

Taurasi retires after historic basketball career

PHOENIX (AP) — Diana Taurasi is retiring after 20 seasons, ending one of the greatest careers in women’s basketball history.

The WNBA’s career scoring leader and a three-time league champion, Taurasi announced her retirement on Tuesday in an interview with Time magazine. The Phoenix Mercury — the only WNBA team she played for — also confirmed her decision.

“Mentally and physically, I’m just full,” Taurasi told Time. “That’s probably the best way I can describe it. I’m full and I’m happy.”

With her taut hair bun and supreme confidence, Taurasi inspired a generation of players while racking up records and championships.

Taurasi led UConn to three straight national titles from 2001-04 and kept on winning after the Mercury selected her with the No. 1 overall pick of the 2004 WNBA draft.

“It’s hard to put into words, it really is, what this means. When someone’s defined the game, when someone’s had such an impact on so many people and so many places. You can’t define it with a quote,” UConn coach Geno Auriemma said. “It’s a life that is a novel, it’s a movie, it’s a miniseries, it’s a saga. It’s the life of an extraordinary person who, I think, had as much to do with changing women’s basketball as anyone who’s ever played the game.”

The 42-year-old won her sixth Olympic gold medal at the Paris Games and finishes her WNBA career with 10,646 points, nearly 3,000



Diana Taurasi looks to pass the ball while playing for the Phoenix Mercury of the WNBA in 2024.

more than second-place Tina Charles.

“I thank Diana for everything that she has brought to the WNBA — her passion, her charisma and, most of all, her relentless dedication to the game,” WNBA Commissioner Cathy Engelbert said in a statement. “She leaves a lasting legacy and the future of the WNBA is in a great position because of her impact, that

will be felt for generations to come.”

In addition to her three WNBA championships with the Mercury, Taurasi won six Euroleague championships while playing year-round most of her career. She was the 2009 WNBA MVP and is one of four players to earn WNBA Finals MVP honors more than once (2009, 2014). “Diana is the greatest to have ever

played the game. I’ve been a fan of her my entire life, she is the ultimate leader and teammate,” Mercury owner Mat Ishbia said in a statement. “She’s had an incredible impact on our franchise, our community and the game of basketball. Her name is synonymous with the Phoenix Mercury and she will forever be part of our family.”

Gators rally past Panthers; Bulldogs cruise past Wolves

BROCKWAY — Peyton Gordon tallied six of her 10 points in the fourth quarter as No. 3 seed Port Allegany rallied for a 46-44 victory over No. 2 seed Keystone in the semifinals of the District 9 Class 2A girls basketball playoffs held at Brockway High School.

Coach Andy Traister’s Panthers still remain alive, though, as they

will compete in the third-place game against Kane on Friday with the site and time to be determined.

The Panthers led for the majority of the contest as they sported leads of 17-8 after one frame, 24-16 at halftime and 35-29 after three periods, however, the Gators took over down the stretch with a 17-9 surge.

Gordon buried a pair of buckets

and two free throws to lead the late charge while Ella Moses netted five of her 11 points in the fourth while Maddy Errick had four of her five points and Brynn Evens added two of her 14 points in the pivotal stanza. Ashlee Albright topped the Panthers with a game-high 18 points, Bella Brandon followed with 10 and Jill Winters added six.

Redbank Valley 65, Kane 33

BROCKWAY — Mylee Harmon and Addy Bond teamed up to net 49 points as Redbank Valley made short work of Kane, 65-33, in the District 9 Class 2A semifinals.

The Bulldogs led 19-13 after one quarter of play before Harmon erupted for 15 points in a 26-7 second

Taurasi made the all-WNBA first team 10 times and was on the first or second team a record 14 times. She’s also an 11-time WNBA All-Star, four-time USA Basketball female athlete of the year and was the 2004 WNBA rookie of the year.

“In my opinion, what the greats have in common is, they transcend the sport and become synonymous with the sport,” Auriemma said. “For as long as people talk about college basketball, WNBA basketball, Olympic basketball, Diana is the greatest winner in the history of basketball, period. I’ve had the pleasure of being around her for a lot of those moments, and she’s the greatest teammate I’ve ever coached.”

The Glendale, California, native holds numerous WNBA records, including playoff scoring, field goals, 3-pointers and 30-point games. She also holds 16 Mercury records.

Now that she’s retired, Taurasi will be able to spend more time with her wife, Penny Taylor — a former Mercury teammate — and their two children.

For her career, Taurasi averaged 18.8 points, 4.2 assists and 3.9 rebounds. She averaged 14.9 points, 3.8 rebounds and 3.4 assists while leading the Mercury to the playoffs during her 20th season.

“I mean, she just scored at all three levels,” Las Vegas Aces coach Becky Hammon said. “Just nasty out there. Just had that nasty, which I love. Like, you love that as a competitor. So our league is going to miss her.”

► Orioles

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“We knew we were going to take punches. I didn’t know it’d be right off the bat like that. It was a battle.”

Eisenhower tallied the first two buckets of the third quarter before halftime adjustments kicked in for Rocky Grove. The Orioles embarked on a 9-0 run and finished the frame with a 19-5 march to post a 39-35

advantage at the horn.

“I think we just came out a little sluggish. It was a long bus ride and we were sitting around, not totally focused. Our warmups were sloppy and we got a little chewed out a halftime, which woke us up a little bit and we came back and came out faster in the second half,” Schiffer Anderson said. “We definitely picked it up on the defensive end. We got some steals and deflections. We didn’t turn the ball over and started hitting some threes and got

some momentum. That was big.”

Anderson led the way in the third as he scored nine of his 15 points in the pivotal frame. Noah Baughman added seven of his team-high 16 points and Connor Ritchey had five points in the spree.

The Orioles saw their lead grow as high as nine points, 44-35, in the fourth when Landen Carter, who finished with 12 points, drained a trey and Baughman added another hoop.

However, Ike made a fierce final run. The Knights came within 49-48

with 1:48 to play. Anderson came through with a hoop, but Jaydon Chase’s triple tied the game at 51-all with 39.5 seconds to go.

Once again, Anderson drove to the hoop and scored to put Rocky Grove up, 53-51, with 27.3 seconds to go. Eisenhower maintained possession and ran its final play off an inbounds pass with 4.1 seconds to go. Hanson produced seemingly his only miss of the evening to preserve the win.

“I knew it was going to be a war

stanza that gave RV a 45-20 half-time advantage and allowed them to cruise after the break.

Harmon would finish with a game-high 29 points while Bond followed with 20. Kira Bonanno added eight points.

Redbank will now square off against Port Allegany in the finals on Saturday at PennWest Clarion.

► Oilers

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Anderson Franco answered with a basket for the Rockets, but the Oilers began to pull away as they went on a 10-1 run to open up a 13-point advantage. Will McMahon got it started with a jumper, and after a free throw from SR’s Doug Popovec, Fink added his third bucket of

the frame, Stinson buried a runner and a free throw before Chase Melat finished off the run with an old-fashioned three-point play to put the score at 44-31.

Book ended the run with a jumper, but the Rockets were too far behind to catch up as Fink connected again before Melat buried his second three-pointer of the contest for a 16-point lead at 49-33. After a free throw from Max Kovacik, Stinson hit a free throw and a layup before

Doug Senge buried a jumper for SR at the buzzer to set the final score.

Fink provided a big spark for the Oilers in that pivotal fourth quarter with eight points off the bench.

“He’s been like an energy guy for us all year,” Chapin said of Fink. “He comes in, makes plays, gets rebounds and takes over the game.”

The game was close through the first three quarters as Book kept the Rockets in the contest with 15 points during that span. He had nine in the first quarter as

SR held a 12-10 edge. He added four more in the second as the Rockets went into the break with a 19-18 lead.

But, Book netted only four points in the final quarter and six total in the second half as the Oilers won the third period, 10-7, and the fourth, 24-10.

“We challenged the guys at half-time and said, ‘We did a good job of flying around, but he still got some easy looks. If we take out those easy looks and just make it a little harder, then we can really slow them down,’”

THE DAILY SCOREBOARD

NHL STANDINGS										
EASTERN CONFERENCE										
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA			
Atlantic	58	36	20	2	74	185	165			
Toronto	59	35	21	3	73	197	168			
Tampa Bay	57	33	20	4	70	205	155			
Detroit	58	30	22	6	66	171	181			
Ottawa	57	29	24	4	62	160	161			
Boston	59	27	24	8	62	163	190			
Montreal	58	27	26	5	59	172	196			
Buffalo	56	24	27	5	53	182	189			
Metropolitan										
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA			
Washington	58	38	12	8	84	212	149			
Carolina	58	33	21	4	70	187	164			
New Jersey	59	32	21	6	70	182	146			
Columbus	58	28	22	8	64	195	191			
N.Y. Rangers	58	29	25	4	62	177	180			
Philadelphia	59	26	26	7	59	174	196			
N.Y. Islanders	57	25	25	7	57	156	171			
Pittsburgh	60	23	28	9	55	171	220			
WESTERN CONFERENCE										
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA			
Central	58	41	14	3	85	208	138			
Dallas	58	37	19	2	76	194	150			
Minnesota	58	34	20	4	72	169	165			
Colorado	59	33	24	2	68	188	179			
St. Louis	59	27	26	6	60	167	178			
Utah	58	25	24	6	59	163	176			
Nashville	57	20	30	7	47	147	189			
Chicago	57	17	33	7	41	152	201			
Pacific										
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA			
Vegas	58	34	18	6	74	190	161			
Edmonton	58	34	20	4	72	189	169			
Los Angeles	55	31	17	7	69	161	141			
Calgary	57	28	21	8	64	154	168			
Vancouver	57	26	20	11	63	157	171			
Anaheim	57	25	25	7	57	146	175			
Seattle	60	25	31	4	54	174	195			
San Jose	59	15	36	8	38	151	221			
NOTE: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.										
Monday's Games										
Winnipeg 2, San Jose 1, OT										
Los Angeles 5, Vegas 2										
Tuesday's Games										
Montreal 4, Carolina 0										
Philadelphia 6, Pittsburgh 1										
Columbus 6, Dallas 4										
Calgary 3, Washington 1										
Buffalo 3, Anaheim 2										
Toronto 5, Boston 4, OT										
N.Y. Rangers 5, N.Y. Islanders 1										
Tampa Bay 4, Edmonton 1										
Detroit 3, Minnesota 2										
St. Louis 7, Seattle 2										
Florida 4, Nashville 1										
Chicago at Utah, late										
Wednesday's Games										
Winnipeg at Ottawa, 7 p.m.										
New Jersey at Colorado, 9:30 p.m.										
Vancouver at Los Angeles, 10 p.m.										
Thursday's Games										
Buffalo at Carolina, 7 p.m.										
Calgary at Tampa Bay, 7 p.m.										
Columbus at Detroit, 7 p.m.										
Edmonton at Florida, 7 p.m.										
N.Y. Islanders at Boston, 7 p.m.										
San Jose at Montreal, 7 p.m.										
St. Louis at Washington, 7 p.m.										
Philadelphia at Pittsburgh, 7:30 p.m.										
Winnipeg at Nashville, 8 p.m.										
Minnesota at Utah, 9 p.m.										
Chicago at Vegas, 10 p.m.										
Vancouver at Anaheim, 10 p.m.										

PENGUINS SUMMARY

Philadelphia 6, Pittsburgh 1										
Pittsburgh	0	1	0	—	1					
Philadelphia	2	3	1	—	6					

First Period—1, Philadelphia, Ristolainen 4 (Zamula, Michkov), 3:56. 2, Philadelphia, Cates 11 (Brink, Pelletier), 12:19. Penalties—Beauvillier, PIT (Holding), 6:48.

Second Period—3, Pittsburgh, Tomasino 8 (Letang, Bunting), 6:09. 4, Philadelphia, Foerster 16 (Drysdael, Brink), 11:55. 5, Philadelphia, Cates 12 (Foerster, Brink), 18:55. 6, Philadelphia, Brink 8 (Foerster, Cates), 19:05. Penalties—Letang, PIT (Cross Checking), 0:37; Hathaway, PHI (Interference), 8:05.

Third Period—7, Philadelphia, Tippet 17 (Michkov, Couturier), 6:06. Penalties—Rust, PIT (Holding), 0:16; Seeler, PHI (Hooking), 3:47.

Shots on Goal—Pittsburgh 6-10-7-23. Philadelphia 15-14-9-38.

Power-play opportunities—Pittsburgh 0 of 2; Philadelphia 0 of 3.

Goalsies—Pittsburgh, Nedeljkovic 12-11-5 (38 shots-32 saves). Philadelphia, Ersson 18-10-3 (23-22). A—19,089 (19,543). T—2:24.

Referees—Mitch Dunning, Gord Dwyer. Linesmen—Shandor Alphonso, Tyson Baker.

THIS DATE IN SPORTS

Feb. 26

1935 — Babe Ruth is released by the New York Yankees and signed by the Boston Braves.

1938 — Glenn Cunningham sets a world indoor record in 1500-meter race at the AAU nationals at New York's Madison Square Garden. Cunningham finishes in 3:48.4.

1947 — Brothers Doug and Max Bentley lead the Chicago Blackhawks to a 9-7 win over the New York Rangers at Madison Square Garden. Doug Bentley scores four goals and sets up two more goals. Max Bentley scores three goals and assists on another goal.

1960 — Dave Jenkins of the United States wins the figure skating gold medal at the Winter Olympics in Squaw Valley, Calif.

1967 — Mario Andretti, better known for his accomplishments in open-wheel and USAC competition, wins the Daytona 500 pulling away from the 1965 champion Fred Lorenzen in the closing laps. It's Andretti's first and only NASCAR Grand National event. He is the only person born outside the United States to win the Daytona 500.

1968 — Thirty-two African nations agree to boycott the Olympics because of the presence of South Africa. The 1981-82 Boston Bruins beat the Minnesota North Stars 5-1 in a game marred by fights. The teams set an NHL record with 84 penalties worth 392 minutes, and 12 players are ejected.

1987 — Michael Jordan scores 58 points, the most by a Chicago player in a regular-season game, to lead the Bulls over the New Jersey Nets 128-113. Jordan scores almost half his points from the free throw line, hitting 26 of 27.

1989 — NFL Dallas Cowboys fire coach Tom Landry after a 29-year career.

1989 — Pittsburgh's Mario Lemieux becomes the third NHL player to have 100 assists in a season, joining Bobby Orr and Wayne Gretzky. Lemieux gets three assists and a goal in the Penguins' 8-6 loss to the Hartford Whalers.

1991 — In Lillehammer, Norway, Vreni Schneider of Switzerland wins the slalom for the fifth medal of her career, the most of any woman in Alpine Olympic history.

2006 — Sweden beats Finland 3-2 to win the Olympic men's hockey gold. Germany leaves Turin with the most overall medals with 29, 11 of them gold, while the Americans win 25 medals overall, including nine gold.