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AP DAVID RICHARD

■ Browns cornerback Denzel Ward (center) celebrates his touchdown with fans during a December 2019 game against the Bengals at FirstEnergy Stadium in Cleveland.

■ CORONAVIRUS: NFL

## Fans can opt out

Browns will transfer season tickets to 2021

By Nate Ulrich  
Akron Beacon Journal

The Browns announced Thursday they are offering season-ticket holders the opportunity to opt out of 2020 amid the COVID-19 pandemic and retain their seat location and priority for next year.

The Browns have yet to finalize

how many fans they plan to allow to attend games at FirstEnergy Stadium in 2020, but the number is expected to be significantly reduced from the stadium's seating capacity of 67,895.

In a letter the Browns sent to season-ticket holders Thursday, the team stated, "While

SEE BROWNS, C2



SUBMITTED PHOTO

■ Green's Frank Micale (left) is pictured with his sons, Andrew (right) and Anthony (center). Frank spearheaded the efforts for a Federal League Senior All-Star Baseball Game, which will be Aug. 1 at Jackson. Andrew will play for Team American.

■ CORONAVIRUS: H.S. BASEBALL

## Federal seniors get final shot

All-Star Games set Aug. 1

By Josh Weir  
The Canton Repository

**JACKSON TWP.** The Federal League's class of 2020 baseball players will get their senior moment.

The 2020 Federal League Senior All-Star Game is set for Aug. 1 at Jackson High School.

The doubleheader of seven-inning games will feature a "senior night" feel, with player and parent introductions beginning at 5 p.m. and the first game starting by 5:30.

The other team's players and parents will be introduced prior to the second game, which is expected to start about 8. If the weather doesn't cooperate, the event will be pushed to Aug. 2.

"We're expecting a great crowd," said event organizer Frank Micale, the father of Green player Andrew Micale. "There are plenty of baseball fans who want to see these kids play."

Players are being dispersed between the two teams with the intention of creating competitive games. School ties do not matter, so there will be kids from the same school playing against each other.

Each team — called Team American and Team National in a nod to the former divisions in the Federal League back in the late 1980s — will have 22 kids.

Division I college recruits Logan Jones (Ohio University) of GlenOak, Petey Taylor (Oakland) of Jackson and Josh Romans (Northern Kentucky) of Jackson highlight the rosters. (Complete rosters are below.)

Micale, a regional channel manager for Spectrum by day and a high school and college basketball official by night along with helping out with Green baseball, began thinking of the all-star game idea back in March when the Ohio High School Athletic Association postponed the spring sports season, knowing the season could be in jeopardy. After it was canceled completely in late April, he started making calls.

SEE FEDERAL, C2

■ CORONAVIRUS: COLLEGE ATHLETICS

## CONFERENCE ONLY IN BIG TEN



COLUMBUS DISPATCH JOSHUA A. BICKEL

■ Ohio State takes the field for their game against Cincinnati in September 2019 at Ohio Stadium. The Big Ten is limiting fall sports to conference only contests in the fall.

## OSU's Smith says questions still must be answered as league decides to keep 2020 fall season in house

By Joey Kaufman  
The Columbus Dispatch

In the early days of the coronavirus pandemic, Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith held cautious optimism that a college football season would be played this fall.

But as the reported cases of COVID-19 have continued to rise across the country in recent weeks, hopefulness is fading.

"I am very concerned," Smith said.

A setback came Thursday when the Big Ten canceled its nonconference schedule, vaporizing the Buckeyes' first three games of the 2020 season, matchups against Bowling Green, Oregon and Buffalo that were set for the first three Saturdays of September.

Rather than a usual 12-game

regular season, the conference plans to stage a conference-only season in football, as well as all other fall sports, including men's and women's soccer, women's volleyball, men's and women's cross country and field hockey.

The decision was reached after months of conversations between the Big Ten Council of Presidents and Chancellors and its task force for emerging infectious diseases that was convened in the spring, among other medical experts.

While first-year commissioner Kevin Warren offered some hope in an interview with the Big Ten Network that the setup would provide athletes with a safer environment amid the pandemic, he followed with a stark warning that summed up growing levels of concern.

"We have to realize that this is

not a fait accompli that we're going to have sports in the fall," Warren said. "We may not have sports in the fall. We may not have a college football season in the Big Ten."

No other Power Five conference has made a similar decision to cancel nonconference football games. On Wednesday, the Ivy League became the first Division I conference to postpone fall sports, including football, until possibly the spring.

Details surrounding the Big Ten's conference-only schedule have not been finalized.

Speaking with reporters on a conference call, Smith said administrators from member schools would hold further discussions next week. Only preliminary conversations had been held as of this week.

SEE BIG TEN, C2

### Brown suggests Buckeyes as Cleveland nickname

Sen. Sherrod Brown wants the Indians to adopt the nickname used by the city's Negro League team in the 1940's.

It should have a pretty familiar ring to it in Columbus.

Brown said during a conference call with reporters on Wednesday that he left a message with the team's ownership, the Dolan family, on Tuesday to say that the team should change its name to the Cleveland Buckeyes.

Brown is a big fan of the team, and on Wednesday he rattled off its historical accomplishments in helping to desegregate professional baseball, including signing the first black player in the American League when the team added Larry Doby to the roster. He pointed out that the Cleveland Buckeyes won the Negro League World Series in 1945.

"Cleveland has a better Civil Rights record, frankly, than most other teams in baseball," he said.

The team already has transitioned its Chief Wahoo logo to be secondary to a block C, and last week it announced that it was considering a name change as well. The team's statement came after the Washington Redskins, under pressure from sponsors, announced that it would re-evaluate its team name as well.

"We have had ongoing discussions organizationally on these issues. The recent social unrest in our community and our country has only underscored the need for us to keep improving as an organization on issues of social justice," the Indians wrote in a statement.

RICK ROUAN, USA TODAY

INDIANS

## Reyes apologizes

Says team did right thing to protect players

By Ryan Lewis  
Akron Beacon Journal

Indians outfielder Franmil Reyes was kept away from the team for a few days following the discovery that he was around some people during the Fourth of July weekend without a mask.

Manager Terry Francona stressed a few days ago that Reyes did nothing egregious, and that he wasn't being punished.

The team was choosing to keep Reyes away from the ballpark for a few days to undergo additional testing rather than risk a larger group.

Reyes passed a medical exam and was back at the ballpark Wednesday afternoon, belting a few pitches into the bleacher seats in left field. On Thursday, the first time he spoke with local reporters since summer camp began, Reyes on multiple



AP MATT YORK

■ The Indians' Franmil Reyes hits during the second inning of a spring training game in March.

occasions apologized for causing the disruption.

"You know what? They did the right thing. They have to do it to protect us," Reyes said via a Zoom call. "I really apologize, because I was not protecting myself and my teammates. I learned from it and it won't happen again. I really don't want

to stop practicing. I really apologize about that."

The Indians do hope that it can be a learning moment. Players, coaches and staff members taking personal responsibility seriously and away from the ballpark has become one of the most important factors to this season.

GOLF

## Woods returns for Memorial

The Associated Press

**DUBLIN** The PGA Tour returned five weeks ago with some of its strongest fields. Now it gets its biggest star.

Tiger Woods announced Thursday on Twitter he will play next week at the Memorial, a tournament he has won a record five times, as he goes after his record 83rd career victory on the PGA Tour.

"I've missed going out and competing with the guys and can't wait to get back out there," Woods said.

It will end a five-month break from competition for Woods. He last played on Feb. 16 at the Genesis Invitational, where he shot 76-77 at chilly Riviera to finish alone in last place.

Woods said he felt stiffness in the cold weather. He chose not to go to Mexico City for a World Golf Championship, then skipped three straight tournaments in Florida before golf was halted because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

His only competition was an exhibition match on May 24 at his home course in Florida, with Peyton Manning as his partner against Phil Mickelson and Tom Brady.