

## Navy vets find, record WWII destroyer

By **WYATT OLSON**  
*Stars and Stripes*

Searchers have located and filmed a World War II destroyer lying four miles deep in waters off the Philippines, the deepest known shipwreck in the world.

An expedition by undersea technology company Caladan Oceanic found the wreck of the Fletcher-class destroyer USS Johnston this week below 21,180 feet of water east of Samar Island in the Philippine Sea, the firm said in a news release Wednesday.

A previous expedition had located debris believed to belong to the Johnston or a virtually identical destroyer that sank in the same battle, but the main wreckage lay down a cliff in waters too deep for the submersible to go.

The Johnston sank on Oct. 25, 1944, during the Battle off Samar, which was the central

scene of action in the Battle of Leyte Gulf, one of the biggest naval battles ever fought.

Led by Cmdr. Ernest Evans, a Native American from Oklahoma, the Johnston was supporting the landing force attempting to liberate the Philippines from the Imperial Japanese. Evans was among the 186 sailors to perish out of the crew of 327. He was awarded a posthumous Medal of Honor, the first Native American in the U.S. Navy and one of only two destroyer captains in World War II so honored, the Naval History and Heritage Command said.

Two former U.S. Navy officers funded and carried out the expedition to film the wreck.

Parks Stephenson, a retired lieutenant commander and naval historian, served as navigator and mission specialist, the company said.

Retired Navy Cmdr. Victor

Vescovo funded the search and personally piloted Limiting Factor, a deep submergence vehicle, to the wreck site during two separate eight-hour dives, the company said. The vehicle has no operating depth limitation, does not require a surface tether and can hold two occupants.

The pair of dives “constituted the deepest wreck dives, manned or unmanned, in history,” the company said.

The company did not disclose the exact date of the dives and did not respond to a query by Stars and Stripes.

One image posted on the company’s website clearly shows the ship’s hull number, 557, in a largely intact portion of the vessel.

“The image is impressive, and we look forward to seeing the rest of the data collected during the expedition because

the story of the Fletcher-class destroyer USS Johnston (DD 557) and her crew is a perfect example for modern Sailors of the honor, courage, commitment, and valor of their predecessors from the Greatest Generation,” Sam Cox, a retired rear admiral who now directs the Naval History and Heritage Command, said in a news release Thursday.

The crew of the Petrel, a research vessel owned by the late Microsoft founder Paul Allen, discovered a debris field believed to be associated with the ship in 2019.

They filmed pieces of a destroyer strewn across a higher seabed using a remotely controlled submersible.

The pair of dives captured images of the destroyer’s two intact 5-inch gun turrets, twin torpedo racks and other gun mounts.

## IG: Productivity, happiness rise with military telework

By **JOHN VANDIVER**  
*Stars and Stripes*

Defense Department personnel report being more productive and possibly happier due to the sharp increase in telework brought on by the coronavirus pandemic, but the shift from traditional office work also has increased security risks, Inspector General reports said.

Nearly 50% of the roughly 50,000 military personnel surveyed reported higher levels of production while another 41% said their effectiveness remained the same, the Pentagon IG said in a report released Thursday.

Just 11.9% of respondents said they were less productive.

“Extra sleep, extra spare time, and yes . . . extra work,” as one survey respondent put it. “I can’t speak for the organization as I don’t have those metrics, but as for me, production numbers are up and life is just bet-

ter.”

But the transition to home offices was not without complications.

Some Army, Navy, and Air Force personnel worked without approved telework agreements or required training because some supervisors were overwhelmed with other duties, the IG found in a redacted report released Monday.

Various Defense Department components also did not fully implement controls to maintain cybersecurity, which put the department at “a higher risk of becoming victims to cyberattacks that could threaten the safety of the warfighter and the security of the United States.”

Although some of the security issues identified in the redacted report have been addressed over the past year, six recommendations remain unresolved, the IG said.

For the Defense Department, the find-

ings in the report released Thursday could have longer-term implications for how staffers carry out their jobs in the future.

The IG recommended that the Defense Department and its service components update their respective pandemic plans “to include the revised assumptions regarding telework for essential and non-essential personnel and the resources required to support the teleworking workforce.”

Among the reasons cited for increased productivity: 78.8 % credited fewer interruptions and distractions. Additionally, 25.7 % reported that teleworking eliminated unnecessary meetings. Less time wasted commuting to the office also was cited as a major factor in allowing more time for work.

“Overall, DoD Components and the majority of survey respondents expressed positive maximum telework experiences,” the IG said.

# Plot to destabilize Jordan uncovered

*Associated Press*

JERUSALEM — A senior Jordanian official on Sunday accused the country's former crown prince of conspiring with foreign elements in a "malicious plot" that threatened national security.

Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi told reporters that the plot had been foiled at the "zero hour."

"Then it was clear they moved from design and planning into action," Safadi said. He said some 14-16 people are under arrest, in addition to two senior officials close to Prince Hamzah.

Safadi spoke a day after Hamzah, a half brother of King Abdullah II, was placed under house arrest, in a rare public clash between top members of the long-ruling family.

The unprecedented incident has raised concerns about stability in a country seen as a key Western ally in a volatile region and drawn an outpouring of support for Abdullah.

In a videotaped statement from house arrest, Hamzah accused the country's leadership of corruption and incompetence.

Safadi, who also holds the title of deputy prime minister, said intelligence agents had been observing the plotters for some time and raised their concerns with the king. He said Hamzah was asked to "stop all these activities and movements that threaten Jordan and its stability," but he refused.

Asked whether Hamzah could face charges, Safadi said that for the time being, there were "amicable" attempts to deal with him, but added that "the kingdom's stability and security transcends" everything.

The United States, Saudi Arabia and Arab countries across the Middle East issued strong statements in favor of Abdullah.

The swift show of support underscored Jordan's strategic importance as an island of relative stability in the turbulent region. While the harsh criticism from a popular member of the ruling family could lend support to growing complaints about the king-

dom's poor governance, the king's tough reaction also illustrated the limits to which he will accept public dissent.

Whatever damage the crisis might have inside Jordan, however, appeared to have little immediate effect on outside support for Abdullah.

U.S. State Department spokesman Ned Price said, "King Abdullah is a key partner of the United States, and he has our full support."

Pro-U.S. Gulf Arab countries, which have many Jordanians working across public sector jobs, also immediately issued statements backing the king and his government.

The state-run Saudi Press Agency said the kingdom's royal court supported King Abdullah's efforts "to maintain security and stability and defuse every attempt to influence them."

Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates similarly issued statements supporting Abdullah.

## Rockets hit near Iraq base that houses US trainers; no one hurt

*Associated Press*

BAGHDAD — Two rockets landed Sunday near an Iraqi air base just north of Baghdad where American trainers are present, causing no casualties or damage, an Iraqi official said.

Maj. Gen. Tahseen al-Khafaji said the rockets landed outside Balad air base after midday.

The attack was the first on an Iraqi base housing U.S. troops since an assault last month on a base in western Iraq that houses U.S. contractors and coalition troops. One contractor died after at least 10 rockets slammed into the base, raising concerns over a new round of escalating violence.

It followed U.S. strikes on

Iran-aligned militia targets along the Iraq-Syria border in late February in retaliation for another deadly attack on a base in Iraq.

The Sunday attack comes days ahead of a new round of so-called strategic Iraq-U.S. talks on April 7.

The Iraqi government has requested the fourth round of talks, partly in response to pressure from Shiite political factions and militias loyal to Iran that have lobbied for the remaining U.S. troops to leave Iraq.

The talks, which began in June under the Trump administration, would be the first under President Joe Biden.

## Army captain breaks record for run in bomb disposal suit

*Stars and Stripes*

FAIRFAX, Va. — The company commander of an ordnance disposal unit at Fort Campbell, Ky., broke the Guinness World Record for the fastest mile run by a woman wearing a bomb disposal suit Saturday at George Mason University.

Capt. Katie Hernandez of 717th Ordnance Disposal Co. needed to run faster than the existing record of 11 minutes, six seconds, set in 2013 by Army 1st Lt. Ashley Sorensen of the 303rd EOD Battalion in Hawaii. Paced by 1st Sgt. John Myers, also of the 717th, Hernandez finished with a time of 10 minutes, 23 seconds.

"If you (have) ever done any type of run with weights, you feel good when you start and then all of a sudden you hit a wall," Hernandez said. "And

then after that it's all mental, because you know your body is capable of doing it, it just doesn't feel like it wants to move."

The suit weighs more than 70 pounds.

"She always impresses me," Myers said. "Obviously her physical capabilities are off the charts ... I knew she could do it, and she did."

The event was hosted by the Military Families Program, an initiative created by the Veteran Success Resource Group and Yellow Ribbons United, whose goal is a unified community to create programs and resources for veterans and their families at no cost. It was founded by retired Marine Lt. Col. Justin Constantine, retired Army Capt. Scott Davidson and former NFL player Derrick Dockery and his wife, Emma.

# Fla. wastewater leak prompts evacuation

*Associated Press*

MIAMI— Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis declared a state of emergency Saturday after a significant leak at a large pond of wastewater threatened to flood roads and burst a system that stores polluted waters.

Officials in Florida ordered more than 300 homes to be evacuated and closed off a highway Saturday near the large reservoir in the Tampa Bay area north of Bradenton.

Residents who live around the Piney Point reservoir received an alert via text saying to leave the area immediately because the collapse was “imminent.” Authorities expanded the evacuation area later Saturday to include more homes, but said they were not planning to open shelters.

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection said a break was detected Friday in one of the walls of a 77-acre pond that has a depth of 25 feet and holds millions of gallons of water containing phosphorus and nitrogen from an old phosphate plant.

Officials brought in rocks and materials

to plug the hole in the pond late Friday into Saturday, but the attempt was unsuccessful.

Manatee County Administrator Scott Hopes said at a press conference Saturday that the most pressing concern is that the water could flood the area, which he said was agricultural and low in population density.

“We are talking about the potential of about 600 million gallons within a matter of seconds and minutes leaving that retention pool and going around the surrounding area,” Hopes said.

Workers have been pumping out thousands of gallons per minute at the site to bring the volume down in the event the pond bursts. Pumping the entire pond would take 10 to 12 days. Others have been working to chart the path to control how the water flows from the pond into the Tampa Bay.

DeSantis’ declaration of a state of emergency allocates more pumps and cranes to the area. The owner, HRK Holdings, did not respond to a request for comment Saturday.

The pond where the leak was discovered is at the old Piney Point phosphate mine, sitting in a stack of phosphogypsum, a waste product from manufacturing fertilizer that is radioactive. It contains small amounts of naturally occurring radium and uranium, and the stacks can also release large concentrations of radon gas.

Hopes said that if the pond collapses, there is a risk it could destabilize the walls of other areas in the plant.

“The pond is basically salt water. We saw ducks yesterday, there are snooks swimming in there. It’s sustaining wildlife. That’s not the case for the other two pools,” he said, adding the wastewater in the other ponds would need to be treated to reduce ammonium content and other materials.

The executive order declaring the state of emergency said the breached structure has 480 million gallons of seawater mixed with process water and the embankment materials from the old fertilizer manufacturing plant.

## Official: Man in Capitol attack suffered delusions

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The man who rammed a car into two officers at a barricade outside the U.S. Capitol, killing one of them before he was shot to death by police, had been suffering from delusions, paranoia and suicidal thoughts, a U.S. official told The Associated Press. Investigators believe it was an isolated incident from a disturbed young man.

Video of the Friday afternoon attack shows the driver emerging from the crashed car with a knife in his hand and starting to run at the pair of officers, Capitol Police acting Chief Yogananda Pittman told reporters. Police shot the suspect, 25-year-old Noah Green, who died at a hospital.

Investigators are increasingly focused on Green’s mental health as they work to identify any motive for the attack, said the official, who was not autho-

ORIZED to speak publicly about an ongoing investigation and spoke to the AP on Saturday on condition of anonymity. The official said investigators had talked to Green’s family, who spoke of his increasingly delusional thoughts.

In online posts since removed, Green described being under government thought control and said he was being watched. He described himself as a follower of the Nation of Islam and its longtime leader, Louis Farrakhan, and spoke of going through a difficult time when he leaned on his faith.

“To be honest these past few years have been tough, and these past few months have been tougher,” he wrote in late March. “I have been tried with some of the biggest, unimaginable tests in my life. I am currently now unemployed after I left my job partly due to afflictions, but ultimately, in search of a spiritual journey.”

## Christians mark pandemic Easter around the world

*Associated Press*

VATICAN CITY — Christianity’s most joyous feast day was celebrated worldwide with faithful sitting far apart in pews and singing choruses of “Hallelujah” through face coverings on a second Easter Sunday conditioned by pandemic precautions.

From Protestant churches in South Korea to St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican, worshippers followed national or local regulations aimed at preventing the transmission of the coronavirus.

At a hospital in the Lombardy region of Italy, where the pandemic first erupted in the West in February 2020, a hospital gave a traditional dove-shaped Easter cake symbolizing peace to each person who lined up to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Many of the ones who came were in their 80s and accompanied by adult children.

In Jerusalem, air travel re-

strictions and quarantine regulations prevented foreign pilgrims from flocking to religious sites during Holy Week, which culminates in Easter celebrations.

Inside St. Peter’s Basilica, Pope Francis sprinkled incense near an icon of Jesus and said, “May the joy of Easter extend to the whole world.”

The 200 or so faithful who were allowed to attend looked lost in the cavernous cathedral. Normally, thousands would attend the popular service and a crowd would gather outside in St. Peter’s Square, with more than 100,000 sometimes assembling to receive the pope’s special Easter blessing after Mass.

But this year, like last year, crowds are banned from gathering in Italy, and at the Vatican. So Francis scheduled his noon Easter address on world affairs to be delivered from inside the basilica.

# Texas will get 2.5M more vaccine doses

Associated Press

AUSTIN — An additional 2.5 million doses of the coronavirus vaccine is to arrive in Texas this week, according to the state health department.

More than 1 million first doses will be sent to vaccination sites in 200 counties and about 900,000 first and second doses will go to pharmacies, health and dialysis centers, the Texas Department of State Health Services said Friday. The remaining doses are for people awaiting a second dose.

The department said the state has administered more than 11.8 million doses of the vaccine, and the federal Centers for Disease Control reported that 27% of the state's population has received at least one dose.

All Texans 16 and older are now eligible to receive the vaccine.

## Arizona

WINDOW ROCK — The Navajo Nation on Saturday reported 18 additional confirmed COVID-19 cases and four more deaths.

The pandemic totals on the tribe's reservation that includes parts of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah increased to 30,164 cases and 1,257 deaths.

Tribal President Jonathan Nez encouraged people to celebrate the Easter weekend safely while following COVID-19 protocols.

"Please stay home as much as possible, wear a mask, practice social distancing, avoid large in-person gatherings and wash your hands with soap and water often," he said in a statement.

## Kansas

WICHITA — Wichita State University has announced it's dropping its coronavirus restrictions after GOP lawmakers overrode Democratic Gov. Laura Kelly's newly reissued mask order.

The Wichita Eagle reported that Friday's announcement means masks are no longer required at the school and that there will be no limits on mass gatherings. In a letter posted on its website, the university encouraged persons on campus to "engage in these practices when possible" and encouraged "everyone to get the vaccine when eligible."

Interim President Dr. Rick Muma said in a virtual town hall meeting that the school had followed orders issued by the state.

Sedgwick County recently dropped its COVID-19 restrictions in anticipation of the Kansas legislature solidifying the law that entitles objectors of COVID-19 mandates to a lightning-fast 72-hour review by a judge. The statewide mask order was overturned by a the Legislative Coordinating Council on Thursday.

## Maryland

BALTIMORE — Maryland has set a new daily record for administering shots for the coronavirus vaccine. But the state is also seeing an uptick in new cases.

The Baltimore Sun reported that Maryland health officials set a new record of giving 78,000 shots on Saturday.

Nearly 18% of the population has been fully vaccinated. And nearly 32% of people in the state are at least partially inoculated.

At the same time, Maryland health officials have reported more than 1,000 new cases of the coronavirus for the fourth day in a row.

## Michigan

LANSING — The number of new coronavirus cases in Michigan topped 8,400 Saturday, the highest daily total since early December.

The health department also reported 57 deaths from COVID-19, including 51 that had occurred earlier and were identified through a records check.

The number of new cases last week — more than 34,000 — was 24% higher than the previous week. At the same time, vaccines are being offered statewide, with the minimum age dropping to 16 on Monday.

Approximately 4.5 million doses were given through Thursday, the health department reported.

## Minnesota

MINNEAPOLIS — Minnesota reported over 2,000 virus cases in a single day on Saturday for the first time since January, while also reporting a daily record for vaccines administered.

Over the past two weeks, the rolling average number of daily new cases has increased nearly 58%, a worrying trend as Gov. Tim Walz pushes for widespread vaccinations. Health officials reported 2,075 new cases Saturday, but at the same time, over 85,000 vaccine doses. It was a new daily high.

About 40% of people eligible for a vaccine — adults 16 and over — have received at least one shot. But about 20% of the state's entire population has been completely vaccinated.

Health officials also reported 11 deaths among people infected by the virus. The state has recorded a total of 6,875 deaths over the course of the pandemic.

## Oklahoma

OKLAHOMA CITY — The rolling average of daily deaths in Oklahoma due to the illness caused by the coronavirus has increased slightly, according to data from Johns Hopkins University.

The number of COVID-19 deaths in the state increased from 12.4 per day to 14.7 from March 18 through Thursday, according to the Johns Hopkins data on Saturday. The rolling average of new cases per day declined from 446.4 to 311.1

during the same time period, according to the data, a decrease of 30.3%.

The Oklahoma State Department of Health on Friday reported totals of 439,149 cases and 7,932 provisional deaths since the pandemic began. The department no longer provides daily case and death updates during the weekend and cites federal Centers for Disease Control statistics in the death toll.

More than 2 million virus vaccine doses have been administered in the state with 32.5% of the state's population receiving at least one dose, the 25th-highest percentage in the nation, according to the CDC.

## Wisconsin

MADISON — Wisconsin's second-most-populated county announced that starting Wednesday, it will no longer require people at outdoor gatherings to wear masks or keep crowds to a certain size, as long as they stay distanced from each other.

Public Health Madison and Dane County's public health order stipulates that people at outdoor gatherings are required to stay 6 feet away from each other, the Wisconsin State Journal reported. The order also allows self-service food stations and public saunas to reopen.

The order came as Wisconsin's average daily cases have been on the rise, increasing by 24% over the last two weeks. The state reported 706 new cases Saturday, as well as seven deaths.

Health officials noted that Dane County has one of the lowest case rates in the state, despite its high population. Officials also cited the 89% rate of vaccination among people aged 65 and older in the county, saying it was "a critical step in protecting the population most at risk of severe outcomes and death."

**AMERICAN ROUNDUP**

**MMA fighter severs finger; reattaches it**

**PA** PHILADELPHIA — A mixed martial arts fighter had his finger severed during a match in Philadelphia, but doctors were eventually able to reattach it.

Khetag Pliev was injured during the second round of his fight, which was stopped when the referee noticed Pliev was missing his left ring finger.

“In the second round, he (opponent Devin Goodale) caught my glove with one hand and held it,” Pliev told ESPN. “I felt my finger snapped. He kept pulling my glove and my finger snapped. We kept fighting. When the second round was finished, I see my (bone) was out in the open. I wanted to keep fighting, because I felt like I had this guy. But the doctor saw that and stopped the fight.”

**Coin firm pays forward after man paid in coins**

**GA** MARIETTA — A global company has stepped in to solve quite a “coincundrum” for a Georgia man.

Andreas Flaten’s former employer dumped at least 90,000 pennies on his driveway last month as a form of final payment for his work at an auto shop, he said.

When Coinstar, based in Bellevue, Wash., heard about his predicament, they decided that change was needed.

They picked up Flaten’s coins and rounded up the amount to give him a \$1,000 check.

They also made donations to

two charities of Flaten’s choosing: two animal shelters.

**Man charged with setting wife on fire**

**MA** LOWELL — A man charged with intentionally setting his wife on fire in a bathtub at their Massachusetts home was ordered held without bail pending a future hearing.

Santos Lebron De Los Santo, 42, of Lowell, followed his wife into the bathroom with a gas can and a lighter, prosecutors said. While she was in the bathtub, prosecutors said he doused her with gasoline and set her on fire.

The woman suffered serious burns to most of her body and is in critical condition, according to Middlesex District Attorney Marian Ryan’s office.

**Man drives his car into Walmart, gets arrested**

**NC** CONCORD — A North Carolina man was arrested after driving a car through the front of a Walmart, police said.

Concord police said in a news release that officers received a call about a car having driven through the entrance to Walmart near Concord Mills. When officers arrived, they found Lacy Cordell Gentry, 32, of Charlotte driving the car and causing damage inside the store, according to the news release. Police said no one was injured.

Police said an investigation determined that Gentry was a former Walmart employee, but no motive has been established for the incident.

**Proposed roundups target 3,500 horses**

**WY** ROCK SPRINGS — The U.S. Bureau of Land Management is accepting public comments through the end of April on plans to remove some 3,500 wild horses from public land in southwestern Wyoming.

The federal agency is seeking to allow between 1,500 and 2,165 wild horses on five herd management areas in the Red Desert outside Rock Springs.

An estimated 5,105 wild horses currently live in those areas, according to the BLM.

The horses would be sent to holding facilities where they would be prepared for adoption. Horses that don’t meet adoption criteria would be sent to off-range pastures.

**Adultery to include same-sex couples**

**NH** CONCORD — The New Hampshire Supreme Court has expanded the definition of adultery to include same-sex infidelity.

The court ruled in the case of a man who sought a divorce on the grounds of adultery alleging that his wife had an affair with another woman. A lower court dismissed his petition based on a 2003 state Supreme Court opinion that limited the definition of adultery to intercourse between people of the opposite sex.

But the Supreme Court overruled its earlier decision, saying the old definition is inconsistent with the Legislature’s enactment of same-sex marriage.

**Police chief accused of abusing his wife**

**MO** HOLDEN — A western Missouri police chief has been placed on leave after being arrested on suspicion of attacking his wife with a hammer.

Holden Police Chief Trent Neal was arrested after police were called about an attack, television station WDAF reported. Neal, 29, is suspected hitting his wife in the head with a framing hammer while the pair were in their garage, rendering the woman unconscious.

Investigators said in court records that the chief’s wife had visible injuries to her cheek and head when authorities arrived.

**April, giraffe turned online star, dies**

**NY** HARPURSVILLE — April, the giraffe that became a sensation when a rural New York zoo live-streamed her 2017 pregnancy and delivery, was euthanized because of advancing arthritis, the zoo said.

“She is a precious member of our family, and while we knew this day would eventually come, our hearts are hurting,” Animal Adventure Park owner Jordan Patch said.

The 20-year-old giraffe started showing signs of mobility problems last summer, and veterinary imaging showed she had arthritis in her feet and problems in her left hind leg, the zoo’s veterinarians said in a statement.

-From The Associated Press



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**Reporting World, National and Military News**

# Gonzaga edges UCLA in OT on Suggs' three

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Jalen Suggs took the inbounds pass and saw nothing but clear sailing. Three dribbles. Past the half-court line. A little stutter-step.

And straight into history.

The Gonzaga freshman banked in a shot at the buzzer from near the Final Four logo for a 93-90 overtime win over UCLA on Saturday night that vaulted the Bulldogs to within one win of an undefeated season and the national title.

Talk about a perfect finish!

This thriller in the national semifinal was the best game of the tournament, and, considering the stakes, it served up possibly the best ending in the history of March Madness — a kiss off the glass from near midcourt to keep a perfect season alive.

“Stuff like this is something you dream of as a kid and that you practice on your mini-hoop,” Suggs said.

After the shot went in, Suggs ran to the mostly empty press row, jumped up on the table, pumped his fists and let out a huge yell to the crowd of 8,000-or-so socially distanced fans. The refs checked to make sure he got the shot off before the buzzer sounded. He did, and the Bulldogs moved to 31-0 and into Monday night's final, where they'll play Baylor for the title.

They are the first team to bring an undefeated record into the championship game since Larry Bird and Indiana State in 1979. Bird lost that game to Magic Johnson and Michigan State. It means Gonzaga could become the first team since the 1976 Indiana Hoosiers to go undefeated.

“We were lucky enough to hit a 50-footer,” Gonzaga coach Mark Few said. “It helps when you have a magical, special guy like Jalen, special at the end of games.”

Even without Suggs' shot, it would've been hard to beat this game for pure ex-

citement — a welcome relief in a tournament that has produced mostly blowouts and duds, sort of like Baylor's 78-59 snoozer over Houston earlier in the evening.

The nightcap featured 15 ties and 19 lead changes and an 11th-seeded UCLA team that simply wouldn't give in. Even though they lost, the Bruins snapped a streak of 27 straight double-digit wins by Few's juggernaut.

UCLA (22-10) went toe-to-toe all night with the top-ranked team in the country. This was their third overtime out of six games in the tournament — they played an extra one in the First Four play-in round — and they never trailed by more than seven. They got everything they could have dreamed of on a magical night of college hoops. Everything but the win.

Some might say it was the greatest game ever.

“I'd say no because we didn't win,” UCLA coach Mick Cronin said.

# Baylor cruises past Houston, on to title game

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Nearly two decades ago, Scott Drew decided to leave his comfort zone at tiny Valparaiso for the scandal-plagued basketball program at Baylor, explaining to his father that there was nowhere for the Bears to go but up.

Now, they're one win away from the top.

Led by Jared Butler and the rest of their brilliant backcourt, a defense that refused to give Houston an inch and a coach intent on making the most of his first trip to the Final Four, the Bears roared to a 78-59 victory Saturday night in their first appearance in the NCAA Tournament semifinals in 71 long years.

“Every day you're grinding, and you don't really look back. You're pressing forward,” Drew said, “but I'm so blessed to have these unbelievable players that bought into what we like to do with the program.”

Or, as Butler put it: “This is what we came to Baylor to do.”

Butler scored all 17 of his points in the first half, but just about everyone from Baylor

(27-2) got into the act, with five players scoring in double figures. They built a 45-20 lead by half-time and coasted the rest of the way in the first Final Four showdown between schools from the Lone Star State.

Next up for the Bears is Gonzaga, the overall No. 1 seed, which beat UCLA 93-90 when Jalen Suggs banked in a buzzer-beater in overtime. Monday night's championship is a matchup that was supposed to take place in December, but that game was called off hours before tipoff due to a COVID-19 outbreak within the Bulldogs program.

“They got pros, we got pros. They win a lot of games, we win a lot of games,” Butler said. “I think we match up pretty well.”

Better than Houston did with them.

Marcus Sasser had 20 points and Quentin Grimes 13 for the cold-shooting Cougars (28-4), whose dream path to their first Final Four since 1984 — they faced teams seeded 15th, 10th, 11th and 12th along the way — ended with a whimper against a team that spent most of the sea-

son ranked No. 2 in the nation behind Gonzaga.

“We had a great run,” Sasser said as he choked back tears. “Just fell short this year.”

Butler said this week that Baylor had been focused squarely on the Final Four since the moment last year's tournament was canceled by the pandemic. And for Drew, the wait goes back even longer.

He took over a program 18 years ago embroiled in arguably the biggest controversy in college basketball history: the graphic shooting death of player Patrick Dennehy, his teammate Devon Dotson pleading guilty to his murder, attempts by then-coach Dave Bliss to cover it all up and NCAA sanctions that lasted into Drew's own tenure.

Yet somehow, the son of longtime Valpo coach Homer Drew could always picture the scene that unfolded Saturday night: His team playing selflessly, almost effortlessly, never once feeling the pressure of college basketball's biggest stage, then celebrating their success at midcourt when the final buzzer sounded.

Well, there were a couple things Drew probably didn't picture.

Instead of 70,000 fans reaching to the rafters, the Bears were cheered in the lower bowl by thousands of cardboard cutouts — the late Georgetown coach John Thompson, New Mexico State mascot Pistol Pete and everyone in between — due to COVID-19 measures.

The roughly 8,000 fans that were allowed through the doors, socially distanced in a vast ocean of blue seats, provided a muted soundtrack to the blowout taking place inside the home of the Indianapolis Colts.

“This was probably the toughest year for any of us,” Houston coach Kelvin Sampson said, “and not just the bubble here but COVID challenges, isolation, being quarantined, social distancing, masks — this was quite a year. But you know, the sting of this will leave them. Days will turn into weeks, weeks into months, and what they'll remember is the memories.”

At least, all those leading up to Saturday night.

# Most ADs say NIL will reduce competition

Associated Press

College athletes will someday soon be permitted to be paid sponsors, social media influencers and product endorsers.

Change is imminent, but not everyone in college sports believes it is for the better as athletes get closer to earning money from third parties for use of their name, image or likeness (NIL).

In an Associated Press survey of Division I athletic directors, nearly 73% said allowing athletes to be compensated for NIL use will decrease the number of schools that have a chance to be competitive in college sports. Nearly 28% said many fewer schools would be competitive.

"NIL will be a game changer for all," one respondent said. "Many will get out of college athletics as this is not what they signed up for. Schools should resist NIL and go Ivy (League) non-scholarship model. I do not see why NIL is good for all."

Tulane athletic director Troy Dannen was among the 15% of ADs who said they believe NIL payments will have no impact on competitive balance.

"The kids that are going to Alabama are still going to go to Alabama. The kids that are going to Southern Cal are still going to go to Southern Cal. The kids that are going to Tulane are still going to go to Tulane," said Dannen, whose school competes at the top tier of Division I football.

Most of the survey respondents came from schools outside the Power Five conferences, the wealthiest and most powerful in college sports (Atlantic Coast, Big 12, Big Ten, Pac-12 and Southeastern).

Nearly 69% of respondents came from the 22 conferences that do not play FBS football. Only 10% of respondents came from the Power Five.

Clemson athletic director Dan Radakovich, whose school competes in the ACC and has had one of the most successful football programs in the country in recent years, said he doesn't believe NIL compensation will damage competitive balance. But he was sympathetic to schools with smaller budgets that have those concerns.

"But Furman's cross-country team has ... consistently been superior to Clemson because they have concentrated on it," he said. "They're going to concentrate on the sports that they think will give them the best opportunity to be successful. With NIL, without NIL, I don't think that they're going to be on the same level with us in certain sports."

Loyola Maryland athletic director Donna Woodruff said her position on NIL compensation has "evolved a little bit" and she is less concerned about its impact on competitive balance.

She said at Loyola, where the women's and men's lacrosse teams routinely are ranked among the best in the country, athletes in those sports could become more popular than they might at schools where the football or basketball programs draw most of the attention.

"So there may be a disproportionate opportunity or an imbalance, but I don't think it's as great as some may fear," Woodruff said.

NIL opportunities could be a boon to female athletes.

"Everybody says the quarterback and the star power forward in men's basketball will get the lion's share of things," New Mexico State AD Mario Moccia said. "I'm not so sure the men are going to dominate the earnings, just because I don't think the way NIL is going to be monetized is completely defined yet."

# Feisty Reds scrap with and beat Cardinals

Associated Press

CINCINNATI — Nick Castellanos stood over, flexed and jawed at St. Louis pitcher Jake Woodford after scoring, setting off a series of scuffles that included relievers shoving in the outfield as the Cincinnati Reds beat the Cardinals 9-6 Saturday.

St. Louis' Adam Wainwright was knocked around for six runs and chased in the third. The next inning, the teams started tagging each other.

Castellanos, who homered on opening day and hopped out of the box before tossing his bat, was plunked by Woodford with two outs and none on in the fourth. Castellanos retrieved the ball and offered to toss it back to Woodford before flipping it out of play.

A wild pitch soon sent Castellanos scampering home from third and he scored with a head-first slide for a 7-2 lead as he bumped into Woodford, who took the throw from catcher Yadier Molina at the plate.

As Castellanos began walking away, Molina rushed up and tapped him from behind, and the benches and bullpens emptied in a wild scene.

**Twins 2, Brewers 0:** José Berríos and three Minnesota relievers combined on a one-hitter with 17 strikeouts to outduel Milwaukee's Corbin Burnes.

Neither team had a hit or walk until Minnesota's Byron Buxton led off the seventh with a homer.

**Astros 9, Athletics 1:** Yordan Álvarez hit a three-run homer and visiting Houston kept slugging its way to a third straight win over Oakland.

**Yankees 5, Blue Jays 3:** Gary Sánchez joined Elston Howard in 1963 as the only Yankees catchers to homer in each of the first two games of a season and Jay Bruce blooped a two-run single in the seventh for his first hit with his new team in host New York's win over Toronto.

**Orioles 4, Red Sox 2:** Maikel Franco drove in two runs after a

Boston error, and Pedro Severino had his second two-hit game in a row against host Red Sox.

**Tigers 5, Indians 2:** Julio Teheran pitched through trouble in his Detroit debut, leading the Tigers to a win over visiting Cleveland.

**Royals 11, Rangers 4:** Michael A. Taylor homered and drove in three for the second straight game, leading host Kansas City over Texas.

**Cubs 5, Pirates 1:** Jake Arrieta pitched six solid innings in a triumphant return to the Cubs, Kris Bryant and Jason Heyward homered, and host Chicago beat Pittsburgh.

**Phillies 4, Braves 0:** Zack Wheeler allowed only one hit and struck out 10 in seven innings and had two hits and two RBIs at the plate to lead host Philadelphia over Atlanta.

**Marlins 12, Rays 7:** Starling Marte had four hits and Miami beat Tampa Bay at home for the first time since 2018.

**Padres 7, Diamondbacks 0:** Joe Musgrove was brilliant in his debut for his hometown Padres, and Wil Myers drove in three runs on two doubles as San Diego beat visiting Arizona.

**Dodgers 6, Rockies 5:** Zach McKinstry hustled for a go-ahead, inside-the-park homer in the eighth inning when left fielder Raimel Tapia reached over the fence to bring the ball back, only to have it bounce out of his glove and roll away, helping visiting Los Angeles beat Colorado.

**Angels 5, White Sox 3:** Justin Upton's homer capped a three-run rally in the eighth inning and host Los Angeles, helped by a flyball that bounced off the head of White Sox center fielder Luis Robert, beat hot-hitting Yermín Mercedes and Chicago.

**Mariners 4, Giants 0:** Chris Flexen returned to the majors with a win after a year in South Korea, and host Seattle got home runs from Mitch Haniger and Ty France while shutting out San Francisco.

# Embiid has 24 points in return, 76ers win

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Joel Embiid was happy to be back on the court, even if he wasn't thrilled with his game.

Embiid had 24 points and eight rebounds in his return to the lineup, and Tobias Harris scored 32 to lead the Philadelphia 76ers over the Minnesota Timberwolves 122-113 on Saturday night.

Embiid missed the previous 10 games due to a bone bruise in his left knee. The four-time All-Star and MVP candidate entered averaging 29.9 points and 11.5 rebounds in 31 games this season.

Philadelphia fans were happy to see their favorite big man back in action, serenading a smiling Embiid with "M-V-P! M-V-P!" chants when he was shown on the big screen during warmups.

With his left knee heavily wrapped, Embiid moved well, but his game wasn't quite as sharp as it had been before he got injured March 12 at Washington. Embiid shot 6 of 14 from the field, but missed all four three-

point tries, and converted 12 of 17 free throws.

"It felt great," he said. "Just trying to get my rhythm back. I'm going to blame the brace I was wearing. I just felt like I didn't have my rhythm all game. It felt like I wasn't smooth. I hate the brace."

Ben Simmons added 14 points, eight rebounds and six assists for Philadelphia (34-15), which pulled even with idle Brooklyn for the best record in the Eastern Conference.

**Jazz 137, Magic 91:** Donovan Mitchell scored 22 points and Utah set an NBA record for three-pointers in a half against depleted Orlando, extending its franchise-best home winning streak to 22 games.

The Jazz made 18 three-pointers in the first half. Mitchell shot 6 of 7 from beyond the arc to help Utah open a 78-40 advantage at the break.

Joe Ingles and Bojan Bogdanovic each had 17 points for the Jazz. No Utah player logged more than 24 minutes, while all 13 in

uniform scored at least five points.

**Heat 115, Cavaliers 101:** Duncan Robinson scored 18 points on 6-for-9 shooting from three-point range and Miami continued its home dominance over Cleveland.

**Pacers 139, Spurs 133 (OT):** Caris LeVert scored 26 points and short-handed Indiana snapped a three-game losing streak by beating host San Antonio in overtime.

**Mavericks 109, Wizards 87:** Luka Dončić scored 26 points as visiting Dallas defeated Washington for its fourth straight victory.

**Knicks 125, Pistons 81:** Julius Randle scored 20 of his 29 points in the first quarter and visiting New York pounded Detroit.

**Bucks 129, Kings 128:** Jrue Holiday scored a season-high 33 points to go with 11 assists and seven rebounds, and visiting Milwaukee overcame the absence of Giannis Antetokounmpo to slip past Sacramento.

**Trail Blazers 133, Thunder 85:** CJ McCollum scored 20 points to lead eight Trail Blazers in double figures as host Portland routed Oklahoma City.

# Gambrell scores late, lifts Sharks to 4th straight win

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES—Dylan Gambrell scored in the third period, and the San Jose Sharks beat the Los Angeles Kings 3-2 on Saturday night for their fourth straight victory.

Kevin Labanc and Evander Kane each had a goal and an assist for the Sharks, who have won six of eight overall to climb back into playoff contention.

San Jose is one point behind Arizona for the final postseason spot in the West after being eight points out to start the week.

"I think we're making strides," Sharks center Logan Couture said. "We're in a spot right now with 19 games left to make a push and see where we end up, so I'm definitely happy with how we've played this last stretch."

San Jose goalie Martin Jones stopped 35 shots after he made 30 saves in Friday night's 3-0 win at Los Angeles.

On the winning goal, Jonathan Quick was caught playing the puck out from behind his own net. John Leonard stole it and found Gambrell for an easy shot into an open net at 15:23.

"Johnny did all the work there, so I can't take too much credit," Gambrell said. "He went end to end there and did all the work, and I was just there to tap it in, so kudos to him."

**Bruins 7, Penguins 5:** Brad Marchand

scored two of his three goals during host Boston's five-goal second period, and the Bruins rebounded from a lackluster effort.

David Pastrnak had two goals and an assist for Boston, which lost 4-1 to Pittsburgh on Thursday night. David Krejci added a goal and an assist, and Patrice Bergeron also scored.

Sidney Crosby and Jake Guentzel each had a goal and two assists for the Penguins. Mark Jankowski had a goal and an assist, and Jared McCann and Cody Ceci also scored.

Casey DeSmith had 21 saves for Pittsburgh, which had won five in a row.

**Wild 2, Golden Knights 1:** Joel Eriksson Ek snapped a tie in the third period and Cam Talbot made 27 saves, sending visiting Minnesota to the victory.

The Wild became the first team to sweep a two-game series in Las Vegas this season. The Golden Knights (0-2-1) are mired in their first three-game skid of the season.

Kirill Kaprizov also scored for Minnesota in the third.

Tomas Nosek scored the lone goal for Vegas. Marc-Andre Fleury made 25 saves.

**Avalanche 2, Blues 1:** Cale Makar scored with 40 seconds left to lift host Colorado to its fourth consecutive victory.

**Stars 3, Hurricanes 2:** Tanner Kero snapped a tie 2:52 into the third period, and

visiting Dallas posted consecutive victories for the first time since the opening week of the season.

**Islanders 3, Flyers 2 (SO):** Mathew Barzal scored in the shootout, and New York continued its dominant play at home.

The Islanders continued their strong play at Nassau Coliseum, where they are 15-1-2 this season.

**Panthers 5, Blue Jackets 2:** Alex Wennberg scored three times for his first career hat trick, leading host Florida to its season-high fifth straight win.

**Predators 3, Blackhawks 0:** Juuse Saros made 41 saves, leading hoist Nashville to the victory.

Eeli Tolvanen, Colton Sissons and Luke Kunin scored for the Predators, winners of seven of eight.

**Sabres 3, Rangers 2 (SO):** Victor Olofsson tied the game with 3:41 left in the third period, and host Buffalo's Tage Thompson scored the only goal in a shootout.

**Lightning 2, Red Wings 1:** Andrei Vasilevskiy made 25 stops, and host Tampa Bay earned its second straight win.

**Senators 6, Canadiens 3:** Evgenii Dadonov scored twice and Artem Anisimov had three assists, leading visiting Ottawa past Montreal.

Anton Forsberg finished with 35 saves for Ottawa.