

# Monken hired to be the next Browns head coach

CLEVELAND (AP) — The Cleveland Browns have hired one of their former coordinators to be the team's head coach.

However, it is not the one some people expected.

The Browns hired Todd Monken on Wednesday as the franchise's 19th full-time head coach, wrapping up a three-week search. He replaces Kevin Stefanski, who was fired on Jan. 5, the day after Cleveland finished a 5-12 season.

This is Monken's first NFL head coaching job after 11 years as an assistant. He spent the previous three seasons as Baltimore's offensive coordinator.

"He is an outstanding leader and has a clear vision to lead our team as a strong communicator who values trust with his players but also accountability and preparation. In our committee's exhaustive reference work on Todd, his commitment to player development was evident, and his tough and straightforward coaching is respected by the players and the coaches he's worked with, putting our team in a position to succeed while developing our players to maximize their talents," owners Dee and Jimmy Haslam said in a statement.

Monken was the Browns' offensive coordinator on Freddie Kitchens' staff in 2019. There was growing sentiment, though, that defensive coordinator Jim Schwartz had emerged as the favorite, especially as the list of candidates thinned out.

Schwartz has been the architect of one of the league's top defenses the past three seasons.

Cleveland led the league in total defense in 2023 and ranked fourth this season as Myles Garrett had 23 sacks and broke the NFL single-season record.

Schwartz is under contract for one more season, but he is expected to look elsewhere after being passed over.

Losing Schwartz would be another blow to the Haslams, whose tenure since buying the Browns in 2012 has been known more for dysfunction than building a winning organization.

Monken is the seventh coach hired by the Haslams. The previous six compiled a 73-139-1 regular-season record, the second-worst mark in the NFL.

The Browns were 5-12 this season and 8-26 the past two years. Stefanski — who was hired as Atlanta's coach — had a 46-58 record. He was a two-time AP NFL Coach of the Year and led the Browns to the playoffs in 2020 and '23.

After announcing Stefanski's firing, Jimmy Haslam bristled over the narrative that the Browns are a dys-

functional organization. However, the coaching search ended up having more people withdraw their names from consideration than finalists. Cleveland interviewed 10 people for the opening, with four — Monken, Schwartz, Grant Udinski and Los Angeles Rams pass coordinator Nate Scheelhaase — getting second interviews.

Udinski withdrew on Monday after a second interview to remain in Jacksonville as offensive coordinator.

The Browns had second interviews scheduled with Mike McDaniel and Jesse Minter before both canceled. McDaniel, who was Miami's coach for four seasons, will be the Los Angeles Chargers' offensive coordinator while Minter was hired as Baltimore's head coach after two seasons directing the Chargers' defense.

Monken, who turns 60 on Feb. 5, first interviewed on Jan. 10 and had a second interview on Jan. 20. He also interviewed for Tampa Bay's offensive coordinator opening and was tied to the New York Giants' offensive coordinator spot after John Harbaugh was hired as the coach.

After Cleveland, Monken went to the University of Georgia from 2020-22 and was the offensive coordinator when the Bulldogs won the national title in 2021 and '22.

The Ravens were second in the

league this season in rushing yards per game (156.6 yards) and 11th in scoring, averaging 24.9 points per game. Baltimore was the league's top-ranked offense in 2024, when it became the first team in NFL history to have at least 4,000 passing yards and 3,000 rushing yards in the same season.

Monken also has worked in Jacksonville (2007-10) and Tampa Bay (2016-17). He was the head coach at Southern Mississippi from 2011-13 and had a 24-22 record.

The biggest task for Monken will be trying to find a quarterback and a sustainable offense.

Stefanski started a league-high 13 different quarterbacks during his tenure, including seven over the past two seasons.

The Browns thought they had their quarterback in 2022 when they released Baker Mayfield and acquired Deshaun Watson from Houston for five draft picks, including three in the first round. Instead, the trade for Watson has set the Browns back.

Watson has played in only 19 games. He has gone 9-10 as Cleveland's starter with 19 touchdowns, 12 interceptions and an 80.7 passer rating. He did not play this season while rehabbing from a torn Achilles tendon. Watson practiced for three weeks last month but was not activated to the roster.

Jimmy Haslam said during the

league meetings last March that the Browns "took a big swing and miss" with the Watson trade and that "we've got to dig ourselves out of that hole."

Shedeur Sanders started the final seven games, going 3-4. He faced growing pains, including a makeshift line and missing the leading rusher and receiver for the last two games.

Whether Sanders convinced the Browns that he can start next season will be debated in the coming months.

This season's Browns joined the 1968 Buffalo Bills as the only teams in the Super Bowl era to have rookies lead the team in passing, rushing and receiving yards.

Cleveland has the sixth and 24th overall selections in April's draft.

"Let me just say this: The next 120 days are crucial for the organization," Haslam said on Jan. 5. "We've got to find the right head coach. We've got to be efficient again in free agency. We have 10 draft picks, including two No. 1s. We have four picks in the top three rounds. And we've got to get really good players who are really good people again. We've got to be opportunistic if trade opportunities come along. We are solely focused on having a great 120 days so we can start winning games around here."

## Reed is leaving LIV, he can return to the PGA Tour in fall

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Patrick Reed is the second major champion to leave Saudi-funded LIV Golf, announcing Wednesday he will spend the rest of the year on the European tour with an eye on returning to the PGA Tour as early as September.

His stunning decision, just three days after he won the Dubai Desert Classic, comes the same week that five-time major champion Brooks Koepka returns to the PGA Tour at Torrey Pines.

"I'm a traditionalist at heart, and I was born to play on the PGA Tour, which is where my story began with my wife, Justine," Reed said on social media. "I am very fortunate for the opportunities that have come

my way and grateful for the life we have created. I am moving forward in my career, and I look forward to competing on the PGA Tour and DP World Tour. I can't wait to get back out there and revisit some of the best places on earth."

The PGA Tour sent a memo to players outlining the path back for players like Reed, who did not fit into the "Returning Member Program" that was offered only to those who had won a major or The Players Championship since 2022.

Reed won the Masters in 2018. The tour said he would be eligible to return a year from his last LIV Golf appearance on Aug. 24, 2025. He would not face additional discipline

from the PGA Tour because Reed resigned his membership when he left for LIV, and he was not part of the antitrust lawsuit filed against the PGA Tour in 2022.

"I'm not surprised guys are wanting to come back," Xander Schauffele said. "Thanks to the whole split, I think we've tried to make our product as good as possible. If they didn't like it then, I'm sure they'll like it the second time around."

Reed can play in the FedEx Cup Fall — the first event is the Biltmore Championship Asheville in North Carolina on Sept. 17-20 — if he receives a sponsor exemption. He cannot use his limited status as a past champion until 2027.

Reed also could earn a full card by finishing among the top 10 players in the Race to Dubai who don't already have PGA Tour membership. His victory in Dubai moved him to No. 2 in the standings, and now he has a full schedule in Europe — commercially known as the DP World Tour — ahead of him.

He also is set for the four majors, having risen to No. 29 in the world.

LIV Golf begins its fifth season in one week in Saudi Arabia. Reed is playing in Bahrain this week as part of the European tour schedule, his third straight week.

Upon his return to the PGA Tour, Reed would not be eligible to receive shares in the Player Equity Program

through 2030. That was part of the agreement for Koepka's return — no equity for five years, and no access to FedEx Cup bonus money this year.

Reed would be eligible to be a captain's pick for the Presidents Cup in September.

Reed last played a team competition in the 2019 Presidents Cup in Australia. While he has a 12-9-5 record overall in Ryder Cup and Presidents Cup competitions, his last two appearances included some negativity. He complained to The New York Times about not being used the right way in a U.S. loss in Paris in 2018, and his caddie shoved a fan in Australia in 2019.

ing Tyson Harkins of Warren in 1:39.

In the quarters, he dropped a 7-4 decision to Emmitt Summerlin of Cochranton before defeating Brooks Hendershot of Curwensville with a 7-2 decision in the fourth round of consolations. He then lost by fall to Owen Rush of Canon-McMillan and by injury default to Cranberry's Noah Lucarelli in the bout for seventh place.

Franklin is tentatively scheduled to host Eisenhower on Friday.

## ► Roundup

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The Beavers opened up a 30-0 lead as Bryson Buzard (107 pounds), Kinley Knisley and Mateo Gallegos (133) all won by fall while Luca Morelli (121) and Simeon Cherico (133) received forfeit wins.

Thompson broke up the run with a fall over Antonio Giambanco in 2:15 at 139 and Dalton Wenner fol-

lowed with a fall over Payton Geer in just :37 at 145.

DuBois claimed wins in the next five bouts before Lucarelli closed the match with a fall over Nathaniel Clark in 3:40 at 285.

The Berries were docked three points after a disqualification during the match.

Cranberry will host Franklin on Tuesday for Senior Night.

### Kiselka wins 100th match

GROVE CITY — Franklin's

Gary Kiselka won his 100th career match en route to finishing in seventh place while Kaden Kiselka placed eighth on Saturday at the Fred Bell tournament hosted by Grove City High School.

Gary Kiselka, competing at 215 pounds, won his first two bouts with a pair of 15-0 technical falls with the first coming over Carson Phillips of Central Valley and the second over Caleb Hendershot of Curwensville to reach the quarterfinals.

In the quarters, he dropped a 12-2

major decision to Brayden Collins on Canon-McMillan before rebounding with a 2-1 decision over Khalil Razipour of Moon in the fourth round of consolations. He then lost a 6-2 decision to Matt Caro of General McLane before besting Ian Holub of Trinity with a 13-3 major decision in the bout for seventh place.

Kaden Kiselka, competing at 285, also won his two first two bouts before losing in the quarters. He started off with a fall over Aiden Ward of Slippery Rock in 2:32 before deck-

ing Tyson Harkins of Warren in 1:39.

In the quarters, he dropped a 7-4 decision to Emmitt Summerlin of Cochranton before defeating Brooks Hendershot of Curwensville with a 7-2 decision in the fourth round of consolations. He then lost by fall to Owen Rush of Canon-McMillan and by injury default to Cranberry's Noah Lucarelli in the bout for seventh place.

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## THE DAILY SCOREBOARD

### THIS DATE IN SPORTS

Jan. 29

1950 — In an Associated Press poll of sports writers and broadcasters, Jack Dempsey is voted the greatest fighter of the past 50 years. Dempsey received 251 votes to 104 for Joe Louis.

1958 — The St. Louis Cardinals give Stan Musial a contract for \$100,000, making him the highest paid player in the National League.

1963 — Eleven players and six officials are elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Jim Thorpe, Red Grange, Bronco Nagurski, Sammy Baugh, Dutch Clark, Johnny McNally, Erni Nevers, Mel Hein, Pete Henry, Carl Hubbard, and Don Hutson are the players. The six officials are Bert Bell, Joe Carr, George Halas, Curly Lambeau, Tim Mara and George Preston.

1971 — Hal Greer of Philadelphia becomes the sixth player in NBA history to score 20,000 points in the 76ers loss to Milwaukee 142-118.

1985 — Bryan Trotter of the New York Islanders scores his 1,000th point with a goal in a 4-4 tie with the Minnesota North Stars.

1994 — Julio Cesar Chavez suffers his first loss in 91 fights when Frankie Randall knocks him down in the 11th round and wins the WBC super lightweight championship on a split decision.

1997 — Brian Himmer rolls two perfect games to take the lead after the first two rounds of qualifying at the PBA's Columbus 200 Open.

2000 — Utah's Karl Malone becomes the third player in NBA history to score 30,000 points when he makes a layup with 8:53 left in the third quarter of a 96-94 loss to Minnesota.

2005 — Serena Williams ends off six break points in the fifth game of the second set, then wills herself to overcome an aching back in a 2-6, 6-3, 6-0 victory over Lindsay Davenport in the Australian Open final.

2006 — Roger Federer wins his seventh Grand Slam title, overcoming an early challenge from unseeded Marcos Baghdatis to win the Australian Open 5-7, 7-5, 6-2, 6-2.

2010 — Bernard Lagat wins his eighth Wanamaker Mile at 103rd Millrose Games in New York. Lagat, who finished in 3:56.34, had shared the record with Irish great Eamonn Coghlan.

2012 — Lydia Ko becomes the youngest person ever to win a professional golf tour event by winning the LPGA's ANA Inspiration in Rancho Mirage, Calif. She is 14 and 8 months, one year younger than the previous youngest person ever to win a professional golf tour event, Japan's Ryo Ishikawa.

2012 — Novak Djokovic outlasts Rafael Nadal to defend his Australian Open title in the longest ever Grand Slam final and becomes the fifth man to win three straight majors in the Open Era. Djokovic wins 7-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-4.

2012 — Kinley Knisley (D) pinned Brent Hurrelbrink, 3:05.

114 — Kinley Knisley (D) pinned Jacob Heim, :51.

121 — Luca Morelli (D) won by forfeit.

127 — Simeon Cherico (D) won by forfeit.

133 — Mateo Gallegos (D) pinned Bradley Smith, 1:51.

139 — Aiden Thompson (C) pinned Antonio Giambanco, 2:15.

145 — Dalton Wenner (C) pinned Payton Geer, :37.

152 — Sampson Deeb (D) pinned Ethan Shreffler, :19.

160 — Seth Wilmeth (D) Jamarcus Cook, 1:59.

172 — Easton Harris (D) major dec. Alex McLaughlin, 14-0.

189 — Brogan Hoare (D) won by disqualification over Clark Findlay.

215 — Kendall Hoare (D) pinned Matthew Antrill, 1:01.

285 — Noah Lucarelli (C) pinned Nathaniel Clark, 3:40.

Match started at 107

### SCHOLASTIC BASKETBALL BOXSCORES

#### VARSITY BOYS

CRANBERRY (80)

Bl. Marchinke 3 0-0 6, Findlay 6 0-1 13, Baker 3 1-2, 7, Morrow 6 0-0 13, Sanchez 3 0-0 6, Zerbe 2 0-0 4, Melat 4 0-0 8, McCloskey 0 0-0 0, Knapp 0 0-0 0, McIntyre 2 0-0 4, Carlson 2 2-2 7, Mason 0 0-0 0, Miller 0 0-0 0, Br. Marchinke 4 1-1, Shumaker 0 3-3 3, Schweikert 0 0-0 0. Totals: 35 7-9 80.

#### A-C VALLEY (42)

Alworth 1 0-3 2, Snyder 1 1-2 3, Ithen 3 1-8 7, Sackson 5 0-0 2, Armagost 2 0-0 5, Lutz 2 0-0 5, Shirey 2 0-0 4, Rupp 1 0-0 2, Fisher 0 0-0 0, Taglia 0 0-0 2. Totals: 18 2-13 42.

#### Score by Quarters