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50¢/Free to Deployed Areas

Sensitive situation



US warship in Black Sea draws Russian consternation

By ALISON BATH
Stars and Stripes

NAPLES, Italy — Another U.S. warship has sailed into the Black Sea, again drawing intense Kremlin scrutiny amid continued concerns about a potential Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The destroyer USS Arleigh Burke entered the sea via the Bosphorus Strait on Thursday for a routine patrol in support of NATO allies and partners, U.S. 6th Fleet said in a statement.

A Russian troop buildup near its shared border with Ukraine is stoking fears that Moscow could be planning to invade and annex more Ukrainian territory, as it did the Crimean Peninsula in 2014. Most of the international community does not recognize Russia's claim to Crimea.

"Now, more than ever, we stand firmly alongside our NATO allies and partners in the Black Sea region," said Cmdr. Patrick Chapman, commanding officer of USS Arleigh Burke.

Russia, which frequently bristles at U.S. ships coming into the Black Sea, described the patrols as destabilizing and provocative. Its military was monitoring the Arleigh Burke's movements, the Russian state news agency TASS reported Thursday.

Arleigh Burke's patrol in the

SEE WARSHIP ON PAGE 6

"Now, more than ever, we stand firmly alongside our NATO allies and partners in the Black Sea region."

Cmdr. Patrick Chapman
USS Arleigh Burke

Fears grow that China could benefit from ongoing US dispute with Marshall Islands

By MATTHEW LEE AND NICK PERRY
Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — For decades, the tiny Marshall Islands has been a stalwart American ally. Its location in the middle of the Pacific Ocean has made it a key strategic outpost for the U.S. military.

But that loyalty is being tested amid a dispute with Washington over the terms of its "Compact of Free Association" agreement, which expires soon. The United States is refusing to engage the Marshallese on claims for environmental and health damage caused by dozens of nuclear tests it carried out in the 1940s and '50s, including a huge thermonuclear blast on Bikini Atoll.

The dispute has some U.S. lawmakers worried that China might be willing to step into the

breach, adding to a bruising competition for geopolitical dominance between the two superpowers.

Since World War II, the U.S. has treated the Marshall Islands, along with Micronesia and Palau, much like territories. On the Marshall Islands, the U.S. has developed military, intelligence and aerospace facilities in a region where China is particularly active.

In turn, U.S. money and jobs have benefited the Marshall Islands' economy. And many Marshallese have taken advantage of their ability to live and work in the U.S., moving in the thousands to Arkansas, Hawaii and Oklahoma.

But this month, 10 Democratic and Republican members of the House of Representatives wrote to President Joe Biden's national

INSIDE Lawmakers make trip to Taiwan Page 3



security adviser, Jake Sullivan, about the U.S. compact talks with the Marshalls, Micronesia and Palau.

"It is distressing that these negotiations do not appear to be a priority — there have been no formal meetings since this Administration

SEE DISPUTE ON PAGE 3

Above: The Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Russell is moored to the pier in Majuro, Marshall Islands, on Jan. 7. A dispute between the Marshallese and Washington has some lawmakers raising concerns that China could step in to provide the desperately needed infrastructure and climate resiliency investment sought by the United States' long-time partner.

WADE COSTIN/U.S. Navy

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Portugal's new teleworking law takes flak

Associated Press

LISBON, Portugal — Portugal's new law on working from home makes the European Union country sound like a workers' paradise. Companies can't attempt to contact their staff outside working hours. They must help staff pay for their home gas, electric and internet bills. Bosses are forbidden from using digital software to track what their teleworkers are doing.

There's just one problem: the law might not work. Critics say the

new rules are half-baked, short on detail and unfeasible. And they may even backfire by making companies reluctant to allow working from home at all.

"The law is badly written and doesn't meet anybody's needs," says José Pedro Anacoreta, an employment attorney at PLMJ, one of Portugal's main law firms. "It's no good for anyone. ... It doesn't make any sense."

In many places around the world, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated a prior trend to-

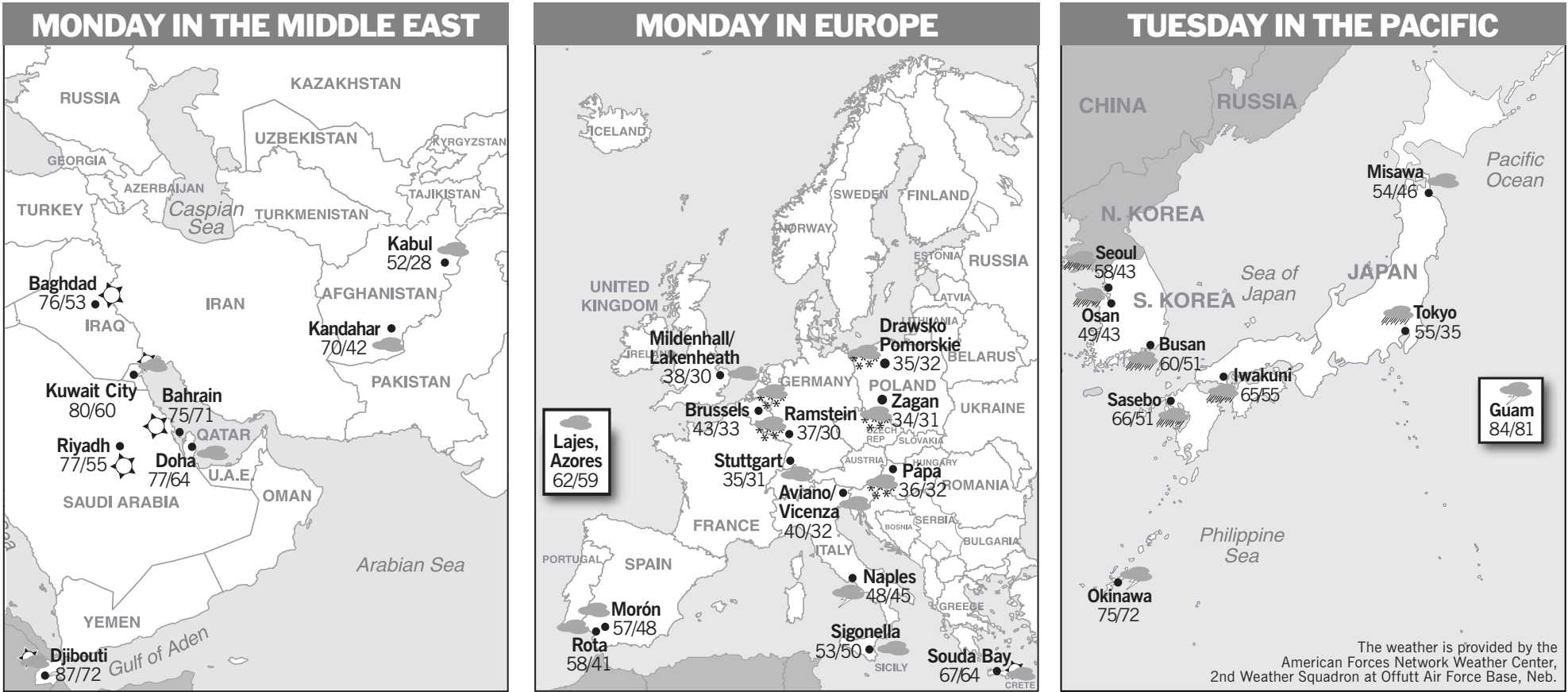
ward the digitization of work and more flexible work arrangements. Amid such a sudden and massive shift in the employment landscape, governments are scrambling to accommodate working from home in their employment laws. Those efforts are largely still in their infancy.

Without a promised European Commission directive on how to legally frame the shift to more extensive working from home, governments' legislative responses have been patchy and piecemeal.

EXCHANGE RATES

| Military rates | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------|--|---|----------|
| Euro costs (Nov. 29) | \$1.10 | | South Korea (Won) | 1,196.17 |
| Dollar buys (Nov. 29) | 0.8636 | | Switzerland (Franc) | .9219 |
| British pound (Nov. 29) | \$1.30 | | Thailand (Baht) | 33.74 |
| Japanese yen (Nov. 29) | 112.00 | | Turkey (New Lira) | 12.3279 |
| South Korean won (Nov. 29) | 1,162.00 | | (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.) | |
| Commercial rates | | | INTEREST RATES | |
| Bahrain (Dinar) | .3770 | | Prime rate | 3.25 |
| Britain (Pound) | 1.3338 | | Interest Rates Discount rate | 0.75 |
| Canada (Dollar) | 1.2786 | | Federal funds market rate | 0.09 |
| China (Yuan) | 6.3930 | | 3-month bill | 0.06 |
| Denmark (Krone) | 6.5768 | | 30-year bond | 1.83 |
| Egypt (Pound) | 15.7208 | | | |
| Euro | .8835 | | | |
| Hong Kong (Dollar) | 7.7990 | | | |
| Hungary (Forint) | 326.48 | | | |
| Israel (Shekel) | 3.1859 | | | |
| Japan (Yen) | 113.19 | | | |
| Kuwait (Dinar) | .3027 | | | |
| Norway (Krone) | 9.0666 | | | |
| Philippines (Peso) | 50.50 | | | |
| Poland (Zloty) | 4.16 | | | |
| Saudi Arabia (Riyal) | 3.7514 | | | |
| Singapore (Dollar) | 1.3713 | | | |

WEATHER OUTLOOK



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EUROPE

ADVERTISING
CustomerService@stripes.com | +49 (0) 0631.3615.9111
DSN: 314.583.9111

MIDDLE EAST

ADVERTISING
CustomerService@stripes.com | +49 (0) 0631.3615.9111
DSN: 314.583.9111

PACIFIC

ADVERTISING
PacificAdvertising@stripes.com | +81 (42) 552.2511
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PACIFIC

US lawmakers make unannounced trip to Taiwan

By DAVID CHOI
Stars and Stripes

A bipartisan U.S. congressional delegation traveled to Taiwan on Thursday to discuss “U.S.-Taiwan relations, regional security, and other significant issues of mutual interest,” the State Department’s affiliate in the country said in a statement.

The delegation consisted of Democratic Reps. Mark Takano of California, Elissa Slotkin of Michigan, Colin Allred of Texas, Sara Jacobs of California and Republican Rep. Nancy Mace of South Carolina. Slotkin and Jacobs are members of the House Armed Services Committee; the remaining lawmakers serve on the House Veterans Affairs Committee.

The Associated Press reported that the group met with Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen on Friday.

Tsai, who welcomed the lawmakers at the Presidential Office in Taipei, noted the two sides’ cooperation in veterans’ affairs, economic issues and trade while reiterating the island’s close alignment with the United States.

“Taiwan will continue to step up cooperation with the United States in order to uphold our shared values of freedom and democracy and to ensure peace and stability in the region,” she said.

The U.S. does not officially recognize Taiwan as a country and instead has a close, informal rela-



TAIWAN PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE/AP

U.S. Rep. Mark Takano, D-Calif., left, chats with Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen at the Presidential Office in Taipei, Taiwan, on Friday.

tionship that includes defense assurances in the event of a military conflict.

Slotkin, a former CIA analyst, tweeted Thursday night that her office “received a blunt message” from the Chinese embassy “telling me to call off the trip.”

“But just as with other stops, we’re here to learn about the region and reaffirm the U.S. commitment to our hosts, the Taiwanese,” Slotkin continued on Twitter. “I’m looking forward to an informative trip.”

The congressional delegation earlier in the week traveled to Okinawa, Japan, and met with U.S. troops and their commanders. On Thursday, they served U.S. troops stationed in South Korea a Thanksgiving meal.

Takano, during the delegation’s trip to South Korea, told Stars and Stripes in an interview Thursday that U.S. forces stationed in the country were pivotal due to a “sense of heightened stakes.”

“The stakes have always been high here in Korea with an aggres-

sive and erratic North Korea,” Takano said. “But I think the fact that these service members are also positioned so closely to the Taiwan Straits, we can’t help but feel ... that these particular service members face heightened stakes.”

The unannounced trip follows a separate congressional delegation that traveled to Taiwan earlier this month. Following that trip, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin warned that it “gravely violates the one-China

principle,” Beijing’s claim that it has sovereignty over Taiwan and its 24 million residents.

“We ask the U.S. side to immediately stop all forms of official interactions with Taiwan and avoid sending wrong signals to the ‘Taiwan independence’ separatist forces, lest it should seriously undermine China-U.S. relations and peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait,” Wang said in a statement to reporters Nov. 10.

The White House this week invited Taiwan to a virtual “Summit for Democracy” in December to advance an “affirmative agenda for democratic renewal and to tackle the greatest threats faced by democracies today through collective action.”

President Joe Biden’s invitation to Taiwan sparked backlash from Beijing, whose spokesman alleged the U.S. was “only using democracy as a cover and tool to advance its geo-strategic goals, suppress other countries, divide the world and serve its selfish agenda of maintaining hegemony.”

“Those offering platform to ‘Taiwan independence’ forces will find themselves in an awkward place,” Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said to reporters Thursday. “Those playing with fire with ‘Taiwan independence’ forces will end up getting burned.”

choi.david@stripes.com
Twitter: @choiboy

Dispute: Marshall Islands still hurting from decades-old US nuclear tests

FROM PAGE 1

began — even as our international focus continues shifting to the Indo-Pacific,” they wrote.

The lawmakers said the delays were putting the U.S. in a weaker position, and “China is all too ready to step in and provide the desperately needed infrastructure and climate resiliency investment that is sought by these long-time partners.”

China’s Foreign Ministry said the U.S. should face up to its responsibility to restore the environmental damage it caused with its nuclear tests. It said China was willing to engage with the Mar-

shall Islands and other Pacific island nations on the basis of mutual respect and cooperation under the “One China Principle,” in which Taiwan is viewed as part of China.

“We welcome efforts to boost economic relations and improve the quality of life between the sides,” the ministry said in a statement.

China has steadily poached allies from Taiwan in the Pacific, including Kiribati and the Solomon Islands in 2019.

James Matayoshi, the mayor of Rongelap Atoll on the Marshall Islands, said he and hundreds of others have remained displaced from

their atoll since the nuclear tests and want to see it revitalized. He said officials have been talking with potential investors from Asia, after a previous proposal by a Chinese-Marshallese businessman fell through.

“It would be a business transaction. We don’t advocate for war or any superpower influence,” Matayoshi said. “But we want to be able to live in our backyard, and enjoy life here.”

Like many others on the Marshall Islands, Matayoshi believes a U.S. settlement of \$150 million agreed to in the 1980s fell well short of addressing the nuclear

legacy. He said his late mother was pregnant at the time of one massive nuclear blast and got exposed to radiation that was the equivalent of 25,000 X-rays before giving birth to a stillborn baby.

But the U.S. position has remained static for more than 20 years, the last time the compact came up for renegotiation. The U.S. maintains that nuclear compensation was dealt with in a “full and final settlement” and cannot be reopened.

Marshallese Senator David Paul — who is on the islands’ negotiating committee and also represents Kwajalein Atoll, which is

home to a major U.S. military base — said continuing high cancer rates and the displacement of people remain huge issues.

“Everyone knows the negotiations at that time were not fair or equitable,” Paul said. “When you look at the total cost of property damage and the ongoing health issues to date, it’s a drop in the bucket. It’s an insult.”

Various estimates put the true cost of the damage at about \$3 billion, including for repairs to a massive nuclear waste facility known as the Cactus Dome which environmentalists say is leaking toxic waste into the ocean.

Taiwan scrambles jets after 27 Chinese planes enter buffer zone

Associated Press

TAIPEI, Taiwan — Taiwan said 27 Chinese aircraft entered its air defense buffer zone Sunday, the latest in a long series of incursions as part of Beijing’s pressure on the self-ruled island.

The Defense Ministry said Taiwan scrambled combat aircraft to “warn” the Chinese planes to

leave. It also deployed missile systems to monitor them.

Sunday’s incursion included 18 fighter jets and five H-6 bombers, as well as a Y-20 aerial refueling aircraft, according to Taiwan’s Defense Ministry.

The Chinese aircraft flew into Taiwan’s air defense identification zone near the southern part of

the island and out into the Pacific Ocean before returning to China, according to a map by Taiwan authorities.

Over the past year, the frequency of Chinese incursions has increased, with about 150 aircraft over a period of four days.

China’s air force mission toward Taiwan came as Chinese Presi-

dent Xi Jinping met with officers at a military conference, where he called for military talent cultivation to support and strengthen the armed forces, according to state-owned news agency Xinhua.

Xi said that talent is imperative in achieving victory in military competition and gaining the upper hand in future wars, according to

Xinhua.

China claims democratically ruled Taiwan as its own territory, to be brought under its control by force if necessary. It refuses to recognize the island’s government and has increasingly sought to isolate the independence-leaning administration of President Tsai Ing-wen.

MILITARY

Marine campaign seeks to inspire old, new recruits

By CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

A one-minute video released on Veterans Day is part of a new push to inspire not only would-be Marines, but also those who have already served, as the Corps looks for ways to bring more veterans back to active duty.

The recruiting spot, titled “Full Circle,” is the first part of a Marine Corps Recruiting Command campaign called “Operation Semper Fi.” Lt. Col. Rob Dolan, the command’s director of advertising, said it is “designed to rekindle the enthusiasm of our Marine veteran population for our Corps.”

The new ad begins at a small town parade where a young man watches a formation of Marines pass. It then follows that man through his military career and into civilian life, where he continues to serve his community.

The spot ends with the same man at another parade, this time older and grayer, before the camera pans to a young woman with a gleam in her eye as she watches Marines march past.

Part of the campaign’s goal is to “revitalize the pride and purpose” of being a Marine for those veterans whose guidance matters in the lives of the younger generation,

Dolan said in an email this week.

The day before the video was released is traditionally when countless Marine veterans mark the service’s birthday at events or in social media posts, where they harken back to their time in the service.

Keeping those veterans “in the know” about the service helps keep that spirit alive, building a relationship that leads prospects to join up, Dolan said. Officials are now looking to attend more veterans organization meetings and host more veterans at recruiting events, he added.

A new landing page on Marines.com is also in the works to help veterans connect with their local recruiting stations, Dolan said. The new recruiting video is intended to show prospective Marines and their parents that “even just one enlistment ... can lead to a life of significance and that Marines are a breed apart,” he said.

The campaign also launched just days after Marine Corps Commandant Gen. David Berger released his plan for redesigning the service’s personnel system to focus less on recruiting fresh bodies and more on retaining mature Marines, to include bringing more



PHOTOS BY GREGORY BOYD/U.S. Marine Corps

A still image from the U.S. Marine Corps’ new recruiting commercial “Full Circle” released Nov. 11.



A still image from the U.S. Marine Corps’ new recruiting commercial “Full Circle.”

veterans back into the fold.

Berger called for new options for those who’ve left active duty to return at their former rank or, if they’ve gained “critical career experience” in the civilian world, possibly at a much higher grade.

“I can envision a Marine who left active duty as a captain or corporal rejoining our ranks as a lieutenant colonel or gunnery sergeant, respectively, after spending 5-7 years working in a cyber or IT field where the service currently lacks capacity,” Berger wrote in the plan, called “Talent Manage-

ment 2030.”

The Corps has the highest turnover in the military, releasing 75% of Marines after their first enlistment each year, many of whom are targeted by recruiters from other services like the Army National Guard. The Corps hopes to change that.

“If we do our job right, they’ll never go to the Army or the National Guard to begin with,” said Maj. Gen. Jason Bohm, head of the service’s recruiting command, at a media event Monday, the Marine Corps Times reported.

Dolan said the new ad “wasn’t myopically focused on recruiting veterans back to the Marine Corps,” but the recruiting command is “definitely interested in engaging Marine veterans with a desire to return to service.”

garland.chad@stripes.com
Twitter: @chadgarland

US Navy destroyer makes rare port call in New Zealand

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

A U.S. Navy guided-missile destroyer arrived Friday in Wellington, New Zealand, a rare visit by an American warship to the nuclear-free nation that has closed its borders to most of the world during the coronavirus pandemic.

A Navy statement described the visit by the USS Howard as an indication of the depth of the relationship between New Zealand and the U.S. The Navy embargoed its statement until the Howard, an Arleigh-Burke-class destroyer based at Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan, had arrived Down Under.

“The U.S. Navy along with its network of alliances and partners plays a key role in the security of global trade routes and freedom of navigation and maintaining global access for our Navy is central to that role,” Task Force 71, Destroyer Squadron 15, said in the statement.

New Zealand froze most port calls by U.S. Navy ships in 1985. The U.S. the following year suspended its ANZUS treaty obligations to New Zealand, which had declared itself nuclear-free.

The declaration meant no port-calls for



JUSTIN ASUNCION/US Navy

The guided-missile destroyer USS Howard, left, is replenished by the New Zealand oiler HMNZS Aotearoa on Tuesday.

nuclear-powered aircraft carriers or submarines or warships that might be carrying nuclear weapons.

In September, New Zealand Prime Min-

ister Jacinda Ardern said nuclear-powered submarines that Australia will acquire under AUKUS, the new defense pact between Australia the United Kingdom and the U.S., won’t be welcome in her country’s waters.

The Howard’s visit is the first by a U.S. warship to the country since the guided-missile destroyer USS Sampson headed south in 2016. During that trip the Sampson helped New Zealand authorities respond to a magnitude 7.5 earthquake that struck the country’s South Island.

The Howard is in New Zealand for a standard port visit and to consult on cooperative exercises, according to the Navy’s statement.

Sailors have taken measures to mitigate and operate amid the coronavirus epidemic and will be granted liberty in Wellington, the statement said.

The U.S. sailors are visiting the South Pacific nation before many of its own citizens, who have been left stranded overseas by pandemic border restrictions that are scheduled to end early next year.

“I’m excited to be immersed in and experience a different culture as well as explore this beautiful country,” one of the Howard’s crew, Ensign Kathryn Cole, said Thursday

in an email to Stars and Stripes.

On its way to Wellington the Howard was replenished at sea by the Royal New Zealand Navy’s HMNZS Aotearoa replenishment oiler, Cmdr. Travis Montplaisir, the Howard’s commander, said Thursday in an email to Stars and Stripes.

“We’re sharper and more focused thanks to events like this that bring us in close cooperation with New Zealand, allowing for greater collective capability across a variety of maritime operations,” he said.

The Howard’s crew is excited to visit New Zealand and proud to represent the U.S. Navy as they build their relationship and deepen friendship in the country, Montplaisir said.

The Howard will take part in a range of activities with the New Zealand Defence force, including training, the statement said.

“As the Royal New Zealand Navy celebrates their 80th anniversary this year, we’re pleased to help them mark the occasion and look forward to a successful visit that ensures continued opportunities for cooperation,” Montplaisir said.

robson.seth@stripes.com

PACIFIC



CARLOS M. VAZQUEZ II/Stars and Stripes

Construction work continued at the site of a new runway into Oura Bay at the Marine Corps' Camp Schwab on Jan. 19, 2019.

Okinawa governor refuses permit for design changes to new Marine airfield

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND MARI HIGA
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Okinawa Gov. Denny Tamaki declined to approve design changes Thursday for a runway being built on the island's northeast coast to relocate Marine Corps Air Station Futenma.

Tamaki, not surprisingly, denied the application filed in April 2020. He wrote the Japanese government to say the seafloor at the site may be unstable and requires further investigation, along with other environmental concerns.

The seabed in Oura Bay in Henoko, where land is being reclaimed for the runway, is softer than builders anticipated. The prefecture has also raised concerns over endangered species of coral nearby.

"There are many people of Okinawa and of Japan who are anxious, furious and sad to see the government using iron fists and forcing the reclamation work without providing a sufficient explanation," Tamaki said at a press conference Thursday. "We have repeatedly expressed to the government that relocation (of MCAS Futenma) to Henoko would not lead to an immediate removal of danger."

This is Tamaki's latest bid to halt a project that he campaigned on stopping. His efforts have largely been overruled by the Japanese courts and Cabinet-level authorities.

On Thursday, Tamaki said uncertainty over construction safety would cast a pall over the project long after its completion.

His administration has been examining the seafloor issue "carefully" since it received the application for construction changes there, a prefectural spokesman

"There are many people of Okinawa and of Japan who are anxious, furious and sad to see the government using iron fists and forcing the reclamation work without providing a sufficient explanation."

Denny Tamaki
Okinawa governor

from the Seashore Disaster Prevention Division told Stars and Stripes by phone Friday. The administration also opened the application up to public comment.

"We received about 18,000 public opinions; we had to check those as well," the spokesman said. Government spokespeople in Japan typically speak to the media on condition of anonymity as a condition of their employment.

The prefecture also submitted 452 questions to the Okinawa Defense Bureau, which represents Japan's Ministry of Defense on the island, the spokesman said.

Tamaki has vowed since his election in September 2018 to do anything in his power to halt the project. He campaigned on moving Marine air operations entirely outside the prefecture.

The defense bureau will investigate Tamaki's reasons for the disapproval, a spokesman told Stars and Stripes by phone Friday. He declined to comment on the bureau's plans to contest the governor's decision.

The bureau will likely file an administrative challenge with the Minister of Land, Infrastructure and Transportation under the Administrative Appeal Act since the courts have already said the project could proceed, a prefectural spokesman with the Henoko Base Construction Countermeasures Division told Stars and Stripes by phone Friday.

In the meantime, work will continue in the unaffected portions of the construction zone, the defense bureau spokesman said. Tamaki on Thursday said that continuing work on any part of the project is "virtually meaningless." He said he believes his latest denial effectively killed the project.

"There is no prospect of completing the entire" project, Tamaki said Thursday. "Okinawa Defense Bureau should stop not only the work related to this design change, but all the landfill work."

Tamaki's last effort to derail the project came in July when he withdrew a permit for coral transplantation. That was later overturned by Japan's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

The fight to relocate Marine air operations from a central urban area on Okinawa to the rural northern coast at Camp Schwab began over 25 years ago. Work finally began in 2017, but has been beset by legal and administrative challenges by successive governors.

Cost overruns and delays have pushed the completion date past 2014 to 2030 and the cost from \$2.2 billion to at least \$8.7 billion.

burke.matt@stripes.com
Twitter: @MatthewMBurke1
higa.mari@stripes.com
Twitter: @marihiga21

Japan doubles supplementary defense budget

BY HANA KUSUMOTO
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — Japan's Cabinet on Friday approved the country's highest-ever supplementary defense budget, aiming to hasten improvements to the nation's defense capabilities as regional challenges become increasingly severe, according to Ministry of Defense officials.

The Cabinet approved nearly twice last year's supplementary budget, adding about \$6.8 billion in defense spending for the current fiscal year, which ends in March. This marks the biggest supplementary defense budget ever, according to defense officials. Last year's supplementary budget for defense was over \$3.4 billion, according to the Defense Ministry.

With this approval, the total defense budget for this fiscal year is about \$52 billion. It brings Japan to the same level of defense spending of Germany and France, Nikkei Asia reported on Nov. 19. Japan's budget, however, is only a quarter of that of its closest rival, China, the news service reported.

Among other programs it supports, the supplemental budget pledges further spending on a new airfield on Okinawa for the U.S. Marine Corps that the prefectural governor has actively resisted.

The supplementary defense budget usually covers unexpected costs from disasters or maintenance and improvements for its troops, officials said. Government officials in Japan customarily speak to the media on condition of anonymity as a condition of their employment.

Defense officials said this year's supplementary budget is "packaged" with the next fiscal year's defense budget. The supplementary budget covers the cost to acquire new defense equipment that is included in the coming year's budget request.

"In order to significantly strengthen the necessary defense power, it is our pressing issue to further speed up the process of implementing various projects as the security environment surrounding our country is evolving faster than ever," the Defense Ministry's supplementary budget document states.

The supplementary budget includes funds for new equipment, such as the Lockheed Martin PAC-3 air defense missile, three Kawasaki P-1 maritime patrol air-



Lockheed Martin

Japan's record-breaking supplemental defense budget includes money to acquire the Lockheed Martin PAC-3 air-defense interceptor missile.

craft and 13 Bell Subaru UH-2 multi-role helicopters. Including costs for such equipment in this year's supplementary budget will speed up their acquisition by three to six months, officials said.

The budget also includes about \$701 million for construction of a new airfield in Henoko, Okinawa, to relocate Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, the document stated. Another \$763 million will go to costs for U.S. troop realignment, the document stated.

Okinawa Gov. Denny Tamaki on Thursday denied permission for design changes for the airfield project, a move calculated to delay construction. Tamaki has been overruled on similar administrative moves in the past. The project schedule has lengthened by 16 years and its budget has grown from \$2.2 billion to \$8.7 billion.

The decision comes as the United States hopes Japan will increase its defense spending. A joint statement from the U.S.-Japan summit meeting in April stated that Japan "resolved to bolster its own national defense capabilities to further strengthen the Alliance and regional security."

During Japan's lower house elections in October, the ruling Liberal Democratic Party pledged to spend more than 2% of gross domestic product on defense, Asahi Shimbun reported on October 12.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on Nov. 19 said Japan will accelerate improvements to its defense capability to deal with the international security environment.

"We will speed up improving necessary defense power, such as missile defense capability and defense of islands in Southwest region," the defense ministry's document on the supplementary budget stated.

kusumoto.hana@stripes.com
Twitter: @HanaKusumoto

MILITARY

Green Berets, SEALs train with Greek operators

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — Navy SEALs and Green Berets operated alongside their Greek counterparts last week in Athens, where watercraft recently donated by the U.S. to an elite Greek unit were on display.

“I have been so impressed to see not only the growth in the U.S. — Greece Special Forces partnership but also the way the Hellenic Special Forces are working across a wide region,” Geoffrey Pyatt, U.S. ambassador to Greece, said in a statement Wednesday after a joint training event in the Greek capital.

For the U.S., finding ways to step up military cooperation with Greece has been a priority over the past couple of years as units

increase rotations to the region.

The U.S. recently donated four Mark V special operations craft to Greece. The high-speed patrol vessels, once used by SEALs but now withdrawn from service, originally cost a total of about \$21 million, Pyatt said. They were given to Greece under the U.S.’s excess defense articles program.

On Wednesday, U.S. Special Operations Command Europe troops patrolled off the coast of Athens to showcase the capabilities of the donated boats.

The drills were aimed at demonstrating how conventional and special operations units can coordinate for rapid response missions across the Mediterranean region, according to SOCEUR. A Greek UH-1H Huey also joined in the drills.



MOLLY COLLINS/U.S. Army

A Greek UH-1H Huey provides security during a training drill Wednesday with Navy SEALs and Army Green Berets in Athens.

In October, the United States updated its defense agreement with Greece that allowed for greater access to Greek military bases in the eastern Mediterranean, where Russia has expanded naval operations and maintains air and naval bases in nearby Syria.

The U.S. Navy has maintained a decadeslong presence at Souda Bay in Crete, but the Army and Air Force have begun to play larger roles in the country, with rotational forces moving through military sites in Alexandroupoli, Larissa and Stefanovikio.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony

Blinken, after signing the new defense cooperation deal with Greece last month, said the plan would enable U.S. forces to train from an expanded array of bases indefinitely.

vandiver.john@stripes.com
Twitter: @john_vandiver

Water bottle dropped from Osprey prompts complaints of safety

By MATTHEW M. BURKE AND MARI HIGA
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Okinawa’s governor expressed “strong doubts” about U.S. military aircraft safety last week after local officials said a Marine’s metal water bottle fell from a MV-22 Osprey in flight Tuesday and landed in a residential area.

The incident occurred at approximately 6:45 p.m. and involved a tilt-rotor aircraft assigned to 1st Marine Aircraft Wing at Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, a spokesman from the Okinawa Defense Bureau, which represents Japan’s Ministry of Defense on the island, said by phone on Friday.

No injuries or property damage were reported, the spokesman said. Some government officials in Japan customarily speak to the media on condition of anonymity.

“Aircraft-related accidents could lead to serious damage to people’s lives and properties,” Okinawa Gov. Denny Tamaki said at a press conference Wednesday. “I cannot help having strong doubts about the U.S. military’s safety management system.”

Details about the incident were

scant last week. Tamaki said at a series of press conferences that the water bottle was made of metal and had fallen in an undisclosed residential area. The news site Nippon.com reported Wednesday that a damaged stainless steel bottle 12 by 6 inches was found near the entrance of a private house.

A spokesman for Ginowan city’s Military Base Affairs Department sent Stars and Stripes a picture of the bottle by email Friday. The photo depicts a crushed, can-like object bearing two Marine Corps squadron logo decals.

The III Marine Expeditionary Force and 1st Marine Aircraft Wing did not immediately reply to an email seeking comment on Friday, a holiday for the U.S. military.

The defense bureau conveyed its regret over the incident to the Marine Corps, asked officials to identify the cause and to take effective preventative measures in the future, the bureau spokesman said. The defense bureau was told the Marines are investigating the incident and all Futenma flight crews have been instructed to follow procedures to secure equipment.

“This kind of incident could lead to great damage to people or



GINOWAN CITY

A Ginowan city, Japan, spokesman provided a photograph of a container that reportedly fell from a Marine Corps tilt-rotor aircraft Tuesday.

property as well as to cause anxiety of the nearby residents,” the bureau spokesman said. Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno uttered similar sentiments at a press conference on Wednesday.

Ginowan Mayor Masanori Matsukawa lodged a complaint Wednesday with the defense bureau.

“I cannot help but feel strong anger that another accident happened,” Matsukawa wrote in his letter, which was posted on the city website.

A similar incident involving the tilt-rotor aircraft occurred on Aug. 12 when an Osprey returned from night training and the crew reported a missing panel and piece of fairing.

Tamaki said at the time he was “infuriated” by the incident and called for an immediate halt to flight operations at the U.S. base. The Marine Corps declined to do so.

burke.matt@stripes.com
Twitter: @MatthewMBurke1
higa.mari@stripes.com
Twitter: @marihiga21

Warship: US destroyer transits draw Russia’s ire

FROM PAGE 1

Black Sea follows that of the destroyer USS Porter, which left earlier this month after more than two weeks in the region. The command ship USS Mount Whitney also departed mid-month after spending about 11 days in the Black Sea participating in exercises with Georgia, Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey and Ukraine.

Both ships drew significant Russian attention and commentary, although the Kremlin likely knew about U.S. intentions at least two weeks before the Navy entered the sea. Warships of non-Black Sea countries that intend to transit via the straits connecting the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea are required to give at least 15 days’ notice to Turkey.

The 1936 Montreux Convention regarding regulating movements through the straits also limits the number of such warships in the Black Sea any given time.

bath.alison@stripes.com
Twitter: @alisonbath_

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Omicron variant spreads; many restrict travel

By Mike Corder
and Geir Moulson
Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands — The Netherlands confirmed 13 cases of the new omicron variant of the coronavirus on Sunday and Australia found two as the countries half a world apart became the latest to detect it in travelers arriving from southern Africa.

Israel decided to bar entry to foreigners and Morocco said it would suspend all incoming flights for two weeks starting Monday — the most drastic of a growing raft of travel curbs being imposed by nations around the world as they scramble to slow the variant’s spread, just days after it was identified by researchers in South Africa.

The “act first, ask questions later” approach reflected growing alarm about the emergence of a potentially more contagious variant that some feared could prolong a pandemic that has killed more than 5 million people.

But many experts cautioned that so much was still unknown about the new strain — and the World Health Organization called for borders to remain open, noting that closing them often has a limited effect. Dr. Francis Collins, director of the National Institutes of Health in the United States, emphasized that there is no data yet that suggests the new variant causes more serious illness than previous CO-

VID-19 variants. It is also not yet known whether it is more resistant to protection provided by the vaccines.

“I do think it’s more contagious when you look at how rapidly it spread through multiple districts in South Africa. It has the earmarks therefore of being particularly likely to spread from one person to another. ... What we don’t know is whether it can compete with delta,” Collins said on CNN’s “State of the Union.”

Collins said the news should make everyone redouble their efforts to use the tools the world already has, including vaccinations, booster shots and measures such as mask-wearing.

The United States’ top infectious diseases expert, Dr. Anthony Fauci, said he wouldn’t be surprised if the omicron variant was already in the U.S., though it hasn’t yet been detected there.

The U.S. plans to ban travel from South Africa and seven other southern African countries starting Monday. “It’s going to give us a period of time to enhance our preparedness,” Fauci said of the ban on ABC’s “This Week.”

Many other countries have already restricted or banned travel from various southern African countries — among the latest to do so were New Zealand, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates.



ALBERTO PEZZALI/AP

People, some wearing face masks, walk in Regent Street, in London, on Sunday.

Scientists race to decode new variant

By Naomi Kresge
Bloomberg News

Travel bans and other snap defenses that countries threw up against omicron, the new COVID-19 variant, are buying time for scientists to answer key questions that could prevent another wave of deaths.

Labs in Europe, the U.S. and Africa are preparing for tests to see how the new variant is likely to behave in people who’ve been vaccinated or previously infected. Real-world research will be important too, as health authorities monitor the outbreak in South Africa closely to find out how much more transmissible the new variant will be as it spreads and whether it’s more dangerous or deadly.

The questions will take weeks

to answer, scientists and policy makers said Friday. The search for understanding starts in the variant’s dramatic pattern of 50 mutations, more than 30 of which are on the virus’s spike protein, which is the weapon COVID-19 uses to invade victims’ cells. It will continue via lab work and finally in observations of illness and transmission patterns in real life.

What’s clear so far is that a constellation of mutations has come together that may make omicron spread more quickly, said Wendy Barclay, head of the department of infectious disease at Imperial College London.

“Taken together on paper, it’s very biologically plausible that this virus has increased trans-

missibility,” Barclay said in a briefing Friday. Researchers must apply the knowledge they’ve gained in more than a year of intense study of the virus, she said. “That’s where you start, and then you try and back up that sort of approach by looking at the epidemiology and the laboratory-based studies.”

The first job of a virus is survival in its hosts, and nature has programmed them to shift shapes. SARS-CoV-2 has been mutating and changing since it was first identified, with the first variant of concern — alpha — designated in December 2020. Omicron, previously known as B.1.1.529, is the fifth variant of concern the World Health Organization has named.

German health official hopes sight of patient transfers is ‘wake-up call’

Associated Press

BERLIN — Germany’s health minister said Saturday he hopes that the sight of air force planes transferring patients across the country will act as a “wake-up call” to millions who are still holding out on getting vaccinated against COVID-19.

Health Minister Jens Spahn said there has been a welcome increase over the past week in the number of people getting their first shots, with 450,000 recorded. He put that down to pressure from Germany’s worsening coronavirus situation and to increasing requirements to people to provide proof of vaccination or recent recovery to take part in many activities.

But it’s still not enough and “this figure of nearly 12 million unvaccinated adults is still far, far too high,” Spahn said at an online town hall event. So far, 68.4% of the population of 83 million people is fully vaccinated, below the 75% minimum threshold eyed by the government. There are significant regional variations.

Hospitals in southern and eastern regions of Germany have warned they are running out of intensive care beds because of the large numbers of seriously ill COVID-19 patients. Germany is having to organize large-scale transfers of patients within the country for the first time since the outbreak began in early 2020, including with

help from the military.

“This hopefully will give many people a wake-up call that vaccination is a pretty good thing,” Spahn said.

Germany has seen a relentless increase in coronavirus infections over recent weeks, with the infection rate hitting a new high every day. On Saturday, it stood at 444.3 new cases per 100,000 residents over the past seven days. Germany’s known COVID-19 death toll climbed above 100,000 on Thursday.

A new government is expected to take over in early December, and the transition period has been blamed for paralyzing Germany’s response to the pandemic.



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NATION

Supreme Court set for all-or-nothing fight on abortion

By MARK SHERMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Both sides are telling the Supreme Court there's no middle ground in Wednesday's showdown over abortion. The justices can either reaffirm the constitutional right to an abortion or wipe it away altogether.

Roe v. Wade, the landmark 1973 ruling that declared a nationwide right to abortion, is facing its most serious challenge in 30 years in front of a court with a 6-3 conservative majority that has been remade by three appointees of President Donald Trump.

"There are no half measures here," said Sherif Girgis, a Notre Dame law professor who once served as a law clerk for Justice Samuel Alito.

A ruling that would overturn Roe and the 1992 case of Planned Parenthood v. Casey would lead to outright bans or severe restrictions on abortion in 26 states, according to the Guttmacher Institute, a research organization that supports abortion rights.

The case being argued Wednesday comes from Mississippi, where a 2018 law would ban abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy, well before viability.

The Supreme Court has never allowed states to ban abortion before the point at roughly 24 weeks when a fetus can survive outside

the womb.

The justices are separately weighing disputes over Texas' much earlier abortion ban, at roughly six weeks, though those cases turn on the unique structure of the law and how it can be challenged in court, not the abortion right.

Still, abortion rights advocates were troubled by the court's 5-4 vote in September to allow the Texas law, which relies on citizen lawsuits to enforce it, to take effect in the first place.

"This is the most worried I've ever been," said Shannon Brewer, who runs the only abortion clinic in Mississippi, the Jackson Women's Health Organization.

The clinic offers abortions up to 16 weeks of pregnancy and about 10% of abortions it performs take place after the 15th week, Brewer said.

She also noted that since the Texas law took effect, the clinic has seen a substantial increase in patients, operating five days or six days a week instead of two or three.

Lower courts blocked the Mississippi law, as they have other abortion bans that employ traditional enforcement methods by state and local officials.

The Supreme Court had never before even agreed to hear a case over a pre-viability abortion ban. But after Justice Ruth Bader



J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/AP

The Supreme Court is seen at dusk in Washington in October.

Ginsburg's death last year and her replacement by Justice Amy Coney Barrett, the third of Trump's appointees, the court said it would take up the case.

Trump had pledged to appoint "pro-life justices" and predicted they would lead the way in overturning the abortion rulings. Only one justice, Clarence Thomas, has publicly called for Roe to be overruled.

The court could uphold the Mississippi law without explicitly overruling Roe and Casey, an outcome that would satisfy neither side.

Abortion rights advocates have said that result would amount to the same thing as an outright ruling overturning the earlier cases because it would erase the rationale securing nearly a half-century of Supreme Court law.

"A decision upholding this ban is tantamount to overruling Roe. The ban prohibits abortion around two months before viability," said Julie Rikelman, who will argue the case for the clinic.

On the other side, abortion opponents have argued that the court essentially invented abor-

tion law in Roe and Casey, and shouldn't repeat that mistake in this case.

If the justices uphold Mississippi's law, they'll have to explain why, said Thomas Jipping, a Heritage Foundation legal fellow.

They can either overrule the two big cases, Jipping said, "or they're going to have to come up with another made-up rule."

Conservative commentator Ed Whelan said such an outcome would be a "massive defeat" on par with the Casey decision in 1992, in which a court with eight justices appointed by Republican presidents unexpectedly reaffirmed Roe.

This court appears far more conservative than the one that decided Casey, and legal historian Mary Ziegler at Florida State University's law school, said the court probably would "overrule Roe or set us on a path to doing so."

If the court looks to public sentiment, it would find poll after poll that shows support for preserving Roe, though some surveys also find backing for greater restrictions on abortion.

Ga. rule on absentee ballots trips up voters

Associated Press

ATLANTA — More than half of absentee ballot applications rejected in Georgia in advance of the Nov. 2 elections were turned down because they came in after a deadline created in Georgia's new voting law.

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported 52% of applications were rejected because voters asked for an absentee ballot within the last 11 days before the election, too late to meet the requirements of a voting law passed in March.

The deadline was created in Senate Bill 202, which also limited absentee voting by restricting drop boxes and requiring voters to prove they had a driver's license or other state identification when applying. The top reason Georgia election officials rejected absentee ballot applications this fall was that they were submitted too close to Election Day, missing a deadline imposed by the state's new voting law.

Republicans in the General Assembly pushed through the new law after a record 1.3 million Georgians mailed in or dropped off ballots in the 2020 presidential election.

The newspaper reported about 26% of those who made absentee ballot requests after the deadline later cast ballots in person on Election Day. Critics of the absentee request deadline said it's too early and hinders voters from being able to cast ballots.

\$1.4M raised for man freed after 43 years

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — More than \$1.4 million had been raised as of Saturday for a man who spent 43 years behind bars before a judge overturned his conviction in a triple killing.

The Midwest Innocence Project set up the GoFundMe fundraiser as they fought for Kevin Strickland's release, noting that he wouldn't receive compensation from Missouri and would need help paying for basic living expenses.

The state only allows wrongful imprisonment payments to people who were exonerated through DNA evidence, so the 62-year-old Strickland wouldn't qualify.

Judge James Welsh, a retired Missouri Court of Appeals judge,



RICH SUGG, THE KANSAS CITY STAR/AP

Kevin Strickland, center, spoke to the media along with his attorneys Tricia Rojo Bushnell, left, and Robert Hoffman, after his release from prison Nov. 23, in Cameron, Mo.

ordered his release Tuesday, finding that evidence used to convict Strickland had since been recanted or disproven.

By Saturday evening, more than \$1.45 million had been donated to

help Strickland.

Strickland has always maintained that he was home watching television and had nothing to do with the killings, which happened in 1978 when he was 18 years old.

Man shot in NC mall still in critical state

Associated Press

DURHAM, N.C. — Police in North Carolina said that a man remains in critical condition following Friday's shooting at a shopping mall that was packed with shoppers on the day after Thanksgiving.

Durham police said Saturday that investigators continue to investigate the incident at The Streets at Southpoint.

The shooting also wounded a 10-year-old child and another man. Both sustained non-life-threatening injuries.

A report in The News & Observer said police said Friday they have one individual in custody, but no charges have been filed yet in connection with the shooting, which terrified hundreds of shoppers at the mall on one of the busi-

est shopping days of the year.

Police said that no charges had been filed as of Saturday morning.

Meanwhile, the mall reopened at 11 a.m. on Saturday, according to The News & Observer.

The shooting occurred during an apparent fight between two groups, police said.

A bystander described "mass hysteria" on one of the busiest shopping days of the year as shoppers ducked into stores for cover or ran for the exits.

Police said another three people were injured as shoppers rushed for exits following the shooting. In a news release, police said their injuries were not life-threatening.

Police said those involved in the fight that led to the shooting fled, but authorities vowed to make more arrests.

NATION

States drop ‘offensive’ immigrant terms

By ACACIA CORONADO
Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas — Luz Rivas remembers seeing the word on her mother’s residency card as a child: “alien.”

In the stark terms of the government, it signaled her mother was not yet a citizen of the U.S. But to her young daughter, the word had a more personal meaning. Even though they were going through the naturalization process, it meant the family did not belong.

“I want other children of immigrants, like me, to not feel the same way I did, that my family did, when we saw the word ‘alien,’” said Rivas, now an assemblywoman in the California Legislature.

The Democratic lawmaker sought to retire the term and this year authored a bill — since signed into law — that replaces the use of “alien” in state statutes with other terms such as “noncitizen” or “immigrant.” Her effort was inspired by a similar shift earlier this year by the Biden administration.

Immigrants and immigrant-rights groups say the term, especially when combined with “illegal,” is dehumanizing and can have a harmful effect on immigration policy.

The word became a focal point of debate in several states earlier this year as the number of migrants at the U.S.-Mexico border swelled and led to fierce backlash



DAVID ZALUBOWSKI/AP

Colorado State Sen. Julie Gonzales speaks during a news conference last year in Denver.

against Biden administration policies by Republican governors and lawmakers.

Lawmakers in at least seven states considered eliminating use of “alien” and “illegal” in state statutes this year and replacing them with descriptions such as “undocumented” and “noncitizen,” according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Only two states, California and Colorado, actually made the

change.

“I want all Californians that are contributing to our society, that are small business owners, that work hard, to feel that they are part of California communities,” Rivas said of the reason behind her legislation.

State Sen. Julie Gonzales, who co-sponsored the new Colorado law, said during a legislative committee hearing that words such as “illegal” were “dehumanizing and

derogatory” when applied to immigrants. Gonzales said the legislation aimed to remove the only place in the Colorado statute where “illegal alien” was used to describe people living in the U.S. illegally.

“That language has been offensive for many people,” she said. “And some of the rationale behind that is really rooted in this idea that a person can certainly commit an illegal act, but no human

being themselves is illegal.”

Using “alien” to describe those who are not U.S. citizens has a long history, dating to the nation’s first naturalization law, passed while George Washington was president. Fearing a war with France, Congress also passed the Alien and Sedition Acts in 1798, which sought to suppress political subversion.

Changing the long-standing government terminology around immigration is not universally accepted as necessary or desirable.

Sage Naumann, spokesperson for the Colorado Senate Republicans, said the Democratic-controlled Legislature should be spending its time on matters of deeper importance to residents, such as taking steps to fight inflation, tackle crime and improve education.

Naumann said he doubted that “the average Coloradan — or American — cares about what semi-controversial words are buried in their state statutes.”

An analysis by The Associated Press (which doesn’t refer to people as “aliens” except in direct quotes) found that more than a dozen states still use the terms “alien” or “illegal” in statutes referring to immigrants. Among them is Texas, where a legislative attempt to transition to different terminology advanced out of committee with bipartisan backing this year but failed to get a hearing before the full Texas House.

Trial set to start on charges Smollett faked racist attack

By DON BABWIN
Associated Press

CHICAGO — A popular actor steps out onto the street and is brutally reminded that, despite his fame and wealth, places still exist where the color of his skin and sexual orientation put him in danger.

That was the story that ricocheted around the world after Jussie Smollett, a Black and openly gay actor, reported to Chicago police that he was the victim of a hate crime.

Nearly three years later, Smollett is about to stand trial on charges that he staged the whole thing.

He was charged with felony disorderly conduct after law enforcement and prosecutors said he lied to police about what happened in the early morning hours of Jan. 29, 2019, in downtown Chicago. He has pleaded not guilty. Jury selection is scheduled to begin Monday. Disorderly conduct,

a class 4 felony, carries a sentence of up to three years in prison but experts have said it is more likely that if Smollett is convicted he would be placed on probation and perhaps ordered to perform community service.

Smollett told police he was walking home from a Subway sandwich shop at 2 a.m. when two men he said recognized him from the TV show “Empire” began hurling racial and homophobic slurs at him. He said the men struck him, looped a makeshift noose around his neck and shouted, “This is MAGA country,” a reference to then-President Donald Trump’s campaign slogan, “Make America Great Again.”

Reaction to his reported assault underscored the increasingly polarized political landscape; Democratic politicians and others called it a shocking example of Trump-era bigotry and hate, while Republicans accused liberals of rushing to paint the presi-

dent’s supporters as racists.

Just weeks later came the stunning announcement that Smollett was charged with staging the attack to further his career and secure a higher salary. And, police said, he hired two brothers from Nigeria, to pretend to attack him for \$3,500.

This made the spotlight on Smollett shine even brighter, but this time he was vilified as someone willing to use one of the most potent symbol of racism in the U.S. to further his career.

“The most vile and despicable part of it, if it’s true, is the noose,” Judge John Fitzgerald Lyke Jr., who is Black, said during Smollett’s first court appearance. “That symbol conjures up such evil in this country’s history.”

Smollett — whose career has since faded — will this week return to the glare of the media spotlight, but this time as he passes the forest of news cameras as he makes his way to and from court.



STACEY WESCOTT/AP

Former “Empire” actor Jussie Smollett, right, arrives the George N. Leighton Criminal Court Building for a hearing, July 14, in Chicago.

3 dead at shooting in Nashville apartment

Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — A shooting in a Tennessee apartment has left three people dead and four others wounded, police said.

The shooting occurred Friday night in an apartment in Nashville, police said on Twitter. Three young men were pronounced dead at the scene and four other people sustained injuries that were not life-threatening.

Police said there were no signs of forced entry into the apartment and two guns have been recovered.

Authorities had no initial word on suspects and said the shooting remains under investigation.

The names and ages of the victims were not immediately released.

NATION

Measuring change

What is a hobby for Billy Barr has become a vital resource for climate research in the Rockies

BY KARIN BRULLIARD
The Washington Post

GOTHIC, Colo. — As world leaders gathered across the globe this month to discuss a climate crisis that is rapidly heating the Earth, Billy Barr, 71, paused outside his mountainside cabin to measure snow.

His tools were simple, the same he'd used since the 1970s. A wooden ruler plunged into white flakes accumulating on his snow board — an old freezer door affixed to legs of plastic piping and wood — showed two inches. A section of snow that he slid into a metal bucket and hung from a scale a few paces away told him it was about 10 percent water, which did not surprise him. For years, that number hovered around 6 percent, but snow here has gotten wetter.

“One year could easily be a fluke. I mean, weather is weather, it changes all the time. But all of a sudden, we've had five years in a row,” said Barr, dingy face mask dangling over his white beard. “So that's starting to get significant.”

These measurements would be a few more data points in nearly five decades of records Barr has kept since leaving urban New Jersey to become the sole year-round resident of this abandoned silver mining town nearly 10,000 feet high in the Rockies. Back then, he wrote his observations — temperatures, snow, the sight of a gray jay or the tracks of a red fox — in small round script in steno notepads, to keep busy in a place he came to be alone.

“Cloudy all A.M.,” he wrote on Nov. 4, 1973. “7 3/4” snow. 5 3/8” presently on ground by night.”

Along the way, Barr became an unwitting chronicler of climate change, the amiable keeper of an analog data set that would eventually inform researchers' papers on hummingbird migration and marmot hibernation. And he served as a winter pioneer in a mountaintop location whose snowpack, which feeds the Colorado River, is now the focus of urgent attention and scientific inquiry as the Western United States dries up.

It is no coincidence Barr logs his data up the hill from the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory, a field station that comes alive each summer with researchers studying a rainbow of alpine wildflowers and animals, but which has long shut down when the snow comes. Barr, a part-time accountant at the lab, always stayed put, stocking his freezer, stacking firewood, readying his notebooks and waxing skis he put up to 800 miles on per winter.

But as he enters his 50th winter in Gothic, change has come, and not just in shorter snow seasons and higher temperatures. All that skiing has left Barr's legs in severe pain, and though he is planning hip replacements, he worries this might be his last winter here. And for the first time, Gothic is hosting winter researchers — a skeleton staff for a two-year, multimillion dollar project using radar, weather balloons, lasers and other high-tech equipment to better predict how rain and snow ends up as water in the Colorado River Basin.

The company might have bothered Barr

years ago, but he doesn't relish the frozen solitude so much anymore. He is, though, determined to keep gathering his data. He says he feels an obligation — to the records themselves, and the precise way he has kept them since the early '70s.

While Barr's extended focus on winter in Gothic is unique, long-term research is one of the lab's summer specialties. A marmot study has been running since 1962. David Inouye, a University of Maryland biologist, began his study of the timing and abundance of wildflower blooming in 1973. Yet although he knew Barr, it wasn't until the 1990s that Inouye got wind of the accountant's handwritten records.

“It turns out that what really sets the clock for all the phenology out there, in terms of flowering and animal activity, is when the snow melts. And Billy had this wonderful data set on not only when does it melt, but when does it start and how does it change from day to day,” Inouye said.

In 2000, Inouye listed Barr as a co-author on a paper about birds and marmots in the Colorado Rockies, which showed, Inouye said, “first, that the climate is changing, and second, that it's having an effect on the plants and animals out there.” In 2012, Barr was a co-author on a paper by Inouye and others that predicted broad-tailed hummingbirds could by 2033 arrive after the flowering of a key nectar source, the glacier lily, which has bloomed earlier over time because of climate change.

After filling 10 notebooks with his records, Barr now organizes them in Excel and publishes them on his website. Researchers regularly ask him for data, he said, and he always obliges.

“I would say it's because I care about others and want to help them,” Barr said. “But it's mostly because I've never had a social life, so what else do I have to do?”

On a recent afternoon, as snow slid from the roof past his window, Barr sat at his computer, scrolling through decades of numbers. Next to him was his current notebook, used only for animal sightings, which he has never found the energy to enter into spreadsheets. Today, it showed, he had spotted a Steller's jay and a crow.

In the numbers, he points out patterns. Nearly half the record low temperatures came in his first decade here, and more than half the record highs occurred in the last one. The years between 1974 and 2000 averaged 10 more days with snow on the ground than the years since. The number of consecutive days when temperatures stayed below freezing has plummeted.

“Back in the '70s, there were winters where we had well over 100 days in a row where it didn't get [above] freezing. Last winter, the most was nine,” Barr said. “It doesn't take much to break that — it could have been 200 days with one in between. But still, there's a trend there.”

Down the hill from Barr's cabin and outside the lab is a new recognition of that: Eight white trailers forming the core of the Surface Atmosphere Integrated Field Laboratory (SAIL), a massive federally funded effort that relies on dozens of instruments



CHET STRANGE/For The Washington Post

Weather monitoring equipment sits outside of Billy Barr's home in Gothic, Colo., on Nov. 2. Barr's data, which he has been collecting since the early 1970s, has become a valuable resource in the study of climate change.



Billy Barr pauses on the walk to his home in the abandoned mining town of Gothic, Colo., high in the Rocky Mountains.

measuring precipitation, wind, aerosols, clouds, radiation and more. Much of the equipment arrived in September after deployment on a ship in the Arctic, where it was part of an expedition documenting climate change.

It is in Gothic now because climate change in this spot has enormous implications but is not fully understood. Snowmelt here eventually flows to the Colorado River — a key and declining water source for 40 million people in the West.

The campaign builds on an existing study of the East River watershed headed by Ken Williams, a Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory scientist who is co-leading SAIL. He chose to work here in part, he said, because the area's diversity — in vegetation, elevation, geology — is representative of mountain watersheds across the West. The lab's wealth of long-term observations

were also a draw — including Barr's, he said.

“If you're in the business of trying to understand how ecosystems function now and in the future, you have to have a long record of data against which to compare one year to the next,” Williams said.

But the new project is aimed at the future, gathering an unprecedented array of data that scientists hope will help them model how much water will flow out of here, into creeks and the bedrock below, and out of other Western watersheds.

Barr, whose office windows at the lab overlook the trailers, watches this with interest, marveling at the laser a researcher told him can measure the size of snowflakes. He is sure the conditions in Gothic will be less arduous than the Arctic. “It'll be shoveling snow more than anything else,” said Barr.

Over time, Barr has added more complex equipment to his cabin-side weather station that can take remote measurements if he's not around.

If Barr can't stay, “there's good chance the lab will ask its caretakers to pick up some of the things that can't be measured so easily,” said Inouye. “I think the lab appreciates how valuable Billy's observations have been, and how important it will be to keep them going.”

For now, Barr intends to remain. He just put in a new wood stove. He is considering subscribing to Hulu so he can watch “Happiest Season,” a holiday movie starring Kristen Stewart and Daniel Levy. He is witnessing snow fall here for the 50th year straight.

“My stuff has basically become useless other than the fact that it goes back a good ways, and it's got easy-to-measure information that we can continue,” Barr said. “I just want to keep it going. It is interesting — it is, I think. And it's helpful.”

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Rare colonial-minted coin sells for \$350,000

MA BOSTON — One of the first coins minted in Colonial New England, which was recently found among other coins in a candy tin, has sold at auction for more than \$350,000, more than it was expected to get, the auctioneer said.

The one shilling silver coin made in Boston in 1652 — considered the finest example of just a few dozen such coins known to still exist — was sold to an anonymous online bidder from the U.S., London-based Morton & Eden Ltd. said in a statement.

The simple coin has the initials NE for New England on one side, and the Roman numeral XII, representing the 12 pennies in a shilling, on the other.

Suit claims hazing injured high school football player

CA SANTA ANA — A lawsuit claims a player on a highly ranked Southern California high school football team suffered traumatic brain injury, gashes and a broken nose in a locker room hazing ritual in which players punch each other until one gives up.

The Orange County Superior Court lawsuit was filed by the player’s family against Mater Dei High School and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Orange, alleging a wide range of negligence, violation of the California penal code and intentional infliction of emotional distress, Southern California News Group reported.

A relative newcomer to the team was matched against a bigger player in a ritual called “Bodies” in which they are supposed to punch each other’s torsos between the hips and shoulders.

But the newcomer was hit hard in the head and face, and there allegedly was significant delay in treatment and informing his parents, the news group reported.

Animal control officer attacked by dogs, bitten

MI BUENA VISTA TOWNSHIP — Authorities were trying to identify the owner of two dogs that attacked an animal control officer in the Saginaw area.

The officer was bitten in a Buena Vista Township neighborhood after a resident reported being nearly attacked by two pit bulls outside his home, according to MLive.com.

Two officers were attempting to catch the dogs when the attack occurred.

“He was able to defend himself from one dog with a catchpole,” Saginaw County Animal Care & Control Director Bonnie Kanicki said of the officer who was attacked. “The other dog managed to bite him on his leg and he fell backward, hitting his head as he



KRISTOPHER RADDER, THE BRATTLEBORO (Vt.) REFORMER/AP

Working with fire

Caitlin Burch, owner of Caitlin Burch Glassworks, in Putney, Vt., uses a torch to shape glass during the annual Putney Craft Tour on Friday.

kept fending off the dogs with the catchpole.”

Both officers then used repellent spray to stop and capture the dogs.

Digital driver’s licenses will be coming soon

IA DES MOINES — Iowa motorists will soon have the option of keeping their driver’s license on their phones.

State officials have begun a pilot project to make digital driver’s licenses, or “mobile IDs,” available for download via smartphone apps sometime in 2022, the Cedar Rapids Gazette reported.

Iowa is one of several states that have considered, tested or begun issuing digital versions of driver’s licenses. Iowa plans to test devices equipped with digital versions through December, with about 100 state Department of Transportation employees expected to enlist by spring as a test group to make sure the app works.

Melissa Gillett, director of the department’s motor vehicle division, said the mobile ID will be optional, but motorists will still be expected to carry hard-copy licenses.

Controversial murals moved from courthouse

MO COLUMBIA — Two courthouse murals that were taken down in Columbia amid concerns that they depict an

THE CENSUS

21 The number of illegal weapons seized by police from two San Francisco homes, along with ammunition and drugs. Federal and local agencies identified social media accounts listing firearms for sale and worked together in the investigation that led to two residences, the San Francisco Police Department and the San Francisco District Attorney’s Office said in statements. They also arrested John Sembrano, Kadkda Mean, Kelly Mean and Ryan Chantha on multiple charges including the illegal sale of firearms, being a felon in possession of firearms and being armed while in possession of narcotics.

attempted lynching, a white man pointing a gun at a Native American man and enslaved people building the courthouse have a new home.

The murals are headed to the private Columbia College, where Sidney Larson, the late artist who painted the murals, taught for more than 50 years, The Columbia Daily Tribune reported.

The murals will be stored at the college until an exhibit can appropriately highlight the educational and historical purpose of the artwork, college President David Russell wrote in a letter last week to Presiding Commissioner Dan Atwill.

Injured sea turtle’s gas hampered it from diving

MS GULFPORT — An injured sea turtle at the Mississippi Aquarium is getting medicine to reduce intestinal gas because a buildup was keeping her from diving.

Banner the green sea turtle was rescued in Florida after being se-

verely injured by a boat propeller. After four years of rehabilitation, staffers at the Florida Aquarium decided the turtle could never be safely released, and she was sent last summer to Mississippi.

Banner’s big problem was that her hind end was buoyant, making it harder to dive, Dr. Alexa Delaune, the Mississippi Aquarium’s vice president of veterinary services, said in a news release.

Veterinarians think that the propeller may have damaged nerves going to Banner’s intestinal tract, Delaune said in an email.

“We won’t be able to cure the problem but we can manage it to make sure it doesn’t get worse,” she wrote in the news release.

Blast blows man from home destroyed by fire

NC NEWPORT — A North Carolina man said an explosion blew him from his home before it was destroyed by fire.

Benny Weeks, 59, said he was the only person home and had just finished his Thanksgiving dinner

when the blast occurred. The laundry room smoke detector went off and when Weeks went to wave a towel at it, he said there was a big explosion.

“It blew me out of the back screen door onto the deck and followed by just fire everywhere and the house burnt down,” Weeks said. There was nothing to salvage after the blast, he said.

Invasive underwater weed is choking parts of lake

TX KILLEEN — An invasive underwater weed is spreading in a Central Texas lake popular with anglers, tangling boat propellers and threatening the fish.

The weed is hydrilla, an aquatic plant initially imported and sold as an aquarium plant in the 1950s that has become one of the world’s most invasive plants. Fishing guide Bob Maindelle said its presence is at an all-time high in Stillhouse Hollow Lake, about 13 miles southeast of Killeen.

The plants are spread by uncleaned boats and form thick mats on water surfaces, changing their pH levels, stripping them of oxygen, restricting native plant growth, blocking nutrients for aquatic animals, and hindering irrigation, recreation and water flow, according to the Texas Invasive Species Institute.

NATION

Firefighters rescue pet dog after pet tortoise traps it underground

By SYDNEY PAGE

Special To The Washington Post

It was a relatively peaceful Sunday morning at the Fortin household in Scottsdale, Ariz. Around noon, though, chaos struck.

Michelle Fortin was folding laundry, when her 10-year-old son, Kenton, sprinted up the stairs and hollered: "Is Bruce up there?"

Bruce is the Fortin family's beloved 1-year-old French bulldog, named after Bruce Wayne from "Batman." They also have a 15-year-old sulcata tortoise named Bianca — after the female protagonist in the 1977 Disney film "The Rescuers."

Fortin, her husband, Jason, and their two children started searching around the house for Bruce, but he was nowhere to be found. Before long, the family of four began to panic.

They assumed the worst: "We worried that maybe he was stolen from our backyard," Fortin said.

The Fortins mobilized. Within an hour of Bruce's disappearance on Nov. 21, they started scattering "lost dog" posters around their neighborhood and went door-to-door, hoping maybe he wandered to a nearby home. They also filed a police report.

After searching with no luck, Fortin decided to do a second scan of the house. When she got to the backyard, she heard a muffled barking sound, but couldn't pinpoint where it was coming from. Then her eyes peered over to Bianca's burrow.

"I approached the tortoise burrow, and I could hear Bruce barking from under the ground," Fortin said.

Indeed, the dog had wandered into the tortoise burrow, which the family later learned is about six feet deep and nearly three feet wide — and it's on a 45-degree angle.

Tortoises dig burrows to regulate their body temperature and escape predators. Sulcata tortoises, also called African spurred tortoises, tend to dig extensive dens, which can run as deep as 20 feet underground.

Hearing Bruce's bark spurred simultaneous relief and terror.

"I had absolutely no idea how we were going to get him out," Fortin said, adding that they feared Bianca — who weighs 50 pounds, about double Bruce's weight — was blocking Bruce from exiting the deep, dark cave.

The situation escalated when

their son Kenton attempted to descend into the burrow, and he confirmed that the dog was, in fact, trapped by the tortoise. The family decided to call for back up.

They started by reaching out to a local tortoise rescue organization, which was closed, as it was a Sunday. Their next call was to the Scottsdale Fire Department.

"I felt ridiculous, but I had no idea what to do or who to call," Fortin said.

When she explained the somewhat-comical crisis to the dispatcher, she was urgently advised to remove her son from the burrow immediately. A crew of firefighters arrived at the scene within 10 minutes of the call.

Daniel Espinoza, a fire captain, showed up with three other firefighters — all of whom were baffled by the situation.

"When I read the dispatch, I couldn't believe it," Espinoza said. "It was one of the most unusual animal rescues I've ever been called to."

The four firefighters attempted to hatch a plan, but to no avail. Given that they were unfamiliar with burrows — and had never encountered a situation in which a small dog was trapped by a massive tor-



COURTESY SCOTTSDALE FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Fortin family poses with Scottsdale, Ariz., firefighters Derek Owen and Preston Fuller after they rescued the Fortins' pet dog, who ventured into their tortoise's burrow.

toise — they were at a loss.

They considered digging into the burrow, but they feared it might collapse, which would have had dire consequences for both animals. They decided to contact a wildlife expert for further insight.

Russ Johnson, president of the Phoenix Herpetological Sanctuary, received the urgent call for help.

Johnson has seen a lot in his career, he said, but "I've never had a dog go into a tortoise hole and the tortoise block him from getting out."

He advised the firefighters to dig delicately, using shovels and a pickaxe, to keep the structural components of the tunnel intact, start-

ing at the entrance of the burrow.

Although they now had a plan in place, the scene remained suspenseful.

The persistent digging had prodded the tortoise to peek out to see what all the commotion was. Once they caught Bianca by her shell, Bruce came bolting out of the burrow.

Although it was certainly an emotional roller coaster for the family, Fortin said that in the end it was a feel-good story, and quite a memorable afternoon.

"How many people can say that they had to call the fire department to rescue their dog, who was trapped by their tortoise in their backyard?" she said.



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STARS AND STRIPES

WORLD

Russia jails 5 people over coal mine disaster

Associated Press

MOSCOW — A Russian court on Saturday ordered five people to remain in pre-trial detention for two months pending an investigation into a devastating blast in a coal mine in Siberia that resulted in dozens of deaths.

Russian authorities reported 51 deaths after a methane explosion rocked the Listvyazhnaya mine in the Kemerovo region in

southwestern Siberia on Thursday — 46 miners and five rescuers. The tragedy appears to be the deadliest in Russia since 2010.

The Central District Court in the city of Kemerovo ruled to jail the director of the Listvyazhnaya mine, Sergei Makhrakov, his deputy Andrei Molostvov and section supervisor Sergei Gerasimenok. They are facing charges of violating industrial safety re-

quirements for hazardous production facilities that resulted in multiple deaths. If convicted, they may be imprisoned for up to seven years.

Two officials of the local branch of Ros-tekhnadzor, Russia's state technology and ecology watchdog — Sergei Vinokurov and Vyacheslav Semykin — have also been jailed for two months on the charge of negligence that led to two or more deaths, puni-

shable by up to seven years in prison as well.

Law enforcement officials said Friday that miners had complained about the high level of methane in the mine. Russia's top independent news site, Meduza, reported that this year authorities suspended the work of certain sections of the mine nine times and issued fines of more than 4 million rubles (roughly \$53,000) for safety violations.

Afghan PM defends Taliban's rule

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Afghanistan's Taliban prime minister defended the group's rule in a public address Saturday, saying it was not to blame for a worsening economic crisis and is working to repair the corruption of the ousted government. He also dismissed international pressure for the formation of a more inclusive Cabinet.

The half-hour audio played on state-run media was the first such public address by Mohammed Hassan Akhund since the Taliban

captured Kabul and secured their rule over the country three months ago. The Taliban takeover led to a shut-off of international aid to the government and the blocking of billions of dollars in Afghan assets held abroad, worsening an already crumbling economy.

Akhund said the problems of worsening unemployment and the financial meltdown had begun under the previous, U.S.-backed government, adding that Afghans should not believe claims that the Taliban were to blame.

"Nation, be vigilant. Those left

over from the previous government in hiding are ... causing anxiety, misleading the people to distrust their government," he said.

The ousted government had run "the weakest system in the world," he said, pointing to pervasive corruption. In contrast, he said, the Taliban are eliminating corruption and have brought security around the country.

"We are trying as much as possible to solve the problems of the people. We are working overtime in every department," Akhund said.



PETROS GIANNAKOURIS/AP

Taliban fighters and Afghan men pray in Kamar Kalagh village Saturday near Herat, Afghanistan.

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FACES

For Wolfhard, fame the strangest thing

‘Ghostbusters: Afterlife’ actor has lived his teen years in front of the world, but he doesn’t care about being famous

BY ASHLEY SPENCER
Special to The Washington Post
After “Stranger Things” premiered on Netflix in July 2016, a then-13-year-old Finn Wolfhard logged on to Instagram to find he was rapidly going from unknown Canadian kid to one of the most recognizable young actors in the world.

Netflix’s original programming had already been well underway, but the streaming giant hadn’t had a global hit that could inspire such a broad and zealous fan base. When Wolfhard filmed the first season in Atlanta, “the show felt really contained,” he said in a recent interview. “It felt like a thing that was big, but also really small.”

But, of course, it wasn’t small at all. Five years later, “Stranger Things” remains one of Netflix’s most popular shows, with its second and third seasons racking up more than 1 billion combined viewing hours, according to data provided by Netflix. Wolfhard’s face can be found on T-shirts, Christmas ornaments and action figures. And his star-making role led to his earning blockbuster parts in the “It” films and this month’s “Ghostbusters: Afterlife.”

Wolfhard plays the grandson of Egon Spengler in “Afterlife,” directed by Jason Reitman, son of the original films’ helmer, Ivan Reitman. (Spengler was played by the late Harold Ramis and was the awkward but resourceful inventor in the original Ghostbusters team.) “Afterlife” is set decades after 1989’s “Ghostbusters II” and sees Egon’s daughter (Carrie Coon) and her two children (Wolfhard and McKenna Grace) inherit Egon’s Oklahoma farmhouse and get swept up in their own paranormal adventures.

With his gangly 5-foot-11 frame, Wolfhard thought it would be fun to take his character, Trevor, from a “boring older

brother” part into a paradigm of physical comedy. “I had come into my body a little more with puberty, and I thought my body was really funny,” he said. For Reitman, the way Finn “listens and acts through his limbs reminds me of the great teenage [performances] of the ’80s. Ferris Bueller, Marty McFly, Bender,” the director said in an email. “Finn is a storyteller at heart. He’s looking for every opportunity to convey story, not just the dialogue.”

In fact, 18-year-old Wolfhard has grown nearly a foot since his career began. Excellent for comedy, difficult for blending in with a crowd. The internet is full of dimly lit, heavily zoomed videos and photos shot by fans trailing him down city streets and loitering at the movie theaters and restaurants he patronizes. While filming “Afterlife” in Alberta, Canada — as is the case pretty much anywhere he goes in the world — Wolfhard was routinely approached by fans of all ages who recognized his mop of dark curly hair and unique features as belonging to “the kid from ‘Stranger Things.’”

“That is very heavy space to occupy,” his co-star Coon said. “As we know, many child stars do not make it. They don’t make it in the business, but they also sometimes don’t make it in the world because of the pressure. Finn has great parents, and he recognizes that his self-worth is not contingent upon that attention.”

Perhaps because of the ’80s nostalgia woven throughout his career, it’s easy to view Wolfhard through a time-warped lens, to imagine he’s actually a world-weary Gen Xer with a decadeslong career behind him. But he wasn’t even born until 2002, and as a child actor coming of age in the late 2010s, he’s grappled with a type of fame completely foreign to those who came before him.

In an age when social media posts are of-

Wolfhard’s face can be found on T-shirts, Christmas ornaments and action figures.



CELESTE SLOMAN/For The Washington Post

Finn Wolfhard, photographed in October, isn’t getting caught up in social media hype.

ten written into contracts and follower counts can decide casting, Wolfhard refuses to get caught up in the hype.

He’s amassed more than 20 million Instagram followers but uses his verified account only for the requisite publicity posts because he finds the platform “anxiety-inducing and distracting.” Same with TikTok and Twitter, the latter of which he deleted entirely before returning to fulfill contractual promotional obligations for “Afterlife.”

“I learned after the fact how many people love him, how huge he is, how many followers he has — things I have no awareness of because I’m a fossil,” his “Afterlife” co-star Paul Rudd said. “Working with him, you would never know that. There’s nothing pretentious or high and mighty about him. He’s just a cool kid.”

But the access some fans feel entitled to and the information they’re able to dig up online are alarming. Strangers periodically threaten to release Wolfhard’s personal data in a bid to get his attention, and recently, someone threatened to expose an address that belonged to his girlfriend unless Wolfhard confirmed their relationship. He complied. “They’re like, ‘Oh, OK, I’m so sorry. We love her,’” he said. “It all fades literally once you’re like, ‘Hey, calm down. It’s cool. I’m a real person.’ It’s almost like a trance or something. Maybe it’s a power thing.”

Those who’ve worked with Wolfhard praise the way he makes it all feel “effortless” and “easy,” but in private, he’s struggled with anxiety about performing, fame



NETFLIX

Wolfhard has grown nearly a foot since the first season of “Stranger Things.”

and life in general. Transcendental meditation and Lexapro help, he said, and this year, he found a kindred anxious spirit in Jesse Eisenberg, who directed him in the upcoming dramedy “When You Finish Saving the World.”

“I was really nervous about doing the movie, and Jesse was like, ‘Who do you think you’re talking to? Have you seen my movies? I’m the most anxious person you’ve ever seen in your life,’” Wolfhard said, laughing. Eisenberg shared stories of vomiting before shooting the first “Zombieland” and having a panic attack on the set of “Adventureland,” which “kind of made me calm down,” Wolfhard said.

“The anxiety never goes away, but it’s something that becomes way easier to deal with. You need a little bit of anxiety to get out of bed in the morning.”

Grammys’ expanded awards meant to promote new talent backfires

BY ANOUSHA SAKOUI
Los Angeles Times
An expansion of the Grammy Awards nominations aimed at improving inclusion benefited established artists such as Taylor Swift and Kanye West, The New York Times reported Nov. 24.

A decision to grow the award ceremony’s “Big Four” categories from eight to 10 nominees was made a day before the nods were announced, and led to nominations for artists including ABBA and Lil Nas X, according to the report. The new additions were revealed by comparing an early version of the final nominations list that had circulated several days before the official announcement made the morning of Nov. 23, a copy of which The New York Times said it obtained.

The Recording Academy did not respond to requests for comment.

This year’s nominees included the largest age spread in Grammys history, from Tony Bennett, 95, to Olivia Rodrigo, 18, in an example of the academy’s attempt to laud new stars as well as established talent.

The latest revelations could generate more backlash for the music industry’s most prominent trade group a year after it was fiercely criticized for snubbing the Weeknd.

Recording Academy CEO Harvey Mason Jr. denied the Weeknd had been iced out of the awards because he had angered executives while negotiating a deal to appear at both the Grammys at the Super Bowl halftime show.

The 64th Grammys are the first where the four major categories, such as record of the year and song of the year, feature 10 nominees each, up from eight for the past few years.

Jazz-R&B composer Jon Batiste, best known as the bandleader and music director for “The Late Show With Ste-

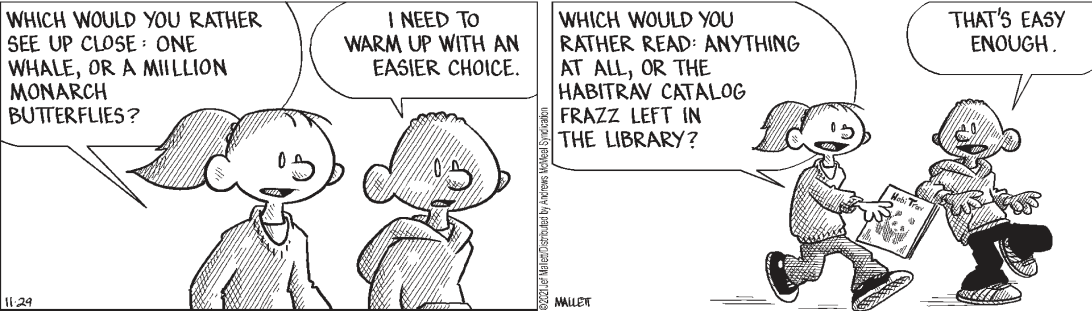
phen Colbert,” earned the most Grammy nominations of any act this year, with 11. The pianist and singer earned nods for album and record of the year for his “We Are” album and its single “Freedom,” which will compete against releases from Rodrigo, Justin Bieber and Lil Nas X.

According to the New York Times, the two entries added to the ballot for album of the year were Swift’s “Evermore” and West’s “Donda.” They joined albums by Bennett and Lady Gaga, Rodrigo, Bieber, Doja Cat, H.E.R., Billie Eilish, Batiste and Lil Nas X.

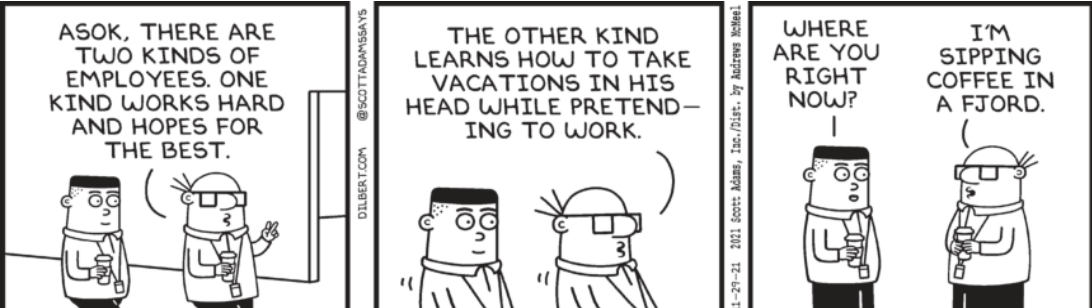
With the expansion of the record of the year category, Lil Nas X’s “Montero (Call Me by Your Name)” and ABBA’s “I Still Have Faith in You” were added, The New York Times said.

The annual ceremony is set to take place Jan. 31 in Los Angeles.

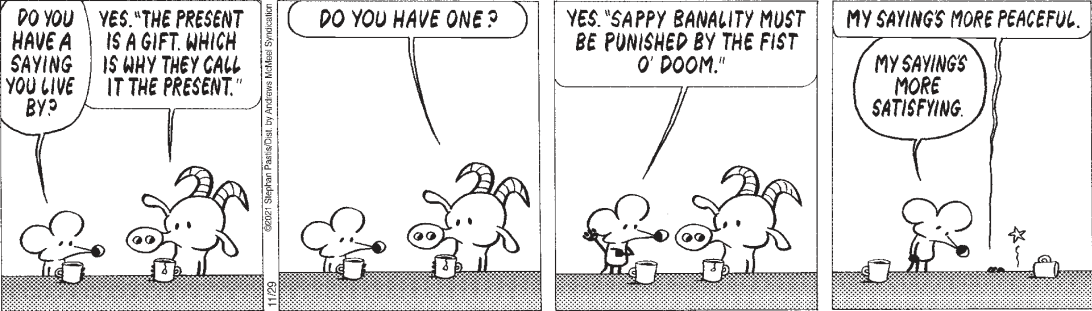
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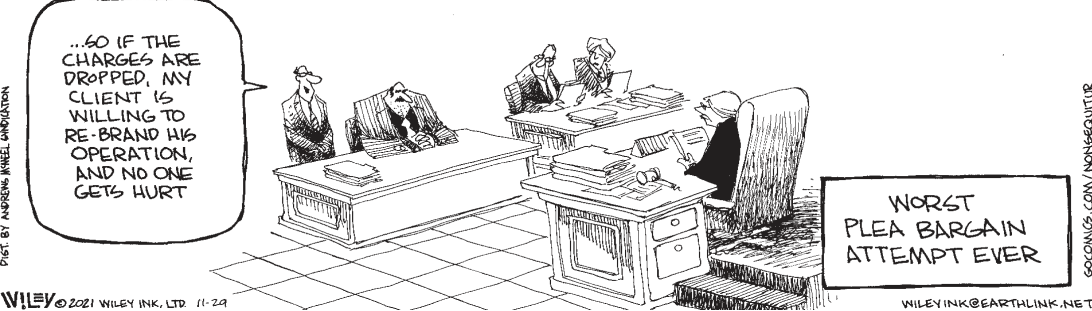
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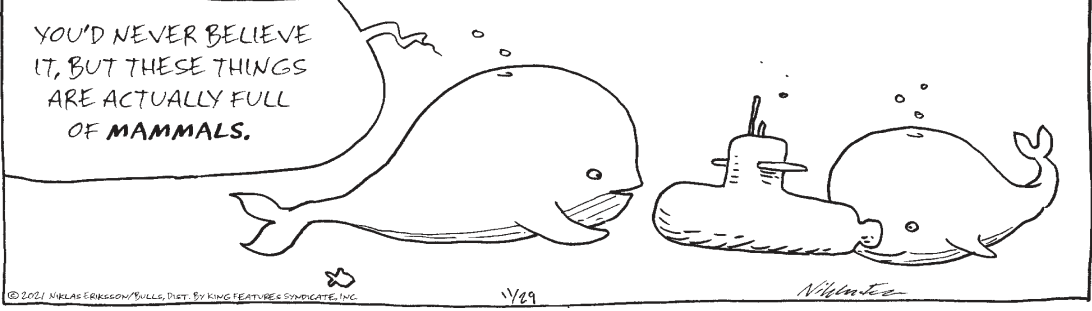
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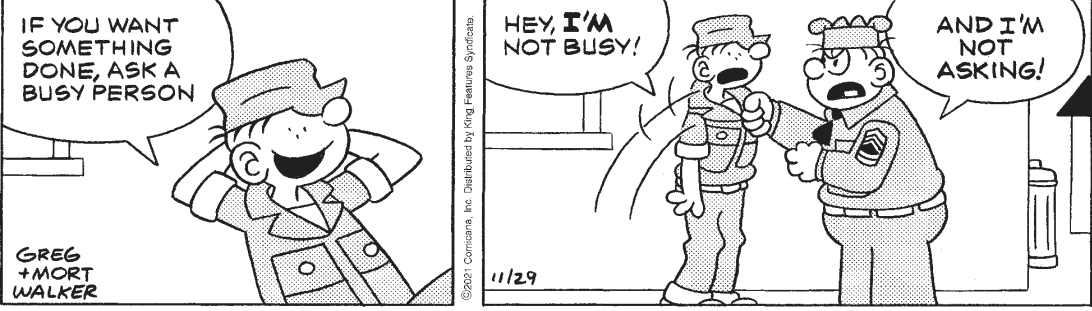
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Eugene Sheffer Crossword

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- 14 Little lice
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- 25 Chopper
- 26 Pothole repairers
- 27 Least quiet
- 29 Blemish
- 30 "A mouse!"
- 33 Hi-tech organizers
- 36 Quidditch position
- 38 Not as spicy
- 40 Busy insect
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- 43 Country singer
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- 48 Sports figure?
- 50 Cattle call

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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11-29 CRYPTOQUIP

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DMLGMK KVNND SMLBGRW:

LNRRKBG BJVL MW.

Saturday's Cryptoquip: "FIDDLER ON THE ROOF" SONG DIRECTED AT THE VILLAGE'S CARTOGRAPHER: "MAPMAKER, MAPMAKER."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals C

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NBA

Scoreboard

| Eastern Conference | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|-----|------|------|------|
| Atlantic Division | | | | | |
| | W | L | Pct | GB | |
| Brooklyn | 14 | 6 | .700 | — | |
| New York | 11 | 9 | .550 | 3 | |
| Boston | 10 | 10 | .500 | 4 | |
| Philadelphia | 10 | 10 | .500 | 4 | |
| Toronto | 9 | 11 | .450 | 5 | |
| Southeast Division | | | | | |
| | W | L | Pct | GB | |
| Miami | 13 | 7 | .650 | — | |
| Washington | 13 | 7 | .650 | — | |
| Charlotte | 13 | 9 | .591 | 1 | |
| Atlanta | 11 | 10 | .524 | 2½ | |
| Orlando | 4 | 17 | .190 | 9½ | |
| Central Division | | | | | |
| | W | L | Pct | GB | |
| Chicago | 13 | 8 | .619 | — | |
| Milwaukee | 12 | 8 | .600 | ½ | |
| Cleveland | 10 | 10 | .500 | 2½ | |
| Indiana | 9 | 12 | .429 | 4 | |
| Detroit | 4 | 15 | .211 | 8 | |
| Western Conference | | | | | |
| Southwest Division | | | | | |
| | W | L | Pct | GB | |
| Dallas | 10 | 8 | .556 | — | |
| Memphis | 9 | 10 | .474 | 1½ | |
| San Antonio | 5 | 13 | .278 | 5 | |
| New Orleans | 5 | 17 | .227 | 7 | |
| Houston | 3 | 16 | .158 | 7½ | |
| Northwest Division | | | | | |
| | W | L | Pct | GB | |
| Utah | 13 | 7 | .650 | — | |
| Portland | 10 | 10 | .500 | 3 | |
| Minnesota | 10 | 10 | .500 | 3 | |
| Denver | 9 | 10 | .474 | 3½ | |
| Oklahoma City | 6 | 13 | .316 | 6½ | |
| Pacific Division | | | | | |
| | W | L | Pct | GB | |
| Golden State | 17 | 2 | .895 | — | |
| Phoenix | 17 | 3 | .850 | ½ | |
| L.A. Clippers | 11 | 8 | .579 | 6 | |
| L.A. Lakers | 10 | 11 | .476 | 8 | |
| Sacramento | 8 | 12 | .400 | 9½ | |
| Saturday's games | | | | | |
| Minnesota 121, Philadelphia 120, 2OT | | | | | |
| New York 99, Atlanta 90 | | | | | |
| Phoenix 113, Brooklyn 107 | | | | | |
| Cleveland 105, Orlando 92 | | | | | |
| Miami 107, Chicago 104 | | | | | |
| Washington 120, Dallas 114 | | | | | |
| Houston 146, Charlotte 143, OT | | | | | |
| Utah 127, New Orleans 105 | | | | | |
| Sunday's games | | | | | |
| Golden State at L.A. Clippers | | | | | |
| Milwaukee at Indiana | | | | | |
| Boston at Toronto | | | | | |
| Sacramento at Memphis | | | | | |
| Detroit at L.A. Lakers | | | | | |
| Monday's games | | | | | |
| Orlando at Philadelphia | | | | | |
| Denver at Miami | | | | | |
| Charlotte at Chicago | | | | | |
| Indiana at Minnesota | | | | | |
| Oklahoma City at Houston | | | | | |
| Cleveland at Dallas | | | | | |
| Washington at San Antonio | | | | | |
| Portland at Utah | | | | | |
| New Orleans at L.A. Clippers | | | | | |
| Tuesday's games | | | | | |
| Memphis at Toronto | | | | | |
| New York at Brooklyn | | | | | |
| Detroit at Portland | | | | | |
| Golden State at Phoenix | | | | | |
| L.A. Lakers at Sacramento | | | | | |
| Leaders | | | | | |
| Through Saturday | | | | | |
| Scoring | | | | | |
| | G | FG | FT | PTS | AVG |
| Durant, BKN | 19 | 198 | 111 | 544 | 28.6 |
| Curry, GS | 18 | 167 | 79 | 511 | 28.4 |
| Antetokounmpo, MIL | 19 | 181 | 129 | 514 | 27.1 |
| FG Percentage | | | | | |
| | FG | FGA | PCT | | |
| Gobert, UTA | 105 | 145 | .724 | | |
| Allen, CLE | 108 | 155 | .697 | | |
| Rebounds | | | | | |
| | G | OFF | DEF | TOT | AVG |
| Gobert, UTA | 20 | 58 | 231 | 289 | 14.4 |
| Jokic, DEN | 14 | 38 | 152 | 190 | 13.6 |
| Assists | | | | | |
| | G | AST | | AVG | |
| Paul, PHO | 20 | 202 | | 10.1 | |
| Harden, BKN | 20 | 188 | | 9.4 | |

Suns extend win streak to 16 games

Booker scores 30 points in 113-107 win over Nets

By BRIAN MAHONEY
Associated Press

NEW YORK — A chance to match franchise history and take a spot atop the NBA is waiting for the Phoenix Suns.

They have loftier aspirations than those, but want them anyway.

“Obviously, everybody knows the ultimate goal is to win a championship,” Chris Paul said. “But if you don’t enjoy the small victories throughout the regular season, then what the hell are you doing?”

Devin Booker scored 30 points, Paul had 22 and the Suns extended their winning streak to 16 games with a 113-107 victory over the Brooklyn Nets on Saturday night.

Phoenix impressively overwhelmed the Eastern Conference leaders early, never trailing and leading by as much as 22 while moving within a victory of matching the longest winning streak in franchise history.

The Suns will try to do that Tuesday night at home against the Golden State Warriors (17-2) in a matchup of the top two teams in the NBA.

“I’m looking forward to it, man,” Booker said. “Obviously not a make it or break-it game, not a playoff game, but we know it’s going to be high-energy, two best records in the NBA. It’s going to a high-intensity, fun game.”

Phoenix improved to 17-3, its

ROUNDUP

T-wolves spoil return of 76ers’ Embiid with 2OT win

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — D’Angelo Russell scored 35 points and had a decisive steal and assist in the final seconds of the second overtime in the Minnesota Timberwolves’ 121-120 victory over Joel Embiid and the Philadelphia 76ers on Saturday night.

Embiid had 42 points and 14 rebounds in his return to the lineup after missing nine games because of COVID-19 protocols. Philadelphia lost seven of those games without the four-time All-Star and has now dropped eight of 10.

“I really thought I wasn’t going to make it,” Embiid said. “It was that bad. So, I’m just thankful to be sitting here. I’m just glad I got over it.”

Tobias Harris returned from a two-game absence due to a hip injury to add 17 points and nine rebounds for the 76ers.

“It’s good to have Embiid back,” he said. “We missed him for sure.”

Knicks 99, Hawks 90: Alec Burks scored 23 points, Evan Fournier added 20 and visiting New York snapped Atlanta’s seven-game winning streak.

Burks, starting with Kemba Walker and Derrick Rose nursing injuries, hit three of his four threes and scored 15 points in the third quarter.

Rockets 146, Hornets 143 (OT): Christian



JESSIE ALCHEN/AP

Brooklyn Nets guard James Harden, left, draws a foul against Phoenix Suns forward Mikal Bridges during the Suns’ 113-107 victory Saturday in New York.

best record through 20 games since having the same mark in 2004-05. The Western Conference champions haven’t lost in a month since Sacramento dropped them to 1-3.

Paul added eight rebounds and five assists, becoming the first player in NBA history to reach 20,000 points, 10,000 assists and 5,000 rebounds.

Mikal Bridges had 13 points and a career-high seven steals for the Suns. They won 17 straight games during the 2006-07 season, and also won 15 in a row earlier that season.

Kevin Durant had 39 points, nine rebounds and seven assists for the Nets. They had their four-game winning streak snapped.

“For us, handing the ball off in

the first half the way we did, you’re not going to beat a good team like that,” Durant said.

James Harden carved out a sloppy triple-double in the Brooklyn’s first game since Thanksgiving, with 14 assists, 13 rebounds and 12 points. But he shot 4-for-15 from the field, missing all six three-pointers and committed seven turnovers.



MATT SLOCUM/AP

The Minnesota Timberwolves’ Karl-Anthony Towns, right, tries to get past the Philadelphia 76ers’ Joel Embiid during the Timberwolves’ 121-120 double-overtime win on Saturday in Philadelphia.

Wood scored a career-high 33 points and had 16 rebounds to help host Houston beat Charlotte.

The Rockets have won two straight after losing 15 in a row.

Heat 107, Bulls 104: Kyle Lowry scored 19 points and Jimmy Butler added 18 to help Miami win at Chicago.

Gabe Vincent made four three-pointers and

had 20 off the bench for the Heat, and Bam Adebayo added nine points, six assists, and seven rebounds.

Cavaliers 105, Magic 92: Darius Garland scored a season-high 26 points, rookie Evan Mobley had 13 points in his return from a sprained right elbow and host Cleveland beat Orlando.

Mobley missed four games after getting entangled with Boston’s Enes Kanter on Nov. 15. He had nine rebounds, three assists and four blocked shots, helping the Cavs end their longest losing streak of the season at five.

Jazz 127, Pelicans 105: Donovan Mitchell had 21 points, seven rebounds and seven assists to help host Utah beat New Orleans.

A night after falling 98-97 to the Pelicans, the Jazz never trailed after the opening minute and shot 56% percent from the floor overall. The Jazz made a season-high 20 three-pointers, shooting 57% from three-point range.

Wizards 120, Mavericks 114: Bradley Beal scored 26 points, Kyle Kuzma had 10 of his 22 in the fourth quarter and Kentavious Caldwell-Pope scored the clinching four points in the closing seconds in Washington’s victory at Dallas.

Luka Doncic had 33 points and 10 rebounds for the Mavericks.

ROUNDUP

Kraken deny Panthers win record

Associated Press

SUNRISE, Fla. — Chris Driedger was the winning goalie when Florida’s home-ice winning streak started last season.

The streak ended Saturday—and Driedger was the winning goalie again.

Driedger made 33 saves against his former team, helping the Seattle Kraken defeat the Panthers 4-1 on Saturday night to deny Florida what would have been a record-setting 12th consecutive home win to start the season.

“Honestly, it was a bit of a challenge trying to just keep my head in the game,” Driedgersaid. “And, you know, it’s so familiar being in this barn. Just seeing those guys on the other side of the ice is a bit different.”

Jordan Eberle scored twice in his 800th game, Ryan Donato and Jamie Oleksiak added goals and Joonas Donskoi had two assists for Seattle, which was facing the Panthers for the first time.

Patric Hornqvist had the goal for Florida, and Spencer Knight stopped 23 shots for the Panthers.

Florida was bidding to become the first team in NHL history to start a season 12-0-0 at home; the Panthers will have to share the record of 11 straight home-ice victories to open a season with Chicago, which had such a start in 1963-64.

“We all know what was at stake tonight, but it’s behind us now,” Panthers forward Owen Tippett said.

It was also Florida’s first home-ice regular-season loss since last season. The Panthers had won 15 consecutive games at home since last April, excluding playoffs, a span that included two coaches, two arena names.

And there was some irony that Driedger — who was picked up by Seattle in the expansion draft, after Florida left him unprotected — was the goalie who came out of the visiting dressing room to get the streak-snapping win.

“We won start to finish tonight

and we really needed to do that, especially in this building against this team,” Kraken coach Dave Hakstol said. “They hadn’t lost in this building yet this year, so it was a good 60-minute performance for us.”

Red Wings 3, Sabres 2 (OT): Lucas Raymond scored 26 seconds into overtime to give host Detroit a win over Buffalo.

Dylan Larkin and Filip Hronek assisted on Raymond’s goal, which came shortly after the Sabres forced the extra session with a goal late in the third period.

Pius Suter and Carter Rowney scored in regulation for the Red Wings. Dylan Cozens and Jeff Skinner scored for Buffalo. Dustin Tokarski made 38 saves.

Oilers 3, Golden Knights 2: Mikko Koskinen stopped 36 shots and earned his 11th victory in visiting Edmonton’s win over Vegas.

Koskinen’s win total is tied for the NHL’s best this season. Ryan Nugent-Hopkins, Zach Hyman and Jesse Puljujarvi scored for the Oilers.

Chandler Stephenson and Reilly Smith scored for the Golden Knights Robin Lehner made 27 saves.

Kings 4, Senators 2: Carl Grundstrom scored twice as host Los Angeles snapped a five-game losing streak by beating Ottawa.

Viktor Arvidsson had a power-play goal and Arthur Kaliyev also scored for the Kings.

Connor Brown and Michael Del Zotto scored for the Senators, who lost their fifth straight game. Ottawa is 1-7-1 on the road, including five defeats in regulation in a row.

Jets 4, Flames 2: Kyle Connor scored twice, including the game-winner with five minutes left, as Winnipeg snapped a five-game skid with a comeback win at Calgary.

Paul Stastny and Andrew Copp also scored for the Jets.

Matthew Tkachuk and Elias Lindholm scored for the Flames, who lost in regulation for the first



Kraken goaltender Chris Driedger makes a glove save against the Panthers during the first period on Saturday. Seattle halted Florida’s home winning streak one short of the season-opening record.

time in eight games.

Canadiens 6, Penguins 3: Josh Anderson scored two empty-net goals and visiting Montreal scored five times in the third period to end a seven-game road drought with a win over Pittsburgh.

Tyler Toffoli also scored into an empty net, and Christian Dvorak and Artturi Lehkonen added goals in the final 20 minutes for the Canadiens.

Sidney Crosby had a goal and had two assists for the Penguins, who saw their five-game winning streak end.

Casey DeSmith stopped 27 shots in just his fourth start of the season. He hadn’t played since Nov. 13 at Ottawa.

Montreal’s only other road victory this season came Oct. 28 at San Jose.

Blues 6, Blue Jackets 3: Pavel Buchnevich and Ivan Barbashev each scored twice and host St. Louis beat Columbus.

Justin Faulk and Jordan Kyrrou

also scored as the Blues won for the third time in 10 games.

Adam Boqvist scored twice and Boone Jenner also had a goal for the Blue Jackets, who had their three-game winning streak halted.

Stars 3, Coyotes 2: Roope Hintz scored his seventh goal in eight games and visiting Dallas extended its winning streak to four games in beating Arizona.

Jacob Peterson and Jason Robertson also scored for the Stars, who have won six of seven. Joe Pavelski had two assists. Braden Holtby had 25 saves for Dallas.

Antoine Roussel and Travis Boyd scored for the Coyotes.

Avalanche 6, Predators 2: Mikko Rantanen had a hat trick and an assist, Bo Byram scored in his return to the lineup, and host Colorado beat Nashville.

Valeri Nichushkin and Tyson Jost also scored for the Avalanche. Cale Makar had three assists, but his goal-scoring streak ended at five games

Scoreboard

| Eastern Conference | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|-----|----|----|--|
| Atlantic Division | | | | | | | | |
| | GP | W | L | OT | Pts | GF | GA | |
| Florida | 21 | 14 | 4 | 3 | 31 | 77 | 56 | |
| Toronto | 22 | 15 | 6 | 1 | 31 | 61 | 48 | |
| Tampa Bay | 19 | 12 | 4 | 3 | 27 | 62 | 52 | |
| Detroit | 22 | 10 | 9 | 3 | 23 | 61 | 71 | |
| Boston | 17 | 10 | 7 | 0 | 20 | 53 | 49 | |
| Buffalo | 21 | 8 | 10 | 3 | 19 | 60 | 70 | |
| Montreal | 23 | 6 | 15 | 2 | 14 | 54 | 83 | |
| Ottawa | 19 | 4 | 14 | 1 | 9 | 46 | 73 | |
| Metropolitan Division | | | | | | | | |
| | GP | W | L | OT | Pts | GF | GA | |
| Carolina | 19 | 15 | 3 | 1 | 31 | 64 | 39 | |
| Washington | 21 | 13 | 3 | 5 | 31 | 74 | 50 | |
| N.Y. Rangers | 20 | 13 | 4 | 3 | 29 | 60 | 54 | |
| Columbus | 19 | 12 | 7 | 0 | 24 | 67 | 59 | |
| Pittsburgh | 21 | 10 | 7 | 4 | 24 | 62 | 59 | |
| New Jersey | 18 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 20 | 52 | 56 | |
| Philadelphia | 19 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 20 | 47 | 56 | |
| N.Y. Islanders | 17 | 5 | 10 | 2 | 12 | 32 | 52 | |
| Western Conference | | | | | | | | |
| Central Division | | | | | | | | |
| | GP | W | L | OT | Pts | GF | GA | |
| Minnesota | 20 | 13 | 6 | 1 | 27 | 74 | 62 | |
| St. Louis | 21 | 11 | 7 | 3 | 25 | 71 | 59 | |
| Winnipeg | 21 | 10 | 7 | 4 | 24 | 62 | 62 | |
| Colorado | 18 | 11 | 6 | 1 | 23 | 73 | 56 | |
| Nashville | 21 | 11 | 9 | 1 | 23 | 58 | 63 | |
| Dallas | 19 | 10 | 7 | 2 | 22 | 53 | 55 | |
| Chicago | 20 | 7 | 11 | 2 | 16 | 45 | 65 | |
| Arizona | 21 | 4 | 15 | 2 | 10 | 39 | 77 | |
| Pacific Division | | | | | | | | |
| | GP | W | L | OT | Pts | GF | GA | |
| Edmonton | 20 | 15 | 5 | 0 | 30 | 77 | 59 | |
| Calgary | 21 | 12 | 4 | 5 | 29 | 72 | 44 | |
| Anaheim | 21 | 11 | 7 | 3 | 25 | 69 | 56 | |
| Vegas | 21 | 12 | 9 | 0 | 24 | 66 | 64 | |
| San Jose | 20 | 10 | 9 | 1 | 21 | 53 | 58 | |
| Los Angeles | 20 | 9 | 8 | 3 | 21 | 53 | 54 | |
| Seattle | 21 | 7 | 13 | 1 | 15 | 58 | 73 | |
| Vancouver | 21 | 6 | 13 | 2 | 14 | 49 | 70 | |
| Saturday's games | | | | | | | | |
| Seattle 4, Florida 1 | | | | | | | | |
| Detroit 3, Buffalo 2, OT | | | | | | | | |
| Edmonton 3, Vegas 2 | | | | | | | | |
| Los Angeles 4, Ottawa 2 | | | | | | | | |
| Montreal 6, Pittsburgh 3 | | | | | | | | |
| St. Louis 6, Columbus 3 | | | | | | | | |
| Dallas 3, Arizona 2 | | | | | | | | |
| Colorado 6, Nashville 2 | | | | | | | | |
| Winnipeg 4, Calgary 2 | | | | | | | | |
| Sunday's games | | | | | | | | |
| Washington at Carolina | | | | | | | | |
| Tampa Bay at Minnesota | | | | | | | | |
| N.Y. Islanders at N.Y. Rangers, ppd | | | | | | | | |
| Philadelphia at New Jersey | | | | | | | | |
| San Jose at Chicago | | | | | | | | |
| Vancouver at Boston | | | | | | | | |
| Toronto at Anaheim | | | | | | | | |
| Monday's games | | | | | | | | |
| Seattle at Buffalo | | | | | | | | |
| Arizona at Winnipeg | | | | | | | | |
| Vancouver at Montreal | | | | | | | | |
| Pittsburgh at Calgary | | | | | | | | |
| Tuesday's games | | | | | | | | |
| Detroit at Boston | | | | | | | | |
| N.Y. Islanders at Philadelphia, ppd | | | | | | | | |
| San Jose at New Jersey | | | | | | | | |
| Washington at Florida | | | | | | | | |
| Arizona at Minnesota | | | | | | | | |
| Columbus at Nashville | | | | | | | | |
| Tampa Bay at St. Louis | | | | | | | | |
| Carolina at Dallas | | | | | | | | |
| Anaheim at Los Angeles | | | | | | | | |

2 Islanders games postponed amid COVID-19 outbreak

BY STEPHEN WHYNO
Associated Press

The NHL has postponed two more games for coronavirus-related reasons, making it five so far this season.

Upcoming New York Islanders games Sunday at the Rangers and Tuesday at the Philadelphia Flyers were postponed after additional members of the team went into the NHL’s COVID-19 protocol on Saturday.

General manager Lou Lamoriello said forward Casey Cizikas became the latest player to test positive. The Islanders would have had as many as eight players unavailable.

The league said the possibility of additional spread contributed to the Islanders’ games through at least Tuesday being

called off for now. Cizikas joined captain Anders Lee, fellow forwards Ross Johnston and Kieffer Bellows and defensemen Zdeno Chara, Adam Pelech and Andy Greene in protocol, and winger Josh Bailey only recently resumed skating after being quarantined.

Lamoriello said as recently as Wednesday that none of the players who were positive for the virus had tested negative to clear the way to return. It would take three consecutive days of negative tests to reopen team training facilities and resume play. The entire Islanders team is vaccinated against COVID-19.

While Lamoriello said Saturday he had not asked the league office for postponements, the absences and a long-term injury

to defenseman Ryan Pulock were making things very difficult for New York. The short-handed Islanders fell 1-0 to the Pittsburgh Penguins at home Friday night, their eighth consecutive loss.

“We’re kind of piecemealing it,” coach Barry Trotz said afterward. “The young guys who have come in, they’re doing what they can. ... They’re doing the job that they can. There’s no one not trying right now.”

The NHL postponed three Ottawa Senators games in mid-November because of that team’s virus outbreak. One of those games, at the New Jersey Devils, has been rescheduled for Dec. 6.

Ottawa is 0-3-0 since resuming play and put goaltender Matt Murray on waivers Saturday. Murray allowed four goals on 27

shots in a loss Wednesday, his only start since being activated off the COVID-19 list.

When the NHL agreed to participate in the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing, the league and the NHL Players’ Association added the caveat that they could withdraw based on pandemic conditions. It would take a significant amount of postponements to trigger the NHL/NHLPA withdrawal for a material disruption to the season that would require the 2½-week Olympic break in February to make up games.

The league and players have until Jan. 10 to pull out without financial penalty. Canada named Claude Julien coach for two international tournaments in December as part of a potential plan B staff if the NHL does not participate in the Olympics.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL/COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Early 14-0 run fuels UCLA win over UNLV

By ADAM SOBOLESKI
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — The UCLA Bruins had three days off in Las Vegas to think about how they were going to rebound from losing to No. 1 Gonzaga by 20 points.

No. 2 UCLA wasted no time on Saturday, scoring 14 unanswered points early in the first half to beat UNLV 73-51.

“We had a lot to think about after our last game,” said Jules Bernard, who led the Bruins with 18 points and had two blocks, four assists and four rebounds. “We had a day off and went right back to practice. That pace we put into practice is what he put into the game.”

UCLA (6-1) shot 47% from the field and from three-point range. Tyger Campbell had 15 points and Johnny Juzang and Jaime Jaquez each added 12 points each.

“I’m really happy with our effort and our attitude,” Bruins coach Mike Cronin said. “I told them, I really don’t care about wins and losses, it’s about effort and attitude. I told them we have to do whatever we have to do to win a tough road game and it starts with defense.”

Bryce Hamilton led UNLV (4-3) with 15 points, while Donovan Williams added 12 points. The Rebels struggled, finishing at 30%.

“We got in a hole and took a lot of three-point shots,” said UNLV coach Kevin Kruger, whose team went 22% (6 of 27) from three-point range. “I think a lot of the shots were right there. There were a lot of drives where we were one (pass) away from finding a better shot. I don’t want to think the sky is falling, it is UCLA.”

The Bruins outrebounded the Rebels 47-27 for the game.

“We really worked on rebounding in practice,” Bernard said. “When the shot goes up, crashing the boards. What we did in practice is really a reflection of what happened today.”

UNLV scored the first two points of the game, but the Bruins went on a 14-0 run and never trailed again. The Rebels cut the lead to 22-19 before UCLA led 37-22 at halftime.

UNLV was down by 9 points with 14:43 left in the second half, but the Bruins countered with a 12-0 run and grew the lead to as many as 22.

“I told them at halftime, ‘When you’re on the road, teams play with pride, they are going to play you with pressure,’” Cronin said. “We came out ready in the second half. UNLV is a team that is fast and athletic.”

Big Picture

UCLA: This was the finale of a three-game Las Vegas stay. The Bruins are now 7-0 against UNLV;

Scoreboard

| Top 25 Fared | |
|--|--|
| Saturday | |
| No. 1 Gonzaga (6-1) did not play. Next: Tarleton St., Monday. | |
| No. 2 UCLA (6-1) beat UNLV 73-51. Next: vs. Colorado, Wednesday. | |
| No. 3 Purdue (6-0) did not play. Next: vs. Florida St., Tuesday. | |
| No. 4 Kansas (4-1) did not play. Next: vs. Iona, Sunday. | |
| No. 5 Duke (7-0) did not play. Next: at Ohio St., Tuesday. | |
| No. 6 Baylor (7-0) did not play. Next: vs. Ark.-Pine Bluff, Saturday, Dec. 4. | |
| No. 7 Villanova (3-2) did not play. Next: at La Salle, Sunday. | |
| No. 8 Texas (4-1) did not play. Next: Sam Houston St., Monday. | |
| No. 9 Memphis (5-1) did not play. Next: at Georgia, Wednesday. | |
| No. 10 Alabama (5-1) did not play. Next: vs. Miami, Sunday. | |
| No. 11 Kentucky (5-1) did not play. Next: vs. Central Michigan, Monday. | |
| No. 12 Houston (5-1) did not play. Next: Northwestern St., Tuesday. | |
| No. 13 Arkansas (5-0) did not play. Next: vs. Penn., Sunday. | |
| No. 14 Illinois (4-2) did not play. Next: vs. Notre Dame, Monday. | |
| No. 15 Tennessee (4-1) did not play. Next: vs. Presbyterian, Tuesday. | |
| No. 16 St. Bonaventure (5-1) lost to N. Iowa 90-80. Next: vs. Coppin St., Wednesday. | |
| No. 17 Arizona (6-0) beat Sacramento St. 105-59. Next: vs. Washington, Thursday. | |
| No. 18 BYU (6-0) beat Utah 75-64. Next: vs. Utah Valley, Wednesday. | |
| No. 19 Auburn (5-1) did not play. Next: vs. UCF, Wednesday. | |
| No. 20 Michigan (4-2) did not play. Next: at North Carolina, Wednesday. | |
| No. 21 Seton Hall (4-1) did not play. vs. Bethune-Cookman, Sunday. | |
| No. 22 UConn (6-1) did not play. Next: vs. Md.-Eastern Shore, Tuesday. | |
| No. 23 Florida (5-0) did not play. Next: vs. Troy, Sunday. | |
| No. 24 Southern Cal (6-0) did not play. Next: vs. Utah, Wednesday. | |
| No. 25 Xavier (5-1) did not play. Next: vs. Cent. Michigan, Wednesday. | |

they beat the Rebels in Los Angeles two years ago by 17 points. The Bruins start Pac-12 conference play in their next two games before four more non-conference contests.

UNLV: The Rebels faced their biggest test of the season in UCLA, but they’d already played two other Power 5 conference teams — losing to No. 20 Michigan, but beating California. The Rebels next leave town for the first time this season, traveling to SMU and then San Francisco.

Army 65, Marist 61: Jalen Rucker had 24 points as the host Black Knights held on to beat the Red Foxes.

Josh Caldwell had six assists for Army (4-2). Charlie Peterson added seven rebounds. Aaron Duhart had six rebounds.

Jao Ituka had 12 points for Marist (2-3).

Navy 67, Mount St. Mary’s 40: John Carter Jr. posted 18 points as the visiting Mids easily beat the Mountaineers 67-40 on Saturday.

Greg Summers had 11 points and eight rebounds for Navy (5-2), which earned its fourth consecutive victory. Sean Yoder added 10 points.

Malik Jefferson had nine points and nine rebounds for Mount St. Mary’s (2-5). Nana Opoku added three blocks.

Jalen Benjamin, who led the Mountaineers in scoring coming into the contest with 14 points per game, was held to six points on 1-for-10 shooting.



Alabama quarterback Bryce Young tries to get a pass away before being tackled by Auburn defensive end T.D. Moultry during the second half on Saturday in Auburn, Ala.

Alabama survives 4 OTs; Baylor, Iowa get title shots

Associated Press
AUBURN, Ala. — Pushed to the limit, Alabama delivered plays to celebrate in a stadium that has produced a few devastating losses. The result was another unforgettable Iron Bowl.

John Metchie caught a scoring pass from Bryce Young in the fourth overtime to give No. 3 Alabama a 24-22 comeback victory over rival Auburn on Saturday, rescuing the Crimson Tide’s national title hopes.

It was the first overtime in the Iron Bowl.

“Wow, what a game,” Tide coach Nick Saban said.

Freshman Kool-Aid McKinstry tipped away T.J. Finley’s pass in the final OT and Young hit Metchie just as he did in the previous one.

Alabama (11-1, 7-1 Southeastern Conference, No. 3 CFP) moves on to face No. 1 Georgia in the league championship game with its College Football Playoff hopes on the line. The Tigers (6-6, 3-5) dropped their fourth straight game after smothering Young and the Tide’s prolific offense most of the way.

“After halftime, it just seemed like everybody was all in and we were fighting like I’ve never seen us fight all year long,” Saban said. “Our players were as happy as I’ve ever seen them after the game.”

Young capped a 97-yard drive with a 28-yard touchdown to freshman Ja’Corey Brooks — his fourth catch and first touchdown this season — with 24 seconds left in regulation.

Young converted a fourth-and-7 to Jahleel Billingsley, followed by

two incompletions under pressure for an offense that had been held in check for 59 minutes.

“It was crazy. It was crazy,” said Young, who passed for 317 yards and two touchdowns with an interception. “When you’re playing in the Iron Bowl, what else are you supposed to expect? Throughout all the ups and downs, even that last drive, I have so much faith in my guys. My confidence never wavered.”

There were times when it easily could have against an Tigers defense that was yielding little.

“There was a lot of fight from our team,” first-year Auburn coach Bryan Harsin said. “I’m proud of our guys. I told them I was proud of their fight. ... Our guys played hard and put ourselves in a position to win the game. We just came up short.”

Big 12

Blake Shapen threw for 254 yards and two touchdowns in his first start for No. 9 Baylor, and the host Bears held off Texas Tech 27-24 — and got into the Big 12 title game when Oklahoma State beat Oklahoma.

Abram Smith ran for 117 yards and a touchdown for Baylor (10-2, 7-2 Big 12, CFP No. 8). It will face the Cowboys in the championship game.

Big Ten

Tanner Morgan overcame an interception that was returned for a first-half touchdown, leading host Minnesota on three scoring drives after halftime to surge past Wisconsin, take back Paul Bunyan’s Axe and give Iowa the Big Ten West Division title Saturday

with a 23-13 upset.

Iowa did its part by winning at Nebraska 28-21. Spencer Petras had a 2-yard touchdown run with 2:58 left to give his team its first lead and the visiting Hawkeyes came back from a 15-point deficit in the third quarter.

Iowa won the border battle for the seventh straight year, but not before Jermari Harris intercepted Logan Smothers’ pass at the Hawkeyes 2 with 43 seconds to play. Iowa (10-2, 7-2) will head to the conference championship game next week in Indianapolis.

ACC

Sam Hartman threw three touchdown passes and ran for a score to help No. 21 Wake Forest beat Boston College, 41-10, for a spot in the Atlantic Coast Conference championship game.

The Demon Deacons (10-2, 7-1) will attempt to claim their first league title since 2006 when they face No. 20 Pittsburgh on Dec. 4.

Academies

Army and Navy both won their final game before their annual showdown on Dec. 11.

Jakobi Buchanan ran for three touchdowns and Christian Anderson threw for a score and the visiting Black Knights beat Liberty 31-16.

Isaac Ruoss ran for two touchdown, Chance Warren had two TD catches and the visiting Mids defeated Temple 38-14.

Navy (3-8, 3-5 American Athletic Conference) threw just 12 passes for 72 yards but had touchdown tosses from both Tai Lavatai and Xavier Arline. The Mids rolled up 219 yards on the ground.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL



TONY DING/AP

Michigan running back Hassan Haskins celebrates a touchdown in the fourth quarter of Saturday's 42-27 victory over Ohio State.

Coach: Wolverines finally get best of Buckeyes

FROM PAGE 24

Rouge tomorrow without penalty. Their records since 2018: Orgeron, 36-14; Fisher, 34-14.

The Wolverines decided not to jump on the coaching carousel and trusted Harbaugh, though not so much that it didn't redo his contract to make getting rid of him more affordable if this season didn't pan out.

With a new defensive staff and more confident and established offensive coordinator (Josh Gattis), Harbaugh delivered a team that perfectly matches his vision, with echoes of his greatest successes at Stanford and in the NFL with the 49ers.

Michigan's offense is a modernized version of ground-and-pound, supported by a defense that features two elite edge rushers in Aidan Hutchinson and David Ojabo.

Harbaugh returned to college football as its most fascinating coach, confident and quirky with all kinds of hype.

His failures against Ohio State turned into him into a punchline and easy target for critics: "This is your savior, Wolverines?"

But if you are what your record says you are, Harbaugh is now 89-44 as a major college head coach and 44-19-1 as an NFL coach with a Super Bowl appearance.

One win over the Buckeyes doesn't make Harbaugh a genius. Five losses against them didn't make him a dummy, though it was fair to ask if he was making Michigan all it can be.

This might turn out to be a blip in the rivalry. Ryan Day, who inherited this Ohio State juggernaut from Urban Meyer, is still assembling one of the two or three most talented teams in the country every season.

But for a day the Wolverines and Harbaugh got the best of the Buckeyes, and the coach who opposing fans love to hate had once again become college football's most interesting man.

"There's definitely stuff that people said that spurred us on even more. Sure," Harbaugh said and then added a not-so-subtle shot toward Day. "Sometimes people that're standing on third base think they hit a triple, but they didn't."

Heisman Moment/Bad Decision

A minute and a half to go and 97 yards to cover. Down a touchdown in college football's fiercest rivalry.

Alabama's Bryce Young put together a tying drive against Auburn that will seal a place for him in Iron Bowl history.

Young's 28-yard touchdown pass to freshman Ja'Corey Brooks was a thing of beauty, just inside the front pylon. It was a Heisman moment that got the third-ranked Crimson Tide into overtime after it had struggled to protect the talented quarterback.

"Throughout all the ups and downs, even that last drive, I have so much faith in my guys," Young said. "My confidence never wavered."

At that point it seemed inevitable Alabama would win, facing Tigers offense with a hobbled backup quarterback in T.J. Finley.

After Alabama scored a TD on its opening possession, Auburn matched it — and had a chance to win the game with a 2-point conversion.

The Crimson Tide had outgained the Tigers more than 2-to-1 and, despite its issues, was clearly the better team and the team best equipped to keep scoring in overtime.

Still, Auburn coach Bryan Harsin chose to kick the tying extra point, instead of going for two and the win in a spot where Alabama's offense could not respond.

If you're the underdog trying to spring an upset, this is how you do it. The more you play, the better your chance of being exposed by the more talented team.

The Tide and Tigers exchanged field goals in OT round two and then went to the two-point conversion shootout where Alabama won it in the bottom of the fourth.

Harsin's decision was egregious and he, too, earned himself a spot in Iron Bowl lore for all the wrong reasons.



Harsin



VASHA HUNT/AP

Alabama running back Trey Sanders hurdles Auburn cornerback Roger McCreary during the second half, Saturday, in Auburn, Ala.

Favorites Foiled

Ohio State's four-year run as Big Ten champion is over. So is Oklahoma's six-year streak of Big 12 titles and Clemson's six-year run atop the ACC.

Instead, Michigan, No. 17 Iowa, Oklahoma State, No. 9 Baylor, No. 20 Pitt and No. 21 Wake Forest will play for conference titles. Only Iowa was ranked in the preseason.

If the favorites win out next week the likely CFP final four would be: Georgia (12-0), Michigan (11-1), Cincinnati (12-0) and Oklahoma State (11-1), with Notre Dame (11-1) and maybe Alabama (11-1) if it can keep it really close against the Bulldogs in the hunt.

Scoreboard

Saturday's scores

EAST

Houston 45, Uconn 17
Maryland 40, Rutgers 16
Navy 38, Temple 14
Pittsburgh 31, Syracuse 14
W. Kentucky 53, Marshall 21
Wake Forest 41, Boston College 10

SOUTH

Alabama 24, Auburn 22, 4OT
Appalachian St. 27, Georgia Southern 3
Army 31, Liberty 16
Clemson 30, South Carolina 0
Florida 24, Florida St. 21
Georgia 45, Georgia Tech 0
Georgia St. 37, Troy 10
Grambling St. 29, Southern U. 26
Kentucky 52, Louisville 21
LSU 27, Texas A&M 24
Louisiana-Lafayette 21, Louisiana-Monroe 16
Memphis 33, Tulane 28
Miami 47, Duke 10
Middle Tennessee 27, FAU 17
Old Dominion 56, Charlotte 34
Southern Miss. 37, FIU 17
Tennessee 45, Vanderbilt 21
Virginia Tech 29, Virginia 24

MIDWEST

Illinois 47, Northwestern 14
Kent St. 48, Miami (Ohio) 47
Michigan 42, Ohio St. 27
Michigan St. 30, Penn St. 27
Minnesota 23, Wisconsin 13
Purdue 44, Indiana 7
Toledo 49, Akron 14
West Virginia 34, Kansas 28

SOUTHWEST

Baylor 27, Texas Tech 24
MVSU 24, Prairie View 19
North Texas 45, UTSA 23
Oklahoma St. 37, Oklahoma 33
Rice 35, Louisiana Tech 31
Texas State 24, Arkansas St. 22
Tulsa 34, SMU 31

FAR WEST

Arizona St. 38, Arizona 15
BYU 35, Southern Cal 31
Hawaii 38, Wyoming 14
Nevada 52, Colorado St. 10
New Mexico St. 44, Umass 27
Notre Dame 45, Stanford 14
Oregon 38, Oregon St. 29
UCLA 42, California 14

FCS playoffs

First round

Saturday's games

Incarnate Word 35, Stephen F. Austin 28, OT
Kennesaw St. 48, Davidson 21
Holy Cross 13, Sacred Heart 10
South Dakota St. 56, UC Davis 24
E. Washington 19, N. Iowa 9
UT-Martin 32, Missouri St. 31
S. Illinois 22, South Dakota 10
SE Louisiana 38, Florida A&M 14

Second round

Dec. 4

Incarnate Word at Sam Houston
UT-Martin at Montana St.
S. Illinois at North Dakota St.
Kennesaw St. at ETSU
Holy Cross at Villanova
South Dakota St. at Sacramento St.
E. Washington at Montana
SE Louisiana at James Madison

NCAA Division II playoffs

Second round

Saturday's games

Kutztown 10, New Haven 7
Shepherd 38, Notre Dame (Ohio) 34
Valdosta St. 66, West Georgia 35
Bowie St. 13, Newberry 10
Ferris St. 54, Grand Valley St. 20
NW Missouri St. 28, Harding 9
Colorado Mines 55, Bemidji St. 6
Angelo St. 20, Nebraska-Kearney 7

Quarterfinals

Dec. 4

Angelo St. vs. Colorado Mines
NW Missouri St. vs. Ferris St.
Shepherd vs. Kutztown
Bowie St. vs. Valdosta St.

NCAA Division III playoffs

Second round

Saturday's games

Linfield 31, Saint John's (Minn.) 28
Mary Hardin-Baylor 42, Birmingham 7
Wis.-Whitwater 45, DePauw 0
Central (Iowa) 30, Wheaton (Ill.) 28
North Central 34, Wis.-LaCrosse 20
Rensselaer 21, SUNY-Cortland 14
Mount Union 45, Johns Hopkins 33
Muhlenberg 14, Delaware Valley 0

Quarterfinals

Dec. 4

Mary Hardin-Baylor vs. Linfield
Muhlenberg vs. Mount Union
Rensselaer vs. North Central
Central (Iowa) vs. Wis.-Whitwater

COLLEGE FOOTBALL



CARLOS OSORIO/AP

Michigan wide receiver A.J. Henning pulls away from Ohio State linebacker Steele Chambers during the Wolverines' 42-27 win Saturday in Ann Arbor, Mich., which ended an 8-game losing streak in the series.

Eight was enough: Michigan ends skid, beats Ohio State

No. 6 Wolverines give Harbaugh his first victory as a coach over No. 2 Buckeyes

By LARRY LAGE
Associated Press

ANN ARBOR, Mich. — Jim Harbaugh got the win he wanted perhaps as desperately as any coach in sports.

Hassan Haskins matched a school record with five rushing touchdowns and Aidan Hutchinson had three sacks to break a single-season program mark, helping No. 6 Michigan finally beat No. 2 Ohio State 42-27 Saturday to give Harbaugh his first win as a coach against the Buckeyes.

"It feels like the best one," Harbaugh said.

The Wolverines clinched the Big Ten East and will play in the conference title game next week with playoff hopes in hand after snapping an eight-game losing streak to the Buckeyes.

"It feels like the beginning," Harbaugh said.

Michigan (11-1, 8-1 Big Ten, No. 5 CFP) advanced to the conference championship for the first time. The Wolverines now have a chance to win a Big Ten title for the first time since 2004 and a national championship for the first time since 1997.

Harbaugh has been dissed and dismissed as a coach long on hype and short on substance over his first six seasons with his alma mater, but he earned a win that should quiet at least most of his critics.

"I'm so happy to be a part of his first win, and to have a top-five game at home," Hutchinson said. "He was just so happy."

Minutes after the game, long-suffering fans filled the Big House turf to celebrate a rare win in the storied series and they were in no rush to leave as music blared.

"Watching the snow fall and the crowd rush onto the field was truly a surreal moment," said Wolverines quarterback Cade McNamara, who was 13-for-19 for 159 yards with an interception.

Ohio State had a school-record winning streak in the rivalry, taking 15 of 16 to turn The Game into its game.

The Buckeyes (10-2, 8-1) blew their chances to continue their dominance with 10 penalties, many before the snap, and because they simply could not stop Mi-



CARLOS OSORIO / AP

Michigan defensive back Vincent Gray, right, breaks up a pass intended for Ohio State wide receiver Chris Olave.

chigan's running game.

"I feel awful," Ohio State coach Ryan Day said. "I just got done talking to the team, and when you work this game 365 days out of the year and you come up short, it's a failure. It hurts. It hurts a lot."

Harbaugh clearly had his team ready to beat the Buckeyes.

After Harbaugh's pay was slashed in his new deal last winter in part because of his lack of success against Ohio State, he reshaped his coaching staff again and renamed a running-heavy period of practice the "Beat Ohio," drill for to add another layer of focus on the rivalry.

It seemed to work.

Haskins had 169 yards rushing on 28 carries, scoring a go-ahead touchdown late in the second half and four more after halftime to pad the Wolverines' lead.

Blake Corum returned from a two-plus game absence to run six times for 87 yards, helping Michigan gain a total of 297 yards on a ground against a rival that has pushed them around for much of this century.

Sanders carries No. 7 Cowboys by No. 10 Sooners

By CLIFF BRUNT
Associated Press

STILLWATER, Okla. — Oklahoma State finally broke through against its greatest nemesis.

Spencer Sanders threw for a touchdown and ran for another and No. 7 Oklahoma State beat No. 10 Oklahoma 37-33 on Saturday night to keep alive its College Football Playoff chances and stop the Sooners' streak of Big 12 titles at six.

The Cowboys (11-1, 8-1, No. 7 CFP) snapped a six-game losing streak to the Sooners. Oklahoma State will play No. 9 Baylor next Saturday for the Big 12 championship. The Cowboys have a shot at their first Big 12 title since 2011.

"I told them we couldn't be more proud of them for what they've accomplished," Oklahoma State coach Mike Gundy said. "That's the good news. Next thing is, we need them all back here tomorrow afternoon. We're in a one-week playoff again."

Oklahoma (10-2, 7-2, No. 10 CFP) got the ball one last time at its 20-yard line with 54 seconds remaining and no timeouts. Caleb Williams scrambled and ran 56 yards to put the Sooners in scoring range.

"I wasn't sure we were going to be able to catch him and get him down," Gundy said. "I've seen him do that on TV two, three, four times this year. Nobody ever catches him. He scores."

The Cowboys' Collin Oliver sacked Williams on fourth down at the Oklahoma State 32 with eight seconds remaining, setting off a wild celebration. Fans clad in orange and black poured onto the field to celebrate Gundy's third win in 17 tries against the Sooners. Songs such as "Friends in Low Places" by Garth Brooks and "All I Do Is Win" by DJ Khaled blared

over the sound system.

It wasn't easy for the Cowboys. Though Oklahoma State entered the game ranked second nationally in scoring defense and third in total defense, Williams threw three touchdown passes in the first half.

Cowboys linebacker Malcolm Rodriguez, who finished with 11 tackles and two sacks, said the team remained confident after the shaky start. Williams connected on just 6 of 18 passes for 48 yards in the second half.

"We knew we're the best defense, so we just knew we've just got to go out there and punch and just keep fighting, man," Rodriguez said. "Just do our thing, relax and just be us."

Oklahoma State already had clinched a spot in the Big 12 title game, but the stakes remained high. With Baylor's victory over Texas Tech earlier Saturday, Oklahoma needed a win to reach the conference championship game. The Cowboys took advantage of the opportunity to eliminate their rival.

For the Sooners, the loss provided perspective.

"I think for everybody, what this does is it makes you appreciate it," Oklahoma coach Lincoln Riley said. "What this program's been able to do here over the last seven years is pretty amazing, and it makes you appreciate how hard winning is, how hard winning championships are, how hard winning against good football teams on the road — how hard that is."

The game turned when the Sooners' Eric Gray muffed a punt and Oklahoma State recovered at the Oklahoma 5. Jaylen Warren then punched it in from the 1 to give Oklahoma State a 37-33 lead with 8:54 remaining.



IAN MAULE/AP

Oklahoma State safety Jason Taylor II, right, tackles Oklahoma tight end Jeremiah Hall during the Cowboys' 37-33 win Saturday in Stillwater, Okla.

SPORTS



Suns streak to 16
Booker scores 30 in victory
over Nets » **NBA, Page 19**

TOP 25 TAKEAWAYS

Big-Game coach

Harbaugh, No. 6 Michigan break through with win over No. 2 Ohio State

BY RALPH D. RUSSO
Associated Press

Jim Harbaugh has always been a good coach. Now he's a good coach who has finally beaten Ohio State.

No. 6 Michigan vanquished the Buckeyes on Saturday, ending a losing streak that has defined the program and its coach.

Later Saturday, No. 7 Oklahoma State and coach Mike Gundy similarly flipped their rivalry with Oklahoma, snapping a six-game losing streak in Bedlam behind a tenacious effort in the second-half by the Cowboys' defense.

In Ann Arbor, the Wolverines were tougher and smarter, bludgeoning and confusing the Buckeyes with a well-schemed and well-blocked running game and getting after the No. 1 offense in the country with maybe the best pass-rushing combo in college football.

"It feels like the beginning," Harbaugh said after he

"It feels like the beginning,"

Jim Harbaugh

Michigan coach, after beating rival Ohio State for the first time as coach of the Wolverines

improved to 1-5 against Ohio State.

A year ago, it seemed like the end for Harbaugh at his alma mater.

Michigan was terrible during last season's abbreviated Big Ten schedule, going 2-4 and not even getting a chance to play Ohio State because of a COVID-19 outbreak before

The Game.

Harbaugh was 49-22 through six seasons at that point, with no victories in the rivalry that mattered most. He had unquestionably made the Wolverines better since taking over in 2015, but Ohio State had soared to another level and left Harbaugh and Michigan behind.

After last season, athletic director Warde Manuel faced a choice: Stick with Harbaugh, a demonstrably good coach, or dive into the market and hope to find someone better.

Patience is at an all-time low in major college football. See LSU and Florida for examples.

Speaking of LSU, the Tigers' fired coach, Ed Orgeron, beat Texas A&M and LSU's desired coach, Jimbo Fisher, 27-24 on Saturday.

Orgeron is getting \$16.8 million to go away. Fisher has a 10-year guaranteed contract and could leave for Baton

SEE COACH ON PAGE 22



Michigan head coach Jim Harbaugh looks around as fans rush the field after the Wolverines' 42-27 victory over No. 2 Ohio State in Ann Arbor, Mich., on Saturday.

TONY DING/AP

Virus outbreak postpones Islanders games » **NHL, Page 20**

