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Cancer fears

Military probing if
diagnoses are linked
to nuclear silo work

By TARA COPP
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Nine military officers who had worked decades ago at a nuclear missile base in Montana have been diagnosed with blood cancer and there are “indications” the disease may be linked to their service, according to military briefing slides obtained by The Associated Press. One of the officers has died.

All of the officers, known as missileers, were assigned as many as 25 years ago to Malmstrom Air Force Base, home to a vast field of 150 Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile silos. The nine officers were diagnosed with non-Hodgkin lymphoma, according to a January briefing by U.S. Space Force Lt. Col. Daniel Sebeck.

Missileers ride caged elevators



DANIEL BROSAM/U.S. Air Force

Airman work on the reentry system of an intercontinental ballistic missile at a launch facility near Great Falls, Mont. Officials are trying to determine whether a cluster of blood cancers are related to work in missile silos.

SEE CANCER ON PAGE 5

Ukraine war reignites debate over what constitutes a ‘tank’



MICHAEL ABAMS/Stars and Stripes

The M1A2 Abrams — like this one training in Bulgaria — qualifies as a tank in everyone’s book.

By PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN
Stars and Stripes

A tank is just an armored vehicle with a gun, right?

Try saying that in any online forum of soldiers and behold the blast of technical debate and expletive-laden passion that follows.

The debate in military circles over what vehicles are tanks is a long one that has intensified as Western countries discuss what to send Ukraine for its fight against Russia.

The arguments reignited recently after U.S. officials said they were considering

sending Bradley fighting vehicles to Ukraine.

Discussing the development with Bloomberg, Mark Cancian, a senior adviser at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, described the vehicle as “in effect, a light tank.”

That comment unleashed a flood of military enthusiasts on social media racing to reject the description and argue that the Bradley was in no way, shape or form a tank.

“A ‘tank’ (at least in the ground combat sense) has a specific meaning,” Twitter us-

RELATED

Poland pushes for more tanks for Kyiv, seeks German approval
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er Mike Glenn wrote. “Although they both wear helmets, a wide receiver on a football team isn’t a quarterback.”

SEE DEBATE ON PAGE 7

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Survey: Firms expect job cuts amid recession fears

Associated Press

NEW YORK — A survey of national economists found that more businesses now expect job reductions at their firms and to spend less on expansions for the first time since the pandemic, a sign that the Federal Reserve’s push to raise interest rates is doing its job to slow the economy.

But the survey shows that business owners are still concerned that the Fed’s decision-making could push too hard on the economy and potentially put the U.S. in-

to a recession this year.

The January survey by the National Association for Business Economics found that its respondents put on average a reading of -7 on how much they plan to hire at their firms, down from previous reading of +8 in October, when NABE did its previous survey.

However, due to inflation, the survey shows that businesses still expect to pay higher wages for the workers they are holding onto.

“The results of the January 2023 NABE Business Conditions

Survey indicate widespread concern about entering a recession this year,” said NABE President Julia Coronado, in a statement.

In order to combat inflation, the Fed has been raising interest rates aggressively in an effort to slow down the U.S. economy without putting it into a recession, known as a “soft landing.” The Fed is expected to raise interest rates again this week, albeit at a slower pace than they have in the past as indicators of inflation have been cooling down in recent months.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates		South Korea (Won)	1,232.29
Euro costs (Jan. 24)	\$1.06	Switzerland (Franc)	.9227
Dollar buys (Jan. 24)	0.8958	Thailand (Baht)	32.81
British pound (Jan. 24)	\$1.21	Turkey (New Lira)	18.8081
Japanese yen (Jan. 24)	125.00	(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)	
South Korean won (Jan. 24)	1,201.00	INTEREST RATES	
Commercial rates		Prime rate	7.50
Bahrain (Dinar)	.3770	Interest Rates Discount rate	5.00
Britain (Pound)	1.2347	Federal funds market rate	4.33
Canada (Dollar)	1.3387	3-month bill	4.69
China (Yuan)	6.7845	30-year bond	3.65
Denmark (Krone)	6.8497		
Egypt (Pound)	29.8704		
Euro	1.0860		
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.8293		
Hungary (Forint)	365.03		
Israel (Shekel)	3.3761		
Japan (Yen)	130.64		
Kuwait (Dinar)	.3056		
Norway (Krone)	9.8401		
Philippines (Peso)	54.53		
Poland (Zloty)	4.34		
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7550		
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3202		

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MILITARY

Amphibious warship key in Taiwan defense

By **SETH ROBSON**
Stars and Stripes

ZUOYING NAVAL BASE, Taiwan — The largest ship in the Taiwanese navy will make China think twice, despite its overwhelming sea power, about invading the island, according to security experts.

On Jan. 12, journalists were given a tour of the Yushan, a domestically built, 502-foot-long, 10,500-ton landing platform dock that was launched in April 2021 as the first of a planned fleet of four such vessels.

Built for amphibious warfare, the ships are capable of carrying and delivering a landing force by air or sea. The USS Green Bay, homeported at Sasebo Naval Base, Japan, is such a vessel in the U.S. Navy.

Sailors showed off the Yushan's features, such as the below-deck bay where AAV-7 amphibious assault vehicles and Humvees can park. An S-70C Thunderhawk helicopter displaying Taiwan's national flag landed and took off from the deck before two landing craft, loaded with reporters, launched from a well deck and chugged to a nearby beach.

Standing on the Yushan's deck, Lt. Cmdr. Yen Tui-chi, a tactical officer on the warship, touted the vessel's capabilities, including anti-air missile defense and a reduced radar cross section.

"We represent an achievement of our national defense industry," he said.

In peacetime, the Yushan can serve as a floating hospital and deliver emergency relief supplies,

Yen said.

"In wartime we will, if necessary, deploy to offshore islands and transport goods and military personnel," he said.

The Taiwan-administered Kinmen Islands, for example, are only 2 miles from the Chinese mainland. Nationalist troops held off several attacks by communists on the islands during the 1940s and '50s.

"[The Yushan] may be used to retake peripheral Taiwanese islands that [China] may seek to occupy as a de facto territorial claim instead of or prior to an invasion of the Taiwanese mainland," Paul Buchanan, a New Zealand-based American security expert, said in an email Friday.

However, the Yushan is vulnerable to Chinese air and naval missiles, he said.

China, with more than 340 warships, has the world's largest navy, according to the Pentagon's 2022 China Military Power Report.

The Yushan likely wouldn't last long in a war with the Chinese, according to retired U.S. Marine Col. Grant Newsham, a senior researcher with the Japan Forum for Strategic Studies in Tokyo.

"But that's not the point," he said in a Jan. 14 email. "A good chunk of the US Navy and Air Force wouldn't last long in an all-out fight with the Chinese either. You do a lot of things in peacetime that you wouldn't do, or couldn't do, in wartime."

Amphibious ships can help Taiwan master joint operations and could train with the U.S. Navy and



PHOTOS BY SETH ROBSON/Stars and Stripes

The Yushan, a domestically built, 502-foot-long, 10,500-ton landing platform dock, is the largest warship in Taiwan's navy.

Marine Corps or even Japan's amphibious forces, Newsham said.

Such vessels could assist in humanitarian and disaster-relief operations overseas, something that is important politically for Taiwan, he said.

Marines, which the Yushan would carry along with landing craft to move them ashore, are essential to Taiwan's defense, Newsham said.

"Tough, well-trained, mobile troops — armed with long-range precision weapons [and any other weapons] are the last thing [the Chinese] want to deal with," he said. "You can't find them, you have a hard time killing [them], and they are coming at you from all directions. Taiwan needs more of them, and properly employed. And consider the effect on civilian morale to know you've got these kinds of troops in your military."

U.S. Marine training for local forces on the island, confirmed by Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen in October 2021 on CNN, isn't at the scale needed to really have an effect, Newsham said.

The most useful thing the U.S. can do is train Taiwanese forces to defend the sea and air around



Taiwanese marines train near Kaohsiung, Taiwan.

their island using missiles, drones and mobile launchers, former Navy Capt. Jan van Tol said in an email Saturday.

Taiwan's marines might play a role similar to that of U.S. Marine littoral regiments designed for sea denial, said Van Tol, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, a non-profit defense-policy think tank in Washington, D.C.

The country should adopt a "porcupine" approach that would feature large numbers of shorter-range precision rockets, artillery,

mortars and missiles, he said.

"Such systems would have far lower unit costs [than warships], but there would have to be many more of them, dispersed down to lower echelons of command, as the conceptual equivalent of 'mobile minefields' to greatly increase geographic or sea areas where [Chinese] forces would need to honor the potential threats and expend greater resources to counter them," he said.

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A craft launched from the landing platform dock Yushan heads toward a beach at Zuoying Naval Base, Taiwan, on Jan. 12.

101st Airborne, 10th Mountain divisions to deploy to Romania

By **JOHN VANDIVER**
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — Army units are gearing up for a potential deployment to Europe, where they are expected to be tasked with deterring Russian aggression in the Black Sea region.

Elements from the 101st Airborne Division's 1st Brigade Combat Team and the 10th Mountain Division headquarters are pre-

paring for the mission, the Army said in a statement Saturday.

"Preparation for this potential deployment provides flexibility to reassess conditions and respond to a dynamic security environment," the Army statement said.

The Army said the move doesn't change force levels, but rather aims to ensure forces are positioned to provide "a robust deterrent and defensive posture along-

side our Allies across the European continent."

The Army statement did not specify where the units are going, but a military official told Stars and Stripes the soldiers are expected to backfill a 101st Airborne Division headquarters and a subordinate brigade deployed to Romania since the summer. However, the military could adjust where those forces go based on security

conditions in the coming weeks and months.

The 101st units were ordered to Romania in June and operate mostly out of Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base, which serves as a hub for the Army in the Black Sea region.

During their time in Romania and other locations around Europe, 101st soldiers have been tasked with monitoring events in Ukraine for potential spillover in-

to allied countries, while incorporating lessons from the war into how American ground forces train.

"The United States will continue to adjust its posture as needed in response to the dynamic security environment," the Army said in its statement.

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MILITARY

DOD officials to discuss civilian health care

BY ALEX WILSON
AND KELLY AGEE
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — Two Pentagon officials will visit two of the largest U.S. bases in Japan next week to address ongoing concerns over a lack of health care for Defense Department civilian employees and their families, according to spokesmen at both installations.

Gilbert Cisneros Jr., undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, and Seileen Mullen, acting assistant secretary of defense for health affairs, will host town hall meetings at Yokota Air Base on Monday and at Yokosuka Naval Base the following day, Jan. 31.

News of the two officials' visit

follows months of confusion and concern as DOD civilian employees scrambled to understand changes imposed by the Defense Health Agency that abruptly limited on-base health care options for anyone other than those covered by the military's Tricare Prime medical plan.

The town hall at Yokota, a key airlift hub in western Tokyo, is scheduled for 4 to 5 p.m. in the base theater, Tech Sgt. Chris Hubenthal told Stars and Stripes by email Monday. Questions can be emailed ahead of time at 374AW.PA.CommandersAction-Line@us.af.mil until noon Wednesday.

The town hall at Yokosuka, homeport of the U.S. 7th Fleet, is scheduled for noon to 1:30 p.m. at

the Fleet Theater, base spokesman Randall Baucom told Stars and Stripes by phone Monday. Questions can be submitted until 4 p.m. Tuesday at yokosukareport@gmail.com.

Attendees can expect the conversation to focus on civilian health care, Naval Forces Japan spokeswoman Katie Cerezo said by phone Monday.

"We know this is a very important topic that's of great interest to our families on installation," she said. "We want to have an opportunity to get their concerns addressed and to hear from those that are knowledgeable about it."

The individual branches of the armed forces shifted from their own independent medical commands to the single DHA com-

mand in February. By September, DOD civilians at Yokosuka reported that making appointments at U.S. Naval Hospital Yokosuka had become nearly impossible. In the weeks that followed, civilians at Yokota and other installations made similar complaints.

Maj. Gen. Joseph Heck, director of DHA Region Indo-Pacific, told Stars and Stripes in October that DHA is legally obligated to prioritize active-duty patients. DOD civilians and those without Tricare coverage may be seen on a space-available basis only.

Those civilians should "have a plan in place" to find medical care off base if military hospitals are lacking space, he said.

Space-available appointments

were further limited by a Dec. 9 Indo-Pacific DHA memo stating that, starting with the new year, only episodic, non-recurring and acute health conditions could be treated on a same-day basis.

Grassroots organizations, such as the Japan Civilian Medical Advocacy, responded to the situation by providing an outlet for advice, attending town hall meetings and lobbying Congress to preserve DOD civilians' access to health care and to protect them from denials by off-base providers.

A petition begun by the advocacy group had 2,353 signatures as of Monday.

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Thousands take part in Frostbite road race at US air base in Japan

BY KELLY AGEE
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — Approximately 10,000 people took part Sunday in the 42nd annual Frostbite Road Race, the first time in three years that runners actually hit the road for the popular event at this airlift hub in western Tokyo.

Japanese and American runners of all ages and abilities turned out to compete in the first actual running of the event since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Temperatures at race-time were in the 40s, not quite but close enough to frosty.

The Frostbite Road Race, organized by the Yokota Striders Running Club, is an opportunity to promote physical fitness in a unique location while strengthening ties between the base and local Japanese communities, according to a statement from the 374th Airlift Wing.

"It is one of the only events that we have on base where our off-base counterparts can actually come on base and run," the Yokota Striders' president, Master Sgt. Tobi Wagner of the 730th Air Mobility Squadron, told Stars and Stripes on Sunday.



People participate Sunday in a 2-kilometer family run.

Wagner, 34, of Selinsgrove, Pa., said this is his first year as president of the club.

"I love to run," he said. "That's the one thing that de-stresses me. And I wanted it to be more involved, and this is the best way to do it."

The 2020 Frostbite Road Race was the last actually run at Yokota. More than 11,000 runners took part. In the two intervening years, the runs were held digitally, meaning individual runners completed the required miles and submitted their times online.

Col. Andrew Roddan, commander of the 374th Airlift Wing, kicked off the event Sunday by thanking the race participants.

"It takes true dedication and determination to sign up and prepare for certain events and I want to commend you all for being here today," he said.

After the opening ceremony, the runners warmed up Zumba-style. Hundreds of runners danced to music to get their legs and arms moving before the run.

Creative costuming highlighted the event. Some runners dressed as celebrities, and others as superheroes, including Michael Jackson, Marilyn Monroe, Waldo and Spiderman.

The main event, the 13.1-mile half-marathon, is the last in a series of the Frostbite, starting with a children's 2K, a family 2K and a 5K. All the races are run entirely on Yokota.

Approximately 150 volunteers helped register the runners, hand out T-shirts, food and merchandise and set up and manage roadblocks to keep motorists off the racecourses.

"It is such an amazing experience," said Diana Carson, 46, of Kansas City, Mo., who is a manager-volunteer at the Airman's Attic. "It is nice to see all the young children of all ages as well as the older generations of Japanese runners."



PHOTOS BY KELLY AGEE/Stars and Stripes

Children participate in a 2-kilometer run during the 42nd annual Yokota Striders Frostbite Road Race at Yokota Air Base, Japan.



Runners, including some in costume, participate in a half-marathon.

CENTCOM: US, partner forces capture 2 ISIS militants in eastern Syria

Stars and Stripes

U.S. Central Command forces captured two Islamic State militants during a partnered helicopter and ground assault raid in eastern Syria on Saturday, CENTCOM said in a news release.

One civilian received minor injuries in the raid that led to the capture of Abdallah Hamid Mus-

lih al-Maddad, AKA Abu Hamza al-Suri, an ISIS facilitator; and Husam Hamid al-Muslih al-Maddad, al-Khayr, an ISIS facilitator and logistician.

"The injured civilian was escorted by our partner forces to a nearby medical care facility along with an accompanying family member," CENTCOM spokesman

Col. Joe Buccino said in the release. "He received care and was released back to his family."

ISIS sleeper cells continue to carry out deadly attacks in Syria and Iraq. The militant group once ruled large swaths of both countries but lost its last stronghold in 2019. In late December, U.S.-backed, Kurdish-led Syrian Dem-

ocratic Forces announced "Operation Al-Jazeera Thunderbolt," citing a surge in ISIS attacks, to target sleeper cells in the areas of al-Hol and Tal Hamis in the country's east, The Associated Press previously reported.

Roughly 900 U.S. troops are deployed to Syria. CENTCOM reported conducting some 313 oper-

ations against ISIS in 2022 in Syria and Iraq, mostly in cooperation with the Syrian Democratic Forces forces.

"ISIS represents a threat to our partners, and to the people of Iraq and Syria and beyond," Buccino said in the release. "Our mission to defeat ISIS alongside our partners continues."

MILITARY



TRISTAN DAY/U.S. Air Force

An airman prepares a spacer on an intercontinental ballistic missile during a Simulated Electronic Launch-Minuteman test in 2020, at a launch facility near Great Falls, Mont.

Cancer: 9 missileers suffered from non-Hodgkin lymphoma decades later

FROM PAGE 1

deep underground into a small operations bunker encased in a thick wall of concrete and steel. They remain there sometimes for days, ready to turn the launch keys if ordered to by the president.

“There are indications of a possible association between cancer and missile combat crew service at Malmstrom AFB,” Sebeck said in slides presented to his Space Force unit this month. The “disproportionate number of missileers presenting with cancer, specifically lymphoma” was concerning, he said.

Sebeck declined to comment when contacted by email by the AP on Saturday, saying the slides were “predecisional.” In the slides, he said the issue was important to the Space Force because as many as 455 former missileers are now serving as Space Force officers, including at least four of the nine identified in the

slides.

In a statement to the AP, Air Force spokeswoman Ann Stefanek said that “senior leaders are aware of the concerns raised about the possible association of cancer related to missile combat crew members at Malmstrom AFB.”

Stefanek added: “The information in this briefing has been shared with the Department of the Air Force surgeon general and our medical professionals are working to gather data and understand more.”

Non-Hodgkin lymphoma, which according to the American Cancer Society affects an estimated 19 out of every 100,000 people in the United States annually, is a blood cancer that uses the body’s infection-fighting lymph system to spread.

For comparison, only about 3,300 troops are based at Malmstrom at a time, and only about 400

of those are assigned either as missileers or as support for those operators. It is one of three bases in the U.S. that operate a total of 400 siloed Minutemen III ICBMs, including fields at Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota and F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming.

The median age for adult non-Hodgkin lymphoma is 67, according to the National Institutes of Health. The former missileers affected are far younger. Officers are often in their 20s when they are assigned duty watch; the officer who died, who was not identified, was a Space Force officer assigned to Schriever Space Force Base in Colorado with the rank of major, a rank typically achieved in a service member’s 30s. Two of the others are in the same Space Force unit with the rank of lieutenant colonel, which is typically reached in a service member’s early 40s.

AFN Now ‘likely’ to livestream sporting events on its app

By JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

Professional sports are now available on the American Forces Network’s new video on demand and livestreaming app, a little over two months after its worldwide launch.

The network is hoping to livestream next weekend’s NFC and AFC championship games and the Super Bowl on Feb. 12 after successfully testing the live function last weekend, AFN spokesman John Clearwater said Monday.

Feedback from AFN Now audiences surprised to find the NFL games live reported “good video and clean audio” during the streams, he said.

“Based on the success of this weekend’s testing, live streaming of the Championship games on AFN Now appears feasible and likely,” Clearwater said in an email.

The weekend’s games were also transmitted as video on demand, as were the wild card games. The format allows viewers to watch prerecorded events.

The first NFL postseason games on wild card weekend, Jan. 14-16, were up about 10 to 13 hours after they aired on AFN television, said Kimberly Antos, the network’s chief of digital media and AFN Now.

Most feedback so far on the new app has been from people wanting to watch those sports live, Antos said, adding that the network is “working toward a live solution.”

The NFL playoffs and the Australian Open tennis tournament debuted on AFN Now earlier this month, shortly after AFN acquired the digital rights for the programming, executives told Stars and Stripes.

That includes rights to air the Super Bowl on the app, said Mike Drumheller, chief of the AFN broadcast center in Riverside, Calif.

The wild card games were still on the app as of early Monday, but likely won’t be for long. The games disappear after seven days as part of AFN’s rights agreement, Antos said.

The three out of four divisional playoff games this past weekend appeared on the app Monday afternoon Central European Time.

The network aims to resolve some technical issues with the app in time to livestream the Super Bowl on Feb. 12, Drumheller said.

The first major hurdle in putting professional sports up on the app was acquiring the digital rights to the games, a process that went down to the wire and involved negotiations across different regions and time zones for the NFL postseason games, Drumheller said.

“We had the rights agreement in hand on Friday and we were up on video on demand on Saturday,” he said of wild card weekend.

As of now, the remaining playoff games are available as video on demand hours after the end of each game, AFN officials said.

Since AFN Now launched in early November after a trial run in the Pacific, the app has reached close to 10,000 registered users, Antos said.

AFN Now is free to download from the Apple and Google app stores. It’s compatible with most devices and in-home media, including Apple TV, Roku and Amazon Fire.

Next up for digital sports is likely to be major league baseball.

“We are working through the calendar year, through those marquee events... to expand and innovate the way that we bring the content to troops where they are,” said Zoe Stagg, AFN’s chief of television programming.

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Ex-DOD teacher found guilty of sexual abuse of elementary schoolers

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — A former Patch Elementary School teacher was convicted by a federal jury in Georgia of sexually abusing four of his former students in Germany, according to the Justice Department.

Stefan Zappey, 56, was convicted Wednesday of four counts of aggravated sexual abuse of a child and four counts of abusive sexual contact, the DOJ said in a statement Thursday. He faces a mandatory minimum sentence of 30 years in prison and is scheduled for sen-



Zappey

tencing in May.

Zappey taught first through third grades at Patch and was employed by Department of Defense Education Activity in Europe between 2001 and 2021, the Justice Department said. He also was DODEA teacher of the year in the Bavaria district in 2007.

Army criminal investigators launched a probe into Zappey in 2020 after a former Patch student came forward with allegations

against the teacher, whom she accused of touching her under her clothing more than 10 years earlier.

The victim, who was 8 years old at the time, said she did not report the abuse when it occurred because she “didn’t know it was wrong,” court papers said.

The victim, a third grader then, said Zappey called her to his desk during class and repeatedly fondled her, court records stated.

That launched a wider investigation, which uncovered additional victims who gave similar accounts of abuse. Staff members also ex-

pressed alarm over Zappey, but it was unclear from court records whether they ever raised their concerns with school leaders.

One faculty member said Zappey “would train students to become ‘really touchy feely,’” court documents stated.

Investigators interviewed four of Zappey’s former students, who reported that he had placed his hand inside their underwear and touched their genitals, the Justice Department statement said.

“Other students and faculty members of Patch Elementary reported that Zappey frequently

hugged students, had them sit on his lap, and touched their backs and stomachs under their clothes,” the Justice Department said.

The victims were between 6 and 8 years old, according to the statement.

Zappey was arrested in August 2021 while on vacation in the United States. DODEA at the time said that he was removed from the classroom in March 2020 at the start of the Army’s investigation into misconduct.

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EUROPE

Poland pushes for more tanks in Kyiv, seeks German OK

By MONIKA SCISLOWSKA

Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland — Poland said Monday that it would ask Berlin for permission to send German-built Leopard tanks to Ukraine as the government in Warsaw pushes its Western allies to move faster on supplying Kyiv with more military hardware to thwart Russia's invasion.

Germany has hesitated over sending tanks to Ukraine. But Polish officials took heart from remarks Sunday by German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock that Berlin wouldn't seek to stop Poland from providing Leopard 2 battle tanks to Ukraine.

Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki didn't specify when the request to Germany will be made. He said that Poland is building a coalition of nations ready to send Leopard 2 battle tanks to Ukraine.

Poland needs the consent of Germany, which builds the tanks, to send them to a non-NATO country.

But even if there is no permission from Germany, Warsaw will make its own decisions, Morawiecki said at a news conference.

Poland has become a leading advocate in the European Union for giving Ukraine the military aid that could help it prevail over the Kremlin's invading forces 11 months after the war began. Germany's hesitation has drawn criticism, particularly from Poland and the Baltic countries on NATO's eastern flank that feel especially threatened by Russia's renewed aggression.

Although Berlin has provided substantial aid, it has been criticized for dragging its feet on providing military hardware.

German government spokesman Steffen Hebestreit said it was important for Germany not to take a "reckless" step it might regret, adding that a decision will not be rushed.

"These are hard questions of life and death," he added. "We have to ask what this means for the defense of our own country."

Pressed on how long a decision on sending tanks might take, Hebestreit said: "I assume that it's not a question of months now."

The Ukrainian government has said that tanks, and especially the Leopards, are vital to Kyiv.

Previously, Polish officials have indicated that Finland and Denmark were ready to join Warsaw in sending Leopards to Ukraine. The United Kingdom has pledged to send some of its Challenger tanks. French President Emmanuel Macron said Sunday that he doesn't rule out sending Leclerc battle tanks to Ukraine and had asked his defense minister to "work on" the idea.

But Macron said a decision hinged on three criteria that have also weighed on the minds of other Western leaders: that sharing the equipment doesn't lead to an escalation of the conflict; that it would provide efficient and workable help when training time is taken into account; and that it wouldn't weaken his own military.

Morawiecki said that while Poland intends to ask Germany for permission to send Leopard tanks to Ukraine, the request is "a secondary matter" as a group of EU countries look at how to help Kyiv.

"Even if, eventually, we do not get this permission, we — within this small coalition — even if Germany is not in this coalition, we will hand over our tanks, together with the others, to Ukraine," he said.

Morawiecki said talks have also been held "with our partners in Brussels" on the subject, referring to the 27-nation EU.

"Naturally, these are not easy talks, but we will be taking efforts to break this barrier of unwillingness in various countries," he said.

Baerbock, Germany's top diplomat, told French television chan-



DANIEL COLE/AP

A woman walks past tank barriers in Kyiv, Ukraine, on Monday.

nel LCI on Sunday that Poland hasn't formally asked for Berlin's approval to share some of its Leopards, but added "if we were asked, we would not stand in the way."

Regarding Baerbock's comments, Morawiecki said that "exerting pressure makes sense" and that her words are a "spark of hope" that Germany may even take part in the coalition.

Baerbock "sent a different message that offers a spark of hope that not only Germany will no longer block, but maybe finally will offer heavy, modern equipment in support of Ukraine," Morawiecki said.

"We are constantly exerting pressure on the government in Berlin to make its Leopards available," he told reporters in the western city of Poznan.

According to Morawiecki, Germany has "more than 350 active Leopards and about 200 in storage."

Poland wants to send a company of Leopard tanks, which means 14 of them, but they would barely make an impression in a war that involves thousands of tanks. If other countries contribute, Warsaw reckons, the tank detachment could grow to a much bigger brigade size.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the latest developments on sending Western Europe tanks to Ukraine "signaled increasing nervousness among

members of the alliance."

In interview clips posted by LCI, Baerbock said German officials "know how important these tanks are" and "this is why we are discussing this now with our partners."

Ukraine's supporters pledged billions of dollars in military aid to Ukraine during a meeting Friday at Ramstein Air Base in Germany. International defense leaders discussed Ukraine's urgent request for the Leopard 2 tanks, and the absence of an agreement overshadowed new military commitments.

Germany is one of the main donors of weapons to Ukraine, and it ordered a review of its Leopard 2 stocks in preparation for a possible green light. Nonetheless, Berlin has shown caution at each step of increasing its aid to Ukraine, a hesitancy seen as rooted in its history and political culture.

Moscow, in response to the pledges of sophisticated Western weapons for Kyiv's military, has stepped up its warnings that escalation risks catastrophe.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov reaffirmed Moscow's claim that the Western supplies could lead to "unpredictable" consequences.

"We have said on numerous occasions that escalation is the most dangerous path, and the consequences may be unpredictable," Ryabkov said. "Our signals are not

listened to, and Russia's adversaries keep raising the stakes."

With both sides' battlefield positions mostly deadlocked during winter, the Kremlin's forces have kept up their bombardments of Ukrainian areas.

Kharkiv Gov. Oleh Synyehubov said Russian forces shelled several towns and villages in the northeastern region in the previous 24 hours, killing a 67-year-old woman and leaving another resident wounded.

Neither side has shown signs of backing down as the war heads for a second year.

The Kremlin appears to be keeping its options open on mobilizing more soldiers. Russian authorities declared that the mobilization of an additional 300,000 reservists in late October is complete. Some Russian lawyers and rights groups, however, pointed out that Putin's mobilization decree remains in effect until another presidential decree is issued to formally end the action.

Peskov said Monday that although the assigned number of reservists have been mobilized, the decree remains in force because it also includes "other measures needed to ensure the fulfillment of tasks by the military." He didn't elaborate.

Ukrainian officials have repeatedly warned of Russia's plans to continue mobilizing more troops.

Hungary says it won't veto EU arms funding to Ukraine

Associated Press

BUDAPEST, Hungary — Hungary's foreign minister said Monday that while his government isn't in favor of the European Union sending funding for weapons to Ukraine, it won't block a planned tranche of \$543 million in assistance to Kyiv to use in the war with Russia.

Speaking at a news briefing on the sidelines of a meeting of EU foreign ministers in Brussels, Peter Szijjarto dismissed as "lies" media reports that emerged last week that Hungary planned to veto the funds earmarked for Ukraine under the bloc's European Peace Facility.

Hungary opposes the deliv-

ery of Western weapons to Ukraine — something Szijjarto said could "lead to the prolongation or potential escalation" of the war — but the government won't veto the aid package, he said.

"We don't consider weapons shipments, nor the hundreds of millions of euros Europe has spent to finance them, a good

idea. But we won't block the decision," he said.

While Hungary's government hasn't blocked previous payouts under the facility, which has to date delivered over \$3.3 billion in arms funding to Ukraine, it did veto an aid package of over \$19.5 billion in December, leaving the EU's other 26 nations scram-

bling to keep the money supply going.

Budapest has also vocally opposed sanctions against Moscow, arguing they have done more damage to EU countries than to Russia, and has refused to provide Ukraine with weapons or allow their transfer across its border with Ukraine.

Debate: Purists want tracks, big gun

“Army doctrine says that a Bradley is not a tank because the Army does not use it like a tank, they use it to support the infantry and to carry infantry,” Cancian, a retired



wellman.phillip@stripes.com
Twitter: @pwwellman

The image is a large orange banner for a contest. At the top, it says "STARS AND STRIPES." in white, with a small American flag graphic between the words. Below this, in large white letters, is "CAST YOUR VOTE!". Underneath that, in white, is "VOTE FOR YOUR FAVORITES!". In the center, there is a large blue circle containing the text "STARS AND STRIPES." at the top, followed by "BEST OF THE PACIFIC" in large white letters with blue wavy lines, and "2023" in white with two blue stars on either side. To the right of the circle is a QR code. At the bottom, in white, is "YOU COULD WIN A GIFT CARD WORTH UP TO \$300!". Below that, in blue, is "Vote online by MARCH 23". At the very bottom, a blue ribbon banner contains the text "BESTOFPACIFIC.STRIPES.COM" in white. The background of the entire banner is a repeating pattern of various contest categories in small white text, such as "BEST EXCHANGE STORE", "BEST OFF-BASE RESTAURANT", "BEST ON-BASE LODGING", etc.

NATION



DAVID ZALUBOWSKI/AP

David Richardson, the co-founder of Elephant Energy, leans on a condenser placed on the roof during the installation of a heat pump in an 80-year-old rowhouse in a Denver neighborhood Friday.

Enticing Americans to buy green seen as climate hurdle for Biden

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden persuaded Democrats in Congress to provide hundreds of billions of dollars to fight climate change. Now comes another formidable task: enticing Americans to buy millions of electric cars, heat pumps, solar panels and more efficient appliances.

It's a public relations challenge that could determine whether the country meets Biden's ambitious goal to cut greenhouse gas emissions in half by 2030.

Relying on tax credits and rebates made the climate legislation — it was approved in August with only Democratic votes — more politically palatable than regulations that force wholesale changes in polluting industries.

But it also means the administration's battle against global warming will be waged "one household at a time," said Shannon Baker-Branstetter, who works on energy issues at the Center for American Progress, a liberal think tank closely aligned with the White House.

"It is very incremental," she said. "So it requires a very sophisticated communications strategy."

Biden acknowledged the hurdle during a recent Cabinet meeting as

he talked about the incentives that are becoming available this year.

"Folks need to know how to take advantage of these benefits that we passed. That's on all of us around the table here to make sure we get that message out clearly," he said.

The White House says it is piecing together a plan to partner with state governments, contractors, retailers and social media influencers to get the word out. "Lowering utility bills is going to be a key driver," said Josh Peck, a senior policy adviser on clean energy issues.

It's also collaborating with Rewiring America, a nonprofit focused on ways to electrify homes and businesses, and companies like Airbnb, Redfin and Lyft. As part of the effort, Rewiring America created an online calculator that shows what credits or rebates homeowners might be eligible for, depending on their ZIP code and income.

Buying a heat pump or installing solar panels is "a major expense line and a major opportunity for savings," said Ari Matusiak, the group's founder and CEO. "So it's really important to make sure people are aware of the resources they have available and the benefits they can unlock in terms of bringing energy bill savings."

But the White House faces an uphill battle.

An AP-NORC poll released in September, one month after the Inflation Reduction Act was signed, found that 61% of U.S. adults said they knew little to nothing about the legislation. And despite the multibillion-dollar investment in climate solutions, only a third said it would help climate change; about half said it wouldn't make a difference.

Majorities of U.S. adults said they are unlikely to install solar panels or buy an electric vehicle in the next three years, according to the poll. Among those, at least half said financial incentives would not make a difference in their decision.

Homeowners typically are reluctant to swap out furnaces or water heaters until they absolutely have to shell out the money for them.

"One day the heat won't turn on and it's negative 10 [degrees] outside and you say, 'Oh crap, I've got to get a furnace,'" said DR Richardson, co-founder of Elephant Energy, a Colorado company that helps homeowners install electric heat pumps and other appliances. "So the biggest challenge from our perspective, and from a climate perspective, is to get people to think ahead of time about how to replace these assets."

Durbin, Manchin criticize Biden for documents doings

BY ELLEN KNICKMEYER
AND SEUNG MIN KIM
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Senior Democrats, dismayed by a steady stream of startling disclosures, expressed criticism Sunday of how President Joe Biden handled classified material after leaving office as vice president and disappointment that the White House has not been more forthcoming with the public.

Lawmakers who might have anticipated questions focusing on the debt limit or Ukraine aid when they were booked last week for the Sunday news shows found themselves quizzed about the latest development over the weekend in the document drama that has put Biden's presidency on the defensive: During a search Friday of Biden's home in Wilmington, Del., the FBI found additional documents with classified markings and took possession of some of his handwritten notes, the president's lawyer said Saturday.

Biden should be "embarrassed by the situation," said Illinois Sen. Dick Durbin, the second-ranking Democrat in the Senate, adding that the president had ceded the moral high ground on an issue that has already entangled former President Donald Trump. Special counsels appointed by Attorney General Merrick Garland are investigating both cases.

"Well, of course. Let's be honest about it. When that information is found, it diminishes the stature of any person who is in possession of it because it's not supposed to happen. ... The elected official bears ultimate responsibility," Durbin said.

Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., said Biden "should have a lot of regrets. ... You just might as well say, 'Listen, it's irresponsible.'" The president told reporters on Thursday that he had "no regrets" over how and when the public learned about the documents and that there was

"no there there."

Despite their criticism, Biden's fellow Democrats defended what they said was his cooperation with the Justice Department as the search for additional classified material unfolds. They contrasted it with Trump's resistance to efforts to recover hundreds of documents after he left office.

"It is outrageous that either occurred," Durbin said. "But the reaction by the former president and the current president could not be in sharper contrast."

Biden voluntarily allowed the FBI into his home on Friday, but the lack of a warrant did not dim the extraordinary nature of the search. It compounded the embarrassment to Biden that started earlier in January with the disclosure that the president's lawyers had found a "small number" of classified records at a former office at the Penn Biden Center in Washington shortly before the Nov. 8 elections.

The White House has disclosed that Biden's team found classified documents and official records on three other occasions in recent months — in follow-up searches on Dec. 20 in the garage of his Wilmington home, and on Jan. 11 and 12 in his home library.

The discoveries have become a political liability as Biden prepares to kick off his 2024 reelection bid, and they undercut his efforts to portray an image of propriety to the American public after the tumultuous presidency of his predecessor, Trump.

Manchin excoriated both men for their handling of sensitive security documents. "It's just hard to believe that in the United States of America, we have a former president and a current president that are basically in the same situation," he said. "How does this happen?"

Durbin appeared on CNN's "State of the Union." Manchin was on CNN and NBC's "Meet the Press."

Biden said to pick former COVID coordinator Zients as chief of staff

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden is expected to name Jeff Zients, who ran the administration's response to the COVID-19 pandemic at the start of Biden's term, as his next chief of staff, according to two people familiar with the matter.

Biden's current top aide, Ron Klain, is preparing to leave the job in



Zients

the coming weeks.

Since serving as COVID-19 response coordinator, Zients has returned to the White House in a low-profile position to work on staffing matters for

the remainder of Biden's first term.

The two people familiar with the matter were not authorized to publicly discuss Biden's plans before an official announcement and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The Washington Post first reported on Zients' expected appointment. The White House did not respond to requests for comment.

The change at the highest levels of senior staff comes as Biden passes his two-year mark in office and pivots to a defensive stance against a House Republican majority hungry to investigate his administration's actions and his family. Biden, 80, is also preparing to launch his reelection campaign in the coming weeks.

Zients, vice chairman of Biden's transition operation after his November 2020 election, brings significant managerial expertise in government and the private sector. He was the director of the National Economic Council during the Obama administration and acting director of the Office of Management and Budget.

NATION

Gunman in California massacre found dead

By AMY TAXIN
AND DAMIAN DOVARGANES
Associated Press

MONTEREY PARK, Calif. — Authorities searched for a motive for the gunman who killed 10 people at a Los Angeles-area ballroom dance club during Lunar New Year celebrations, slayings that sent a wave of fear through Asian American communities and cast a shadow over festivities nationwide.

The suspect, 72-year-old Huu Can Tran, was found dead of a self-inflicted gunshot wound on Sunday in the van that authorities say he used to flee after being prevented from attacking another dance hall. The mayor of Monterey Park said Tran may have frequented the dance hall he attacked.

The massacre was the nation's fifth mass killing this month — and it struck one of California's largest celebrations of a holiday observed in many Asian cultures, dealing another blow to a community that has been the target of high-profile violence in recent years.

It was also the deadliest attack since May 24, when 21 people were killed in an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas. Authorities said Saturday's assault could have been even more deadly. A man whose family runs the venue confronted the assailant in the lobby and wrested the gun from him, *The New York Times* reported.

Authorities have shared very little about Tran.



DAMIAN DOVARGANES/AP

A body is retrieved from a van by the Los Angeles County coroner in Torrance, Calif., on Sunday.

"We do understand that he may have had a history of visiting this dance hall and perhaps the motivation has to do with some personal relationships, but that's something that I think investigators are still uncovering and investigating and we'll probably find out more in the hours ahead or even days ahead," said Monterey Park Mayor Henry Lo. Public records show Tran once

had addresses in the city and neighboring ones.

But Lo and Los Angeles County Sheriff Robert Luna stressed that the motive remained unclear for the attack, which also wounded 10 people. Speaking at a Sunday evening news conference, Luna said all of the people killed appeared to be over 50. No other suspects were at large, according to the sheriff.

The suspect was carrying what Luna described as a semi-automatic pistol with an extended magazine, and a second handgun was discovered in the van where Tran died.

Monterey Park Police Chief Scott Wiese said Sunday evening that within three minutes of receiving the call, officers arrived at the Star Ballroom Dance Studio in

Monterey Park. There, they found carnage inside and people trying to flee through all the doors.

"When they came into the parking lot, it was chaos," Wiese said.

About 20 minutes after the first attack, the gunman entered the Lai Lai Ballroom in the nearby city of Alhambra.

Brandon Tsay was in the lobby at the time, and he told ABC's "Good Morning America" that he thought he was going to die.

"Something came over me. I realized I needed to get the weapon away from him, I needed to take this weapon, disarm him or else everybody would have died," Tsay said. "When I got the courage, I lunged at him with both my hands, grabbed the weapon and we had a struggle."

Once Tsay seized the gun, he pointed it at the man and shouted: "Get the hell out of here, I'll shoot, get away, go!"

The assailant paused, but then headed back to his van, and Tsay called the police, the gun still in his hand.

While Luna told reporters on Sunday that two people wrested the weapon away from the attacker, Tsay, who works a few days a week at the dance hall his grandparents started, told *The New York Times* that he acted alone. Stills from security footage shown on "Good Morning America" showed only the two men struggling for the gun.

South Dakota tribe says storm deaths 'could have been prevented'

By HEATHER
HOLLINGSWORTH
Associated Press

Honor Beauvais' every breath was a battle as a snowstorm battered the Rosebud Sioux Reservation in South Dakota.

The asthmatic 12-year-old's worried aunt and uncle begged for help clearing a path to their cattle ranch near the community of Two Strike as his condition worsened, his fragile lungs fighting a massive infection. But when an ambulance finally managed to get through, Honor's uncle was already performing CPR, said his grandmother, Rose Cordier-Beauvais.

Honor, whose Lakota name is Yuonihan Ihanble, was pronounced dead last month at the Indian Health Service's hospital on the reservation, one of six deaths that tribal leaders say "could have been prevented" if not for a series of systemic failures. Targets of the frustration include Republican Gov. Kristi Noem, the U.S. Congress, the Indian Health Service and even — for some — the tribe itself.

"We were all just in shock," said Cordier-Beauvais, who recalled that when the snow finally cleared

enough to hold the funeral, the family gave out toys to other children as a symbol of how he played with his siblings. "He loved giving them toys."

As the storm raged, families ran out of fuel, and two people froze to death, including one in their home, the Rosebud Sioux Tribe said in a letter this month seeking a presidential disaster declaration.

The letter described the situation on the reservation in a remote area on the state's far southern border with Nebraska, 130 miles southeast of Rapid City, as a "catastrophe."

And in a scathing State of the Tribes address delivered last week in the state Legislature, Peter Lengkeek, chairman of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe, accused emergency services of being "slow to react" as tribes struggled to clear the snow, with many using what he described as "outdated equipment and dilapidated resources."

Noem's spokesman, Ian Fury, said the claims were part of a "false narrative" and "couldn't be further from the truth." The Indian Health Services didn't immediately return email messages from *The Associated Press* seeking com-

ment.

Noem, who is seen as a potential contender for the 2024 White House, declared an emergency on Dec. 22 to respond to the winter storm and activated the state's National Guard to haul firewood to the tribe.



Beauvais

ly rented two helicopters to drop food to remote locations and rescue the stranded.

The firewood, said OJ Semans, a consultant for the tribe, came in the form of uncut logs, which were not immediately usable. The tribe wrote in its letter that volunteers continue to work diligently to get the wood cut.

"It was a political stunt that did nothing to help the people that were in trouble," he said.

It all started on Dec. 12, when the tribe shut down offices so people could prepare for the first onslaught. The storm hit in earnest

around midnight, dumping an average of nearly 2 feet of snow on the reservation, most of it in the first day, said Alex Lamers, a National Weather Service meteorologist.

By the time the storm let up on Dec. 16, the reservation also was coated with one-quarter of an inch of ice and wind gusts as high as 55 mph had blown the snow into drifts of up to 25 feet.

The tribe issued a no travel advisory, except for emergencies, threatening a \$500 fine for violators. Still some traveled and got stuck, the tribe said, their abandoned vehicles creating a hazard for first responders.

Starting on Dec. 18, soon after the blizzard moved out, there were 11 straight days with sub-zero temperatures. Wind chills were dangerous, hitting -51 degrees Fahrenheit at their lowest. The length and severity of the cold made it one of the worst such stretches on record, Lamers said.

Then, as fierce cold and storms descended across much of the rest of the country, claiming at least 40 lives in western New York, a phenomenon called a ground blizzard hit the reservation on Dec. 22. Strong winds blew existing snow

on the ground, and visibility fell to a quarter mile, Lamers said.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs sent staff to help, and the White House said FEMA also spoke to the tribe's president. But snowplows were paralyzed in the cold, with the freezing temperatures turning the diesel fuel and hydraulics into gel, the tribe said.

Shawn Bordeaux, a Democratic state lawmaker and a former tribal council member, was running out of propane heat at his home on the reservation when Noem announced she was sending in the National Guard. Unable to get out and shop, he had no Christmas gifts for his children. Even for those who could get out, the store shelves were growing bare. Gas stations were running out of gas.

"I don't want to totally dog out the system, but we kind of got left to our own devices," said Bordeaux, who is a frequent critic of the governor. "She basically left us hanging."

The tribe also alleges Congress is at fault for not changing rules that allocate how money from a tribal transportation program is distributed among the nation's 574 federally recognized tribes.

NATION

Rare swift police firings could become common

By STEVE LEBLANC
Associated Press

BOSTON — The speed with which five Memphis, Tenn., police officers were fired following the traffic stop of a man who later died in a hospital is unusual but could become more common, according to those studying police and criminal justice issues.

The five Memphis Police Department officers were fired Friday, less than two weeks after the Jan. 7 arrest of Tyre Nichols, 29. Officials said the five were dismissed for excessive use of force, failure to intervene and failure to render aid.

It's rare for a police department to act so quickly, said David Thomas, a professor of forensic studies at Florida Gulf Coast University. Investigations can sometimes go on for up to a year, he said.

"It never happens this quickly," Thomas said.

All five officers — Tadarrius Bean, Demetrius Haley, Emmitt Martin III, Desmond Mills Jr. and Justin Smith — are Black, as was Nichols. The decision to fire the of-

ficers followed a probe by the Memphis Police Department. Nichols died three days after the traffic stop.

The U.S. Justice Department has opened a civil rights investigation. The Tennessee Bureau of Investigation also is looking into the force used in the arrest.

One recent turning point has been the advent of police body cameras, which can be quickly reviewed, along with cellphone video taken by passersby, said Thomas, who served 20 years as a police officer in Michigan and Florida.

"In the old days, you'd have the officer's word. If the victim was still alive, you'd have their testimony. If someone had died, you'd have the medical examiner's report. All of that would play a role," he said. "With body cameras, the evidence is right there."

Nichols was arrested after officers stopped him for reckless driving, police said. There was a confrontation when officers approached Nichols, and he ran before he was confronted again and

arrested, authorities said. He complained of shortness of breath and was hospitalized.

Relatives have accused police of beating Nichols and causing him to have a heart attack. Authorities said Nichols experienced a medical emergency. Relatives have pushed for the release of police body camera footage and called for officers to be charged.

Body cameras can only tell a full story if they are on and working throughout an entire incident, Thomas said. Some officers may forget to turn them on. Others may deliberately turn them off.

"Law enforcement can no longer act with impunity," he said. "Absolutely, officers will be let go more quickly."

Typically before a firing, officials will determine if an officer has violated a department's general orders, which set out the procedures and regulations officers are meant to follow, said Patrick Oliver, director of the criminal justice program at Cedarville University in Ohio.

"The seriousness of the job ac-



LUCAS FINTON, THE (MEMPHIS, TENN.) COMMERCIAL APPEAL/AP

Rodney Wells, Tyre Nichols' stepfather, listens to activists outside of the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tenn., on Jan. 16. Nichols died this month after being arrested following a traffic stop.

tion is based on the severity of the violation," said Oliver, who spent 28 years in law enforcement, 16 of them as a police chief, including as chief of the Cleveland Police Department.

Firing an officer is the most severe job action, Oliver said, suggesting that department officials feel confident they can support the decision.

"There is far more scrutiny of police today," he said. "When I was in policing there was less of a likelihood that something a police officer was doing would be caught on video."

Oliver added that many times videos will confirm police acted properly. "I would say that's the

majority of times," he said.

While unusual, it's not unheard of for a city to fire an officer before criminal charges are filed, but that's not necessarily the end of the story, said Stephen Rushin, a Loyola University Chicago law school professor who has studied police contracts.

Cities often give officers the ability to appeal disciplinary action, including termination of their employment, Rushin said.

"In many agencies, the initial decision to fire an officer begins a lengthy appellate process that can take months to complete," he said. "At the end of this process, it is not uncommon for an officer to be rehired on appeal."

Abortion activists rally at Women's March 50 years after Roe

By CLAIRE RUSH
AND HARM VENHUIZEN
Associated Press/Report for America

MADISON, Wis. — From beach cities to snow-covered streets, abortion supporters rallied by the thousands on Sunday to demand protections for reproductive rights and mark the 50th anniversary of the now-overturned Roe v. Wade U.S. Supreme Court decision that established federal protections for the procedure.

The reversal of Roe in June unleashed a flurry of legislation in the states, dividing them between those that have restricted or banned abortion and those that have sought to defend access. The Women's March, galvanized during Donald Trump's presidential inauguration in 2017 amid a national reckoning over sexual assaults, said it has refocused on state activism after Roe was tossed.

"This fight is bigger than Roe," Women's March said in a tweet. "They thought that we would stay home and that this would end with Roe — they were wrong."

A dozen Republican-governed states have implemented sweeping bans on abortion, and several others seek to do the same. But those moves have been offset by gains on the other side.

Abortion opponents were de-



AMANDA ANDRADE-RHOADES/AP

Maggie Schoenbaum, 12, speaks about abortion rights during the Women's March in front of the White House in Washington on Sunday.

feated in votes on ballot measures in Kansas, Michigan and Kentucky. State courts have blocked several bans from taking effect. Myriad efforts are underway to help patients travel to states that allow abortions or use medication for self-managed abortions. And some Democratic-led states have taken steps to shield patients and providers from lawsuits originating in states where the procedure is banned.

Organizers with the Women's March said their strategy moving forward will focus largely on mea-

sures at the state level. But freshly energized anti-abortion activists are increasingly turning their attention to Congress, with the aim of pushing for a potential national abortion restriction down the line.

Sunday's main march was held in Wisconsin, where upcoming elections could determine the state Supreme Court's power balance and future abortion rights. But rallies took place in dozens of cities, including Florida's state capital of Tallahassee, where Vice President Kamala Harris gave a fiery speech before a boisterous crowd.

"Can we truly be free if families cannot make intimate decisions about the course of their own lives?" Harris said. "And can we truly be free if so-called leaders claim to be ... 'on the vanguard of freedom' while they dare to restrict the rights of the American people and attack the very foundations of freedom?"

In Madison, thousands of abortion rights supporters donned coats and gloves to march in below-freezing temperatures through downtown to the state Capitol.

"It's just basic human rights at this point," said Alaina Gato, a Wisconsin resident who joined her mother, Meg Wheeler, on the Capitol steps to protest.

They said they plan to vote in the April Supreme Court election. Wheeler also said she hoped to volunteer as a poll worker and canvass for Democrats, despite identifying as an independent voter.

"This is my daughter. I want to make sure she has the right to choose whether she wants to have a child," Wheeler said.

Buses of protesters streamed into the Wisconsin capital from Chicago and Milwaukee, armed with banners and signs calling for the Legislature to repeal the state's ban.

Eliza Bennett, a Wisconsin OB-

GYN who said she had to stop offering abortion services to her patients after Roe was overturned, called on lawmakers to put the choice back in the hands of women. "They should be making decisions about what's best for their health, not state legislatures," she said.

Abortions are unavailable in Wisconsin due to legal uncertainties faced by abortion clinics over whether an 1849 law banning the procedure is in effect. The law, which prohibits abortion except to save the patient's life, is being challenged in court.

Some also carried weapons. Lilith K., who declined to provide their last name, stood on the sidewalk alongside protesters, holding an assault rifle and wearing a tactical vest with a holstered handgun.

"With everything going on with women and other people losing their rights, and with the recent shootings at Club Q and other LGBTQ night clubs, it's just a message that we're not going to take this sitting down," Lilith said.

The march also drew counter-protesters. Most held signs raising religious objections to abortion rights. "I don't really want to get involved with politics. I'm more interested in what the law of God says," John Goeke, a Wisconsin resident, said.

NATION

Substation protections proposed after attacks

BY HANNAH SCHOENBAUM
AP/Report for America

RALEIGH, N.C. — When gunshots at two electrical substations cut power to thousands of central North Carolina homes for several days in early December, Republican state Rep. Ben Moss watched his vibrant district full of family farms, small businesses and sprawling golf courses become “a ghost town.”

After the latest attack last week on a substation in Randolph County, northeast of Charlotte, Moss is urging fellow lawmakers to prioritize new legislation that would secure the state’s critical infrastructure when the legislative session begins in earnest this week. He’s among the first state legislators to propose power grid protections this year amid a surge in attacks on U.S. substations, primarily in the Carolinas and Pacific Northwest. The recent attacks in Moore County, N.C., and others in Washington, Oregon, South Carolina and Nevada, have underscored the vulnerability of the nation’s far-flung electrical grid, which security experts have long warned could be a target for domestic extremists.

Lawmakers in at least two affected states — North Carolina and South Carolina — have begun proposing remedies.

“I don’t want to see anybody else go through what Moore (County) did,” said Moss, a 2024 candidate for state labor commissioner whose district saw a peak of more than 45,000 customers lose power. “When the power goes out, you don’t have heat, don’t have food, can’t get fuel or some medications, the people are unsafe.”

Moss is drafting legislation that would require utilities to provide 24-hour security at substations, which transform high-voltage electricity into the lower voltages that power communities. Security provisions would vary across sites, some of which are already gated with nearby cameras while others are more exposed.

He considers the bill “a conversation opener” between lawmakers, utilities and security experts to help the General Assembly identify cost-effective defenses that wouldn’t drive up consumer prices.

His call for increased surveillance comes as questions linger about the Moore County shootings. The FBI is still seeking information and no arrests have been made.

Federal regulators in December ordered a review of physical security standards across the nation’s vast electricity transmission network following the attacks in North Carolina. The North American Elec-

tric Reliability Corporation, which oversees the nation’s bulk power system, has until early April to submit a report and recommend possible improvements.

Utilities in South Carolina — where gunshots were fired near a Duke Energy facility but caused no damage days after the North Carolina shootings — are asking lawmakers to increase penalties for intentionally destroying electrical infrastructure or other utility property.

A state Senate proposal would set a sliding scale based on how much damage is done — if it costs more than \$25,000 to fix equipment and cover losses, the perpetrator could face up to 20 years in prison, double the current 10-year maximum.

A maximum 25-year penalty would apply if anyone died or their health was endangered by a resulting outage.

Dominion Energy South Carolina President Keller Kissam said the state saw at least 12 incidents of people intentionally damaging equipment last year.

“You want to demoralize people, you put them in the dark,” he said.

The Pacific Northwest has become a hotspot for the physical attacks, with Washington and Oregon utilities reporting at least 15 incidents in 2022, including 10 in the last

two months of the year.

Attackers hit four Washington substations on Christmas Day, forcing entry, setting fire to equipment and temporarily cutting power to thousands of customers.

Michael Furze, director of the Washington State Energy Office, said that although no legislation specifically addressing substation security has been introduced, broader bipartisan discussions are underway about grid resilience.

Washington is already revamping its electrical infrastructure under the Clean Energy Transformation Act, which commits the state to an electricity supply free of greenhouse gas emissions by 2045. Physical and cybersecurity updates are in the works as the electrical grid undergoes significant changes to meet new standards, Furze said.

“‘Security by design’ is a core component of these systems,” he said.

In neighboring Oregon, the state’s Public Utility Commission is working with regulated utilities to increase vigilance and explore possible security updates, after gunfire attacks damaged two substations southeast of Portland in late November. Spokesperson Kandi Young said the commission monitors proposed legislation and is not aware of any related bills introduced this session.



JAMM AQUINO/AP

Luke Shepardson rides a large wave during The Eddie Aikau Big Wave Invitational at Waimea Bay on Sunday on Oahu’s North Shore, in Hawaii.

Hawaii surf contest The Eddie returns, welcomes female surfers for first time

Associated Press

HONOLULU — One of the world’s most prestigious and storied surfing contests — dubbed the “Super Bowl of Surfing” — went forward Sunday in Hawaii for the first time in seven years with towering wave faces and a gigantic swell that was expected to grow throughout the day.

And this year female surfers competed alongside the men for the first time in the 39-year history of The Eddie Aikau Big Wave Invitational. The event — alternatively known simply as The Eddie — is a one-day contest held in Waimea Bay on Oahu’s North Shore when the surf is consistently large enough during the winter big-wave surfing season from mid-

December through mid-March. “Large enough” means 20 feet by Hawaii measurements. That’s equivalent to about 40 feet when measured by methods used in the rest of the U.S. Before this year, conditions have only aligned for it to be held nine times since the initial competition in 1984.

Organizer Clyde Aikau said at a news conference Friday that he was expecting waves to reach 25 to 30 feet by Hawaii measurements or 50 to 60 feet on the national scale — and the conditions were meeting expectations.

On Sunday, the sets were already big, with the swell expected to grow as the day went on, and an estimated 60,000 people packed the beaches and surrounding area

to catch a glimpse of the spectacle. One huge wave swept onto the beach and hit a family, sweeping a baby under a house, but the child was not injured, Hawaii News Now reported.

“We’ve been looking at 30-foot to 40-foot wave faces for the most part, (and) the biggest waves of the day are going to be in excess of 45 feet. By local scale, they’ll call those waves 25 feet — and we’ve seen a couple sets like that already,” Kevin Wallis, director of forecasting at Surfline.com, said by phone Sunday morning.

“It’s amazing, it’s really cool to see and it’s such a rare and prestigious event, and there’s a lot of energy and a lot of buzz around, for sure,” he said.

New pill treats diabetic cats without daily insulin shots

Associated Press

When Mark Winternheimer’s 12-year-old tabby cat was diagnosed with diabetes last year, the treatment was daunting: twice-daily injections of insulin, an implanted monitor and frequent visits to the vet.

Despite their qualms, Winternheimer and his wife, Courtnee, of New Albany, Ind., learned to give Oliver his shots.

“For us, they’re part of the family,” Winternheimer said of Oliver and their two other cats, Ella and Theo. “You wouldn’t deny another family member care if it’s available.”

Now, a new, once-daily pill promises to make treating feline diabetes easier in newly diagnosed animals, without the shots.

“A pill is a huge step forward from a needle,” said Dr. Audrey Cook, a cat veterinarian at Texas A&M University.

One caveat: The pill called Bexacat can’t be used in cats like Oliver, who had previously received insulin.

The biggest benefit may be the ease of use, experts said. While many cat owners successfully treat their cats with twice-daily insulin, often for years, others struggle. Research shows that owners put down 1 in 10 cats with a new diabetes diagnosis. Another 10% are euthanized within a year, in part because of the difficulties of treatment.

“Some people are afraid of giving insulin injections. Some peo-

ple don’t have the time to dedicate to the care of their cats,” said Dr. Catharine Scott-Moncrieff, a Purdue University veterinarian who consulted with the makers of Bexacat on the product testing.

Made by Elanco Animal Health Inc., Bexacat was approved by the Food and Drug Administration in December and is expected to be available in the U.S. in the next several weeks. It’s the first drug of its type approved for animals; similar drugs have been approved for people for about a decade.

Diabetes is caused when too much glucose, or sugar, builds up in the bloodstream because the pancreas doesn’t produce enough insulin, a hormone, or use it properly. Bexacat lowers blood sugar by causing it to be excreted in urine. Symptoms of feline diabetes include increased thirst and urination, increased appetite and weight loss.

About a quarter of U.S. households include one or more cats, totaling more than 58 million felines. Between 1 in 100 and 1 in 500 cats in the U.S. are diagnosed with diabetes, which is rising as obesity rates in the species approach 50%, said Dr. Bruce Kornreich, director of the Cornell Feline Health Center at Cornell University.

In studies involving more than 300 diabetic cats, Bexacat improved glucose control and decreased at least one symptom of diabetes in more than 80% of newly diagnosed, healthy animals, company documents show.

WORLD

Power outage hits Pakistan after energy-saving move

By MUNIR AHMED
Associated Press

ISLAMABAD — Much of Pakistan was left without power for hours on Monday morning as an energy-saving measure by the government backfired. The outage spread panic and raised questions about the cash-strapped government's handling of the country's economic crisis.

Electricity was turned off during low usage hours overnight to conserve fuel across the country, officials said, leaving technicians unable to boot up the system all at

once after daybreak. The outage was reminiscent of a massive blackout in January 2021, attributed at the time to a technical fault in Pakistan's power generation and distribution system.

Monday's nationwide breakdown left many people without drinking water as pumps are powered by electricity. Schools, hospitals, factories and shops were without power amid the harsh winter weather.

Energy Minister Khurram Dastgir told local media on Monday that engineers were working to restore the power supply across the country, including in the capital of Islamabad, and tried to reassure the nation that power would be fully restored within the next 12 hours.

According to the minister, electricity usage typically goes down overnight during winter — unlike summer months when Pakistanis turn to air conditioning, seeking a respite from the heat.

"As an economic measure, we temporarily shut down our power generation systems" on Sunday night, Dastgir said. When engi-



FAREED KHAN/AP

A shopkeeper starts a generator at a shop in Karachi, Pakistan, following a power breakdown across the country on Monday.

neers tried to turn the systems back on, a "fluctuation in voltage" was observed, which "forced engi-

neers to shut down the power grid" stations one by one, he added.



Frank Hanebuth

Trial against Hells Angels club set to start in Spain

Associated Press

MADRID — The trial of a former leader of the Hells Angels in Europe is set to start on Monday in Madrid.

German national Frank Hanebuth is being tried alongside 49 alleged international collaborators for running a chapter of the motorcycle club on the Spanish resort is-

land of Mallorca that was allegedly involved in organized crime.

He was seen arriving at court an hour before the scheduled start time for the trial. A total of 46 defendants were present in the courtroom, while three others were expected to give evidence by video.

Spanish prosecutors are seeking a 13-year prison sentence for

Hanebuth on charges of membership in a criminal organization, money laundering and illegal possession of firearms. They also are demanding a \$4.5 million fine for the money laundering charge.

Other alleged leading members are also charged with running a prostitution ring and drug trafficking, and face up to 38 years.

According to the prosecutor's indictment, the Hells Angels conducted illegal activities in Mallorca from 2009 to 2013 under Hanebuth's leadership. He allegedly appointed members who then carried out crimes including extortion, pimping, acquiring illegal firearms and robbery in popular tourist spots.





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WORLD

Turks decry burning of Quran in Sweden

Associated Press

ISTANBUL — Outrage over a Quran-burning protest in Sweden produced a second day of protests in Turkey, reflecting tensions between the two countries.

Some 250 people gathered outside the Swedish Consulate in Istanbul, where a photo of Danish anti-Islam activist Rasmus Paludan was set on fire. Paludan burned Islam's holy book outside the Turkish Embassy in Stockholm on Saturday, sparking protests in Istanbul and Ankara that night.

Participants in Sunday's event carried green flags featuring the Islamic proclamation of faith and banner that said "We condemn Sweden's state-supported Islamophobia." A sign on a window of the Swedish Consulate read, "We do not share that book-burning idiot's view."



FRANCISCO SECO/AP

People set on fire a photograph of far-right activist Rasmus Paludan during a protest outside the Swedish Consulate in Istanbul on Sunday.

The protests have renewed concerns about Turkey holding up Sweden and Finland's bid to join NATO. Turkey has not yet ratified the Nordic nations' memberships in the military alliance, saying Sweden needs to address Ankara's security concerns.

Turkish officials slammed Sweden for allowing the Quran-burning protest but President Recep Tayyip Erdogan did not comment on it during his weekend

speeches. Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson tweeted late Saturday that freedom of expression was crucial to democracy but added that "what is legal is not necessarily appropriate."

"Burning books that are holy to many is a deeply disrespectful act. I want to express my sympathy for all Muslims who are offended by what has happened in Stockholm today," Kristersson said.

Russia, Estonia expel ambassadors amid 'destroyed' relations

Associated Press

MOSCOW — Russia and Estonia on Monday were expelling the ambassadors from each other's countries in a tit-for-tat move, saying that their diplomatic missions will be headed by charges d'affaires.

The Russian Foreign Ministry summoned Estonian Ambassador Margus Laidre and ordered him to leave the country by Feb. 7.

The statement issued by the ministry said that Estonia's diplomatic representation from now on will be downgraded to a charge d'affaires that heads the European Union country's mission in Moscow.

The ministry said that the move was made in retaliation for Estonia's "new unfriendly step to radically reduce the size of the Russian Embassy in Tallinn."

In response, Estonian Foreign Minister Urmas Reinsalu said that the Russian ambassador will leave on Feb. 7 too, in accordance with "the principle of parity."

The Estonian Foreign Ministry earlier this month ordered Russia to reduce the number of its embassy staff to eight diplomats and 15 administrative, technical and service staff members in order to "reach parity in embassy staff" by Feb. 1.

Estonia has reduced its bilateral relations with Moscow "to the absolute minimum" since the Kremlin sent troops into Ukraine, Reinsalu said in a statement on Jan. 11. "Now we are setting a limit to the number of Russian diplomats working in Estonia in order to achieve parity. Today's step is in correlation with the low point of our relations in general," he said.

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AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Fire damages university's oldest building from 1769

CT STORRS — A fire early Friday heavily damaged the University of Connecticut's oldest building, a colonial-style house built in 1769 that is part of the school's historic district. No injuries were reported.

Firefighters were called to the Whitney House at about 6 a.m. and the building was almost fully engulfed in flames at one point, UConn officials said. The fire was deemed under control about an hour later, but firefighters remained at the scene to put out hot spots.

The Whitney House, which was not currently in use, is one of several private residences in Storrs that predate the founding of the school and were acquired by the university, whose historic district is on the National Register of Historic Places.

The cause of the fire is under investigation.

Residents warned extra federal food aid will end

NM ALBUQUERQUE — More than half a million New Mexicans will see the amount of money they have to spend on groceries each month shrink significantly when the U.S. government cuts off extra aid that had been doled out during the coronavirus pandemic.

Top public health officials in the poverty-stricken state issued the warning Thursday, saying it will take a mix of short- and long-term efforts to fill the gaps that will be created when the extra food assistance ends after next month.

New Mexico has one of the highest rates in the nation for food insecurity among children, putting the state at the top of the list when it comes to the percentage of residents and families who receive benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

That means there will be more pressure on food banks that are already dealing with long lines, fewer donations and higher prices due to inflation, officials and advocates said.

Police seek suspect in off-Strip casino heists

NV LAS VEGAS — Police have gone public with pleas to identify a man believed to be responsible for several recent robberies of cashiers at casinos in neighborhoods off the Las Vegas Strip.

Las Vegas police on Wednesday released a media statement tracing the series of heists to November 2022, and posted video on the internet showing surveillance camera clips of two vehicles and a person wearing hooded sweatshirts, gloves, masks and sneakers.

Details were not provided about where and when the videos were recorded. Investigators have not



JOHN RUCOSKY, THE TRIBUNE-DEMOCRAT/AP

Journey to the unknown

Skiers ride the Gunnar chairlift through heavy fog above a bare Gunnar Chair Line Slope at Seven Springs Mountain Resort in Champion, Pa., on Wednesday. The resort currently has 47% of its terrain open due to warm and rainy winter.

THE CENSUS

440 The approximate amount of pounds of fentanyl precursor chemicals U.S. agents in southern Arizona seized Thursday.

The seizure is a chilling sign that producers may be moving to manufacture the deadly synthetic opioid on American soil. The powdered chemical was being transported by agents Thursday morning from a residence and warehouse in Tucson, where it had been sent in recent months in a series of suspicious packages from China that did not identify their contents, said Leo Lamas, the deputy special agent in charge for Homeland Security Investigations in Tucson. There were no immediate reports of arrests after agents with federal search warrants entered the locations and found no people inside.

ship hit it. The whale had a large gash in its side.

Ex-detective tried in case that sank drug convictions

NY NEW YORK — A former New York City narcotics detective went on trial Thursday on charges that he lied about witnessing drug deals — allegations that prompted the dismissals of hundreds of drug convictions.

Prosecutors have said video contradicted several of Joseph Franco's claims to have seen illegal drug sales. His lawyer, Howard Tanner, has claimed the former detective might have muffed some details about where he saw the alleged transactions but didn't deliberately lie, and Tanner has maintained the video doesn't prove otherwise.

Franco worked for the New York Police Department for about 20 years, until 2020. He was charged in Manhattan in 2019 with perjury and other offenses and has pleaded not guilty.

The charges involve a handful of cases, but the allegations prompted prosecutors in Brooklyn, Manhattan and the Bronx to disavow hundreds of convictions in cases involving Franco. The prosecutors didn't say they had found evidence that he lied in those cases, but they said they couldn't stand by his work.

Panel advances bill to restrict drag shows

AR LITTLE ROCK — Drag performances would be classified as adult-oriented businesses under an bill in Arkansas that a legislative panel endorsed Thursday. It's the latest in a growing number of Republican-backed proposals nationwide to restrict or ban the shows.

The state Senate City, County and Local Affairs Committee advanced the proposal, which would also prohibit drag shows from public property.

It next goes to the Republican-controlled Senate.

The proposed restrictions

would classify places that show drag performances along with other adult businesses such as adult theaters and strip clubs. The designation would prohibit them from being within 1,000 feet of churches, schools, parks and libraries. It would also prohibit such shows from public property.

Critics warned the restriction was overly broad and could affect theatrical performances that include actors or actresses performing as members of the opposite sex.

Restaurant owner's stolen hot dog statue returned

WV CHARLESTON — The owner of a West Virginia restaurant that was heavily damaged by fire has his coveted hot dog statue back.

The "Wienerman" statue was stolen from the Dairy Winkle in Campbells Creek during a break-in sometime after the Jan. 11 fire, the Kanawha County Sheriff's Office said in a news release.

A tip led deputies to a location where the statue was found undamaged. It was returned to restaurant owner Kerry Ellison, the statement said.

Investigators have not identified a suspect and are seeking information about the theft.

The short statue depicts a hot dog licking its lips and holding a bottle of mustard while pouring a bottle of ketchup on its head.

FACES

Hot, fresh tunes

Parody band Mac Sabbath combines fast food, metal music to create its crowd-pleasing style

By KELLI SKYE FADROSKI
The Orange County Register
Hailing from “the bowels of outer space,” heavy metal parody band Mac Sabbath has made a super-sized impact on the music scene since forming in Los Angeles in 2014.

The quartet — vocalist Ronald Osbourne, guitarist Slayer Mac-Cheeze, bassist Grimalice and drummer The Catburglar — may look a bit familiar since their appearances parody characters created by fast-food giant McDonald’s along with musical icons like Ozzy Osbourne, Alice Cooper, Slayer and Kiss.

After building its audience playing clubs in Los Angeles, Mac Sabbath has gone on to larger stages, festivals and tours, delivering songs with a fast-food twist as Black Sabbath hits like “Paranoid,” “Iron Man” and “Sweet Leaf” become “Pair-a-Buns,” “Frying Pan” and “Sweet Beef.” The band hit the road last year on its Pop-Up Drive-Thru Tour in support of its vinyl album release and accompanying pop-up book.

The players in the band maintain their anonymity and speak exclusively through band manager Mike Odd.

While Mac Sabbath borrows its look from famous McDonald’s characters, the band’s lyrics ar-

gue against fast-food eats for general health reasons and decry industry greed and low-wage jobs in the multibillion-dollar businesses.

“We’re absolutely not promoting that,” Odd said.

The players may look a bit creepy, and metal music is often evocative of the dark side, but Odd said Mac Sabbath is a family-friendly band. So they don’t curse up a storm or bite the heads off of bats while on stage. Real bats, anyway.

“I can guarantee that Mac Sabbath is family-friendly, but I can’t always guarantee that about the opening bands,” Odd said with a laugh.

Mac Sabbath’s live shows include wild props, pyro, giant inflatable hamburgers, audience participation and more. According to Odd, the band has added a few more tricks to its already colorful repertoire.

“It’s all about the live show,” he said. “The thing I hear more often than anything is, ‘Oh my God, I had no idea it was going to be like that.’ Even from people who have seen the videos posted online, they’re always saying, ‘Wow, it’s so much better than I thought it ever could be.’”

Mac Sabbath doesn’t release its music through traditional channels. While the group has a You-



TNS

Ronald Osbourne, left, is the lead singer for Mac Sabbath. The band is primarily a parody of English heavy metal group Black Sabbath, utilizing lyricism and imagery centered on fast food.

Tube channel and has uploaded a couple of music videos, it has yet to put out music that’s available via streaming or on CD. A few years ago, the band put out a coloring and activity book that included a flexi disc with the single “Pair-a-Buns” and now it’s promoting a new release, “Drive-Thru Metal,” that includes an exclusive seven-song vinyl and pop-up book.

While Mac Sabbath may not have a stamp of approval from the fast-food industry, it did get the blessing of Black Sabbath. Early on, Black Sabbath posted some of Mac Sabbath’s videos on its social

media pages and singer Ozzy Osbourne himself came face-to-face with the band in 2017 during the taping of an episode of “Ozzy & Jack’s World Detour.” Osbourne’s son, Jack, surprised him with a private performance by the band, which delighted Osbourne.

“That was the turning point for the band because in managing the band and working with the PR and stuff, going through and reading comments, there were always those guys that were like ‘This is disrespectful and blah, blah, blah,’” Odd said. “That totally disappeared after that clip was shared.”

New this week: Jennifer Lopez, Sam Smith, ‘You People’

Associated Press

Here’s a collection curated by The Associated Press’ entertainment journalists of what’s arriving on TV, streaming services and music platforms this week.

Movies

■ Jennifer Lopez, rom-com queen, returns to the genre she’s most identified with in “Shotgun Wedding,” premiering Friday on Amazon’s Prime Video. Lopez stars with Josh Duhamel as a couple whose Philippines beach-resort destination wedding goes awry when the wedding party is taken hostage. For Lopez, who last year wed Ben Affleck in a Las Vegas drive-thru chapel, it’s her second wedding-themed romantic comedy in the past year, following 2022’s “Marry Me.” This one also features “White Lotus” star Jennifer Coolidge.

■ “Black-ish” creator Kenya Barris and Jonah Hill co-wrote “You People,” a new Netflix comedy about a Los Angeles interracial couple and the culture clash of their families. Lauren London and Hill star as the couple, with Eddie Murphy and Nia Long playing her Muslim parents, and Julia Louis-Dreyfus and David Duchovny playing his Jewish parents. Barris directs the film, streaming Friday.

— AP Film Writer Jake Coyle

Music

■ Singer-songwriter Sam Smith is releasing “Gloria,” an album the singer-songwriter



Netflix

Jonah Hill, left, and Eddie Murphy star in “You People,” streaming Friday on Netflix.

calls a “coming of age.” Early singles include the epically sexy arena pop “Unholy” featuring Kim Petras, and the intimate, self-affirming ballad “Love Me More” with the lyrics: “Every day I’m trying not to hate myself / But lately it’s not hurting like it did before.” Smith recorded the album in Jamaica, Los Angeles and London, and says: “It feels like emotional, sexual and spiritual liberation. It was beautiful, with this album, to sing freely again. Oddly, it feels like my first-ever record. And it feels like a coming of age.”

■ Celebrate Roberta Flack, one of music’s best voices, in the feature-length documentary, “Roberta,” airing Tuesday as part of PBS’ “American Masters” series. The movie “explores the depth and complexity of her lyrical

and thematic choices as well as the sophisticated mix of classical and soul influences on her style.” This year marks the 50th anniversary of the release of Flack’s landmark album “Killing Me Softly,” and she has a new children’s book about her musical beginnings, “The Green Piano: How Little Me Found Music.”

■ For a sardonic look at life, go no further than Elle King and her spiky album “Come Get Your Wife.” The country collection celebrates all sides of the artist, from “being a hot mess, a glorious excess and a woman coming into her own.” There are the tongue-in-cheek singles “Tulsa” and “Try Jesus,” which finds King looking to a higher sort of relationship since men in her life are letting her down. It’s accompanied by a hysterical video of her dressed as all the bad guys as she shops in a dollar store.

— Entertainment Writer Mark Kennedy

Television

■ “Knives Out” and “Glass Onion” writer/director Rian Johnson describes his new show, “Poker Face,” starring Natasha Lyonne, as a “how done it,” not a “who done it.” Lyonne plays Charlie, a wise-cracking, friendly drifter who has an uncanny ability to immediately know if someone is lying. If critics are correct, “Poker Face” could be Peacock’s first hit. Its first three episodes dropped Monday and the rest of season one will be doled out one by one on a weekly basis.

— Alicia Rancilio

‘Avatar’ sequel hits \$2B mark

From wire reports

James Cameron’s “Avatar: The Way of Water” led ticket sales in movie theaters for the sixth straight weekend, making it the first film to have such a sustained reign atop the box office since 2009’s “Avatar.”

“The Way of Water” added \$19.7 million in U.S. and Canadian theaters over the weekend, according to studio estimates Sunday. Its global total has now surpassed \$2 billion, putting it sixth all-time and just ahead of “Spider-Man: No Way Home.” Domestically, “The Way of Water” is up to \$598 million. Continued robust international sales (\$56.3 million for the weekend) has helped push the “Avatar” sequel to \$2.024 billion worldwide.

A year ago, “Spider-Man: No Way Home” also topped the box office for six weekends, but did it over the course of seven weeks. You have to go back to Cameron’s original “Avatar” to find a movie that stayed No. 1 for such a long span. (“Avatar” topped out at seven weeks.) Before that, the last film to manage the feat was another Cameron film, “Titanic” (1997) was No. 1 for 15 weeks.

The only major new wide release was the thriller “Missing.” A sequel to 2018’s “Searching,” starring Storm Reid as a teen seeking her missing mother, “Missing” debuted with \$9.3 million.

In its fifth week, the animated “Puss in Boots: The Last Wish” came in second place with \$11.5 million domestically and \$17.8 million overseas. The sequel has grossed \$297.5 million globally.

The creepy doll horror hit “M3gan” notched \$9.8 million in its third week, bringing its domestic haul to \$73.3 million.

“A Man Called Otto,” starring Tom Hanks, made \$9 million in its second week of wide release. It’s taken in \$35.3 million domestically through Sunday.

Other news

■ Actor **Jeremy Renner** said in a social media post Jan. 21 that he broke more than 30 bones in his snowplow accident on New Year’s Day. Renner, 52, said earlier that he is recovering at home from what Nevada authorities say were serious chest injuries he suffered when he was run over while helping free a relative’s car on a private road near Lake Tahoe.

■ **Dennis Quaid** has joined Taylor Sheridan’s upcoming Western drama “1883: The Bass Reeves Story.” Quaid will play Sherrill Lynn, a Deputy U.S. Marshall, in the streaming series, which a spinoff of Sheridan’s “Yellowstone” prequel, “1883.” The six-part limited series, which stars David Oyelowo, will air on Paramount+. A release date has not been announced.



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Ernie Gates

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OPINION

Is Germany letting Ukraine down? It’s not that simple.

BY HAL BRANDS

Bloomberg Opinion

What’s the matter with Germany? Ukraine and many of Berlin’s European neighbors would like to know. Germany’s foot-dragging on aid to Ukraine is threatening to solidify its reputation as a country that benefits greatly from the current global order but won’t do much to defend it.

The real story, though, is more complicated. Yes, the world needs a more assertive Germany. But the changes in German foreign policy over the past year have been historic, even if they still seem insufficient relative to the challenges of our time.

When Russian President Vladimir Putin attacked Ukraine, he set off shock waves in Germany. Chancellor Olaf Scholz immediately declared the invasion a “zeitenwende” — a historical turning point. He promised that Germany would finally meet NATO’s target of spending 2% of GDP on defense; it would break its own prohibition on sending arms to conflict zones by delivering weapons to Ukraine. To the surprise of U.S. officials, Scholz even halted the controversial Nord Stream II pipeline connecting Russia to Germany.

Since then, however, Germany’s conduct has often seemed more evolutionary than revolutionary. Scholz has delayed Germany’s arrival at the 2% threshold. For fear of provoking escalation, Berlin has often been a brake on major arms deliveries to Ukraine.

The latest controversy involves tanks. Poland and other countries want to send their German-made Leopard 2 battle tanks to Ukraine. That requires Berlin’s permission, even though the Poles suggested last week they may not wait for German assent.

Amid discontent from some of his own ministers, Scholz has averred that Germany will send tanks only as part of a larger coalition involving the U.S. “We always act togeth-

er with our allies and friends — we never go alone,” Scholz told Bloomberg News Editor-in-Chief John Micklethwait last week.

The annoyance is palpable in Kyiv, Warsaw and other Eastern European capitals that worry less about provoking Putin than about defeating him. Add in that Scholz beat a path to Beijing as soon as Chinese President Xi Jinping began accepting post-COVID visitors in November, and questions abound about whether Germany, the world’s fourth-largest economy, is serious about meeting the threats to a global order that has served it so well.

Those questions aren’t new. Prior to the Ukraine invasion, NATO’s East European members had long complained that Germany’s pursuit of economic and energy ties with Moscow put their own security at risk. Former U.S. President Donald Trump gleefully accused Berlin of being a strategic deadbeat that refused to pay its share for collective defense. Skeptics charged that Germany’s policy of “change through trade” — promoting economic integration with autocratic challengers in hopes of mellowing them diplomatically — was really just naivete or greed.

None of these critiques are groundless. Still, it’s a mistake to make Germany the villain in a geopolitical morality play. For all its shortcomings, Germany’s Ukraine policy has been remarkable: Who, a year ago, would have predicted that Germany would respond to the invasion by decisively slashing its dependence on Russian energy? That it would send, however ambivalently, howitzers, air defenses and armored vehicles to Kyiv?

Taking the longer view, one can criticize Germany for being naive about Putin’s Russia and becoming economically handcuffed to a nasty autocracy. Then again, the U.S. — and many of Europe’s largest democracies — are guilty of similar mistakes.

Above all, it’s worth remembering that the characteristics that critics of German foreign policy find so frustrating are the same char-

acteristics that helped transform a once-bellikose country into the peaceful, liberal state we know today. There was a time when “the German problem” didn’t refer to a hesitant, quasi-pacifist country that spent too little on defense. It referred to a country that was the terror of Europe because it repeatedly sought to seize geopolitical primacy by force.

After World War II, a divided Germany (the half of that was under American supervision, anyway) took on the traits its diplomacy still bears. It effectively renounced a fully independent foreign policy, embedding its power within European and North Atlantic institutions and tethering itself closely to the U.S. It emphasized diplomacy and economic prosperity, even as it contributed substantially to NATO’s defense.

That earlier zeitenwende helped produce an unprecedented period of European peace. So Berlin doubled down on the same policies in the post-Cold War era, in part to reassure its neighbors that a reunified Germany wouldn’t again become Europe’s scourge. Today’s Germany may not be the best Germany possible, but it’s far from the worst.

A fairer critique is that Germany has been slow to recognize that what the world and the West need from it today is very different from what was needed a generation ago. As the U.S.-led order comes under assault from multiple angles, all the advanced democracies, especially those as prosperous as Germany, will have to invest more in its defense.

The good news is that Berlin’s foreign policy is headed, albeit fitfully and belatedly, in the right direction. The bad news is that Ukraine may not have the luxury of waiting for a zeitenwende to play out at a leisurely pace.

Hal Brands is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist. The Henry Kissinger Distinguished Professor at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies, he is co-author of “Danger Zone: The Coming Conflict with China” and a member of the State Department's Foreign Affairs Policy Board. This column does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editorial board or Bloomberg LP and its owners.

Dems have edge over Republicans in political branding

BY DENNIS M. POWELL

InsideSources.com

Democrats have methodically and effectively branded Republicans and their issues over the last six years, and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy needs to take this into consideration going forward.

Three terms trigger most Democrats: Trump, January 6th and MAGA — all are considered dangerous. This positioning is to brand Republicans as neanderthals hellbent on undermining our democracy and turning back the clock on progress.

An NBC News poll in August 2022 found that “threat to democracy” polled higher than the cost of living, jobs, immigration or climate change and that 57% of voters said investigations into Donald Trump should continue.

The language Democrats have adopted allows them to control the debate. President Joe Biden’s divisive speech at Independence Hall in Philadelphia in September included, “Donald Trump and the MAGA Republicans represent extremism that threatens the very foundations of our republic,” and the president went on to state: “MAGA Republicans have made their choice. They embrace anger. They thrive on chaos. They live not in the light of truth but in the shadow of lies.”

A recent CNN Politics headline read, “Biden honors January 6 democracy defenders:

‘History will remember your names.’ ” The article reported, “In a week defined by dramatic contrasts between a White House at work and a House Republican majority in chaos, Friday’s event ... gave Biden the opportunity to highlight the extremist risk to the nation and its politics that he sees as still very real.” Democrats made sure Trump remains the story. The Philadelphia Inquirer reported on the front page about the second tranche of classified documents found at Biden’s home. On page three was the headline, “Trump campaign officials received subpoena asking new questions about Jan. 6.” The story detailed “new areas of investigative interest.”

In a brilliant use of political jujitsu, Democrats have branded Republicans who argue that we are losing the religious foundations of our nation as “Christian nationalists.” According to Religion News, “Christian nationalism is a religious and political belief system that argues the United States was founded by God to be a Christian nation and to complete God’s vision of the world. In this view, America can be governed only by Christians, and the country’s mission is directed by a divine hand.”

This rhetoric feeds the narrative that Republicans are religious zealots hellbent on turning America into a theocracy. It also shows how effectively they have branded the party using its most extreme members. Republi-

cans have failed to brand all Democrats using the policies of the far left.

Systemic racism is another term that is driving effective messaging for Democrats. The National Library of Medicine defines it as “built-in systems that undermine life opportunities and outcomes by racial category, with a focus on challenges to Black Americans.” This represents a fundamental policy shift and foundation for Biden’s equity agenda.

Race is now a prime mover of political opinion, and equity that supports equality of outcomes lies at its core. U.S. News & World Report reported in November on a Harris Poll that found that 53% of whites, 81% of Blacks, 73% of Asians and 67% of Hispanics believed “there is systemic racism in America.”

These beliefs are being translated into public and corporate policy, broadly viewed by Republicans as WOKE. In its broadest sense, the term means to be awakened to social injustice. In government, education and big business, this is being used to wage war on meritocracy and achievement.

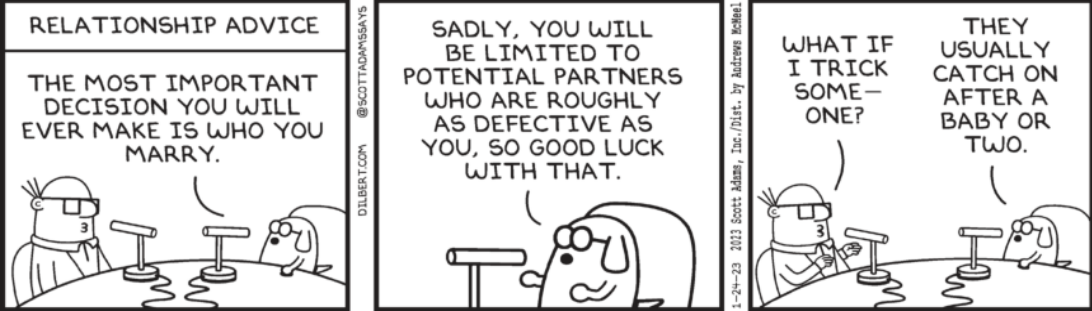
Democrats always put language ahead of policy. McCarthy needs to work on developing the Republican lexicon to control the narrative to win over the people, because in the end hope and fear sell.

Dennis M. Powell is the author of “Leading from the Top: Presidential Lessons in Issues Management.”

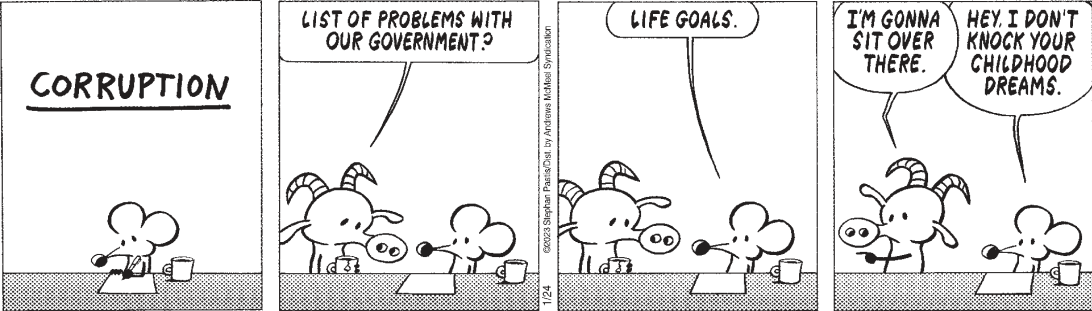
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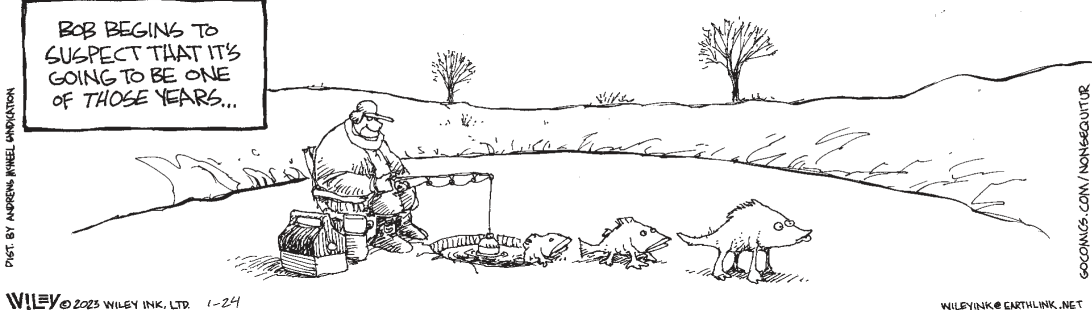
Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



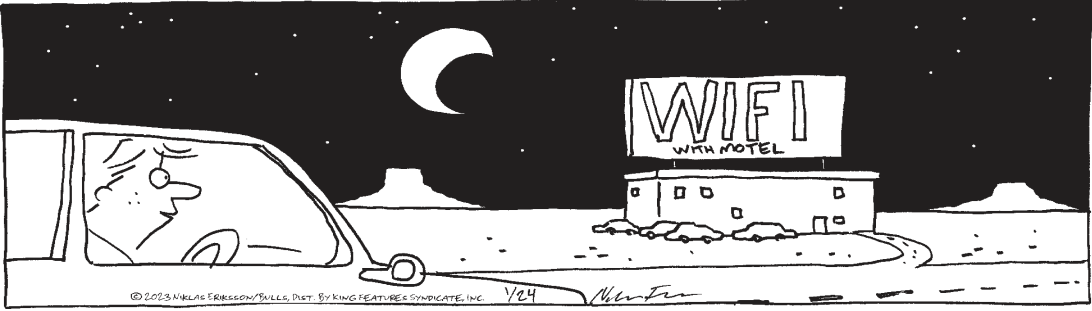
Non Sequitur



Candorville



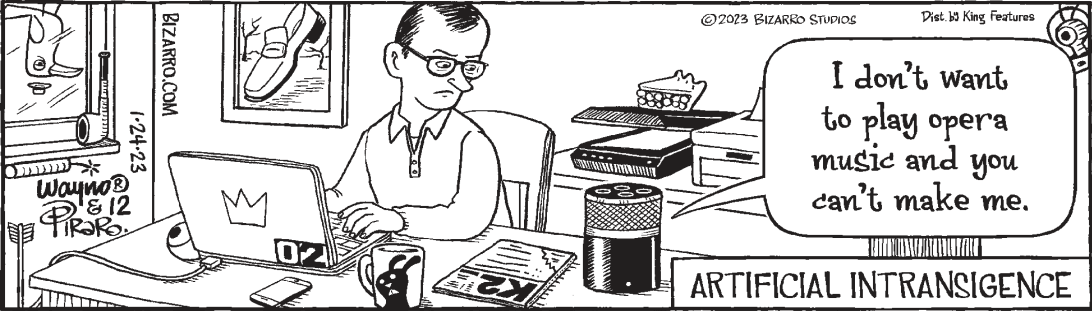
Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14			
15					16				17			
18					19				20			
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23	24	25				26				27	28	29
30					31					32		
33			34	35					36	37		
			38				39					
40	41	42				43				44	45	46
47					48				49			
50					51				52			
53					54				55			

- ACROSS
- 54 Prof's aides
- 55 Hardy heroine
- 25 Verily
- 26 French article
- 27 '60s war zone
- 28 Use a ray gun
- 29 "So that's it!"
- 31 Season opener?
- 34 Executed perfectly
- 35 Literary Jane
- 36 Capote nickname
- 37 Papa Hemingway
- 39 Fabric bundles
- 40 Golf bag item
- 41 Spanish greeting
- 42 "Closer" actor Clive
- 43 Sultry Horne
- 44 Adhesive
- 45 Recedes
- 46 Get lippy
- 48 Cistern
- DOWN
- 1 Prosperity
- 2 Jason's ship
- 3 Knitter's need
- 4 Put on, as a play
- 5 Dole out
- 6 French perfume brand
- 7 Command to Rover
- 8 Starbucks size
- 9 Impudent
- 10 Nepal's continent
- 11 "Go no further!"
- 17 Time of day
- 19 Enthusiast
- 22 Fiddle stick
- 23 Actor Linden
- 24 Mil. address
- 30 Mimic
- 31 Church seat
- 32 Apt rhyme for "spa"
- 33 Auto shop offerings
- 36 Musical pace
- 38 Nay undoer
- 39 "It's c-c-cold!"
- 40 Gospel group
- 43 Relaxes
- 47 Like some menial jobs
- 49 "Prometheus" actor Idris
- 50 Peter Fonda role
- 51 Busy insect
- 52 Long lunches?
- 53 Combo

Answer to Previous Puzzle

M	A	C	S		V	I	A		W	I	R	E
O	G	L	E		I	S	H		A	S	E	A
S	U	E	R		G	R	A	N	D	A	M	S
S	A	F	A	R	I		B	Y	E	B	Y	E
					P	O	L	S		E	R	E
D	A	S	H	C	A	M	S		S	L	I	D
I	N	K		A	N	E	Y	E		L	B	J
G	O	Y	A		T	A	N	G	R	A	M	S
					L	P	S		R	O	A	R
A	G	A	T	E	S		P	L	A	T	E	S
B	A	R	E	X	A	M	S		T	I	V	O
E	L	K	S		L	E	I		E	K	E	S
L	E	S	T		T	D	S		D	I	N	O

1-24 CRYPTOQUIP

PL EKOLHDF RDH YDHSSI

AHDWKGF RQKGS MKOPAE SMH

QROO KA SMH EDHHA, SMHI

MRWH SMH YGSSHD-LOPHF.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: BECAUSE THAT GUY WAS SPORTING A VERY EXPENSIVE ROLEX WATCH, HE DECLARED "MY TIME IS VALUABLE."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Y equals P

SCOREBOARD/COLLEGE BASKETBALL

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Sunday's men's scores EAST CCSU 58, LIU 42 Fairfield 62, Siena 52 Maine 78, Binghamton 57 Mass.-Lowell 98, Bryant 79 Merrimack 63, St. Francis (NY) 55 Mount St. Mary's 59, Marist 55 Niagara 59, St. Peter's 57 Quinnipiac 87, Canisius 82 Rider 67, Manhattan 65 Stonehill 70, Fairleigh Dickinson 59 UConn 86, Butler 56 Vermont 85, NJIT 69 Wagner 68, Sacred Heart 58 SOUTH Furman 96, Wofford 82 MIDWEST Indiana 82, Michigan St. 69 Memphis 75, Cincinnati 68 Michigan 60, Minnesota 56 Purdue 58, Maryland 55 SOUTHWEST Temple 56, Houston 55 Wichita St. 71, SMU 69 FAR WEST Colorado 58, Washington St. 55 Oregon St. 68, California 48
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Sunday's women's scores EAST Clemson 67, Boston College 57 Davidson 66, Duquesne 65 Fordham 71, Saint Joseph's 65 George Washington 69, VCU 61 Mass.-Lowell 76, Bryant 63 Northeastern 68, Hofstra 48 Penn St. 74, Wisconsin 69 Rhode Island 74, St. Bonaventure 57 Towson 70, Drexel 61 SOUTH Auburn 77, Mississippi 76, OT Belmont 101, S. Illinois 45 Duke 62, Syracuse 50 Florida 73, Vanderbilt 55 Florida St. 74, Pittsburgh 37 Mississippi St. 77, Kentucky 76 Missouri St. 77, Murray St. 61 Monmouth (NJ) 55, UNC-Wilmington 52 N. Kentucky 73, Cleveland St. 69 NC A&T 75, Hampton 70, OT NC State 63, Louisville 51 North Carolina 70, Georgia Tech 57 South Carolina 92, Arkansas 46 South Florida 83, UCF 51 Stony Brook 70, Elon 56 Virginia Tech 74, Wake Forest 57 William & Mary 80, Coll. of Charleston 74, OT MIDWEST Fort Wayne 72, Wright St. 55 Green Bay 71, Robert Morris 54 IUPUI 85, Oakland 69 Illinois 67, Northwestern 64 Illinois St. 78, Evansville 46 Indiana St. 71, Bradley 60 La Salle 67, Loyola Chicago 51 Marquette 80, Seton Hall 61 Maryland 69, Nebraska 54 Michigan St. 85, Rutgers 63 Notre Dame 76, Virginia 54 Tennessee 68, Missouri 65 UMass 79, Dayton 60 Youngstown St. 61, Milwaukee 51 SOUTHWEST Texas 68, Baylor 55 Texas A&M 75, Georgia 73 FAR WEST Arizona 80, Arizona St. 67 Hawaii 55, UC Riverside 51 Southern Cal 63, Washington 54, OT Stanford 62, Colorado 49 UCLA 73, Washington St. 66 Utah 87, California 62
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AP SPORTLIGHT Jan. 24 1939 — Eddie Collins, Wee Willie Keeler and George Sisler are elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame. 1956 — Bob Pettit of the St. Louis Hawks captures the first of his NBA record four All-Star MVP awards. Pettit leads the West team with 20 points and 24 rebounds in a 108-94 win over the East. 1981 — Mike Bossy of the New York Islanders scores his 50th goal in the 50th game of the season in a 7-3 victory over the Quebec Nordiques. 1982 — Ray Wersching kicks a Super Bowl record-tying four field goals to help the San Francisco 49ers beat the Cincinnati Bengals 26-21. 1986 — Mike Bossy of the New York Islanders scores his 1,000th career point with an assist in a 7-5 victory over the Toronto Maple Leafs. 1990 — Winston-Salem State basketball coach Clarence “Big House” Gaines wins his 800th career game, 79-70 over Livingstone. 1998 — The Denver Nuggets end their record-tying, single-season losing streak at 23 games, beating the Los Angeles Clippers 99-81. 1999 — David Duval shoots a 59 to match what is then the best round in PGA Tour history. Duval surges from seven strokes off the pace for a one-stroke victory over Steve Pate in the Bob Hope Chrysler Classic. 2010 — Kelly Kulick becomes the first woman to win a PBA Tour title, beating Chris Barnes in the final of the 45th Tournament of Champions. Kulick outscores Barnes 265-195 to take home the \$40,000 first prize and a two-year PBA Tour exemption. 2010 — Peyton Manning throws three touchdown passes and the Indianapolis Colts rally from an 11-point, first-half deficit to beat the New York Jets 30-17 in the AFC championship game. 2010 — The New Orleans Saints make it to their first Super Bowl after battering Brett Favre and the Minnesota Vikings 31-28 in overtime on Garrett Hartley's 40-yard field goal.
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GOLF

The American Express PGA Tour Sunday La Quinta, Calif. PGA WEST TPC Stadium Course (Host Course) 7,187 yards; Par 72 PGA WEST Nicklaus Tournament Course 7,147 yards; Par 72 La Quinta Country Club 7,060 yards; Par 72 Purse: \$8 million Final Round Jon Rahm, \$1,440,000 64-64-65-68—261 -27 Davis Thompson, \$872,000 62-64-67-69—262 -26 Chris Kirk, \$472,000 69-67-63-64—263 -25 Xander Schauffele, \$472,000 65-68-68-62—263 -25 T. Montgomery, \$328,000 64-69-65-66—264 -24 Tom Kim, \$252,400 69-62-67-67—265 -23 J.T. Poston, \$252,400 65-66-66-68—265 -23 Matthias Schmid, \$252,400 64-72-65-64—265 -23 Robby Shelton, \$252,400 66-68-65-66—265 -23 Erik Van Rooyen, \$252,400 65-72-66-62—265 -23 C. Bezuidenhout, \$171,600 68-67-62-69—266 -22 Sam Burns, \$171,600 64-70-64-68—266 -22 Garrick Higgo, \$171,600 67-68-68-63—266 -22 Patton Kizzire, \$171,600 69-63-67-67—266 -22 Scottie Scheffler, \$171,600 68-65-66-67—266 -22 Tony Finau, \$134,000 69-67-65-66—267 -21 Danny Lee, \$134,000 67-68-67-65—267 -21 Jason Day, \$110,000 67-64-70-67—268 -20 Adam Hadwin, \$110,000 68-69-64-67—268 -20 Harry Higgs, \$110,000 70-66-62-70—268 -20 Sungjae Im, \$110,000 65-66-68-69—268 -20 Harrison Endycott, \$80,400 65-71-67-66—269 -19 Si Woo Kim, \$80,400 70-64-69-66—269 -19 Keith Mitchell, \$80,400 66-70-66-67—269 -19 Alex Smalley, \$80,400 67-68-71-63—269 -19 Patrick Cantlay, \$58,400 68-66-71-65—270 -18 Thomas Detry, \$58,400 69-66-67-68—270 -18 Tano Goya, \$58,400 66-71-69-64—270 -18 Justin Rose, \$58,400 66-67-72-65—270 -18 Matthias Schwab, \$58,400 66-71-68-65—270 -18 Cameron Young, \$58,400 68-70-65-67—270 -18 Ben Griffin, \$46,700 73-67-64-67—271 -17 Tom Hoge, \$46,700 71-66-68-66—271 -17 Brendan Steele, \$46,700 68-73-64-66—271 -17
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Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions LPGA Tour Sunday At Lake Nona Golf & Country Club Orlando, Fla. Purse: \$1.5 million Yardage: 6,608; Par: 72 Final Round Brooke Henderson, \$225,000 67-66-69-70—272 -16 Charley Hull, \$152,898 69-69-69-69—276 -12 Maja Stark, \$152,898 71-68-68-69—276 -12 Nelly Korda, \$99,457 68-69-68-72—277 -11 Nasa Hataoka, \$80,052 71-68-66-74—279 -9 Gaby Lopez, \$56,117 73-68-69-70—280 -8 Paula Reto, \$56,117 74-69-67-70—280 -8 Yuka Saso, \$56,117 70-73-67-70—280 -8 Ashleigh Buhai, \$41,239 69-75-67-71—282 -6 Leona Maguire, \$41,239 71-69-73-69—282 -6 Moriya Jutanugarn, \$36,386 74-67-69-73—283 -5 Danielle Kang, \$31,890 71-69-70-74—284 -4 Anna Nordqvist, \$31,890 71-72-68-73—284 -4 Ryann O'Toole, \$31,890 72-70-70-72—284 -4 Wei-Ling Hsu, \$28,139 69-69-74-73—285 -3 Gemma Dryburgh, \$25,907 69-73-71-73—286 -2 Jenniffer Kupcho, \$25,907 73-74-71-68—286 -2 P. Anannarukarn, \$23,158 71-72-72-72—287 -1 Jodi Ewart Shadoff, \$23,158 70-72-69-76—287 -1 Ayaka Furue, \$23,158 71-70-73-73—287 -1 Marina Alex, \$20,377 75-74-69-70—288 E Matilda Castrén, \$20,377 72-70-74-72—288 E N. Koerstz Madsen, \$20,377 72-72-74-70—288 E Lizette Salas, \$20,377 71-77-72-68—288 E Ally Ewing, \$18,533 79-70-68-72—289 +1 Celine Boutier, \$17,855 71-73-70-76—290 +2 Andrea Lee, \$17,174 74-71-74-72—291 +3 Patty Tavatanakit, \$16,495 72-74-78-78—302 +14 Ariya Jutanugarn, \$15,816 84-77-72-76—309 +21

DEALS

Sunday's transactions BASEBALL Major League Baseball American League KANSAS CITY ROYALS — Agreed to terms with INF Johan Camargo on a minor league contract. BASKETBALL Women's National Basketball Association ATLANTA DREAM — Acquired G Allisha Gray from Dallas in exchange for a 2023 first-round draft pick and a 2025 first-round pick. LAS VEGAS ACES — Acquired C Amanda Zahui B and a 2024 second-round draft pick from Los Angeles in exchange for F Dearica Hamby and a 2024 first-round draft pick. HOCKEY National Hockey League COLORADO AVALANCHE — Waived LW Anton Blidh. NEW YORK ISLANDERS — Recalled D Samuel Bolduc from Bridgeport (AHL). OTTAWA SENATORS — Assigned D Jacob Bernard-Docker to Belleville (AHL). PITTSBURGH PENGUINS — Reinstated C Ryan Poehling from injured reserve. ST. LOUIS BLUES — Assigned D Steve Santini to Springfield (AHL). SEATTLE KRACEN — Reassigned RW John Hayden o Coachella Valley (AHL). TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS — Waived LW Dryden Hunt.



DAVID J. PHILLIP/AP

Houston's J'Wan Roberts charges into Temple's Nick Jourdain during the first half of Sunday's game in Houston. Temple handed top-ranked Houston its second loss of the season.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL ROUNDUP

Dunn helps lead Temple past top-ranked Houston

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Temple coach Aaron McKie got a wet welcome into his team's locker room following the Owls' win over No. 1 Houston.

He didn't mind.

Damian Dunn scored 16 points and made the go-ahead free throw, Kur Jongkuch blocked Houston's go-ahead attempt in the final seconds and Temple held on to defeat the top-ranked Cougars 56-55 on Sunday.

"It was a cold celebration for me because the guys threw a lot of cold water on me, so it was pretty good," McKie said. "It's just always fun to see guys just so excited about a win and just enjoying this game of basketball."

Temple improved to 3-18 against No. 1-ranked teams. The Owls (12-9, 6-2 American Athletic Conference) earned their first win over a No. 1-ranked team since a 77-69 win at No. 1 Cincinnati on Feb. 20, 2000.

"Any time you get the opportunity to beat the No. 1 team in the nation on their home floor, it was a great atmosphere and a really good win for our guys," McKie said.

Tied at 55, Dunn made a free throw with 1:06 left to give Temple a one-point lead. Jamal Shead missed a three-pointer and Nick Jourdain grabbed the rebound. Dunn missed a layup with 8 seconds left, and Jongkuch grabbed the rebound, but the Owls were

whistled for a shot clock violation upon review.

"I was trying to attack the rim," Dunn said. "I was not really searching for (a call), but was trying to be aggressive and go downhill and putting the pressure on the referee."

Trailing by one, Shead drove to the basket but Jongkuch blocked it out of bounds with 1.3 seconds left. Tramon Mark's tip-in attempt fell short at the buzzer to give the Owls the win.

Zach Hicks added 12 points for Temple, which snapped a six-game losing streak to Houston. The Owls shot 31% but were 20-for-22 from the free-throw line.

No. 3 Purdue 58, Maryland 55: Zach Edey had 24 points and 16 rebounds and Braden Smith's two free throws with 3.9 seconds left helped the host Boilermakers fend off a furious second-half charge from the Terrapins.

Purdue is off to the best start in school history (19-1, 8-1 Big Ten). The Boilermakers have won six straight and are the fifth conference team since 2000 to win 19 of their first 20 games. Edey had his 16th double-double this season.

Julian Reese scored 19 points to help Maryland (12-7, 3-5) overcome a 14-point halftime deficit to have a chance to force overtime.

No. 15 UConn 86, Butler 56: Jordan Hawkins scored 20 points and the host Huskies snapped a three-game losing streak in resounding fashion by routing the

Bulldogs.

Adama Sonogo added 17 points and 14 rebounds for UConn (16-5, 5-5 Big East), which won its first 14 games this season but dropped five of six coming into the game. Alex Karaban added 15 points and Tristen Newton scored 11 points for the Huskies.

Chuck Harris had 16 points and Simas Lukosius added 12 for Butler (11-10, 3-7), which was playing its third straight game without center Manny Bates, who is still recovering from a knee injury suffered earlier this month against St. John's.

Indiana 82, Michigan St. 69: Trayce Jackson-Davis finished with 31 points and 15 rebounds for his 40th career double-double and the host Hoosiers pulled away in the second half to beat the Spartans.

Jackson-Davis sank 10 of 20 shots from the floor and 11 of 13 from the free-throw line for Indiana (13-6, 4-4 Big Ten Conference). He jumped two spots on Indiana's all-time scoring list. The senior has scored 1,898 points in his career, passing Alan Henderson (1,979) and Kevin 'Yogi' Ferrell (1,986) for sixth place. Next up is Indiana coach Mike Woodson's 2,061.

Jackson-Davis finished with five blocked shots to tie Jeff Newton's school-record career total of 227. He has 959 rebounds in his career — fourth all-time. Kent Benson is third with 1,031.

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

3 American men earn spots in quarters

By HOWARD FENDRICH
Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Ben Shelton’s concerns leading into his first Australian Open had less to do with playing tennis and more to do with everything else associated with the trip.

His first time outside of the United States. His first time using a passport. The jet lag. The time difference. The food. The driving on the left side of the road. And, oh, yeah, the whole part about keeping up with online classwork as he begins a new semester this week while pursuing a business degree.

Shelton, you see, is still just 20. A year ago at this time, he was attending classes and competing in college tennis at the University of Florida, where his dad, a former pro himself, coaches the men’s team. As of Monday, when he edged J.J. Wolf 6-7 (5), 6-2, 6-7 (4), 7-6 (4), 6-2 at John Cain Arena, Shelton is, suddenly and stunningly, a Grand Slam quarterfinalist — one of three American men to make it that far at Melbourne Park, the most for the country since 2000.

“Definitely a surprise. I got on the plane with no expectations,” Shelton, who won the 2022 NCAA singles championship, said of his performance at the second major tournament of his nascent professional career. “It maybe has helped me a little bit, kind of not having that expectation or the feeling that I have to perform, but being able to just go out there, be myself and play free. I think that’s been a big contribution to my success.”

Now the 89th-ranked Shelton meets yet another unseeded American, 35th-ranked Tommy Paul, who eliminated No. 24 seed Roberto Bautista Agut of Spain 6-2, 4-6, 6-2, 7-5.

Their matchup will be the first Slam quarterfinal between two men from the U.S. since 2007, when Andy Roddick beat Mardy Fish in Melbourne. Roddick’s title at the U.S. Open 20 years ago remains the last major singles championship for a man from the country.

“It’s like every person’s dream when they start playing tennis to play the big matches at the Slams,” said Paul, a 25-year-old from New Jersey. “I’m really excited to get out there on Wednesday. We know there’s going to be an American in the semis, so I’m really excited about that, too.”

Completing the trio is Sebastian Korda, who plays his quarterfinal Tuesday against No. 18 Karen Khachanov of Russia. Like Shelton and Paul, Korda has made it this far at a major for the first time. And like Shelton, Korda’s Dad played tennis: Petr Korda won the 1998 Australian Open.



Ben Shelton celebrates after defeating J.J. Wolf in their fourth-round match at the Australian Open on Monday. Shelton joins Tommy Paul and Sebastian Korda to give the U.S. three men in the quarterfinals.

There is nothing new about all of this, of course, for Novak Djokovic, the 21-time Grand Slam champion who looked indomitable during a 6-2, 6-1, 6-2 win over No. 22 seed Alex de Minaur of Australia and declared that his bothersome left hamstring is no longer an issue.

“I didn’t feel anything today,” Djokovic said, noting that he has been taking “a lot of” anti-inflammatory pills.

Djokovic, who couldn’t play in last year’s Australian Open be-

cause he wasn’t vaccinated against COVID-19, moved a step closer to a record-extending 10th championship in Melbourne by never facing a break point and by claiming a half-dozen of de Minaur’s service games.

Djokovic moves on to a matchup against No. 5 seed Andrey Rublev. The Russian kept coming back, kept coming back, kept coming back — from down 5-2 in the fifth set, from facing a pair of match points while trailing 6-5, from deficits of 5-0 and 7-2 in the first-to-10

Scoreboard

Monday At Melbourne Park Melbourne, Australia Purse: AUD\$3,848,000 Surface: Hardcourt outdoor Sseedings in parentheses Men's Singles Fourth Round Andrey Rublev (5), Russia, def. Holger Rune (9), Denmark, 6-3, 3-6, 6-3, 4-6, 7-6 (9). Ben Shelton, United States, def. Jeffrey John Wolf, United States, 6-7 (5), 6-2, 6-7 (4), 7-6 (4), 6-2. Tommy Paul, United States, def. Roberto Bautista Agut (24), Spain, 6-2, 4-6, 6-2, 7-5. Novak Djokovic (4), Serbia, def. Alex de Minaur (22), Australia, 6-2, 6-1, 6-2. Women's Singles Fourth Round Aryna Sabalenka (5), Belarus, def. Belinda Bencic (12), Switzerland, 7-5, 6-2. Karolina Pliskova (30), Czech Republic, def. Zhang Shuai (23), China, 6-0, 6-4. Donna Vekic, Croatia, def. Linda Fruhvirtova, Czech Republic, 6-2, 1-6, 6-3. Magda Linette, Poland, def. Caroline Garcia (4), France, 7-6 (3), 6-4. Men's Doubles Third Round Wesley Koolhof, Netherlands, and Neal Skupski (1), Britain, def. Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi, Pakistan, and Nikola Cacic, Serbia, 6-4, 6-2. Marcel Granollers, Spain, and Horacio Zeballos (8), Argentina, def. Raven Klaasen and Lloyd Harris, South Africa, 6-1, 7-6 (4). Jean-Julien Rojer, Netherlands, and Marcelo Arevalo-Gonzalez (3), El Salvador, def. Robin Haase and Matwe Middelkoop (16), Netherlands, 6-3, 7-6 (6). Fabrice Martin and Jeremy Chardy, France, def. Alex Molcan, Slovakia, and Jiri Lehecka, Czech Republic, 7-6 (2), 6-3. Arthur Rinderknech and Benjamin Bonzi, France, def. Robert Farah and Juan Sebastian Cabal (12), Colombia, 7-6 (5), 6-7 (6), 6-2. John Peers, Australia, and Andreas Mies	(14), Germany, def. Luke Saville and Alex Bolt, Australia, 6-0, 6-3. Hugo Nys, Monaco, and Jan Zielinski, Poland, def. Rajeev Ram, United States, and Joe Salisbury (2), Britain, 6-7 (4), 7-6 (6), 6-2. Jason Kubler and Rinky Hijikata, Australia, def. Gonzalo Escobar, Ecuador, and Tomislav Brkic, Bosnia-Herzegovina, 1-6, 7-6 (8), 6-4. Women's Doubles Third Round Shuko Aoyama and Ena Shibahara (10), Japan, def. Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova, Russia, and Elena Rybakina, Kazakhstan, 6-2, 7-6 (7). Zhaoxuan Yang, China, and Hao-Ching Chan (11), Taiwan, def. Alison van Uytvanck, Belgium, and Anhelina Kalinina, Ukraine, 6-3, 7-5. Jessica Pegula and Coco Gauff (2), United States, def. Aldila Sutjiadi, Indonesia, and Miyu Kato (16), Japan, 6-4, 6-2. Elena-Gabriela Ruse, Romania, and Marta Kostyuk, Ukraine, def. Marketa Vondrousova and Miriam Kolodziejova, Czech Republic, 6-3, 6-4. Barbora Krejickova and Katerina Sinikova (1), Czech Republic, def. Oksana Kalashnikova, Georgia, and Alycia Parks, United States, 6-0, 6-3. Storm Sanders, Australia, and Elise Mertens (4), Belgium, def. Monica Niculescu, Romania, and Viktorija Golubic, Switzerland, 6-2, 6-2. Mixed Doubles Third Round Neal Skupski, Britain, and Desirae Krawczyk (3), United States, def. Andrew Harris and Alana Parnaby, Australia, 6-2, 6-4. Jelena Ostapenko, Latvia, and David Vega Hernandez, Spain, def. Marcelo Arevalo-Gonzalez, El Salvador, and Giuliana Olmos (1), Mexico, 6-7 (4), 7-6 (6), 10-8. Rohan Bopanna and Sania Mirza, India, def. Ariel Behar, Uruguay, and Makoto Ninomiya, Japan, 6-4, 7-6 (9). Marc Polmans and Olivia Gadecki, Australia, def. Kimberly Birrell and Rinky Hijikata, Australia, 6-0, 6-2.
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concluding tiebreaker — before finally putting away No. 9 Holger Rune 6-3, 3-6, 6-3, 4-6, 7-6 (11-9) at Rod Laver Arena.

Rublev won it when his backhand return slipped off the net cord and barely, just barely, made it over onto Rune’s side of the court, impossible to reach. Rublev dropped to his back at the baseline and raised both arms as if to say, “Sorry!” — or perhaps “Sorry. Not sorry!” — while Rune also flung away his racket.

“I have no words, man. I’m shaking,” said Rublev, who is 0-6

in Grand Slam quarterfinals for his career. “That ball was exactly on my side and I don’t know how (it) went over.”

Advancing in the women’s draw Monday were Magda Linette — into the quarterfinals of a Slam for the first time at age 31 and in her 30th appearance at a major — Karolina Pliskova, Aryna Sabalenka and Donna Vekic.

Linette will play Pliskova, while Sabalenka will face Vekic for semifinal berths. On the other side of the bracket, it’ll be Jessica Pegula vs. Victoria Azarenka, and Elena Rybakina vs. Jelena Ostapenko.

Shelton and Wolf traded big cuts and momentum shifts on a day where the temperature rose above 80 degrees Fahrenheit.

The left-handed Shelton comes equipped with a powerful serve that produced the fastest offering of the tournament so far, at 142 mph during his first-round victory, an instinct for defense and a competitive streak. Against Wolf, who played college tennis at Ohio State and also was playing in the main draw in Melbourne for the first time, Shelton only faced two break points and saved them both.

“Each match that I’ve won here has felt the same. It’s a mixture of joy, relief. I just have that feeling of ecstasy, right? When the last ball lands: ‘I did it!’” Shelton said. “To be able to do that on this stage four times in a row, that feeling over and over again, has been pretty cool.”



Paul reacts after defeating Roberto Bautista Agut at the Australian Open on Monday. Paul will play Shelton for a berth in the semifinals. Both Americans are unseeded.

ROUNDUP

Ullmark, Bruins shut out Sharks

Associated Press

BOSTON — Defensemen Hampus Lindholm and Charlie McAvoy scored highlight-reel goals, Linus Ullmark made 17 saves and the NHL-leading Boston Bruins beat the San Jose Sharks for the 11th straight time, 4-0 on Sunday night.

The Bruins won their fifth straight game and improved to 22-1-3 at home this season, including a victory at Fenway Park as the “home” team in the Winter Classic.

“Our bench was really motivated by it,” Boston’s first-year coach Jim Montgomery said of the McAvoy and Lindholm goals. “When those two guys, you have two studs out there that are making plays like that, not only what it does for our bench, but it deflates the other team.”

Ullmark, named a first-time All Star, improved his record to 25-2-1. He had a relatively easy game before leaving 8:01 into the period with a skate-blade issue, and backup Jeremy Swayman made one stop in relief before Ullmark returned 2:28 later.

“I have no clue,” Ullmark said of what happened to his skate. “I had some skate issues before the game, but we took care of that. ... A flat tire, that’s for sure. That was weird. I was just happy they didn’t shoot. It’s so much easier when you’re standing up. Now, you have to sit.”

David Pastrnak had his team-leading 36th goal and Nick Foligno also scored for Boston, which hasn’t lost to the Sharks since falling 3-2 at home on March 15, 2016. Brad Marchand added two assists.

Devils 2, Penguins 1 (OT): Dougie Hamilton scored a power-play goal 2:07 into overtime as host New Jersey extended its point streak to



STEVEN SENNE/AP

San Jose Sharks left wing Alexander Barabanov is unable to get the puck past Bruins goaltender Linus Ullmark during the second period Sunday in Boston. The Bruins won 4-0.

seven games (6-0-1).

Jack Hughes had a goal and an assist and Vitek Vanecsek stopped 25 shots for the Devils, who have won two straight at home in overtime.

Sidney Crosby scored for the Penguins, who fell to 2-0-2 in their last four games. Tristan Jarry finished with 23 saves.

Kings 2, Blackhawks 1: Jaret Anderson-Dolan scored twice and visiting Los Angeles snapped a four-game losing streak.

Kevin Fiala had two assists and Pheonix Copley stopped 18 shots for the Kings.

Defenseman Ian Mitchell scored his first goal of the season

for Chicago, spoiling Copley’s shutout bid with 3:15 remaining. Petr Mrazek finished with 25 saves. The Blackhawks had won three straight and six of their previous seven.

Jets 5, Flyers 3: Axel Jonsson-Fjällby, Kyle Connor and Mark Scheifele gave visiting Winnipeg an early three-goal lead, and the Jets held on to beat Philadelphia.

Karson Kuhlman also scored, Kevin Stenlund had an empty-netter and David Rittich made 28 saves for the Jets, who improved to 2-2 on a five-game road trip that concludes Tuesday night in Nashville.

Kevin Hayes tallied twice while

playing in his 600th career game, and Ivan Provorov added a goal for Philadelphia. Felix Sandström, playing in his first game since Dec. 13, made 25 saves.

Coyotes 4, Golden Knights 1: Clayton Keller had his second hat trick of the season and host Arizona got its second victory in the last 13 games.

Dylan Guenther scored and Karel Vejmelka had 35 saves for the Coyotes, who had been shut out in their last two games. Keller has a team-high 18 goals, but had only one in his previous 10 games.

Phil Kessel scored and Logan Thompson had 19 saves for Vegas, which has lost four of five.

Canucks fire coach Boudreau, hire Tocchet

By Stephen Whyno
Associated Press

Bruce Boudreau has been fired as coach of the Vancouver Canucks, who are again on track to miss the playoffs with another underachieving season.

The team announced the change Sunday, less than a week since president of hockey operations Jim Rutherford said “major surgery” was needed to fix the Canucks, who have only made the playoffs once in the past eight years. Rick Tocchet was hired as Boudreau’s replacement for a Vancouver team that has lost 28 of 46 games this season.

“This was not an easy decision to make, but one that we felt was necessary for this franchise,” general manager Patrik Allvin said in a statement thanking Boudreau for his contributions.



Tocchet

Boudreau

Boudreau waved to the crowd after the Canucks’ latest defeat Saturday night, their third in the past four games. Chants of “Bruce, there it is!” to the tune of Tag Team’s “Whoop! (There It Is)” echoed around the arena as a tribute to the well-respected 68-year-old hockey lifer who ranks among the top regular-season coaches in NHL history.

He’s the second coach Vancouver has fired in under 14 months. Boudreau took over in December 2021 when previous coach Travis

Green and general manager Jim Benning were let go 25 games into last season.

Assistant Trent Cull was also relieved of his duties, the team said Sunday. Adam Foote was named as an assistant and Sergei Gonchar a defensive development coach on Tocchet’s staff.

Tocchet previously coached the Tampa Bay Lightning for parts of two seasons from 2008-10 and the Arizona Coyotes for four years from 2017-21. He won the Stanley Cup as a player with the Pittsburgh Penguins and then twice as an assistant for them.

“Rick Tocchet brings a wealth of knowledge to this team from both a coach and player perspective,” Allvin said. “He has had more than two decades of coaching experience, guiding teams of various styles.”

The Canucks have missed the playoffs the past two seasons since reaching the second round in the COVID-19 bubble in 2020.

Teams coached by Boudreau for a full season have made the playoffs nine out of 10 times. His .626 points percentage ranks fourth among coaches with at least 500 games behind the bench, and his 617 wins are tied for 20th in league history.

But a Canucks team in disarray did not give him much of a chance to keep that success going. Rutherford in a news conference Monday said big changes would be coming in the offseason, citing the need for the team to get younger.

They could happen before that, especially with captain Bo Horvat unsigned beyond this season and attracting attention ahead of the March 3 trade deadline.

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference								
Atlantic Division								
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	
Boston	46	37	5	4	78	177	96	
Toronto	47	28	11	8	64	158	125	
Tampa Bay	45	29	15	1	59	163	135	
Florida	48	23	20	5	51	163	163	
Buffalo	45	23	19	3	49	172	155	
Detroit	45	19	18	8	46	138	153	
Ottawa	46	20	23	3	43	133	152	
Montreal	47	20	24	3	43	125	171	
Metropolitan Division								
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	
Carolina	46	29	9	8	66	151	124	
New Jersey	46	30	12	4	64	161	121	
N.Y. Rangers	46	25	14	7	57	145	123	
Washington	49	25	18	6	56	156	139	
Pittsburgh	46	23	15	8	54	148	138	
N.Y. Islanders	48	23	20	5	51	141	136	
Philadelphia	48	20	21	7	47	133	155	
Columbus	46	14	30	2	30	119	180	
Western Conference								
Central Division								
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	
Dallas	48	28	13	7	63	167	124	
Winnipeg	48	31	16	1	63	160	126	
Minnesota	45	25	16	4	54	143	130	
Colorado	45	25	17	3	53	141	124	
Nashville	46	22	18	6	50	129	136	
St. Louis	47	23	21	3	49	149	167	
Arizona	47	15	27	5	35	123	170	
Chicago	45	14	27	4	32	108	163	
Pacific Division								
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	
Vegas	48	29	17	2	60	156	139	
Seattle	46	27	14	5	59	166	144	
Los Angeles	49	26	17	6	58	159	167	
Edmonton	48	27	18	3	57	178	157	
Calgary	47	22	16	9	53	150	143	
Vancouver	46	18	25	3	39	155	186	
San Jose	48	14	25	9	37	145	184	
Anaheim	47	13	29	5	31	113	199	
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.								
Sunday's games								
New Jersey 2, Pittsburgh 1, OT Los Angeles 2, Chicago 1 Winnipeg 5, Philadelphia 3 Boston 4, San Jose 0 Arizona 4, Vegas 1								
Monday's games								
Florida at N.Y. Rangers N.Y. Islanders at Toronto Buffalo at Dallas Columbus at Calgary								
Tuesday's games								
Boston at Montreal Florida at Pittsburgh Los Angeles at Philadelphia Minnesota at Tampa Bay San Jose at Detroit Vegas at New Jersey Buffalo at St. Louis Winnipeg at Nashville Anaheim at Arizona Washington at Colorado Chicago at Vancouver								
Wednesday's games								
N.Y. Islanders at Ottawa N.Y. Rangers at Toronto Carolina at Dallas Columbus at Edmonton Vancouver at Seattle								
Thursday's games								
Boston at Tampa Bay Detroit at Montreal Pittsburgh at Washington Buffalo at Winnipeg New Jersey at Nashville Philadelphia at Minnesota Anaheim at Colorado Chicago at Calgary St. Louis at Arizona								
Scoring leaders								
Through Sunday								
	GP	G	A	Pts				
Connor McDavid, EDM	48	40	48	88				
Leon Draisaitl, EDM	46	28	45	73				
Nikita Kucherov, TB	45	18	48	66				
David Pastrnak, BOS	46	36	29	65				
Jason Robertson, DAL	48	31	33	64				
Erik Karlsson, SJ	48	15	47	62				
Tage Thompson, BUF	45	32	29	61				
Matthew Tkachuk, FLA	45	24	35	59				
Jack Hughes, NJ	46	30	28	58				
Mikko Rantanen, COL	45	32	26	58				
R. Nugent-Hopkins, EDM	48	22	35	57				
Kyle Connor, WPG	48	24	33	57				
Mitch Marner, TOR	47	17	39	56				
Zach Hyman, EDM	47	24	32	56				
Kirill Kaprizov, MIN	45	26	30	56				

NBA

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference					
Atlantic Division					
	W	L	Pct	GB	
Boston	35	12	.745	—	
Philadelphia	30	16	.652	4½	
Brooklyn	29	17	.630	5½	
New York	25	23	.521	10½	
Toronto	21	27	.438	14½	
Southeast Division					
	W	L	Pct	GB	
Miami	26	22	.542	—	
Atlanta	24	23	.511	1½	
Washington	20	26	.435	5	
Orlando	17	29	.370	8	
Charlotte	13	34	.277	12½	
Central Division					
	W	L	Pct	GB	
Milwaukee	29	17	.630	—	
Cleveland	29	19	.604	1	
Indiana	23	25	.479	7	
Chicago	21	24	.467	7½	
Detroit	12	36	.250	18	
Western Conference					
Southwest Division					
	W	L	Pct	GB	
Memphis	31	15	.674	—	
New Orleans	26	21	.553	5½	
Dallas	25	23	.521	7	
San Antonio	14	32	.304	17	
Houston	10	36	.217	21	
Northwest Division					
	W	L	Pct	GB	
Denver	33	14	.702	—	
Minnesota	24	24	.500	9½	
Utah	24	25	.490	10	
Oklahoma City	23	24	.489	10	
Portland	21	25	.457	11½	
Pacific Division					
	W	L	Pct	GB	
Sacramento	26	19	.578	—	
L.A. Clippers	25	24	.510	3	
Phoenix	24	24	.500	3½	
Golden State	23	24	.489	4	
L.A. Lakers	22	25	.468	5	
Saturday's games					
Boston 106, Toronto 104 Washington 138, Orlando 118 Cleveland 114, Milwaukee 102 Charlotte 122, Atlanta 118 Minnesota 113, Houston 104 Phoenix 112, Indiana 107 Philadelphia 129, Sacramento 127					
Sunday's games					
L.A. Clippers 112, Dallas 98 Miami 100, New Orleans 96 Toronto 125, New York 116 Oklahoma City 101, Denver 99 Phoenix 112, Memphis 110 Brooklyn 120, Golden State 116 L.A. Lakers 121, Portland 112					
Monday's games					
Boston at Orlando Milwaukee at Detroit Atlanta at Chicago Minnesota at Houston Charlotte at Utah San Antonio at Portland Memphis at Sacramento					
Tuesday's games					
Chicago at Indiana Boston at Miami Cleveland at New York Denver at New Orleans Washington at Dallas Charlotte at Phoenix L.A. Clippers at L.A. Lakers					
Wednesday's games					
Indiana at Orlando Brooklyn at Philadelphia Atlanta at Oklahoma City Denver at Milwaukee Minnesota at New Orleans Washington at Houston Memphis at Golden State Toronto at Sacramento Utah at Portland San Antonio at L.A. Lakers					
Thursday's games					
Chicago at Charlotte Detroit at Brooklyn New York at Boston Cleveland at Houston Dallas at Phoenix San Antonio at L.A. Clippers					
Leaders					
Through Sunday Rebounding					
	G	OFF	DEF	TOT	AVG
Sabonis, SAC	43	129	411	540	12.6
Antetokmpo, MIL	35	80	338	418	11.9
Adams, MEM	42	214	271	485	11.5
Gobert, MIN	39	129	319	448	11.5

ROUNDUP

Thunder halt Nuggets' win streak

Associated Press

DENVER — Shai Gilgeous-Alexander banked in a decisive 8-foot jumper with 9.2 seconds remaining and finished with 34 points as the Oklahoma City Thunder snapped Denver's league-leading nine-game winning streak and beat the Nuggets 101-99 Sunday night.

After Denver's Zeke Nnaji hit two free throws to tie the game at 99 with 30 seconds left, Gilgeous-Alexander got the ball out of a timeout and hit the mid-range jumper to give the Thunder the lead. The Nuggets' Jamal Murray missed a fadeaway 14-foot shot in the final seconds.

"He's got some poise in those situations," Thunder head coach Mark Daigneault said of Gilgeous-Alexander. "The game slows down for him. He's got great confidence and he's always at his pace, even in the most pressure situations."

Oklahoma City's victory ended the Nuggets' 16-game home winning streak — the franchise's longest run in 10 years.

Josh Giddey had 18 points and a team-high nine rebounds for the Thunder, who earned their seventh win in nine games.

Denver center Nikola Jokic missed his second straight game while dealing with tightness in his left hamstring. The two-time reigning NBA MVP had recorded a triple-double in five of his last six games. Nuggets acting head coach David Adelman said he expects Jokic's return is "going to be very soon."

"I think it's much easier to switch one through five with us," Adelman said. "When Nikola is on the floor, it's virtually impossible to do that and it's virtually impossible to zone us. They did those two things and they're smart things to do."

Forward Michael Porter Jr. also missed the game for "personal reasons," leaving Denver without two of its top four scorers. Porter's younger brother, Coban, a sophomore guard at the University of Denver, was arrested Sunday on suspicion of vehicular homicide and reckless driving after he was involved in a fatal crash.

Without Jokic and Porter, Murray shouldered much of the offensive load, finishing with a team-high 26 points and nine assists, two nights after recording his first career triple-double.

Suns 112, Grizzlies 110: Chris Paul had 22 points and 11 assists in his return after missing seven games with a hip injury, leading host Phoenix over Memphis.

The Suns had to hold on in the final minutes after dominating



DAVID ZALUBOWSKI/AP

Thunder guard Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, right, drives past Nuggets guard Jamal Murray in the second half on Sunday in Denver. Gilgeous-Alexander made a bank shot with 9.2 seconds left for the winning points.

most of the night.

Desmond Bane's free throws cut the margin to 110-106 with 58.8 seconds left. After a Phoenix turnover, Ja Morant was fouled and made two more free throws to cut it to 110-108 with 28.6 seconds remaining. Phoenix forward Dario Saric hit two free throws after being fouled on the ensuing possession and the Grizzlies finally ran out of time.

The Suns have won three straight, pushing back to .500 for the season. The Grizzlies have dropped two in a row after their 11-game winning streak was snapped by the Lakers on Friday.

Mikal Bridges led the Suns with 24 points, while Torrey Craig added a season high 20. Morant scored 27 for the Grizzlies, while Bane added 24.

Lakers 121, Trail Blazers 112: LeBron James had 37 points and 11 rebounds, and visiting Los Angeles rallied in the second half to beat Portland.

Thomas Bryant added 31 points and 14 rebounds for the Lakers, who have won three of their last four after a three-game losing streak.

The Blazers led by as many as 25 points in the first half, but the Lakers cut the margin to 91-86 after outscoring Portland 40-20 in the third quarter.

Troy Brown Jr. made a three-pointer that got the Lakers within 97-95, before they took the lead on Bryant's three with 7:54 left.

Bryant's dunk gave the Lakers a 114-107 lead with 2:23 left and they held off Portland for the win.

Anfernee Simons had 31 points



Chasing Kareem

A look at LeBron James' pursuit of Kareem Abdul-Jabbar for the NBA's scoring record. Abdul-Jabbar has held the record since April 5, 1984:

Abdul-Jabbar points: 38,387.

James points: 38,164.

Difference: 223 points.

James' latest game: He scored 37 points Sunday in the Los Angeles Lakers' 121-112 win over Portland.

James' scoring average this season: 29.8.

Potential record-breaker: At his current rate of 29.8 points per game, with 224 points needed to pass Abdul-Jabbar, it would take James eight more games to become the NBA's scoring leader. Assuming he does not miss any games, that makes the potential record-breaking game Feb. 7 at home against Oklahoma City.

Next Lakers game: Tuesday at home against the Los Angeles Clippers.

From The Associated Press

for the Blazers, who have lost three straight. Damian Lillard added 24 points and 10 assists.

Nets 120, Warriors 116: Royce O'Neale hit a go-ahead three-pointer with 28.5 seconds left, and visiting Brooklyn capitalized on

Golden State's third straight game squandering a double-digit lead.

Kyrie Irving finished with 38 points, nine assists and seven rebounds for a Nets team that won a second straight playing without injured star Kevin Durant.

Stephen Curry had 26 points, seven assists and six rebounds and Jordan Poole added 17 points for the Warriors.

Heat 100, Pelicans 96: Tyler Herro scored 26 points, Kyle Lowry had nine straight for Miami in the final 1:42 and the host Heat rallied to beat New Orleans.

Bam Adebayo and Jimmy Butler each scored 18 for Miami, which trailed by 16 in the first half. Lowry scored 17 for the Heat.

Trey Murphy III had 17 for New Orleans.

Clippers 112, Mavericks 98: Kawhi Leonard scored a game-high 30 points, Paul George had 21 and Norman Powell added 19 off the bench to lead visiting Los Angeles past Dallas.

Luka Doncic led the Mavericks with 29 points and 10 rebounds.

The Clippers won consecutive games for the first time since Dec. 26-27, while the Mavericks have lost four of their last five games.

Raptors 125, Knicks 116: Fred VanVleet scored 28 points, Gary Trent Jr. had 24 before fouling out and host Toronto beat New York to end a three-game losing streak.

Pascal Siakam scored 24 points for the Raptors, who scored 26 points off 17 New York turnovers.

RJ Barrett scored 30 points and Julius Randle had 23 points and 19 rebounds as the Knicks lost their fourth straight.

NFL PLAYOFFS

Purdy finds way to get by Dallas

49ers headed back to NFC title game

By JOSH DUBOW
Associated Press

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — Brock Purdy rolled to his left and saw his first few options covered. At the last second, George Kittle broke free running deep, Purdy threw across his body and Kittle made a juggling catch that sparked San Francisco's only touchdown drive.

That one big play proved to be enough to send the 49ers to their second straight NFC title game, thanks to a suffocating defensive performance.

Christian McCaffrey capped that drive with a go-ahead 2-yard run and the defense buckled down from there, sealing a 19-12 victory over the Dallas Cowboys on Sunday.

"Man, we're just excited that we won," said Purdy, the 49ers' unbeaten rookie quarterback. "Everyone did their part. It's playoff football, it's never easy, but we're moving on."

The 49ers (15-4) used back-to-back long scoring drives in the second half to wear down the Cowboys (13-6) and win their 12th straight game. San Francisco advanced to play the Eagles in the NFC title game next Sunday in Philadelphia after losing in that round to the Rams a year ago.

The Cowboys lost for the record seventh straight time in the divisional round and have failed to



Purdy

make it to the NFC title game since winning their fifth Super Bowl title following the 1995 season.

Dak Prescott threw two interceptions and Brett Maher missed his fifth extra point of the postseason when his attempt was blocked. He later made two field goals.

"Just disappointment," Prescott said. "Defense gave us an opportunity to win this game. They played hard against a really, really good offense, a really good team. For us to only put up the points that we did, that's unacceptable. It starts with me. I've got to be better. There's no other way to sugarcoat it."

The key play came on the second play of the drive late in the third quarter with the game tied at 9. Purdy ran a bootleg that Dallas covered perfectly.

But he waited long enough for Kittle to improvise and turn upfield. Purdy then delivered a strike.

"We needed something," Purdy said. "We needed a spark to get the ball rolling."

Kittle bobbled the ball a few times before finally corralling it for a 30-yard gain, giving credit to his rookie QB for delivering it.

"I'm not even in the read, so I just kind of saw a space and he hadn't thrown it yet so I was just going up the field," Kittle said. "He gave me a catchable ball and I was just trying to be dramatic. Just for TV."

McCaffrey capped the 91-yard drive with his TD run.

The Cowboys still had a shot late when they took over at their own 18



SCOT TUCKER/AP

San Francisco 49ers tight end George Kittle makes a juggling catch during Sunday's divisional playoff game against the Dallas Cowboys in Santa Clara, Calif. The play resulted in a 30-yard gain.

with 2:59 remaining, trailing 19-12 after Robbie Gould's fourth field goal of the game capped a nearly eight-minute drive.

But Prescott threw two straight incompletions and was sacked on third down. Coach Mike McCarthy opted to punt on fourth-and-10 with all three timeouts left.

Purdy started the next drive with a 16-yard completion to Kittle and San Francisco didn't give the ball back to Dallas until there were 45 seconds left. The Cowboys took over at their 6 and never got close from there.

"I like to be in those positions," Prescott said. "We just weren't able to get anything going."

Purdy, the last pick in the draft last April, improved to 7-0 as a starter since replacing an injured Jimmy Garoppolo early in Week 13.

He went 18-for-28 for 215 yards with no turnovers against the Cow-

boys, joining Joe Flacco (2008) and Mark Sanchez (2009) as the only rookie QBs to win two playoff starts.

"I'm not shocked anymore," McCaffrey said. "It's just who he is now."

The NFL's top two scoring teams over the past 13 weeks had trouble getting going as the defenses led by All-Pro Nick Bosa of San Francisco and Micah Parsons of Dallas controlled the play.

The Niners picked off Prescott twice in the first half, turned those into field goals by Gould and led 9-6 at the break.

The Cowboys scored the only TD of the first half with Prescott connecting with tight end Dalton Schultz for the third time this postseason. But Maher's low extra-point attempt was blocked by Samson Ebukam.

Maher got some redemption when he made a 25-yard field goal

that tied the game at 9 early in the third quarter after Ray-Ray McCloud fumbled a punt return at the San Francisco 21.

"That felt like legit playoff football," Bosa said. "That's a really good team."

Just for kicks

The Cowboys' decision to stick with Maher after his four missed extra points last week looked questionable when he missed the early extra point. Maher's five missed PATs are the second most by any NFL kicker in the playoffs. Roy Gerela missed six tries in 43 attempts in the 1970s for Houston and Pittsburgh.

There had been a dustup pregame when Maher was warming up. Trent Williams and other 49ers players tried to interfere with his attempts from San Francisco's side of the field, leading to a brief argument.

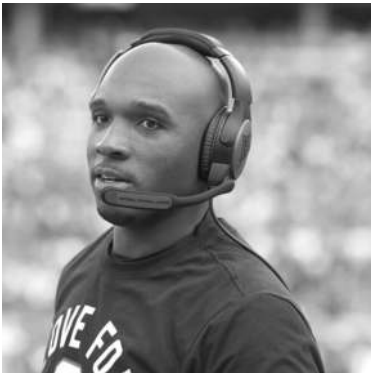
Proving: Cincinnati's defense had most impressive all-around game

FROM PAGE 24

said of his defensive coordinator. "Obviously, we have great players. ... But this guy is an unbelievable coordinator. ... He's going to be a head football coach in the National Football League because of what he does. This guy is a stud. He's a stud."

Cincinnati's defense had the most impressive all-around game of all, considering its opponent. The Bengals shut down Josh Allen and Buffalo's dynamic offense in a 27-10 win. The Bills were only 4-for-12 on third downs, went three-and-out three times and managed just a field goal in the second half.

Defensive coordinator Lou Anarumo put the Bengals in position to constantly pressure Allen and knock him out of rhythm. Allen only had one turnover late in



GODOFREDO A. VASQUEZ/AP

49ers defensive coordinator DeMeco Ryans is a candidate for several head coaching vacancies.

the game but he misfired on some throws and didn't click with his receivers. Allen kept his head down and didn't look up when wide receiver Stefon Diggs approached

him on the bench and yelled a few times in his direction midway through the fourth quarter.

"He wants the ball," Allen said of Diggs, who had just four receptions for 35 yards. "And whatever it was that we couldn't get him the ball tonight, we're going to have to learn from."

The Bengals will meet the Chiefs again in a rematch of last year's AFC championship game that was won by Cincinnati. Burrow is 3-0 against Patrick Mahomes and the Chiefs.

In the final game of the weekend, the 49ers' top-ranked defense flustered Dak Prescott throughout a 19-12 victory, forcing two interceptions and holding the Cowboys to just 282 total yards. San Francisco had a few more opportunities at turnovers but couldn't hang

onto to a couple of picks.

Niners defensive coordinator DeMeco Ryans, a candidate for several head coaching vacancies, improved his case with another stellar game plan.

"I'm pretty sure DeMeco is gonna have a head coaching job after this year," Niners defensive back Jimmie Ward said. "You see it with the play calling. We went out there and shut down a playoff team and one of the best teams in the league this year."

Next up for the 49ers is a trip to Philadelphia to face one of the league's most well-rounded offenses in the NFC championship game.

"Get ya popcorn ready, man," Ward said. "Heavyweight fight right there. Get ready. It's gonna be a good show."

Scoreboard

NFL playoffs

Wild-card Playoffs
Saturday, Jan. 14
San Francisco 41, Seattle 23
Jacksonville 31, L.A. Chargers 30

Sunday, Jan. 15
Buffalo 34, Miami 31
N.Y. Giants 31, Minnesota 24
Cincinnati 24, Baltimore 17

Monday, Jan. 16
Dallas 31, Tampa Bay 14

Divisional Playoffs
Saturday, Jan. 21
Kansas City 27, Jacksonville 20
Philadelphia 38, N.Y. Giants 7

Sunday, Jan. 22
Cincinnati 27, Buffalo 10
San Francisco 19, Dallas 12

Conference Championships
Sunday, Jan. 29
AFC
Cincinnati at Kansas City, **AFN-Sports**, 9:30 p.m. **Sunday CET**; 5:30 a.m. **Monday JKT**

NFC
San Francisco at Philadelphia, **AFN-Sports**, 6 p.m. **Sunday CET**; 2 a.m. **Monday, JKT**

Super Bowl
Sunday, Feb. 12
At Glendale, Ariz.
Conference Championship winners

NFL PLAYOFFS



SETH WENIG/AP

Cincinnati Bengals safety Michael Thomas (31) and cornerback Eli Apple (20) react after a defensive play against the Buffalo Bills during the fourth quarter Sunday in Orchard Park, N.Y.

Bengals rout Bills to return to AFC championship game

By JOHN WAWROW

Associated Press

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. — Joe Burrow and the Cincinnati Bengals threw a big wrench into the highly anticipated travel plans of the Buffalo Bills, their fans and perhaps even the NFL offices.

Burrow threw two touchdown passes and Cincinnati's defense swarmed Josh Allen on a snow-slicked field in a 27-10 win Sunday to send the Bengals to the AFC championship game for the second straight year.

And it'll be in Kansas City again — instead of in Atlanta, the neutral site where the game would've been played if Buffalo had beaten Cincinnati.

"Better send those refunds," Burrow said, referring to the 50,000 or so tickets already sold for a game that will never be played.

"See y'all in Atlanta," one Bengals player was heard yelling sarcastically while the team made its way to the locker room, where cornerback Eli Apple and a couple of teammates conducted interviews smoking cigars.

The Bengals entered the game already feeling disrespected when the NFL began selling tickets for a would-be game at Atlanta, that was dependent on the Bills and Chiefs winning this weekend.

The league decided on the first-of-its-kind conference championship neutral site setting because the Bills (13-3) finished the season a half-game behind the Chiefs (14-3) after their game at Cincinnati was canceled on Jan. 2 when Bills safety Damar Hamlin went into cardiac arrest and had to be resuscitated on the field.

Hamlin's inspirational presence while watching the game from an end-zone suite was not enough to spark the Bills.

Instead, it was "Joe Cool" showing poise while playing in a persistent snowfall.

Burrow completed his first nine passes for 105 yards as Cincinnati raced to a 14-0 lead after its first two possessions. Ja'Marr Chase opened the scoring with a 28-yard TD catch 3:20 into the game, followed by Burrow's 15-yard TD throw to Hayden Hurst eight minutes later. Joe Mixon scored on a 1-yard run, and Evan McPherson made field goals from 20 and 28 yards in a game the Bengals never trailed.

"The bigger the moment gets, the calmer he gets," Bengals coach Zac Taylor said of Burrow, who improved his playoff record to 5-1. "Our guys believe. They walk on the field ready to attack."

Cincinnati advanced to consecutive AFC championship games for the first time in franchise history and will prepare for a rematch of last year's title game. The Bengals defeated Patrick Mahomes and the Chiefs 27-24 to advance to last year's Super Bowl, which they lost to the Los Angeles Rams.

"It's going to be a fun one," said Burrow, who went 23-for-36 for 242 yards Sunday. "Two of the top guys in the league, two of the top teams in the league, great defenses, great overall teams, great coaches."

Cincinnati has won the last three meetings against Kansas City, including a 27-24 win last month. The Chiefs are making their fifth straight appearance in the AFC championship game after a 27-20 win over Jacksonville on Saturday.

The Bills' playoff run ended in the divisional round for a second straight season, including a 42-36 overtime loss to Kansas City last year.

It was a dud of an outing for the Bills, who opened the season with Super Bowl aspirations, and eventually ran out of emotional and physical gas. Aside from the shocking sight of Hamlin's collapse, the Bills had their schedule twice disrupted by severe winter storms.

Injuries also played an issue. The Bills' pass rush, missing Von Miller since he sustained a season-ending knee injury in November, generated very little pressure against a Bengals offensive line missing three starters due to injuries.

"We were expecting their best punch and they came out and punched us," said Allen, who finished 25-for-42 for 265 yards, and scored on a 1-yard plunge. "We just didn't have it today."

Hamlin was whisked into the stadium in a security vehicle, and led directly into the Bills' locker room about an hour before kickoff. He was later joined by his mother, Nina, and younger brother, Damir. He watched the game from a suite in one end zone and was pictured on the videoboard at the 2-minute warning in the first half, with Cincinnati facing second-and-goal at Buffalo's 5.

Hamlin raised his arms in his suite to a roar of cheers, before making a heart sign with his hands. The Bills limited the Bengals to a field goal, and trailed 17-7 at the half.

"We'll be back," Hamlin tweeted a few hours after the game. "Don't even trip."

Mahomes reportedly has high ankle sprain

By DAVE SKRETTA

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Patrick Mahomes sustained a right high ankle sprain in the Kansas City Chiefs' divisional playoff win over the Jaguars, a person familiar with the nature of the injury told The Associated Press on Sunday, though the All-Pro quarterback expects to play against Cincinnati in next week's AFC championship game.

Mahomes was hurt late in the first quarter Saturday when a Jacksonville defender landed on him. X-rays taken during the game came back negative, and Mahomes returned after halftime to lead Kansas City to the 27-20 victory.

Mahomes underwent an MRI exam Sunday to better determine the extent of the injury, the person told AP, speaking on condition of anonymity because the team did not announce the results. The tests showed no structural damage.

"Obviously, I have a lot of adrenaline going right now. We'll see how it feels but I'll hop right into treatment tonight and try to do whatever I can to be as close to 100% by next week," Mahomes said late Saturday. "Luckily for us we played the early game on Saturday, so we get an extra almost half a day that I can let that ankle rest."

The Chiefs will face the Bengals, who beat the Bills 27-10 in their divisional game Sunday, in a rematch of last year's AFC title game. Cincinnati rallied from an early 21-3 deficit for a 27-24 overtime victory and a spot in the Super Bowl.

Mahomes said Saturday night that his ankle already felt "better than I thought it would feel now."

Still, high ankle sprains are notoriously difficult to overcome. Chiefs running back Clyde Edwards-Helaire sustained one in late November and landed on injured reserve, and only last week did he finally return to practice.

"I don't want to jump to things right now, but let's just see how it goes here the next couple days," Chiefs coach Andy Reid said Saturday night. "It's going to be sore, I know, but let's see where he is at. He's had this before and he was able to keep pushing through, actually against Jacksonville whenever — a couple of years ago, same type of deal."

"The main thing is that he's safe," Reid said, "or as safe as you can be on a football field. That's the important thing."

Mahomes missed most of the second quarter against the Jaguars but still threw for 195 yards and two scores. The second of them was a throw to Marquez Valdes-Scantling in the fourth quarter that ultimately provided the winning margin.

While Mahomes was out, backup Chad Henne led the Chiefs on a 12-play, 98-yard touchdown drive.

"I've got to tell you, 15 is tough as nails, being able to come back in," Chiefs safety Justin Reid said. "Even staying in after the injury and handing the ball off while he's basically hobbling on one leg. The guy — that just shows you his love for the game and his character and his will to just be out there for his team and doing everything he can to help us win."



CHARLIE RIEDEL/AP

Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes visits with fans after a win over the Jacksonville Jaguars on Saturday in Kansas City, Mo.

SPORTS



Americans crash party
Paul, two other US men earn berths in quarterfinals » **Australian Open, Page 19**

ANALYSIS



ADRIAN KRAUS/AP

Buffalo Bills quarterback Josh Allen loses the ball while being hit by Cincinnati Bengals defensive end Joseph Ossai during the second quarter of Sunday's AFC divisional playoff game in Orchard Park, N.Y. The play was ruled an incomplete pass. The Bengals held one of the NFL's top offenses to a season-low 10 points and just 63 yards rushing.



SCOT TUCKER/AP

San Francisco 49ers cornerback Deommodore Lenoir intercepts a pass from Dallas Cowboys quarterback Dak Prescott during Sunday's NFC divisional playoff game in Santa Clara, Calif.

Proving the old adage

Defense is still what helps teams advance in NFL playoffs

By ROB MAADDI
Associated Press

Defense stills wins in the playoffs. The San Francisco 49ers and Cincinnati Bengals advanced to the conference championship games with excellent defensive performances on Sunday.

The Philadelphia Eagles also had a stand-out defensive effort Saturday night.

While high-flying offenses led by star quarterbacks get most of the attention, defense matters.

It was evident in the NFL divisional round this weekend.

Chiefs defensive coordinator Steve Spagnuolo's aggressive unit forced two turnovers in the fourth quarter, helping Kansas

INSIDE

Source says Mahomes has high ankle sprain
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City beat Jacksonville 27-20 in the first game.

"We focused throughout the week, especially on the week we had off, focused on maybe punching the ball a little bit more or hop on the ball or just catching the ones that they give us," Chiefs linebacker Nick Bolton said. "I dropped one early, but it's one of those things you kind of have to keep going on, and in playoffs, you understand that they count times two when you get them."

Jalen Hurts and the Eagles' offense were unstoppable, especially dominating the Giants on the ground with 268 yards rushing. But Philadelphia's defense, which was No. 2 in the league this season, was downright nasty in a 38-7 rout of New York.

Coming off an impressive 301-yard passing game in an upset over 13-win Minnesota, Daniel Jones had no chance against Haason Reddick and Philly's ferocious D.

Jones was sacked five times, threw a pick, completed just 55.6% of his passes and looked lost. The Eagles held the Giants to only 227 total yards.

"Jonathan Gannon puts these guys in great positions," Eagles coach Nick Sirianni

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Temple knocks off top-ranked Houston » College basketball, Page 18

