctin—Joanna Genemans, Aliyah McLain
Frederick—Olivia Gregory, Antje Romano
Linganore—Claire Ingram, Jillian Lotito
Middletown—Ava Gordon, Camryn Quinn
Oakdale—Brielle Eagen, Mia Jablonski
Thomas Johnson—Silva Carlson, Lyra Cooskey-Coale
Tuscarora—Chelsea Pyle, Emma Rosales
Urbana—Paige Montgomery, Haryn Seol
Walkersville—Audrey Corrigan, Rory Wilson

NBA playoffs will, once again, be international showcase of stars

By **TIM REYNOLDS**
AP Basketball Writer



They'll be watching in Canada, not just because of Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, though the NBA's scoring champion and MVP favorite who plays for Oklahoma City surely helps lure in fans who are north of the border.

They'll be watching from Serbia and Greece, the homelands of Denver star Nikola Jokic and Milwaukee star Giannis Antetokounmpo. Alperen Sengun will have them watching Houston games in the middle of the night in Turkey, too. Fans in Cameroon will be tuned in to see Pascal Siakam and the Indiana Pacers. Defending champion Boston features, among others, Kristaps Porzingis of Latvia and Al Horford of the Dominican Republic.

Once again, the NBA playoffs are setting up to be a showcase for international stars.

In a season where the five statistical champions were from five different countries, an NBA first — Gilgeous-Alexander is Canadian, rebounding champion Domantas Sabonis of Sacramento is from Lithuania, blocked shots champion Victor Wembanyama of San Antonio is from France, steals champion Dyson Daniels of Atlanta is from Australia, and assists

champion Trae Young of the Hawks is from the U.S. — the postseason will have plenty of international feel as well. Gilgeous-Alexander is in, while Sabonis and Daniels (along with Young, obviously) could join him if their teams get through the play-in tournament.

"We have a tremendous number of international players in this league," NBA Commissioner Adam Silver said earlier this season. "It's roughly 30% of our players representing, at least on opening day, 43 different countries, so there's much more of a global sense around our teams."

By the end of the season, it wound up being 44 different countries — at least in terms of countries where players who scored in the NBA this season were born. For the first time in NBA history, players from one country other than the U.S. combined to score more than 15,000 points; Canadian players scored 15,588 this season, led by Gilgeous-Alexander, the first scoring champion from that country.

Gilgeous-Alexander is favored to be MVP this season. It'll be either him or Jokic, which means it'll be a seventh consecutive year



Thunder guard Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, left, takes the ball to the basket in front of Nuggets center Nikola Jokic.

with an international MVP for the NBA. Antetokounmpo won twice, then Jokic won three of the next four, with Cameroon-born Joel Embiid of the Philadelphia 76ers winning two seasons ago.

"Shai is in the category of you do not stop him," Toronto coach Darko Rajakovic said after a game between the Raptors and Thunder this season.

In other words, he's like a lot of other international guys now. Nobody tru-

ly stops Jokic, Antetokounmpo and Doncic either.

And this season brought another international first: Doncic finished atop the NBA's most popular jersey list, meaning NBAStore.com sold more of his jerseys than they did anyone else's. Sure, that was bolstered by Doncic changing jerseys mid-season when he was traded by Dallas to the Los Angeles Lakers, but it still is significant.

The Slovenian star is the first international player to

finish atop the most popular jerseys list — and the first player other than Stephen Curry or LeBron James to hold that spot in more than a decade, since soon-to-be enshrined Basketball Hall of Famer Carmelo Anthony did it when he was with New York in 2012-13.

All this comes at a time where the NBA is more serious than perhaps ever about growing its international footprint. Last month, FIBA — the sport's international governing body — and the

NBA announced a plan to partner on a new European basketball league that has been taking shape for many years. The initial target calls for a 16-team league and it potentially could involve many of the biggest franchise names in Europe, such as Real Madrid, Paris Saint-Germain and Manchester City.

It was a season where four players topped 2,000 points in the NBA and three of them were international with Gilgeous-Alexander, Jokic and Antetokounmpo. Globally, time spent watching NBA League Pass was up 6% over last season. More people watched NBA games in France this season than ever before, even with Wembanyama missing the final two months. NBA-related social media views in Canada this season set records, and league metrics show more fans than ever were watching in the Asia-Pacific region — already a basketball hotbed — as well.

FIBA secretary general Andreas Zagklis said the numbers — which are clearly being fueled by the continued international growth — suggest the game is very strong right now.

"Looking around the world, and of course here in North America," Zagklis said, "the NBA is most popular and more commercially successful than ever."

Associated Press file photo