BY KIM GAMEL AND YOO KYONG CHANG
Stars and Stripes
SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea fired a ballistic missile that appeared to have been launched from a submarine on Wednesday, South Korean officials said, hours after the communist state announced it has agreed to resume nuclear talks with the United States this weekend.

The missile flew about 280 miles from the waters off its eastern coast near the town of Wonsan and reached an altitude of 565 miles, South Korea’s Joint Chiefs of Staff said.

That would make it the highest apogee for a missile tested since the North fired an intercontinental ballistic missile toward Japan in November 2017 amid rising tensions over its nuclear weapons program.

The National Security Council in Seoul held an emergency meeting and said it “placed weight” on the likelihood that the North had “tested an SLBM” though South Korean and U.S. intelligence officials were still analyzing precise details.

The latest launch marked an escalation from the recent short-range, land-based missile tests that President Donald Trump has dismissed as small-scale and therefore not a threat to diplomacy.

Experts say the communist state is likely trying to project strength ahead of new negotiations to wring concessions from Washington.

The weapons tests also show that the North has continued to develop its weapons programs as talks have stalled.

SEE LAUNCH ON PAGE 6

North Korea launches ballistic missile after announcing plans for new nuke talks

The littoral combat ship USS Gabrielle Giffords launches a Naval Strike Missile in the Philippine Sea on Tuesday.

KENNETH RODRIGUEZ/U.S. Navy

BY CAITLIN DORNBOS
Stars and Stripes
Sailors launched a Naval Strike Missile from the deck of the littoral combat ship USS Gabrielle Giffords on Tuesday, the first time such a weapon has been fired in the Indo-Pacific region, according to a Navy statement.

The precision strike weapon “can find and destroy enemy ships at distances up to 100 nautical miles away,” the statement said. It zips over the ocean “at sea-skimming altitude, has terrain-following capability and uses an advanced seeker for precise targeting in challenging conditions.”

In footage of the launch released Wednesday, the missile ignites and flies from the ship. The video shows the launch from three angles as a sailor barks orders in the background.

The launch came the same day China unveiled its supersonic Dongfeng-41 intercontinental ballistic missiles capable of carrying 10 nuclear warheads. The missiles appeared in a military parade in Beijing celebrating the 70th anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party’s rule. Dongfeng means “east wind” in Chinese.

At 9,400 miles, the Dongfeng 41’s range is potentially the longest of any weapon in the world, the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank in Washington, D.C., told the Associated Press in a Sunday report.

SEE MISSILE ON PAGE 6

USS Gabrielle Giffords fires ‘sea-skimming’ Naval Strike Missile in Indo-Pacific

The littoral combat ship USS Gabrielle Giffords launches a Naval Strike Missile during exercise Pacific Griffin in the Philippine Sea on Tuesday.

By Caitlin Dornbos
Stars and Stripes

The littoral combat ship USS Gabrielle Giffords launches a Naval Strike Missile in the Philippine Sea on Tuesday.
Marines looking into new types of grenades

Stackable modules bring larger explosions with less fragmentation

By MARTIN EGNASH
Stars and Stripes

Several new types of grenades, including one that can be stacked to create a larger explosion, have garnered interest from the Department of the Navy.

The Marine Corps has also expressed interest in the stacking grenades. The notice comes as the military looks to expand its nonlethal weapons capability for a complex modern battlefield, where troops may encounter more low-intensity conflict scenarios or situations where civilians and enemy combatants are intermingled.

“Lethality is absolutely critical in the modern combat environment that we find ourselves in, but the world’s most lethal, incredible force must also be able to compete in all the other phases of combat,” Marine Col. Wendell B. Leimbach Jr. said earlier this year at the National Defense Industrial Association’s Armament Systems Forum in Fredericksburg, Va., which oversees the development of flash-bang devices and other weapons of nonlethal use.

“Wherever Marines are deployed, 21st century operational environments will require the use of nonlethal weapons,” he wrote in August.

The Scalable Offensive Hand Grenade allows users to configure blast effects by connecting up to three modules. The grenades bear a slight resemblance to Legos, and, like the building blocks can be coupled together.

“Modular offensive hand grenades give scalable shock effect and variety of use,” the website says. “Each module can have its own fuse, and grenades can be used either separately or by attaching two to three modules together.”

The Marine Corps currently uses “defensive” M67 fragmentation grenades as their standard. The M67 sends out hot steel shrapnel in a 15-yard casualty radius. Fragmentation hand grenades are meant for defensive use and give an extensive burst of fragments with a [360-degree] distribution, NAMMO said in a statement.

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Stackable modules bring larger explosions with less fragmentation.
By James Bolinger
Stars and Stripes

The largest class in the history of the Air Force Officer Training School — 745 newly commissioned officers — recently pinned on their rank insignia at graduation ceremonies in Montgomery, Ala.

Class No. 19-07 — a group so large that course instructors and leaders referred to it as the “Godzilla class” — started with 800 students, twice the usual number, which required the school to run two training squadrons concurrently. The usual attrition trimmed the class to 745.

Of those who graduated on Friday, 116 attended a shortened five-week course for specialized career fields for qualified, degree-holding candidates like physicians, lawyers and chaplains.

Col. Peter Bailey, the school commandant, said the class size was increased to meet Air Force demands for new officers. OTS is an initial training program for commissioned officers drawn from the enlisted ranks or the civilian world. It’s held at Air University at Maxwell Air Force Base.

“This was a unique year,” said Capt. Kaitlin Daddona, an instructor and the assistant director of operations for training, in a telephone interview Friday before graduation.

The biggest challenge was sharing resources and locations, she said. The instructors also had only one week to prepare for this class instead of the usual two.

“We did all the prep in half the time. It was hard work organizing schedules, planning shared spaces, even making sure that this many students at [physical training] have a place to go,” Daddona said. “That is just a testament to what we do. The hard work the leadership does, that the instructors do to produce really awesome second lieutenants.”

Most of Friday’s graduates were prior enlisted; the remainder had no military experience, according to a statement from the school’s public affairs office.

Second Lt. DeJaeye Herrera, who previously served 12 years as an enlisted airman, is headed to Travis Air Force Base, Calif., as an aircraft maintenance officer. She said the larger class came with a more diverse student body, which contributed to the learning environment.

The school made few changes in its day-to-day class routine despite the large number of students, said Capt. Kaitlin Daddona, an instructor and the assistant director of operations for training, in a telephone interview Friday before graduation.

“Because of shortfalls in the number of commissioned officers from [the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps] and the Air Force Academy this year, we worked the Air Force manpower directorate and Air Force Recruiting Service to make this happen,” Bailey told Stars and Stripes in an email Friday.

The school’s public affairs office said the larger class came with a more diverse student body, which contributed to the learning environment.

Of this class, 287 new officers are headed to aviation-related career fields. Another 287 are headed for jobs in engineering, operations research, intelligence, logistics, maintenance, cyber and space.

The remaining 171 graduates are entering professions in the law, medicine or the chaplain corps.

Valerie Seelye
U.S. Air Force

Sheriff denies reservist fired over duties

Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. — The U.S. Justice Department says in a lawsuit that a Mississippi sheriff fired an employee because he had to go on military duty for extended periods.

However, Coahoma County Sheriff Charles Jones said Tuesday the employee was fired for “insubordination,” not for taking military leave.

The department filed a civil lawsuit Monday against Coahoma County on behalf of Jason M. Sims Jr. of Batesville. The suit says Sims has served in the military 18 years, is in the Army Reserve and teaches leadership classes at Fort Knox, Ky.

The suit says Sims started working for the sheriff's Department in 2016. It says the sheriff's office “demonstrated hostility” during a work evaluation given in 2017.

The suit says Sims was fired in August 2018. It demands that he be rehired and paid lost wages.

“Sheriff’s department is definitely fighting the lawsuit, which was filed in U.S. District Court in Greenville,” Jones said. Sims violated work policies, but said he couldn’t discuss specifics.

Jennifer H. Svan
Stars and Stripes

By Jennifer H. Svan
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — The airmen killed in a fiery car crash on Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, were identified Wednesday as Bradley Reese Haile, 19, and Jacob Blackburn, 20.

They were airmen first class assigned to the 52nd Civil Engineer Squadron, base officials said. Both died on the scene in the fiery car crash on Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, Wednesday.

A makeshift memorial on Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, pays tribute to the two airmen killed Monday in a car crash.

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S. Korea suspends tours of border truce village

By Kim Gamel and Yoo Kyong Chang

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea has suspended tours of the border truce village of Panmunjom and the recently opened hiking trails in the area as part of measures to prevent the spread of African swine fever, officials said Wednesday.

South Korea has confirmed 11 cases of the disease, including two on Wednesday, all near the border with North Korea. The virus does not sicken people but is highly contagious and deadly for pigs and has vast economic ramifications.

Gen. Robert Abrams, head of United Nations Command and U.S. Forces Korea, ordered the temporary suspension of visits and tours to Panmunjom, which is also known as the Joint Security Area, effective Tuesday, for an unspecified time, according to a UNC press release.

The decision was made upon request from South Korea “to support the containment of the African swine fever that has been detected in the northern areas of Gyeonggi province,” it said, adding that U.N. Command education and orientation program sites also have been closed.

“UNC coordinated this temporary suspension closely with the Ministry of National Defense and the Ministry of Unification, and remains committed to supporting [South Korean] government efforts at preventing any further spread of swine fever in the country,” it said.

Hiking trails that opened elsewhere in the so-called Demilitarized Zone earlier this year as part of peace efforts with the North also have been temporarily closed as part of the quarantine efforts, the unification ministry said. The government promised to try to resume the tours as soon as possible.

South Korea has killed tens of thousands of pigs, increased disinfection measures and temporarily banned the transport of hogs and related livestock since its first outbreak was detected on Sept. 17 at a farm near the heavily fortified border that has divided the peninsula since the 1950-53 Korean War.

North Korea reported an outbreak near its border with China in May.

Tours to the JSA, which is in the heart of the DMZ and includes the iconic blue building where the armistice that ended the war was signed, are popular and receive hundreds of visitors each week.

Panmunjom, the only point in which soldiers from both sides come face to face, also was the site of the first inter-Korean summit last year as well as an impromptu meeting between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on June 30.

The closure of the area comes as the United States and North Korea have announced plans to resume working-level negotiations over the North’s nuclear weapons program this weekend. Officials have not announced the location of those talks.

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Vet finds calling as US rugby team manager

By Seth Robson
Stars and Stripes

Civilian life after a military career can be a challenge.

It wasn’t easy for Oscar Alvarez, who went through four jobs before finding his calling as a manager with the U.S. Eagles national rugby team.

Alvarez, 41, of New Braunfels, Texas, and the team are in Japan this month for the Rugby World Cup, which has seen crowds of foreigners and locals alike pack stadiums all over the country.

The trip is a nostalgic one for the former enlisted aviation ordnance Marine and logistics officer who served at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni near Hiroshima for 18 months and trained on the Japanese island of Okinawa.

Alvarez joined up in 1999 and was part of the invasion of Iraq in 2003 as a member of the Camp Pendleton, Calif.-based Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 39. He spent 9½ months in the war zone, earned his commission and worked in logistics before leaving the service in 2014.

But civilian life wasn’t all plain sailing, he said.

“Some veterans transition easily into civilian life, but some don’t,” he said. “I went through four jobs [after leaving the military]. I wasn’t happy. Nothing fulfilled me.”

Alvarez’ path to a job in rugby began while he was still in uniform. He started playing the sport at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N.C., as a back on the base team.

He worked as a liaison to the Argentine national seven-a-side team, helping link their staff with organizers at the Las Vegas Sevens tournament. Then he did the same job for the U.S. national sevens team before joining the Eagles’ staff.

Alvarez is also the manager of Major League Rugby’s San Diego Legion, where his background in military logistics comes in handy.

“It’s a great job for a veteran,” he said. “I have to get guys from A to B and make sure the players have everything they need.”

Being a manager filled everything that was missing in his life after the military, Alvarez said.

“I’m taking care of a bunch of guys, making sure they are getting fed and dealing with personal problems just as I would have done in the Marine Corps,” he said.

The Eagles were based in the city of Yomitan on Okinawa ahead of the World Cup. Members of the Yomitan Beach Boys, a team made up of Marines, soldiers, sailors and airmen stationed on Okinawa, attended a welcome ceremony for the Eagles.

James Deak, a retired Army officer who coaches the Beach Boys, said military players, including female members of Okinawa’s Wahine team, are excited about the tournament.

Deak traveled to Yokohama to watch the New Zealand All Blacks play South Africa’s Springboks last month and plans a trip with 10 other military ruggers to watch the Eagles play Tonga in Osaka on Oct. 13.

Some of the Eagles players visited Torii Station, home of the Army’s 1st Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group in Yomitan, and a group of Okinawa-based troops watched the team train, Alvarez said.

The Eagles had tough losses to heavyweights England and France in their first two games but they’re expected to do better against Tonga and challenge Argentina in their pool match in Saitama on Oct. 9.

Alvarez’ advice to troops who have never watched rugby is to give it a go.

“Almost all Americans love contact sport. If my brother-in-law, who is a die-hard Minnesota Vikings football fan, can start liking rugby, anybody can,” he said.

Rugby appeals to servicemembers, he said.

“If [troops stationed in Japan] are in any area where they can make their way to a game, they should do it,” he said. “The stadiums are always full; the crowds are amazing, and this only happens every four years.”

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Aviano schools, medical services affected by power outage again

Aviano, Italy — A second power outage in just over two weeks forced schools on Aviano Air Base to close and caused some medical services to be canceled for part of Wednesday.

Power was restored at about 10 a.m., nearly four hours after it went out, but all classes were canceled at the base’s schools and children were sent home at 9 a.m.

At the 31st Medical Group clinic, sick call, dental and optometry services were unavailable and some other services were limited. Most, however, were available throughout the outage.

“Civil engineers were on hand when the outage happened and would quickly to disseminate word of the outage,” said Capt. Sarah D. A. Babcock, spokeswoman for the base’s 31st Fighter Wing. “Backup generators were used at the medical clinic to keep things running until power was restored.”

The outage also closed all of the support squadron’s base services in the area, including the community center, bowling center, library, youth programs and education office. The base’s Community Bank was also closed. All services resumed later in the day.

Many students had already been picked up from home by buses and taken to school. Some parents said bus drivers were aware of the outage and had told them they would likely be bringing the children home again soon. “Why wouldn’t you just delay school for a few hours in the hope that the issue is repaired?” wrote Stephanie Dominque, a parent of a student at Aviano Elementary School.

Senior diplomat Choe Son Hui said Tuesday that North Korea’s “peaceful roster” is first in Indo-Pacific region. The February summit in Vietnam broke down due to sharp differences over how much reward, including sanctions relief should be given to North Korea for steps toward denuclearization.

The North responded to Trump’s suggestion made last month that Washington may pursue an unspecified “new method” in the negotiations.

Aviano schools, medical services affected by power outage again

By Norman Llamas
Stars and Stripes

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Wednesday’s incident came just over two weeks after a 15-hour power outage on Aviano forced schools to close early and threatened to keep them shut the following day. The Sept. 17 outage was caused by a demolition crew cutting through a power line while working on an area of the base that was shuttered in 2016.

A temporary repair was made to the power line two weeks ago, but base officials said a permanent solution would require another upgrade, which would be scheduled in advance to avoid disruptions to the base community.

Officials don’t yet know what caused the latest power cut, Babcock said.

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‘Blue Ribbon’ for achievement awarded to 3 DODEA schools

By Jennifer H. Svan
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — Three Department of Defense Education Activity schools, including two in Europe, have been ranked among the highest-performing U.S. schools, DODEA announced this week.

Vicenza High School in Italy, AFNorth Middle/High School in the Netherlands, and Maxwell Air Force Base Elementary/Middle School in Alabama were awarded the Department of Education’s National Blue Ribbon for 2019 in recognition of their high academic standards, DODEA said in a statement released Tuesday.

The prestigious Blue Ribbon is awarded to schools with outstanding overall academic performance or notable progress in closing achievement gaps among students.

Out of the more than 132,000 public and private schools in the U.S., all of which are potentially eligible for the designation, 362 were recognized this year.

“I am extremely proud of the students, educators and staff at all three schools for earning National Blue Ribbon recognition,” DODEA Director Thomas M. Brady said. “Their achievements reflect our unwavering commitment to excellence in education for the military-connected families we serve.”

To be recognized as high performers, Blue Ribbon schools must do well in reading and mathematics assessments and have a high graduation rate.

Both Vicenza and AFNorth had a graduation rate of 100 percent in the 2017-18 school year, information from DODEA shows.

More than 60 percent of the students who took Advanced Placement courses at AFNorth in 2018 scored a three or higher on the exam.

“This percentage is higher than DODEA or global averages!” the application said.

Many American colleges give students credit for AP scores of three and above.

AFNorth also touted its distinct location in Europe and the excursions it offers students as learning tools, to World War II battle sites and memorials, among other places, its application says.

Vicenza highlighted on its application the academic support it offers students. The school’s Student Support Team monitors grades, behavior and attendance on a weekly basis to flag at-risk students.

For younger students, a team of teachers developed what they called the Freshman Academy to help students transition from middle school, according to the school’s application. The team meets weekly to discuss the needs of students and grade-level events, according to the school.

Maxwell AFB Elementary/Middle School has “provided superior education for pre-kindergarten through fifth grade children of United States military personnel living on Maxwell Air Force Base” since it was founded in 1963, DODEA said. Sixth through eighth grade classes were added in 2011.

Representatives from this year’s crop of Blue Ribbon schools will be honored at an awards ceremony in Washington next month.

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Turkey signals incursion into Syria could be near

Bloomberg

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan expressed his readiness to act alone in northeast Syria and retake areas from American-backed Kurdish forces, saying that efforts to defuse the threat they pose to Turkey have failed.

“We may suddenly arrive one night,” Erdogan told reporters after a speech to parliament in Ankara on Tuesday, referring to a possible cross-border offensive in northeast Syria. “We have tried every means, with great patience, to solve this problem together with our allies.”

Erdogan spoke a day after Turkey vowed to take further steps to protect its national security and create a buffer zone inside Syria by pushing back Kurdish militia to enable the return of Syrian refugees. Turkey suspects the U.S. backs Kurdish aspirations for self-rule in Syria and is getting ready to use its military to prevent an attempt to redraw the region’s map.

Turkey wants to act quickly before winter sets in and makes it difficult for tanks to operate, which leaves little room for a last-minute settlement with the U.S.

Turkey’s president has repeatedly called on the U.S. to act together in expanding a previously negotiated security zone in Syria — designed to be off-limits to American-backed Kurdish YPG forces — while threatening an incursion if he doesn’t get his way by the end of last month.

The latest remarks on Tuesday threaten to inflame lingering tensions with Washington, which has warned against a unilateral operation against the Kurdish group, regarded by Turkey as a threat to its territorial integrity.

“We have no other choice left but to tread our own path,” Erdogan said. “Turkey is not going to leave its security to powers with their own agenda in the region.”

Erdogan said Turkey aims to create a buffer zone as deep as 19 miles — running from the Syrian town of Manbij on the western bank of the Euphrates River to the Iraqi border in the east — in order to accommodate as many as 2 million Syrian refugees in towns that will be built by donations from the international community once the area is cleared from YPG forces.

It’s official. UMUC is now University of Maryland Global Campus. We have a new name that better communicates who we are: a state university with a global reach and a rich history of serving the military around the world. We offer online and on-site courses, more than 90 programs and specializations, and more than 140 classroom and service locations worldwide, including at 50 military installations across Europe and the Middle East. We have served the military community overseas in war and peace for 70 years and will proudly continue our legacy as UMGC. New name. Same mission.

VISIT US AT OUR NEW URL:
europe.umgc.edu
Democrats accuse Trump of inciting violence

By Lisa Mascaro, Mary Clare Jalonick, Matthew Lee and Jonathan Lemire
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Accusing President Donald Trump of "an incitement to violence," House Democratic leaders bluntly warned Trump and his administration Wednesday not to intimidate potential witnesses in their impeachment inquiry. They said there were readying a subpoena demanding documents related to the president's dealings with Ukraine.

Meanwhile, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo acknowledged Wednesday he was on the phone call between Trump and Zelensky that is at the center of the impeachment inquiry. He also continued to push back against what he said was Democrats' "bullying and intimidation.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said she had not yet called a "vulgar" statement against the whistleblower "disgusting" and questioned him or her, though the person's identity is protected by whistleblower "Protection Act.

The Democrats said they will subpoena the White House on Friday for documents related to Trump's dealings with Ukraine, citing "flagrant disregard" of the whistleblower's complaints.

The subpoena announcement came as House and Senate staff prepared for documents to arrive from the State Department's inspector general Wednesday afternoon. A State Department invitation, reviewed by The Associated Press, requested an "urgent" meeting with staff from eight House and Senate committees.

They said that if he was on Trump's call, "Secretary Pompeo is now a fact witness in the House impeachment inquiry." And they warned, "He should immediately cease intimidating department witnesses in order to protect himself and the president.

Democrats often note that obstruction was one of the impeachment articles against Richard Nixon, who resigned the presidency in 1974 in the face of almost certain impeachment.

The committees are seeking voluntary testimony from the current and former officials as the House digs into State Department actions and Trump's other calls with foreign leaders that have been shielded from scrutiny. They have also subpoenaed Pompeo for documents.

Volker played a direct role in trying to arrange meetings between Rudy Giuliani, who is Trump's personal lawyer, and Zelensky, the chairman said. The State Department said that Volker has confirmed that he put a Zelensky adviser in contact with Giuliani, at the Ukraine adviser's request.

The former envoy, who has since resigned his position and so is not necessarily bound by Pompeo's directions, is eager to appear as scheduled on Thursday. Volker's team is not familiar with the situation, but unauthorized to discuss it and granted anonymity.

The career professional believes he acted appropriately and wants to tell his side of the situation, the person said.

Yovanovitch, the career diplomat whose abrupt recall from Ukraine earlier this year raised questions, is set to appear next week.

The Democrats also want to hear from T. Ulrich Brechbühl, a counselor at the State Department, who also listened in on the Trump-Zelensky call, they said.

A whistleblower alleged in an August letter to the inspector general for the intelligence community, Michael Atkinson, that the White House tried to "lock down" Trump's July 25 phone call with the new Ukrainian president because it was worried about the contents being leaked to the public.

The Trump administration eventually made public after acting Director of Intelligence Joseph Maguire withheld it from Congress for several weeks.

Ex-Ukraine president, Giuliani discussed investments in 2017

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Ukraine's former president said Wednesday he discussed investments with President Donald Trump's attorney, Rudy Giuliani, in 2017, but that he never discussed Ukrainian companies with any U.S. official.

Like many Ukrainians, former President Petro Poroshenko is trying to distance himself from the U.S. impeachment inquiry into Trump's July 25 phone call between the American leader and Poroshenko's successor, Volodymyr Zelensky.

"We definitely do not want to be involved in the political process inside the United States," Poroshenko, now a member of parliament, told reporters.

Poroshenko said he met Giuliani in 2017 as a "friend of Ukraine" and they discussed "political support and investment" but nothing else. He wouldn't elaborate.

"We never spoke about commercial companies" with Trump, former President Barack Obama, current Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden, or "any U.S. officials," said Poroshenko, who led Ukraine from 2014 to 2019.

Giuliani wants Ukraine to investigate Biden, whose son Hunter served on the board of the Ukrainian gas company Burisma. Trump asked Zelensky to "look into" the Bidens in a July 25 phone call that is now at the center of an impeachment inquiry.

In his first public comments on Thursday, the controversial Russian President Vladimir Putin said Trump's critics are using "every excuse to malign" Giuliani and made his remarks at a conference in Moscow.

Poroshenko said he was not aware that Giuliani had met with then-Ukrainian prosecutor Yuriy Lutsenko.

Officials: US OKs anti-tank missiles sale to Ukraine

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Congress and the State Department have given initial approval to a $39 million sale of anti-tank missiles to Ukraine to help the country battle Russia-backed separatists, officials said Wednesday. The approval was signed weeks ago and must be announced soon after both Republicans and Democrats signed off on the proposal. The State Department asked for anonymity because the sale is not final.

It was reported Tuesday by Bloomberg News. The State Department declined to comment.

The Javelin missile is man-ufactured by a joint venture of Lockheed Martin, based in North Bethesda, Md., and Raytheon Co., headquartered in Waltham, Mass.

The U.S. has been providing military aid to Ukraine since Russia invaded following the ouster of a Kremlin-backed president in 2014.

Translation: Friday, October 4, 2019
Georgia abortion law temporarily blocked

By Kate Brumback
Associated Press

ATLANTA — A federal judge on Tuesday temporarily blocked Georgia's restrictive new abortion law from taking effect, following the lead of other judges who have blocked similar measures in other states.

The law signed in May by Republican Gov. Brian Kemp bans abortions once a "detectable human heartbeat" is present, with some limited exceptions. Cardiac activity can be detected by ultrasound as early as six weeks into pregnancy, before many women realize they’re expecting, according to a legal challenge.

The law had been scheduled to become enforceable on Jan. 1.

Lawyers with the American Civil Liberties Union, Planned Parenthood and the Center for Reproductive Rights in June filed a constitutional challenge to the law on behalf of Georgia abortion providers and an advocacy group.

U.S. District Judge Steve Jones wrote in an order Tuesday that the current laws governing abortion in the state shall remain in effect for the time being. Based on current U.S. Supreme Court precedent, he wrote, the challenge to the new law is likely to succeed.

Kemp spokeswoman Candice Brotie said in an email that the governor's office is reviewing the decision.

"Despite today’s outcome, we remain confident in our position," she wrote. "We will continue to fight for the unborn and work to ensure that all Georgians have the opportunity to live, grow, and prosper."

"Today is a tremendous victory for the women of Georgia and for the Constitution," ACLU of Georgia legal director Sean Young said. "Politicians have no business telling women or couples when to start or expand a family. This case has always been about one thing: Letting her decide."

The law defines a "detectable human heartbeat" as "embryonic or fetal cardiac activity or the steady and repetitive rhythmic contraction of the heart within the gestational sac," according to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the legal challenge says that "cells that eventually form the basis for development of the heart later in pregnancy" produce "cardiac activity" that can be detected by ultrasound as early as six weeks into pregnancy.

The law makes exceptions in the case of rape and incest, as long as the woman files a police report first. It also allows for abortions after cardiac activity is detected when the life of the woman is at risk or when a fetus is determined not to be viable because of a physical condition.

Additionally, it declares an embryo or fetus a "natural person" once cardiac activity can be detected, saying that is the point at which "life begins." That would make the fetus a dependent minor for tax purposes and trigger child support obligations.

Trump and Pelosi aides talk drug costs

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Even as the impeachment battle rumbled, senior White House and Democratic aides sat down Tuesday to discuss details of drug pricing legislation, officials on both sides said.

Passing a law to curb prescription drug prices remains a top policy priority for President Donald Trump and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, despite her decision to launch an impeachment inquiry into the president's efforts to get a foreign leader to investigate political rival Joe Biden.

Both sides stressed they were in the best of times, a prescription drug bill would be a heavy lift for a divided Congress and the Trump White House. But the talks showed there's movement, even if the end result remains highly uncertain.

Former House Speaker Henry Connelly said her top staff provided a briefing on how the California secretary of state this week temporarily blocked a California law aimed at forcing President Donald Trump to release his personal income tax returns in order to appear on the 2020 primary ballot.

U.S. Rep. Brenda Lawrence and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, both Democrats, were involved in the talks, said a law enforcement official.

The California secretary of state is blocked by a federal judge from requiring President Donald Trump release his personal income tax returns.

Law aimed at Trump's tax returns is blocked

Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — A U.S. judge on Tuesday temporarily blocked a California law aimed at forcing President Donald Trump to release his personal income tax returns in order to appear on the 2020 primary ballot.

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Law aimed at Trump’s tax returns is blocked

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Former Rep. Chris Collins pleaded guilty Tuesday in an insider trading case, a day after he resigned from Congress.

Cameron Collins leaves federal court Tuesday in New York. Collins pleaded guilty Tuesday in an insider trading case, a day after he resigned from Congress.

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's re-election campaign and the Republican National Committee raised $125 million in the third quarter of the year, a presidential fundraising record.

The pro- Trump effort said Tuesday that it has raised more than $308 million in 2019 and has more than $156 million in the bank.

Republicans aim to use the fundraising haul to fight off Democratic impeachment effort.

Former President Barack Obama and the DNC raised just over $70 million in the third quarter of 2011.

“President Trump has built a juggernaut of a campaign, raising record amounts of money at a record pace,” said Trump campaign manager Brad Parscale.

RNC Chairwoman Ronna McDaniel credited Democratic attacks on Trump for motivating supporters to donate in record numbers.

“We are investing millions on the airwaves and on the ground to hold House Democrats accountable, highlight their obstruction, and take back the House and re-elect President Trump in 2020,” she said.

The fundraising announcement comes as the pro-Trump efforts launched their first major advertising campaign of the cycle. Trump's team aims to de

Trump

Former President Barack Obama and the DNC raised just over $70 million in the third quarter of 2011.

Smoke fills the sky after a World War II-era bomber plane crashed Wednesday outside Bradley International Airport north of Hartford, Conn.

WWII-era bomber crashes, burns at airport in Conn.

The Hartford Courant

HARTFORD, Conn. — At least two people died and more were seriously injured when a World War II-era plane crashed at Bradley International Airport in Windsor Locks on Wednesday.

A B-17 bomber crashed about 10 a.m. local time, burning into flames and creating a plume of smoke that could be seen for miles. Sources say it crashed into a small building as it was trying to land.

While there is no official word on the number of deaths, sources say at least two people have died and three others have critical injuries.

Thirteen people were on board: the pilot, the co-pilot, an attendant and 10 passengers, state officials said. One person in a maintenance building also was injured.

Laura Nolan said she saw that something was amiss as the plane came in for a landing. She was driving east on Route 20 at the time, and she saw the World War II-era plane flying unusually low.

“He was treetop level when I saw him,” Nolan said. “And one of the engines wasn’t spinning.”

As the plane passed by, Nolan said, the roar was “thunderous.” And then, the plane crashed.

“I saw the smoke in the rearview mirror,” Nolan said.

The Collings Foundation did not provide details on the crash but released a statement: “Our thoughts and prayers are with those who were on that flight and we will be forever grateful to the heroic efforts of the first responders at Bradley. The Collings Foundation flight team is fully cooperating with officials to determine the cause of the crash of the B-17 Flying Fortress and will comment further when details become known.”

The plane is one of five — two World War II fighter planes and three bombers — at the airport this week for tours and flights through Wings of Freedom. The most recent fatal crash of a vintage war plane happened in Fredericksburg, Texas, in November 2018. The pilot and a passenger in a P-51D Mustang fighter aircraft were killed when the plane, which had just parti-

The Nine-O-Nine, a Collings Foundation B-17 Flying Fortress, flies over Thomasville, Ala., in 2002. A B-17 vintage World War II-era bomber plane associated with the foundation crashed Wednesday.

John David Mercer, (Mobile, Ala.) Press-Register

WASHINGTON — Bernie Sanders' campaign said Wednesday that the Democratic presidential candidate had a heart procedure for a blocked artery and was canceling events and appearances “until further notice.”

The Vermont Senator's campaign said Sanders, 78, was in Las Vegas when, according to a campaign statement, he experienced chest discomfort during a campaign event Tuesday and sought medical evaluation. Two stents were “successfully inserted” and that Sanders “is conversing and in good spirits,” according to the campaign.

Sanders' wife, Jane O'Meara Sanders, was en route to Las Vegas on Wednesday and said in an email to The Associated Press that her husband was “doing really well.”

Tick Segerblom, a Clark County, Nevada, commissioner who was at Sanders’ fundraiser Tuesday said Sanders seemed fine at the time.

“He spoke well. He jumped up on the stage. There was just nothing visible,” Segerblom said.

The Democratic field's oldest candidate, Sanders sometimes jokes about his age to town halls and other events, especially when interacting with younger participants. His aides have tried to project him as a candidate with energy levels that surpassed his 2016 presidential campaign.

He is one of three candidates over age 70 in the Democratic primary, which has spurred discussions over whether the party should rally behind a new generation of political leaders. Sanders' health issue is certain to revive that discussion in the weeks before the next presidential debate this month.

Sanders' campaign manager, Faiz Shakir, was on a telephone call with supporters Tuesday night but didn't mention any health concerns about the candidate. Shakir said the “state of the campaign is strong” and he played up Sanders’ strong fundraising total for the third quarter.

The Vermont Senator's campaign raised $25 million, the highest among the candidates who have reported so far, and scheduled its first television ads in Iowa. On Wednesday, it suspended those spots, too.

Sanders had been among 10 Democratic candidates scheduled to appear Wednesday at a forum on gun control in Las Vegas. He recently canceled some appear-

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2,000 attend funeral for vet who had no kin

Associated Press

SARASOTA, Fla. — Most of the 2,000-plus people who gathered in the Florida heat Tuesday didn’t know Edward K. Pearson. They knew little, if anything, about the life of the 80-year-old Army veteran.

But they knew of his death, and that was reason enough to attend his funeral. They came on rumbling Harley-Davisons and in sleek Mercedes. They walked into the service with the aid of canes and service dogs. Women clasped and Robert, the general’s sons. Men gripped American flags large and small.

Pearson, a resident of Naples, Fla., who had served in the Army during the early 1960s, died Aug. 31. His obituary went viral when the funeral director included this sentence in the service announcement: This veteran has no immediate family and all are welcome to attend.

News of the ceremony at a pavilion area at Sarasota National Cemetery spread fast and wide in veterans’ forums and on social media. CNN host Jake Tapper and Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., tweeted the information. For many in the region, it was impossible to think they wouldn’t attend.

“You know what? There’s no way I’m going to let him do this alone,” said Willie Bowman, 62, a Purple Heart recipient and a former Army veteran. “I’ve never met the man. But he’s a veteran and he’s a brother of mine.”

Pearson was born in Pennsylvania and moved to Florida 25 years ago. One woman in the community got to know him after Hurricane Irma in 2017: Patty Thrasher, a customer service representative for the Collier County Tax Collector’s office.

The storm had damaged the roof of Pearson’s mobile home. Water rained into the kitchen through a window and when Pearson sought government aid to help with repairs and needed a title, Thrasher discovered that he didn’t actually own the home.

The man who sold him the home was a swindler who took advantage of an elderly person, she said.

With Thrasher’s help, the community secured a title for the home, fixed the roof and paid a past electric bill. Pearson told Thrasher that he didn’t want to “be on the news” for his plight and was hesitant to ask for help.

Cemetery officials say it’s not uncommon for veterans to die and be buried — without family. In Texas, there is a formal effort called the “Unaccompanied Veteran Burial Program” that makes sure veterans in the state receive full military honors.

On Tuesday, Thrasher said Pearson would have been overwhelmed by the thousands who stood in the heat to send him off.

“I think he would have just totally been in tears,” she said.

Court rules FCC had right to dump net-neutrality rules

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Federal Communications Commission can dump rules that keep internet providers from favoring some services over others, but couldn’t bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or bar states from imposing any rules that the agency repealed or

Mo. executes man despite medical concerns

Human rights groups and death penalty opponents, including all four Roman Catholic bishops in Missouri and the American Civil Liberties Union, urged Parson to grant clemency and remand Bucklew to life in prison without parole. But Parson, a Republican who worked in law enforcement for more than 20 years and is a staunch death penalty supporter, decided early Tuesday that the execution could proceed.

Bucklew’s girlfriend, Stephanie Ray, left him on Valentine’s Day 1996. Over the next few weeks, according to court records, he harassed her, cut her with a knife and punched her in the face. Ray feared for her life and the lives of her children, so she moved into the Cape Girardeau County mobile home that her new boyfriend, Michael Sanders, shared with his children.

On March 21, after stealing his nephew’s car and taking two pistols, handcuffs and duct tape from his brother, Bucklew followed Ray to Sanders’ home. Sanders confronted Bucklew with a shotgun inside the home. Bucklew fired two shots, one piercing Sanders’ lung. He bled to death.

Court records say Bucklew struck Ray in the face with the pistol, handcuffed her and dragged her to his car. He later raped Ray.
Judge allows challenge to downsizing of monuments to proceed

The government has already created new management plans for the downsized monuments.

President Donald Trump downsized Bears Ears by 85% and Grand Staircase by nearly half. The lawsuits were filed by environmental organizations, tribal coalitions, an outdoor recreation company and a paleontology organization.

Those groups celebrated getting over an initial hurdle as they attempt to reverse decisions they say left sensitive lands and sites vulnerable to damage. Lands cut from the monuments are still under protections afforded to federal lands but are now open to oil and gas drilling and coal mining.

“We’re one day closer to overturning Trump’s unlawful order that attacks the Grand Staircase-Escalante and Bears Ears national monuments,” said Steve Bloch, legal director at the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance conservation group, which is among the organizations mounting the legal challenge.

The Department of the Interior said in an emailed statement that it supports Trump’s decisions and is confident the judge will side with the administration.

Government lawyers argued last year in the request to throw out the lawsuits that the groups did not have standing to file their cases. The lawsuits challenged the constitutionality of a 2017 decision by the federal government to downsize two sprawling national monuments in Utah, including Bears Ears National Monument.

A federal judge has rejected the Trump administration’s bid to dismiss lawsuits challenging the constitutionality of a 2017 decision to downsize two sprawling national monuments in Utah, including Bears Ears National Monument.
White officer’s guilty verdict stuns some black advocates

By Errin Haines and Russell Contreras  
Associated Press

Monica Blake watched closely as a Texas jury weighed the case against a white police officer charged in the fatal shooting of a black neighbor, wondering whether the panel would render a different decision than so many others in recent years.

When Amber Guyger was convicted of murder Tuesday, Blake, a retired Nashville, Tenn., officer, wept in disbelief.

“I’m so happy,” said Blake, who is black. “But of course, nobody wins.”

C.J. Lawrence, a Jackson, Miss.-based civil rights attorney and founder of the advocacy web-site Black With No Chaser, said the verdict offered one clear message: “Black people won’t become criminals in their own homes.”

Guyger sentencing began Wednesday. She faces up to 99 years in jail.

While activists and observers welcomed the rare conviction, most cautioned that the outcome was not the result of changing behavior and attitudes.

Tourists to Yellowstone National Park

Horn of plenty of pain: Bison gore
Utah man, then his date, months later

By Antonia Noori Farzan  
The Washington Post

After recovering from a cracked rib and collapsed lung, Kyler Bourgeois thought he was ready to return to Utah’s Antelope Island State Park, where he was gored by a bison during a June trail run. So he headed there with a date on Friday evening, figuring that they could watch the sun set together.

The next thing he knew, his date, Kayleigh Davis, was being airlifted to the hospital, the victim of the park’s second reported bison attack this year.

“I thought my situation was just a freak accident,” Bourgeois told The Washington Post on Monday night. “But apparently, they’re a lot more aggressive than I ever thought.”

Statistically speaking, bison attacks are a relatively rare occurrence on Antelope Island, a 42-square-mile preserve in the Great Salt Lake that is one of Utah’s most popular parks and also home to hundreds of free-ranging bison.

Making the coincidence even more bizarre, neither Davis, 22, nor Bourgeois, 30, made the mistake of trying to pet a bison or approach one for a selfie, as visitors to Yellowstone National Park have been known to do. Both were gored while doing what experts recommend.

On June 1, Bourgeois set out to climb the trail that leads to the highest point in the park. He approached the summit only to discover that two adult bison were waiting on the opposite side of the ridge. As soon as he saw them, he rushed to get out of their sight. But it was too late. One of the huge, shaggy beasts, which can run at up to 35 mph, was charging him.

While recovering from the bison attack, Bourgeois connected with Davis online, and the two bonded over their shared love of the outdoors.

Davis told KSL-TV that as soon as she spotted the bison on her run Friday, she turned and hopped off the trail to give the animal space. Then, the Boy Scouts cycled by.

The enormous animal turned on her and charged, throwing her about 15 feet in the air. Although in enormous pain, she tried not to move or make any noise once she hit the ground.

When Bourgeois found her, Davis was bleeding from her left thigh, where the bison had gored her. She had also broken her right ankle, dashing her plans to run in a spring half-marathon.

Bourgeois said he couldn’t help but feel guilty.

“My heart hurt pretty bad seeing that,” he told The Post.

Judge upholds Harvard’s use of affirmative action

By Collin Binkley  
Associated Press

BOSTON — A federal judge Tuesday cleared Harvard University of discriminating against Asian American applicants in a ruling that was seen as a major victory for supporters of affirmative action in college admissions across the U.S.

He closely watched lawsuits that had raised fears about the future of affirmative action, a group called Students for Fair Admissions accused the Ivy League college of deliberately — and illegally — holding down the number of Asian American applicants in order to preserve a certain racial balance on campus.

U.S. District Judge Allison D. Burroughs, however, ruled that Harvard’s admissions process is “not perfect but permissible constitutional muster.” She said there is “no evidence of any racial animus whatsoever” and no evidence that the admissions decision was “negatively affected by Asian American identity.”

“Race-conscious admissions will always penalize to some extent the groups that are not being advantaged by the process,” Burroughs wrote. “But this is justified by the compelling interest in diversity and all the benefits that flow from a diverse college population.”

Her ruling, which came after a three-week trial last year, brings temporary relief to other universities that consider race as a factor in choosing students.

Harvard President Lawrence S. Bacow welcomed the ruling, saying that the consideration of race and many other factors “helps us achieve our goal of creating a diverse student body that enriches the education of every student.”

Students for Fair Admissions said it will appeal.

“We believe that the documents, emails, data analysis and depositions SFFA presented at trial compellingly revealed Harvard’s ‘systematic discrimination against Asian-American applicants.’”

Edward Blum, the group’s president, said in a statement. “We believe that the documents, emails, data analysis and depositions SFFA presented at trial compellingly revealed Harvard’s ‘systematic discrimination against Asian-American applicants.’”

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President Students for Fair Admissions

including its highest court, will continue to uphold the vital principle that colleges and universities that choose to do so can consider race as one factor in reviewing applicants to achieve the goal of a talented, diverse incoming class,” Ted Mitchell, the group’s president, said in a statement.

In the case at Harvard, the plaintiffs argued that Asian Americans were held to a higher standard than others, amounting to an “Asian penalty,” while the school gave preference to black and Hispanic students with lower grades.

A 2013 internal report at Harvard found that if the school admitted only Asian applicants — 43% of the admitted class would be Asian American, while in reality it was 19%. Harvard said the report was only meant to be “exploratory” and was based on incomplete data.

Much of the lawsuit centered on a subjective “personal rating” that Harvard assigns to applicants. The suit argued that Asian Americans consistently receive lower personal ratings because of racial bias, leading many to be rejected.

The plaintiffs built their case around a analysis of six years of Harvard admissions data. It found that Asian Americans had the lowest personal ratings and the lowest admission rates, while black and Hispanic students fared far better in both areas.

Harvard countered with its own analysis finding no evidence of bias. During the trial, the dean of admissions offered possible reasons to explain the lower personal rating for Asian Americans, saying they may come with weaker letters of recommendation.

The judge sided with Harvard on every count of wrongdoing alleged in the lawsuit.
Bones, who met Landry in Brooklyn with Seelig, head of marketing for Hearts & team in New York City, where on Sept. 20, about another adopter, Dolly was flown ever family.”

“Hello, Dolly!” the puppy, left, has fur around her mouth that makes her look like Salvador Dali. After fostering, and some confusion about another adopter, Dolly was flown through the volunteer Southwest Animal Transport Team, the organization’s team in New York City, where on Sept. 20, Landry picked up the fast-growing, now almost 3-month-old puppy.

“It was love at first sight,” said Allison Seelig, head of marketing for Hearts & Bones, who met Landry in Brooklyn with the puppy. “She is such a wonderful little pup.”

Although a surprise that night for Martino didn’t quite come off as planned, Dolly was greeted in Provincetown with a birth-day party and a house full of people singing “Hello, Dolly!”

“I never win anything in contests, or situations where you have to have hope for luck,” Martino said as he showed off Dolly last week. “So I just kind of thought the odds aren’t really in my favor for this to happen.” When I turned the corner (to see Dolly for the first time), I thought ‘It’s really true. She’s right there.’” He soon emailed Seelig: ‘I’m so in love with her already!”

“We’re just so happy to have her,” Landry said.

The couple had lost their 17½-year-old dog, Rhoda, just a month before Dolly’s photo started getting famous. While rescue workers had lost five young, very healthy, in great shape, perfect bulls that are all basically the same age ... that is so outside the bounds of normal activity.

Colby Marshall vice president of Silvies Valley Ranch

Colby Marshall, left, with Violet, and Ryan Landry adopted Salvador Dolly, on Sept. 25. The puppy, left, has fur around her mouth that makes her look like Salvador Dali.

The couple were hugely impressed by Hearts & Bones as a thorough and “get them to the right homes operation,” have

NASA’s Insight lander captures marsquakes and other Mars sounds

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — NASA’s InSight lander on Mars has captured the low rumble of marsquakes and a symphony of other otherworldly sounds.

Scientists released an audio sampling Tuesday. The sounds had to be enhanced for humans to hear.

InSight’s seismometer has detected more than 100 events, but only 21 are considered strong marsquake candidates. The rest could be marsquakes — or something else. The French seismometer is so sensitive it can hear the Martian wind as well as movements by the lander’s robot arm and other mechanical “dinks and donks” as the team calls them.

“It’s been exciting, especially in the beginning, hearing the first vibrations from the lander,” said Imperial College London’s Constantinos Charalambous, who helped provide the audio recordings. “You’re imagining what’s really happening on Mars as InSight sits on the open landscape,” he added in a statement. InSight arrived at Mars last November and recorded its first seismic rumbling in April.

A German drilling instrument, meanwhile, has been inactive for months. Scientists are trying to salvage the experiment to measure the planet’s internal temperature.

The so-called mole is meant to penetrate 16 feet beneath the Martian surface, but has managed barely 1 foot. Researchers suspect the Martian sand isn’t providing the necessary friction for digging, causing the mole to helplessly bounce around rather than burrow deeper, and to form a wide pit around itself.
Residents of Tsuen Wan on Wednesday protest the police shooting of a teenage demonstrator. Hong Kong office workers and schoolmates of the teenage demonstrator rallied to condemn police tactics and demand accountability.

Hong Kong protesters condemn police tactics after teenager shot

BY EILEEN NG AND JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

HONG KONG — Hong Kong office workers and schoolmates of a teenage demonstrator shot at close range in the chest by a police officer rallied Wednesday to condemn police tactics and demand accountability.

The shooting Tuesday during widespread anti-government demonstrations on China’s National Day was a fearsome escalation in Hong Kong’s protest violence. The 18-year-old is the first known victim of police gunfire since the protests began in June. He was hospitalized and his condition was described by the government as stable on Wednesday.

The officer fired at the teen, Tsang Chi-kin, struck him with a metal rod. The officer’s use of lethal weaponry is sure to inflame widespread public anger about police tactics during the crisis, widely condemned as heavy handed.

“The Hong Kong police have gone trigger-happy and nuts,” pro-democracy lawmaker Claudia Mo said Wednesday. After viewing a video of the shooting, Mo said: “The sensible police response should have been to use a police baton or pepper spray, etc., to fight back. It wasn’t exactly an extreme situation and the use of a live bullet simply cannot be justified.”

Several hundred people, including students, chanted anti-police slogans outside Tsang’s school in Tsuen Wan district in northern Hong Kong on Wednesday.

Sitting cross-legged, some held an arm across their chest to protest or their left shoulder — the location of the teenager’s gunshot wound. One held a hand-written message condemning “thug police.”

More than 1,000 office workers skipped their lunch to join an impromptu march in the city’s business district against the police shooting. Dozens of black-clad protesters also protested — the location of the teenager’s gunshot wound. One held a hand-written message condemning “thug police.”

Responding to questions about why the officer shot at Tsang’s chest, instead of his limbs, Deputy Police Commissioner Tang Ping-Keung said Wednesday the officer had fired at an area that could immobilize the youth quickly.

Residents of Tsuen Wan protest the police shooting of a teenage demonstrator. Hong Kong office workers and schoolmates of the teenage demonstrator rallied to condemn police tactics and demand accountability.

Iraq protest death toll rises to 6 in two days of clashes

BY QASSIM ABDULL-ZAHRA Associated Press

BAGHDAD — At least four people were killed and dozens were wounded in clashes in Iraq on Wednesday as security forces fired live ammunition and tear gas for the second day to disperse anti-government protesters demanding improved services and an end to corruption.

The deaths brought the overall number in two days of violence to six. Protests on Tuesday had left two dead — one in Baghdad and one in the city of Nasiriyah — and over 200 wounded.

The renewed clashes occurred despite a massive security dragnet mounted by the government in an effort to quash the economically-driven protests.

Hundreds of heavily armed security forces and riot police deployed on Baghdad streets, blocking all intersections leading to a major central square Wednesday for a repeat of the clashes on Tuesday. Police launched armored personnel carriers and SUVs stood guard and by mid-afternoon residents said authorities had shut down social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp.

Iraq has been caught in the middle of U.S.-Iran tensions in the Middle East, putting an additional strain on popular resentment in Baghdad that hosts thousands of U.S. troops and powerful paramilitary forces linked with Iran. Iran has warned of violent retribution for the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad called for restraint from all sides.

“The right to demonstrate peacefully is fundamentally a right in all democracies, but there is no place for violence in demonstrations from any side,” it posted on Twitter.

The protests, organized on social media, urged authorities to reach Tahrir Square on Tuesday, initially driven by economic woes. They began peacefully, calling for an end to corruption, improved basic services and more jobs. But they soon turned violent after security forces fought back demonstrators with water cannons, tear gas and live ammunition.

Protesters responded by calling for toppling the government, throwing stones at security forces and setting tires and trash containers on fire. At least two protesters were killed and more than 200 were wounded.

A few dozen protesters tried to reach Tahrir Square again on Wednesday morning but were met with scores of riot police who formed a human barrier and soldiers who blocked roads, sometimes with barbed wire. Security forces again fired tear gas and live ammunition into the air to disperse the protesters, chosing them away, according to officials.

Saadoun Street, a major commercial thoroughfare leading to Tahrir Square, was deserted and all the shops and restaurants were closed.

Security and medical officials said three protesters were killed in Baghdad on Wednesday and one in Nasiriyah, south of the capital. All officials spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations.

Iraqi police did not rule out further protests, saying they had gathered evidence to present in court. The sessions are expected to extend over four days. It could take several weeks for the attorney general to render his final decision. However, legal experts say the likelihood of an indictment is very high given the mountains of evidence collected by police over years of investigations and the prosecution’s seeming consensus of pursuing a trial.

Although Netanyahu would not be required to step down if charged, he will face heavy pressure to do so.

Netanyahu’s pre-indictment corruption hearing begins

BY AARON HELLER Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s long-awaited pre-indictment hearing on corruption charges began Wednesday in Jerusalem, as a jittery political world eagerly sought clarity on his legal standing amid the stalemate that followed the country’s second inconclusive election of the year.

Netanyahu is currently struggling to prolong his lengthy rule by building a unity government with his primary opponents, the centrist Blue and White party, which refuse to partner with him because of the serious crimes of which he is suspected.

Israel’s attorney general has recommended charging Netanyahu with bribery, fraud and breach of trust in three separate cases. Netanyahu has denied wrongdoing, calling them part of a media-orchestrated witch hunt. The allegations against him in the cases include suspicions that he accepted hundreds of thousands of dollars of champagne and cigars from billionaire friends, offered a critical publisher legislation that would weaken his paper’s main rival in return for softer treatment and allegedly used his influence to help a wealthy telecom magnate in exchange for favorable coverage on a popular news site.

Netanyahu has long promised he’d clear his name in the hearing. A team of his lawyers arrived at the Justice Ministry in Jerusalem to argue that all charges should be dropped.

“We are going to present not only the evidence everyone is aware of but also new evidence. We are certain that once we present our findings there will be no choice but to close the case,” Netanyahu attorney Amit Haddad said, upon entering the hearing.

“We believe and know that at the end of the day all the three cases must be closed.”

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Although Netanyahu would not be required to step down if charged, he will face heavy pressure to do so.
Iran says it likes European plan to boost nuclear deal

Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — President Hassan Rouhani said Wednesday that Iran supports a plan by European countries to help save a nuclear deal that Tehran reached with the West in 2015 and from which the United States withdrew last year.

Rouhani said the plan included preventing Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons, securing its support for regional peace, lifting U.S. sanctions and the immediate resumption of Iranian oil exports.

Speaking during a weekly cabinet meeting, Rouhani said: “We agreed with the general framework work by the Europeans.” France, Britain and Germany had urged Tehran to enter talks about a new arrangement on the nuclear deal.

Rouhani’s comments come amid heightened tension between Tehran and Washington following U.S. President Donald Trump’s decision over a year ago to unilaterally pull out of the nuclear deal with Iran. The U.S. has imposed sanctions that have kept Iran from selling its oil abroad and have crippled its economy. Iran has since begun breaking terms of the deal.

Rouhani said Iran has never been after nuclear weapons and whenever the rights of the Iranian nation are considered in plans and negotiations, “the road is not closed, and the road is again open.”

Rouhani said the plan could have been discussed during his New York visit last week to attend the U.N. General Assembly but that President Donald Trump scuppered chances by openly threatening to impose more sanctions.

He said Trump in a private message had told the Europeans he was ready but later told media outlets he wanted to intensify sanctions. Rouhani expressed gratitude for efforts by President Macron regarding the plan.

Assistant Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif told state TV later Wednesday that even though Macron’s four-point plan did not include Iran’s views, “it is necessary that negotiations continue in an accurate way. We will continue the communications.”

Without elaboration, Zarif said Japan’s Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is applying efforts, too.

Zarif said Iran has always wanted security in the Persian Gulf and if its rival Saudi Arabia changes its regional policy, it will find “open arms” from Iran.

“Have we always said we are not after tensions with our neighbors,” he said.

Trump pulled the U.S. from the nuclear deal between Iran and world powers and reimposed sanctions on Iran as part of a “maximum pressure” policy that sent the country’s economy into free fall.

The Azores Civil Protection Agency said the Category 2 hurricane powered across the Atlantic Ocean on Wednesday, lashing the Azores Islands with heavy rains, powerful winds and high waves but causing only minor damage, according to authorities.

The Azores Civil Protection Agency said the Category 2 hurricane flooded trees and power lines as it passed just west of the Portuguese island chain.

Hurricanes the size of Lorenzo are rare so far north and east in the Atlantic basin. Lorenzo is producing huge swells across the North Atlantic as it moves northeast toward Ireland and the United Kingdom and weakens to a Category 1 hurricane.

The U.S. National Hurricane Center in Miami said swells generated by Lorenzo are being felt along the eastern coast of the United States, Canada and the Bahamas as well as parts of western Europe. The swells are bringing life-threatening surf and rip currents, it warned.

It said Lorenzo is “likely be a fairly vigorous cyclone” when it reaches Ireland late Thursday.

The U.K. Met Office forecast “very strong winds and heavy rain” for western areas of the country on Thursday and Friday.

The Portuguese weather agency reported gusts of up to 90 mph in the Azores — lower than forecast as Lorenzo lost power over cooler water.

Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa said he had spoken to Azores officials at daybreak and the hurricane risk had peaked without major incident.

“Fortunately, everything indicates that things have not turned out as badly as we feared,” Costa told reporters in Lisbon. Azores Civil Protection Agency chief Carlos Neves said two homes were safely evacuated and no injuries were reported. Emergency crews were removing fallen trees from roads and restoring downed power lines, he said.

Around 250,000 people live on the Azores’ nine volcanic islands and the archipelago is a popular tourist destination, famed for its lakes, mountains and volcanic craters.

Authorities in the archipelago placed seven islands on red alert as Lorenzo approached. School classes were canceled and government offices were closed as people were told to remain indoors Wednesday.

Azores airline SATA canceled all flights to the archipelago, and some islands closed their ports.

UK’s Johnson says he has ‘reasonable’ Brexit compromise for European Union

Associated Press

MANCHESTER, England — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson will send what he called a “constructive and reasonable” compromise for a Brexit deal to the European Union on Wednesday, as he warned of grave consequences for trust in democracy if Britain fails to leave the bloc in less than a month.

British voters in 2016 narrowly chose to leave the EU but the country remains deeply divided over the departure terms. In a speech Wednesday to the Conservative Party’s annual conference, Johnson underscored the fear of violating public belief in democracy should Brexit not happen.

“After three and a half years, people are beginning to feel that they are being taken for fools,” he told party members in Manchester, northern England. “They are beginning to suspect that there are forces in this country that simply don’t want Brexit delivered at all.”

The new British plans are likely to face deep skepticism from EU leaders, who doubt the U.K. has a workable plan to avoid checks on goods or people crossing the border between EU member Ireland and the U.K.’s Northern Ireland after Brexit.

Johnson insisted that there would not be customs checks at the border in Northern Ireland under the proposed deal, one of the main sticking points of the Brexit talks.

A Brexit agreement between the EU and his predecessor, Theresa May, was rejected three times by the U.K. Parliament, largely because of opposition to the “backstop,” an insurance policy designed to ensure there is no return to customs posts or other infrastructure on the Irish border.

At Vatican, Pompeo pushes religious freedom alliance

Associated Press

VATICAN CITY — U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Wednesday criticized governments that wield absolute power as threats to religious freedom, as he scrambled to contain a political crisis back home.

Amid a growing storm in Washington over an impeachment inquiry into President Donald Trump, Pompeo went to the Vatican to urge it and other nations to join the Trump administration in an alliance to promote global religious freedom.

He told a conference on human dignity and faith that when governments hold all the power, religion is a threat.

“When the states rules absolutely, human dignity is trampled, not cherished,” he said.

“When the state rules absolutely, it demands its citizens worship government, not God,” he said.

Pompeo delivered the speech as he came under increasing scrutiny from House Democrats leading the impeachment proceedings. On Tuesday, he pushed back on demands for House demands for interviews with State Department officials about the administration’s dealings with Ukraine that are at the center of the inquiry.

Debris blocks a road in the seaward village of Feteira, outside Horta, in the Portuguese island of Faial, Wednesday. The Category 2 hurricane passed the Azores on Wednesday.

Lorenzo lashes Azores as it heads toward Ireland, Britain
Pony on freeway clipped by hit-and-run driver

LONG BEACH — Authorities were searching for a hit-and-run driver who struck a pony that was loose on a Los Angeles-area freeway, leaving the small horse slightly injured.

The California Highway Patrol said a 10-year-old boy had been riding the pony at a home when he fell off and the animal ran away.

The CHP said the pony made its way onto westbound State Route 91 in Long Beach, where it was clipped by a black SUV. The driver sped away.

The horse was evaluated by animal control officers and reunited with its owner.

Charge: Timber thieves started forest fire

TACOMA — Federal prosecutors said timber thieves were to blame for a fire in Washington’s Olympic National Forest last year.

An indictment unsealed Monday said Justin Wilke and Shawn Williams were trying to steal a bigleaf maple tree in August 2018 but it had a beehive nest. They decided to burn the nest with gasoline, and then tried unsuccessfully to douse the fire with their water bottles.

Nearly 5.2 square miles of public land burned.

Wilke was arrested Monday. The U.S. Attorney’s Office said Williams is in custody in California.

Cougar captured after escaping zoo enclosure

INDEPENDENCE — Officials at a southeast Kansas zoo said a cougar that got out of its enclosure was recaptured.

The cougar got loose Monday morning at Riverside Park and Ralph Mitchell Zoo in Independence.

City officials later said the animal was captured and it had not left the zoo.

Zoo officials had issued a statement before the capture warning residents to be cautious while the search was underway.

Ferris wheel opens in downtown St. Louis

ST. LOUIS — A new and colorful attraction is open in downtown St. Louis — a 200-foot-tall Ferris wheel.

The St. Louis Wheel opened at Union Station, where a new aquarium complex is expected to open in December.

The Ferris wheel lights up with 1.6 million LED lights. It includes 42 climate-controlled gondolas that can hold up to eight people each. Rides last about 15 minutes and cost $15 for adults and $10 for children.

The redevelopment of the former train station complex also includes an 18-hole mini-golf course, a carousel and an old-fashioned soda fountain.

Serving the community

Coulter Grove Intermediate School students weed the labyrinth at New Hope Children’s Advocacy Center in Maryville, Tenn., on Monday as part of Students Engaged in Rewarding Volunteer Experiences, or SERVE.

THE CENSUS

1,400

The number of South Carolina lottery players who won a Pick 4 game using just the number 2. The South Carolina Education Lottery posted on Twitter that $3.4 million dollars will be paid out to the record number of winners, who all used the combination 2-2-2-2 on their Saturday Midday cards. The winners will be eligible to claim between $2,500 and $5,000 per winning ticket.

Boy, 9, takes wrong turn, wins 10K race

SARTELL — It took 9-year-old Kade Lovell longer than expected to finish his 5K race, but only because he was busy accidentally winning a separate 10K race.

Lovell’s mother became worried when he didn’t cross the finish line of the Francis Franny Flyer 5K in Sartell on Sept. 21. Kade said a woman told him to keep going when he approached the 5K turn so he did, despite his confusion.

Kade finished in first-place overall. His time of just over 48 minutes was a minute faster than the 40-year-old second-place contestant.

Most of human skeleton found on building’s roof

BILOXI — Police said most of an adult human skeleton was found on the roof of a building in downtown Biloxi.

Investigators said no foul play is suspected.

Harrison County Deputy Coroner Brian Switzer told WLOX-TV that the bones were found Sept. 19 and are being examined by a forensic anthropologist.

Biloxi Police Maj. Chris De Back said officers have investigated cases of people reported as missing and concluded that none match what they know about the remains.

Officials: Man found with drugs, synthetic urine

HARTFORD CITY — A 49-year-old Indiana man on probation faces new drug charges including possession of synthetic urine.

The Star Press reported Kirk Allen Boughman was driving with a suspended license, was clipped by a black SUV. The driver sped away.

The horse was evaluated by animal control officers and reunited with its owner.

In court for making instruments.

Bottles. The tree’s wood is prized and then tried unsuccessfully to burn the nest with gasoline, but it had a bees nest. They decided to burn the nest with gasoline, and then tried unsuccessfully to douse the fire with their water bottles. The tree’s wood is prized for making instruments.

Nearly 5.2 square miles of public land burned.

Wilke was arrested Monday. The U.S. Attorney’s Office said Williams is in custody in California.

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In tune with new opportunities

‘Rappa-ternt-sanga’ T-Pain enjoying his success following ‘Masked Singer’ win

By Gary Gerard Hamilton
Associated Press

T-Pain is not a fan of early mornings, but it’s the time he prefers to work. He says it’s the time he’s most productive, and it’s also the time when he can work from his home, where he can keep his children close. He is married to fellow country star Trisha Yearwood.

His music career has been varied when it comes to his production. He has worked with artists from multiple genres, including country, pop, and hip-hop. He has written songs with artists such as Luke Bryan, and he has worked on a song with the rapper Pitbull.

He has been a busy performer, touring and recording in 2014 and remains with his family. He is married to fellow country star Trisha Yearwood.

Garth Brooks to receive Gershwin Prize for Popular Song

Country superstar Garth Brooks has more than just friends in low places. The Library of Congress said Wednesday the Grammy winner will receive the Gershwin Prize for Popular Song in March. Previous recipients include Tony Bennett, Paul Simon, Carole King and Willie Nelson.

Brooks is a member of the Country Music Hall of Fame whose hits include “Friends in Low Places,” “The Thunder Rolls” and “The Dance.”

At 57, he’ll be the youngest recipient of the prize. He will be honored with an all-star tribute concert in Washington that will air on PBS stations in spring 2020.

An award is only as good as the names on it,” Brooks said in a statement. “First off, for any musician, the name Gershwin says it all. Add to Ira’s and George’s names the names of the past recipients and you have an award of the highest honor. I am truly humbled.”

Since his debut in 1989, Brooks has become a top-selling and touring musical force, bringing his brand of high energy and emotional country music to stadiums across America.

He is the best-selling solo artist in the U.S. with more than 148 million in album sales, according to the Recording Industry Association of America, and is second only in total U.S. sales to The Beatles.

In the early 2000s, he took a break from recording and touring to spend more time with his family. Brooks returned to major touring and recording in 2014 and remains one of country’s most popular touring acts.

He is married to fellow country star Trisha Yearwood.

Other news

■ Writer-director Spike Lee added to his New York Knicks collection by purchasing 13 items associated with his favorite team in a recent auction. The family of late Knicks coach Red Holzman sold 35 items that netted $319,341, according to SCP Auctions, which handled last week’s sale. Among Lee’s acquisitions was the used original net from Game 7 of the 1970 NBA Finals, won by the Knicks, and Holzman’s NBA coach of the year trophy that season.

■ Jim Carrey has set his wild sights on the literary world. The actor has written a novel called “Memoirs and Misinformation,” Alfred A. Knopf announced Wednesday. The book is a “fearless and semi-autobiographical deconstruction of persona.”
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The Korean Peninsula: A dangerous neighborhood

BY GEORGE F. WILL
Washington Post Writers Group

South Korea's President Moon Jae-in, who has hosted North Korean leader Kim Jong Un for a number of summits, last visited Pyongyang to discuss the restoration of the Ganges River's flow to North Korea, as part of a generalwärmende Debatte zwischen Nord- und Südkorea die Auseinanderdrängung des Kriegswüchs. Erst als die südkoreanische Armee in die Offensive ging, erkannte die Nordkorea ihre Schwachstellen in den Infrastrukturen des südkoreanischen Landes.

In the meantime, the South Korean army continued its strategic drills near the border, as a joint military exercise with the United States. The exercise aims to prepare for any potential conflict that could arise from the North Korean threat.

The situation is tense, as South Korea and its allies are closely monitoring the developments on the Korean Peninsula. The international community, including the United Nations, continues to call for a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

OPINION

How can Congress compel testimony?

BY DAVID IGNATIUS
Washington Post Writers Group

After Secretary of State Mike Pompeo’s February 11 refusal to testify before Congress, a new question emerges: What legal tools does Congress have to compel the Trump administration to provide testimony and documents?

This fundamental constitutional question may begin moving gradually toward the Supreme Court in coming months, perhaps slowing the Democrats’ timeline for impeachment proceedings. For such a constitutional challenge between the legislative and executive branches probably can only be resolved by the third leg of our government, the judiciary.

As the Watergate investigation of President Richard Nixon turned on the production of White House tape recordings of Nixon’s conversations in the Oval Office, the Trump investigation may cross a similar threshold. A House committee chaired by Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., is seeking to gather evidence consistent with an OMBIG (Office of Management and Budget) investigation that “the president of the United States is using the power of his office to solicit interference from a foreign country in the 2020 U.S. election.”

But how will Congress seek to compel testimony? The House has alreadyMoon Jae-in, who has hosted North Korean leader Kim Jong Un for a number of summits, last visited Pyongyang to discuss the restoration of the Ganges River’s flow to North Korea, as part of a generalwärmende Debatte zwischen Nord- und Südkorea die Auseinanderdrängung des Kriegswüchs. Erst als die südkoreanische Armee in die Offensive ging, erkannte die Nordkorea ihre Schwachstellen in den Infrastrukturen des südkoreanischen Landes.

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Johnson & Johnson settles Ohio opioid suit

By Geoff Mulvihill
Associated Press

Johnson & Johnson on Tuesday announced it had reached an agreement worth more than $20 million with two Ohio counties, becoming the latest company to settle a lawsuit to get out of the first federal trial over the nation's opioid crisis.

The deal with Cuyahoga and Summit counties comes a little more than a month after an Oklahoma judge ordered the New Brunswick, N.J.-based health care conglomerate to pay $572 million over its marketing of opioids in that state.

It was announced less than three weeks before the scheduled start of the first federal trial over the opioid crisis. Four other opioid makers also have reached settlements in recent months and will not be defendants in the trial, scheduled for federal court in Cleveland. Like most of the others, Johnson & Johnson still faces some 2,000 other lawsuits related to the nation's opioid epidemic.

The Ohio agreement calls for the company and its Janssen Pharmaceutical subsidiary to pay $10 million without admitting liability. The deal also includes provisions for the company to reimburse the counties up to $5 million for legal expenses and contribute $5.4 million to nonprofit organizations that deal with the crisis in northeastern Ohio.

"The settlement allows the company to avoid the resource demands and uncertainty of a trial as it continues to seek meaningful progress in addressing the nation's opioid crisis," Johnson & Johnson said in a statement. "The company recognizes the opioid crisis is a complex public health challenge and is working collaboratively to help communities and people in need."

Opioids, a class of drug that includes prescription painkillers as well as heroin and illicitly made fentanyl, have been linked to more than 400,000 deaths in the U.S. since 2000. Johnson & Johnson has sold three opioids in the U.S.: Duragesic fentanyl patches, the oral opioid Nucynta; and an extended-release version of Nucynta.

The company said its products accounted for less than 1% of the opioid prescriptions in the country since they were launched. It sold marketing rights for Nucynta in 2015 and has not marketed Duragesic to patients or prescribers in the U.S. for more than a decade, although it continues to sell the drug.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates

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WEATHER OUTLOOK

The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.
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**Metropolitan Division**

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- Carolina Hurricanes
- New York Rangers
- New York Islanders
- New Jersey Devils

**Central Division**

- Chicago Blackhawks
- Colorado Avalanche
- St. Louis Blues
- Tampa Bay Lightning
- Minnesota Wild

**Western Conference**

- Arizona Coyotes
- Colorado Avalanche
- Dallas Stars
- Minnesota Wild
- St. Louis Blues

**College football**

- Georgia Southern (4-0)
- Temple (3-1)
- East Carolina (3-2)
- Dartmouth (2-2)
- BYU (4-0)

**College basketball**

- Iowa (1-0)
- Oregon (1-0)
- Arizona (3-0)
- Texas A&M (1-0)
- Oklahoma State (2-0)

**Fri., Oct. 25**

- San Diego State at Colorado State
- Nevada at Ohio State
- USC at Washington
- UCLA at Stanford
- Oregon State at Arizona State

**Sat., Oct. 26**

- Washington at Oregon
- Oregon at Arizona
- Colorado at Utah
- UCLA at Washington State
- Stanford at California

**Sun., Oct. 27**

- BYU at Stanford
- Washington at Oregon State
- Oregon at UCLA
- Washington State at Arizona State
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**Tennis**

- China Open

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- New England Patriots
- New York Giants
- Miami Dolphins
- Minnesota Vikings
- Kansas City Chiefs

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**Sports on AFN**

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  - MLS
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    - Sporting Kansas City
    - Vancouver Whitecaps FC
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          - Tampa Bay Buccaneers
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      - Rugby World Cup
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      - WNBA Playoffs
      - WNBA Western Conference
      - WNBA Eastern Conference
  - Cricket
  - Handball
  - Water polo
  - Squash
There are several ways to win a title

By Stephen Whyno
Associated Press

had the night of June 12 gone differently, maybe NHL rivals would be looking to the Boston Bruins as the team to follow to win the Stanley Cup.

“We were one game away to change the narrative of how teams should be structured,” Bruins defenseman Torey Krug said.

The Bruins lost Games 7 of the final to the big, heavy St. Louis Blues, who bruised and battered their way to the Cup. In recent years, that might have led teams around the league to bulk up and try to follow the Blues’ lead — but that is unlikely.

The differences in recent champions — from fast and skilled to physical and punishing — illustrate how many different blueprints there are to win a championship in today’s NHL.

Over the past decade, the Chicago Blackhawks and Pittsburgh Penguins won it all with speed, skill and talent. The Los Angeles Kings, Washington Capitals and Blues had plenty of skill, sure, but also used size to wear down opponents.

In a sport where whoever lifts the Stanley Cup tends to swing the pendulum on how to build a winner, it’s important to “stay true to the identity of your team” — whatever that is. Yet there remains a notion that when the regular season ends and the playoffs begin, the NHL trend toward speed and skill ruling the ice is no longer the case.

“Playoffs is a whole different beast, and obviously there’s more hitting,” Chicago winger Alex DeBrincat said. “Even if you’re a skilled team, you’re going to hit more.”

Ryan O’Reilly said, “There’s so many different ways,” Blues playoff MVP Ryan O’Reilly said. “Most of the players in the league, you’re not going to change. You change little things and make adjustments, but you’re not going to change the players that they are. So it’s finding your group of players and getting them to play the most effective way.”

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“It’s different hockey,” said Anze Kopitar, who won with the Kings in 2012 and 2014. “In order to get into the playoffs, you’ve got to be fast and skilled and everything. Playoffs is a little bit different. You’ve got to wear teams down, and that’s what it is. It’s not as high-scoring as it is during the regular season. You still obviously have to have some grit and some hard-nosed guys that are willing to do that.”

“We battle it out, battling isn’t just about the Kings, Capitals or Blues finishing thundering checks and separating opposing players from the puck. It’s about getting through injuries, winning races to the puck and dictating the tempo of the game to suit a certain style.

“You always have to stick to what gives you success throughout a regular season,” Krug said. “We play a certain way where we can match up against any style. If you want to play fast, we’ll do it. You want to play heavy and in your face, we have the players that can do that as well, and we won’t shy away from it.”

Roster shuffling

Panarin, Bobrovsky among many on the move

By Larry Lage
Associated Press

The St. Louis Blues looked a lot like the team that won the franchise’s first Stanley Cup when the puck dropped Wednesday in the NHL’s season opener against the 2018 champion Washington Capitals.

Ryan O’Reilly, who won the Conn Smythe Trophy as playoff MVP, knows the season won’t be quite the same even if many of his teammates are still together.

“It’s going to be very different,” O’Reilly said. St. Louis held onto much of its roster during a quiet offseason, hoping it will be enough to compete for another title. The Blues raised their championship banner during a pregame ceremony Wednesday.

But the Blues made one major move last week, acqui- ring offensive-minded defenseman Justin Faulk from Carolina for Joel Edmundson and a prospect. The team then signed the 27-year-old Faulk to a $45.5 million, seven-year extension, banking on him being a key part of its future.

Here’s a look at some of the other major moves in the offseason on the ice, behind the bench and in the front office:

Bye, Blue Jackets

Columbus lost a trio of stars in free agency, the only unrestricted free agents to sign seven-year contracts with other teams.

Dynamic forward Artemi Panarin received an $81.5 million deal from the New York Rangers. Two-time Vezina Trophy winner Sergei Bobrovsky took his talents to the Florida Panthers for $70 million just after Roberto Luongo retired. And two-time All-Star center Matt Duchene signed a $56 million deal with the Nashville Predators.

Columbus has a lot of cap space, perhaps planning to make a splash next summer, because it didn’t spend a lot of money chasing success with free agents. The Blue Jackets did add 30-year-old winger Gustav Nyquist with a $22 million, four-year contract after he had a career-high 60-point season.

Savvy Stars

The Dallas Stars have built a Cup-caliber team and know now is the time to spend in free agency. They added a pair of veterans motivated to prove they can still play after spending their entire careers with one team.

The Stars lured three-time All-Star forward Joe Pavelski away from the San Jose Sharks with a three-year deal worth $21 million. They made a much smaller investment in 34-year-old winger Corey Perry, whose contract was bought out by the Anaheim Ducks. Perry’s $1.5 million, one-year contract could be quite a bargain if he can provide more scoring depth for Dallas.

Taking a flyer

Mississippi left the playoffs for the first time in seven years and made an aggressive move to pay 32-year-old Mats Zuccarello $30 million over five years even though he has only one 20-goal season and that was three years ago.

Vancouver gave 29-year-old defenseman Tyler Myers a $30 million, five-year deal after he had consecutive seasons with 30 points for the first time since his first two years in the league. The Canucks are trying to avoid the first five-year playoff drought in franchise history.

Follow the leader

Shortly after Florida’s season ended, the Panthers hired three-time Stanley Cup-winning coach Joel Quenneville to take perhaps the top leader in the league off the market.

Three former Edmonton coaches — Todd McLellan (Ottowa), Dallas Eakins (Anaheim) and Ralph Krueger (Buffalo) — are getting another shot to lead teams.

The Oilers, meanwhile, are hoping former Adams Award winner Dave Tippett can get the most out of Connor McDavid’s supporting cast and guide them into the playoffs for just the second time in 14 years. Alain Vigneault, another former NHL Coach of the Year, landed a job in Philadelphia.

The rebuilding Ottawa Senators are taking a chance on former Toronto Maple Leafs assistant D.J. Smith, giving him his first opportunity to be a head coach in the NHL.

Upstairs

The Detroit Red Wings brought Hall of Famer Steve Yzerman back to be their general manager. The former Tampa Bay Lighting general manager replaced Ken Holland, who later left to lead the Oilers’ front office. The Red Wings are hoping former Adams Award winner Dave Tippett can get the most out of Connor McDavid’s supporting cast.

The Boston Bruins as the model to follow to win the Stanley Cup.

Members of the Washington Capitals pose with the Stanley Cup on June 7, 2018 in Las Vegas. The ebb and flow of recent champions from fast and skilled to physical and punishing illustrates how many different blueprints there are to win a championship in today’s NHL.

AP hockey writer Stephen Whyno contributed to this report.
Whether it involves New Jersey rookie center Jack Hughes or any other prospect, Devils general manager Ray Shero says the most important aspects of a prospect’s development must be in place before first stepping into the locker room.

Simply put, the key is culture, and how it rubs off on an impressionable 18-year-old.

“If you have a bad group of guys, if you're not in a good environment in terms of work ethic, you're like, ‘OK, that’s how it’s done here, great. I’m not going to work, I’m going to stay out ’til 4 o’clock,’” Shero told The Associated Press.

“If there’s accountability, and that’s really a big thing in terms with anything whether it’s business, sports, whatever ... when you walk into that it’s ‘Oh, that’s how it’s done,’” he added. “There’s learning curves for everything on and off the ice. I think the better you support those guys as young kids and teenagers, the better off they’re going to be.”

The start of the NHL season this week places the focus on a new crop of youngsters set to make their debuts.

In New Jersey, all eyes are on Hughes, the under-sized, play-making center who became the eighth American-born player selected with the top pick in June. He joins a team that features two other No. 1 draft picks in Taylor Hall, who was selected first by Edmonton in the 2010 draft, and Nico Hischier, selected No. 1 by the Devils in 2017.

Nothing Hughes has done thus far should give Shero pause as the Devils prepare to open their season hosting Winnipeg on Friday.

The 5-foot-10, 170-pound Hughes displayed how much of a competitor he is by expressing how unhappy he was losing in his first NHL competitive setting — a 6-4 loss to Buffalo in the Sabres prospects tournament last month.

“We kind of got lucky to put four on the board, and only gave up six. Disappointing game,” Hughes said.

The youngster responded once the preseason began by scoring twice, including the decisive goal, on a give-and-go with Nikita Gusev in a 4-3 overtime win in his preseason debut against Boston.

And the player who spent the past two years setting USA Hockey’s National Development Program’s scoring record followed up by scoring a breakaway goal 34 seconds into a 4-2 win over the Rangers a few days later. Hughes finished the preseason with three goals and an assist in four games.

Like any youngster, Hughes is bound to make mistakes. One issue that stood out in Buffalo was the number of times he coughed up the puck.

Former NHLer turned broadcaster Ed Olczyk isn’t concerned, believing Hughes will learn to adapt.

“He’s going to try things that he won’t in 50 games game from now or 100 games from now. You’ve going to have to take the good with the bad and vice versa,” he said.

Here’s a list of other youngster to keep an eye on this season:

RW Kaapo Kakko, Rangers
Selected second overall behind Hughes, the 6-foot-2, 194-pound forward led Finland with six goals in 10 games at the world championships. His 22 goals in the Finnish Elite League last season were the most by a draft-eligible player.

D Cale Makar, Avalanche
After helping UMass make its first Frozen Four appearance in April, college hockey’s Hobey Baker Award winner made the jump to the NHL by joining Colorado in the midst of its first-round playoff series with Calgary. He finished with a goal and five assists in 10 games.

D Quinn Hughes, Canucks
A play-making defenseman, Hughes spent two years at Michigan before closing last season with three assists in five games with the Canucks.

D Erik Brannstrom, Senators
Acquired in a trade that sent Mark Stone to Vegas in February, Brannstrom is expected to get plenty of playing time on a young Senators team.

LW Alexandre Texier, Blue Jackets
The 20-year-old is being counted upon to be part of the Blue Jackets’ young core to step up following the offseason free-agency departures of Artemi Panarin and Matt Duchene. Texier had two goals and an assist in eight playoff games with Columbus last spring.

F Victor Olofsson, Sabres
Nicknamed Victor “Goal-ofsson” for his deft shooting ability, he had two goals and two assists in six games with the Sabres last year, and had a team-leading 30 goals in 65 games with AHL Rochester. A seventh-round pick, the 24-year-old rookie was a late-bloomer after playing five seasons in his native Sweden.

AP hockey writer Stephen Whyno contributed.

New Jersey Devils center Jack Hughes, center, scores a goal against the Boston Bruins on Sept. 16 in Newark, N.J.

2020 JEEP® GLADIATOR
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The Rams (3-1) had spent their first 35 regular-season games without losing their first week. Another team.

The Rams opened 8-0 last year before going 6-0 against the division, and McVay is 10-2 over the accelerated schedule — except for running back Todd Gurley, who’s clearly tired of talking about invisibility running game behind King, LAC 5 0 0.0 1 0.

McCloud, CAR 6 135 22.5 31 0.

Natson, LA 6 61 10.2 32 0.

J. Jones, ATL 23 317 13.8 54 0.

Lockett, SEA 26 328 12.6 44 2.

M. Thomas, NOR 34 361 10.6 24 1.

Evans, TAM 139 74 970 9 4.

Keenum, WAS 135 92 970 7 4.

Rodgers, GBY 146 91 1069 6 1.

N. Chubb, CLE 78 398 5.1 88 4.

Fournette, JAC 72 404 5.6 81 0.

A. Jones, BAL 8 0.8 7.6 0 0.

T. Quinn, WAS 5 41 8.2 11 0.

T. Cloud, BUF 16 749 58 46.8.

C. Hyde, HOU 52 250 4.8 25 1.

J. Jacobs, OAK 62 307 5.0 51 2.

D. Henry, TEN 78 310 4.0 18 3.

Ma. Ingram, BAL 55 328 6.0 49 5.

M. Mack, IND 22 169 7.7 1 0.

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Alabama, NE 6 19 3.2 9 0.

G. Ruley, MIA 8 147 17.9 1 0.

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Coe addresses low turnout at worlds, heat and doping

By Pat Graham
Associated Press

DOHA, Qatar — Sebastian Coe has a concise message for athletes who are dicing on Doha: Deal with it.

The head of worldwide track and field says any athletes complaining about the hot temperatures and non-existent crowds at these world championships probably isn’t making any other sort of headlines.

“If I just be a bit blunt about this: The athletes talking about externalities are probably not the ones who are going to be walking home with medals from here,” the IAAF president said Wednesday at the half-way mark of the championships.

“I have much, much bigger commitments and visions for our sport than to turn and head for home because we take an event into an area that poses problems.”

Coe also said the latest doping issue to cloud the action on the track — famed track coach Alberto Salazar’s four-year-doping ban, which led to his removal from the track meet on Tuesday — “doesn’t derail the championships.”

“We’ve been in business mode,” Coe said.

That business at the moment is uncovering the next Usain Bolt heading into the Tokyo Games next summer.

Even better, multiple Bolts.

“I think it’s unhealthy for a sport to have to rely on the long haul on one person,” Coe said as the championships end Sunday.

“It’s pretty clear we’ve got some unbelievable young talent there. Do we have to do more to promote them? Absolutely. Do we have to build their profile over the next four years? Absolutely. We need that jaw-dropping talent to be more recognizable.”

Some story lines are starting to take shape, said Coe. From Noah Lyles, Christian Coleman and Andre De Grasse are being billed as next in line to fill the void left by the retirement of Bolt in 2017. The trio figures to be vying for medals in the 100 and 200 in Tokyo.

The next version of worlds will be in Eugene, Ore., in 2021. The 2022 World Cup.

“Why would it be the wrong place?” Coe said. “I’m not sure any of us at this moment are in a position to want to make sporting relationships dependent upon current political fragilities.”

One day, Coe envisions places such as Kenya, Ethiopia or Jamaica hosting a world championship. The organization is trying to reduce costs to make the championships more appealing to cities.

The next version of worlds will be in Eugene, Ore., in 2021.

“If we’re a global sport, we have to be seen as global,” Coe said.

“I can keep going back to the same eight or nine places that we’ve always sort of focused on in the past. But you won’t get there in one natural testosterone level in order to compete: “The regulations were tabled and suffused in a concept that a level playing is really important.”

On the Russians competing as neutral athletes at worlds: “You’ve got 30 of them there. That’s important.”

On the steamy conditions in road races (the stadium is kept cooler by an air-conditioning system): “It was a challenging climate. But the reality of it is we had a medical facility, which I don’t think I’ve ever seen in any championship — Olympics or world championships.”

Coe became a bit defensive when asked if Qatar seemed like the right place to host the 2022 World Cup.

“If we’re a global sport, we do have to be seen as global. We have to keep in mind that our goal is to compete internationally.”

Kelly was at odds with the conference concerning he hadn’t really studied the issue.

“I believe that policy change around student-athlete name, image and likeness needs to be addressed at the national level to assure consistency and a level playing field across all states and intercollegiate athletic conferences,” said a statement released by the office of the president at Cal.

Stanford released a similar statement:

“Finally, to have done it feels unbelievable. It does feel good. It’s like I thought, ‘We already did this?’ ” Lyles said.

“Can I just be a bit blunt about this: The athletes talking about externalities are probably not the ones who are going to be walking home with medals from here,” the IAAF president said Wednesday at the half-way mark of the championships.

“I have much, much bigger commitments and visions for our sport than to turn and head for home because we take an event into an area that poses problems.”

The schools would not pay the players who were dicing on Doha: Deal with it.

The law does not take effect until 2023.

The schools would not pay the players for their likenesses, but players could be compensated by outside companies. Other states are considering similar legislation.

Kelly wasn’t alone among his Pac-12 counterparts in his pragmatism. Almost all of the league’s coaches responded that they were taking a wait-and-see approach.

The concern among coaches is that top recruits might favor Tennessee in California because of the opportunity to make money.

Or, it could hurt recruiting if California teams are declared ineligible for postseason.

“We believe that policy change around student-athlete name, image and likeness needs to be addressed at the national level to assure consistency and a level playing field across all states and intercollegiate athletic conferences,” said a statement released by the office of the president at Cal.

Stanford released a similar statement:

“It doesn’t cost the universities, it doesn’t cost the NCAA, and what it did before is it put restrictions on athletes and it no longer does and I think it’s progress,” he said.

“You know, the Olympics used to just be for amateurs. The Olympic model changed over time, so I would imagine the NCAA model has to change over time.”

Oregon coach Mario Cristobal also walked the fine line of wanting to do what’s right by his players while also acknowledging he hadn’t really studied the issue.

“I certainly believe that in any way that we can help the student-athletes I think it’s our obligation, our responsibility. We certainly do a lot for them here. I know what it’s like. I’ve been there,” Cristobal said.

Utah coach Kyle Whittingham expressed confidence the NCAA would address the matter long before the law takes hold. Indeed, the main governing body for collegiate sports has a committee that has been looking at the issue. A report is due later this fall.
The Los Angeles Dodgers' Corey Seager waits to bat as the wild-card game between Milwaukee and Washington plays on the scoreboard during practice on Tuesday in Los Angeles.

**Dodgers healing up ahead of NLDS against Nationals**

**By Beth Harris**

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Nagging injuries to Justin Turner, Rich Hill and Joe Kelly have improved enough that all three will be available when the Los Angeles Dodgers open the National League Division Series.

Manager Dave Roberts didn't reveal his roster Tuesday for the best-of-five playoff that begins Thursday at Dodger Stadium against the Washington Nationals. And he didn't announce a Game 1 starter, either.

But Roberts confirmed that two talented Dodgers rookies — catcher Will Smith and second baseman Gavin Lux — will be active. The manager also said the team will carry eight relievers.

Los Angeles is rested after finishing fourth in the NL West during the regular season, a .500 team at All-Star break before midsummer tear. St. Louis needed Flaherty to pitch regularly in September.

Donaldson batted .190 with no homers vs. St. Louis. ... Keuchel has not faced the Cardinals in last eight games while missing some time due to bone spurs in his right elbow.

The goal is to get outs and he has had a long streak. ... Keuchel against Dodgers in 2018 NLDS, is only other Atlanta pitcher with more than one postseason start.

All six games between the clubs this season were played in May. St. Louis went 9-18 overall that month. ... Atlanta finished third in National League in runs. St. Louis ranked 11th. ... Cardinals had second-best ERA (3.62) in NL behind Dodgers. Atlanta was fourth (3.67). ... Cardinals had second-most shutouts (14) in NL this year. ... St. Louis had best fielding percentage in majors. ... Braves were second among NL teams.

**NLDS capsule**

A capsule look at the National League Division Series between the St. Louis Cardinals and Atlanta Braves.

**Schedule:** Game 1, Thursday, at Atlanta; Game 2, Friday, at Atlanta; Game 3, Sunday, at St. Louis; Game 4, Monday, at St. Louis; Game 5, Wednesday, Oct. 9, at Atlanta.

**Projected lineups**

**Cardinals:** RF Dexter Fowler (.236, 18 HRs, 65 RBIs), 2B Tommy Edman (.307, 11, 36) or Kolby Wong (.285, 11, 59), 1B Paul Goldschmidt (.256, 33, 95), LF Marcell Ozuna (.242, 29, 88), C Yadier Molina (.271, 10, 37), 3B Matt Carpenter (.226, 14, 43), SS Paul DeJong (.234, 30, 78), CF Harrison Bader (.274, 10, 20), LF Matt Joyce (.295, 7, 23) or Adam Duvall (.267, 10, 19), C Brian McCann (.249, 12, 45) or Tyler Flowers (.229, 11, 34), SS Dansby Swanson (.251, 17, 65, 10.15 SBs).

**Braves:** RF Ronald Acuna Jr. (.280, 41, 101, 37 HRs), LF Ozzie Albies (.295, 24, 86, 19 HRs), SS Chuckie Robinson (.267, 5, 24), 2B Ozzie Albies (.295, 24, 19, 5 HRs), CF Adam Duvall (.267, 10, 19), 3B Josh Donaldson (.239, 37, 94, 37 HRs), 1B Freddie Freeman (.295, 39, 121, .389 OBP), DH Marcell Ozuna (.314, 30, 78, 12 HRs), LF Matt Joyce (.295, 7, 23) or Adam Duvall (.267, 10, 19), CF Brian McCann (.249, 12, 45) or Tyler Flowers (.229, 11, 34), SS Dansby Swanson (.251, 17, 65, 10.15 SBs).

**Starting pitchers**

**Cardinals:** Rhys Hoskins (1-0, 4.23 ERA), RH Jack Flaherty (10-8, 2.85), RH Adam Wainwright (14-10, 4.19), RH Dakota Hudson (16-7, 3.35).

**Braves:** LH Dallas Keuchel (8-8, 3.75, 34 starts), RH Mike Foltynewicz (7-5, 3.69). ... Mike Soroka (13-4, 2.68, 28 starts, 142 Ks in 174⅓ IP), LH Max Fried (7-6, 4.02, 30 starts, 173 Ks in 165⅔ IP).

**Relievers**

**Cardinals:** RH Carlos Martinez (2-1, 3.23 ERA, 24/27 saves), LH Giovanny Gallegos (5-2, 2.34), RH John Gant (1-1, 3.66), LH Andrew Miller (5-6, 4.45).

**Braves:** RH John Gant (3-4, 3.59), RH Michael Wacha (6-7, 4.76 in 29 games, 24 starts), LH Tyler Webb (2-1, 3.76).

**Matchups**

Fifth postseason meeting between the teams, most recently when Cardinals won 2012 wild-card game. ... Braves have lost nine straight playoff rounds since beating Astros in 2001 NLDS. Only the Chicago Cubs, who lost 10 straight from 1910 through 1998, had a longer streak. ... Braves are without their top three relievers. ... Keuchel and Jansen will be key.

**Big picture**

Braives: Atlanta (97-65) finished regular season with its most wins since 2003 and the NL's No. 2 seed. ... Team that started season with no Cy Young Award contender to one start that plan would limit the team's best hitter, Adam Duvall.
WASHINGTON — Trent Grisham’s eyes were still red, his cheeks stained by tears, as a group of Milwaukee Brewers teammates gathered near his locker in the visitors’ clubhouse at Nationals Park to offer hugs and words of encouragement. Everything was going according to plan for manager Craig Counsell and the Brewers — get a lead, mix and match with the bullpen — until, suddenly, it wasn’t. Milwaukee was undone by wildness from closer Josh Hader and an error by Grisham in right field that allowed the go-ahead run to score with two outs in the bottom of the eighth inning.

It added up to a gut-punch of a 4-3, season-ending loss to the Washington Nationals in the NL wild-card game Tuesday night.

“It’s going to sting. It’s going to sting for a long time. Especially giving the Nationals a Divisional (Series) berth,” Grisham said. “It’s going to hurt. I expect it to hurt.”

He is a 22-year-old rookie who debuted Aug. 1 and played in only 51 major league games this season, taking his 0-5 record right primarilly after 2018 NL MVP Christian Yelich went down for the year after fracturing his right kneecap on Sept. 10.

“It’s going to be magnified because of the big stage, but he's a huge reason that we’re even playing in this game. He has a lot to be proud of in his first taste of the big leagues,” Yelich said. “I feel for him. If you play baseball long enough, you’re going to come up short sometimes. It’s part of being a professional athlete. He’ll be just fine.”

Even without Yelich, Milwaukee managed to surge into the playoffs, winning 18 of 20 games during one stretch and reying on a strong bullpen. That formula appeared set to work again.

“I’ve been here a bunch of times. Never kind of broke through,” said Ryan Zimmerman, the Nationals’ first draft pick back in 2005, who has been through all the disappointments. “Finally caught a break tonight.”

It was Zimmerman’s broken-bat bloop single — as a pinch hitter that helped load the bases in the eighth off Hader, who took the loss.

Hader hit another pinch hitter, Michael A. Taylor, a ruling that stood up when the Brewers challenged, according to Major League Baseball, because there wasn’t “clear and convincing evidence to overturn the call.”

“Definitely looked like it got the bat, but it also got the hand,” Hader said.

Hader, who had 37 saves in 44 attempts this season, also walked Anthony Rendon, loading the bases and bringing Soto to the plate.

“It was Zimmerman’s thinking right there,” Counsell said.

“Just get a base hit up the middle,” he said, “and try to help to tie the game.”

The summer’s won’t have it. For 2019 NL Rookie of the Year in the NL, the Brewers hit the go-ahead run to end the inning, but that didn’t matter. He had turned a 3-1 deficit into a lead, and so he clapped his hands, then pounded his chest and high-fived third base coach Bob Henley, before shouting “Let’s go!” and its Spanish equivalent, “Vamonos!”

“That inning was an ugly inning,” Brewers manager Craig Counsell said. “Crazy things happen.”

Max Scherzer fell behind 3-0 by giving up homers to Yasmani Grandal and Eric Thames in the second. Scherzer replaced Soto in the sixth and threw three scoreless innings to earn the win in the first relief appearance of his major league career, regular season or playoffs.

Daniel Hudson pitched the ninth for the save, getting Ben Gamel to fly out to the warning track in center with a man on to end it.

“At first I was upset, but when I walked off the field, I thought, ‘Why not?’” said the pitcher. "I want to see a situation where I can walk off and have the confidence that I have with the routine."
Washington Nationals left fielder Juan Soto watches his two-out single to right field during the eighth inning Tuesday night against the Milwaukee Brewers in the National League wild-card game at Nationals Park. Three runs came home on the play, which included an error by Brewers right fielder Trent Grisham. Washington won 4-3.

Juan way ticket to LA

Soto lifts Nats to comeback win over Brewers in NL wild-card game

By Howard Fendrich
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — After all the heartache, close calls and early exits, maybe it makes sense that a 20-year-old kid who never had been to the playoffs, Juan Soto, helped the Washington Nationals finally advance. Maybe, just maybe, it makes sense that this particular edition of the Nationals, a club that went from 12 games under .500 to playoff participant, demonstrated the necessary never-give-up fortitude when things looked bleak.

Soto delivered a bases-loaded single against Milwaukee closer Josh Hader that scored three runs with two outs in the eighth inning, thanks in part to an error by rookie outfielder Trent Grisham, and the Nationals came back to beat the Brewers 4-3 in the NL wild-card game.

The Nationals' record in winner-take-all playoff games prior to Tuesday night's win over the Brewers.

Tuesday night.
“We started off horrible, as we all know, and we vowed that we wouldn’t quit,” Nationals manager Dave Martinez said, talking about the year as a whole but sounding like he could have meant this particular evening. “I told the boys, ‘I promise you, stay with it, don’t quit, this will turn around.’ And it did. And here we are today.”

The Nationals carry a nine-game winning streak into their best-of-five NL Division Series against the Dodgers, who had the National League’s best record at 106-56.

Game 1 is Thursday in Los Angeles, and some in the sellout crowd of 42,993 chanted “Beat LA! Beat LA!” as the Nationals began their celebration on the infield with family members.

SEE JUAN ON PAGE 31