

## Officer criticized for letter calling sailors 'perverts'

By ERICA EARL  
*Stars and Stripes*

TOKYO — An officer at Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan, is under investigation for purportedly writing a complaint to the base housing office about the “deviant nature” of enlisted sailors who pose a danger to his family.

The letter, allegedly authored by Lt. Nathanael Allison of Naval Hospital Yokosuka, states that living in the Ikego Housing Detachment in an apartment building for enlisted families is “unacceptable.” The message, filled with spelling and grammatical errors, condemns enlisted sailors as “perverts” and accuses them of egregious behavior such as rape, involvement in drug cartels and attacking each other with hatchets.

Officer criticized for letter calling sailors ‘perverts’

“There are often drunk and often hostile sailors hanging around enlisted housing,” the letter states. “Housing with enlisted greatly increases the risk to my family. I have a good-looking family, a wife and two daughters, ages 3 and 4. They are prime targets to be victims for these enlisted deviant activities.”

According to screenshots, the letter was sent Feb. 8 via a Google email account to housing. It began circulating last week on military community Facebook pages, and a YouTube video

about the letter has garnered over 300,000 views as of Monday.

The Yokosuka housing office declined Stars and Stripes’ requests for comment. Allison did not respond to attempts to reach him by email.

The base hospital is investigating the letter for the strong remarks and language used, according to a response from Naval Hospital Yokosuka commanding officer Capt. Carolyn Rice posted Sunday by the hospital’s Facebook page.

“I am aware of the recent allegation that a member of our staff sent a letter to the housing office with comments disparaging to enlisted service members,” she wrote. “We are conducting an internal investigation into the matter and if any allegations are found to be true, we will take appropriate actions.”

Allison’s command is working with the housing office to confirm the letter’s authorship, hospital spokeswoman Erika Figueroa told Stars and Stripes in a phone call on Monday.

The letter states that officers are “more respectable” than enlisted members and that Allison’s children should “only be friends with officers’ children” and his wife “only friends with officer wives.” He also expressed concern that his officer colleagues would not want to visit him in enlisted housing.

## Carrier group transits Suez Canal after stuck container ship is freed

By CHAD GARLAND  
*Stars and Stripes*

The USS Dwight D. Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group has sailed through the Suez Canal from the Mediterranean Sea, making them the first U.S. warships to pass through the maritime chokepoint since a nearly weeklong blockage of the waterway.

The aircraft carrier, the cruiser USS Monterey and the destroyers USS Mitscher and USS Thomas Hudner entered the Red Sea on Friday, the Navy’s 5th Fleet said in a statement over the weekend.

“We appreciate the government of Egypt and Suez Canal Authority’s efforts to ensure the safety of navigation in this critical waterway for all ships, and in allowing the IKE CSG to transit so quickly,” 5th Fleet commander Vice Adm. Samuel Paparo said.

The canal had been blocked to all traffic for six days starting March 23, when the container ship Ever Given ran aground in the middle of the waterway. During the blockage, more than 400 ships were stranded at the canal, which links the Mediterranean to the Red Sea.

The cruiser USS Philippine Sea was the first Navy ship to make a northbound trip through the canal Saturday, 5th Fleet said Monday on Twitter.

While sailing in the eastern Mediterranean last week, the Eisenhower strike group had already started flight operations to support the anti-Islamic State campaign in Iraq and Syria. Known as Operation Inherent Resolve, the coalition

carried out more strikes against ISIS in Iraq last month than in all of 2020.

The Eisenhower is expected to continue support to Inherent Resolve while operating and training alongside regional and coalition partners, the Navy said.

“Our strike group is excited to sail and fly in the conduct of our operations in the Red Sea,” said Rear Adm. Scott F. Robertson, the strike group’s commander.

U.S. officials have declined to discuss the effect of the canal blockage on operations in the region, but Pentagon spokesman and retired Rear Adm. John Kirby told reporters last week in Washington that the U.S. military has “any number of alternate ways” to fulfill its missions in the region.

Kirby credited local authorities for “amazing work” to free the 200,000-ton Ever Given from the canal bank.

The reopening “will certainly facilitate greater movement,” he said, but added that the United States has long factored the possibility of chokepoint blockages into its planning.

The U.S. 5th Fleet’s area of operations, spanning 2.5 million square miles in the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, Red Sea and parts of the Indian Ocean, includes three critical chokepoints.

While the blockage did bog down ship traffic, it wasn’t expected to cause significant delays to replenishment and logistics support, officials with both the Defense Logistics Agency and the Navy said.

# US closes Guantanamo unit, moves prisoners

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — A once-secret unit within the Guantanamo Bay detention center that had fallen into disrepair has been closed and the prisoners moved to another facility on the American base in Cuba, the U.S. military said Sunday.

The prisoners at Camp 7 were transferred to a facility adjacent to where the other detainees on the base are held as part of what U.S. Southern Command said in a statement was an effort to “increase operational efficiency and effectiveness.”

Miami-based Southern Command, which oversees the detention center at the southeastern edge of Cuba, did not say how many prisoners were moved. Officials have previously said about 14 men were held in Camp 7. There are 40 prisoners at Guantanamo.

Southern Command said the Camp 7 prisoners were moved to Camp 5 “safely and without incident,” but did not say when the transfer occurred. Camp 5, which was largely empty, is next to Camp 6, where the other detainees are held.

Camp 7 opened in December 2006 for

prisoners previously held in a network of clandestine CIA detention facilities, often referred to as “black sites,” where they were subjected to brutal interrogation techniques. The military ran it under an agreement with CIA, and Southern Command said intelligence agencies were involved with the transfer.

The military long refused to even acknowledge the location of Camp 7 on the base and has never allowed journalists to see the inside of the facility. Officials had said that unit, which was never designed to be permanent, had structural issues and needed to be replaced, but the Pentagon dropped plans to seek money for the construction.

Among those held at Camp 7 were the five prisoners charged with war crimes for the alleged roles planning and providing logistical support for the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

President Joe Biden has said he intends to close Guantanamo, but that would require approval from Congress to move some prisoners to the United States for trial or imprisonment.

## Marine Osprey squadron arrives in Spain for AFRICOM mission

*Stars and Stripes*

A Marine Corps Osprey tiltrotor squadron has arrived at Moron Air Base in Spain for a rotation in support of U.S. Africa Command’s North and West Africa Response Force, which conducts contingency and crisis operations throughout the two regions.

Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 261 (Reinforced) took over the support mission from Squadron 266 on Thursday, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Europe and Africa said in a statement.

Both squadrons are based at Marine Corps Air Station New River, N.C.

VMM-261 will work “alongside the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team to

accomplish our shared crisis response mission in North and West Africa, supporting our allies and partners in the region,” the squadron’s commanding officer, Lt. Col. Travis Stephenson, said in the statement. He described the mission as an “incredibly important” one.

Known as the “Raging Bulls,” VMM-261 flies MV-22 Osprey transport aircraft.

Countries in the response force’s area of operations include Libya, where civil strife and fighting have contributed to chronic instability since 2011.

Violence in West Africa’s Sahel region by militants linked to Islamic State, and al-Qaida has been on the rise in recent years.

## Navy removes grooming terms like ‘outrageous’

BY THERON GODBOLD  
*Stars and Stripes*

Sailor feedback has prompted the Navy to change grooming standards terms that are considered vague and sometimes arbitrarily applied, according to a recent Navy administrative message.

A series of changes are coming to hair standards, especially, that are aimed at “enhancing clarity, interpretation and application of uniform policies,” according to Naval Administrative Message 072/21 issued Thursday.

Terms like “faddish,” “good taste” and “outrageous” will be deleted from the regulation, according to the message. Other terms like “professional appearance,” are being revised, or added, like “professional military appearance.”

The message comes after a Navy review of its hair and grooming standards in the summer and fall of 2020. The service assembled focus groups of sailors, male and female, officer and enlisted, and asked them whether the existing standards are racially biased, the message states.

The Navy found no bias, but sailors cited many instances of inconsistent application and policy enforcement because of vague terms in the grooming standards.

“Overall, with grooming standards, we found that there were none that were discriminatory,” Vice Adm. John Nowell Jr., the Navy’s chief of personnel, told the Navy Times in February. “But the way that some were written, it was too subjective, as a commanding officer looked at the interpretation and carrying out what those regulations were.”

The message states that the update is “forthcoming” and that until the Navy’s uniform regulations are updated, the naval administrative message should serve as a reference to those upcoming changes.

“I think the changes were very needed, especially with the experiences of my peers,” Petty Officer 3rd Class Belen Saldana, who works for American Forces Network at Yokota Air Base, Japan, said Monday. “It helps protect sailors and better defines what sailors can and can’t do with their hair.”

# Marine held in link with missing ammo

*The Orange County Register*

A 28-year-old Reconnaissance Marine is being held in the brig at Camp Pendleton after he was charged with six counts of larceny and military property-related offenses involving missing ammunition from the base, military officials said Friday.

The charges against Sgt. Gunnar Naughton, with 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, follow an Article 32 fact-finding hearing held on March 19 at the Western Judicial Circuit Court, said 2nd Lt. Kyle McGuire. If Naughton's case is referred to a general

court-martial, a redacted charge sheet will provide more details on the materials that are missing, McGuire said.

A second, unidentified Recon Marine is awaiting a similar Article 32 hearing, McGuire said, adding he couldn't discuss specific details on possible charges or the Marine's identity prior to the hearing. McGuire added that the Camp Pendleton investigation is unrelated to 10 pounds of C-4 explosives that were reported missing from Marine Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms in March.

More details are not being released because the case is under investigation by the Naval Criminal Investigation Service.

An ABC 10News report in San Diego on March 25 stated, "At least five reconnaissance Marines allegedly stole thousands of rounds of military-grade ammo and explosives. Then, one Marine allegedly tried to sell the ammo online but got caught in a sting operation that was set up by federal agents."

McGuire said he could confirm that only Naughton is being held in custody on the base.

According to military re-

ports, Naughton, of Kansas, started as a recruit at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego in January 2015. In May 2015, he went to training at US Army Training Center, Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.

From September 2015 to November 2019, he trained as part of the Chemical Biological Incident Response Force, Marine Corps Forces Command, Indian Head, Md. There he trained as a chemical, radiological and nuclear specialist. He joined the elite 1st Reconnaissance Battalion at Camp Pendleton in November 2019.

## Poll: Problems at border put dent in Biden's approval rate

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — More Americans disapprove than approve of how President Joe Biden is handling waves of unaccompanied migrant children arriving at the U.S.-Mexico border, and approval of his efforts on larger immigration policy falls short of other top issues — suggesting it could be a weak point for the new administration.

A new poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research also shows that solving the problem of young people at the border is among Americans' highest immigration priorities: 59% say providing safe treatment of unaccompanied children when they are apprehended should be a high priority, and 65% say the same about reuniting families separated at the border.

Former President Donald Trump built his presidency around hard-line policies that expanded and fortified border walls, made it tougher for people fleeing drug violence and other desperate circumstances in Mexico and Central America to seek U.S. asylum, and separated immigrant families.

Biden has tried to seize political momentum on the issue by promising a more humane and orderly system, but his administration has struggled to cope with rising numbers of migrants coming to the border, especially unaccompanied children.

Overall, 40% of Americans disapprove of Biden's handling of children reaching the nation's southern border without their parents, compared with just 24% who approve. Thirty-five percent don't have an opinion either way.

"I don't know how to politically correctly say this: I do feel that, because there's this new administration, that people feel that they can come to the country," said Mindy Kiehl, a 40-year-old real estate agent in Erie, Pa., who otherwise approves of Biden's handling of the presidency so far.

"I get it. They're seeking refuge," Kiehl added. "But bringing these children, it's not good for the children, it's not good for the families. I don't know how that's going to solve the problem."

Biden said at a recent news conference that "we're sending back the vast majority of the families that are coming." But his struggles on the issue go beyond unaccompanied minors.

Just 42% of Americans say they approve of how the president is handling immigration in general, and a similar share, 44%, say they approve of how he's handling border security. Both are significantly lower than the 61% of Americans who say they approve of how Biden is handling his job overall and fall short of the president's rating on some other issues, including his response to the pandemic and the economy.

## Doctor theorized a lack of air stopped Floyd's heartbeat

*Associated Press*

MINNEAPOLIS — The emergency room doctor who pronounced George Floyd dead after trying to resuscitate him testified Monday that he theorized at the time that Floyd's heart most likely stopped because he didn't get enough oxygen.

Dr. Bradford Langenfeld, who was a senior resident on duty that night at Hennepin County Medical Center, took the stand at the beginning of Week Two at former Minneapolis Officer Derek Chauvin's murder trial, as prosecutors sought to establish that it was Chauvin's knee on the Black man's neck that killed him.

Langenfeld said Floyd's heart had stopped by the time he arrived at the hospital. The doctor said that he was not told of any efforts at the scene by bystanders or police to resuscitate Floyd, but that paramedics told him they had tried for about 30 minutes.

Under questioning by prosecutor Jerry Blackwell, Langenfeld said that based on the information he had, death by asphyxiation was "more likely than the other possibilities."

Chauvin attorney Eric Nelson questioned Langenfeld about whether some drugs can cause hypoxia, or oxygen deprivation. The doctor acknowledged that fentanyl and methamphetamine, both of which were found in Floyd's body, can do so.

# Hawaii Special Olympics athletes get vaccine

Associated Press

HONOLULU — Hundreds of Special Olympic athletes with intellectual disabilities have received their first dose of the coronavirus vaccine at a facility in Hawaii.

Physicians and medical employees from Kaiser Permanente worked in tandem with Special Olympics Hawaii to administer shots at Consolidated Theatres Kapolei on Saturday.

More than 250 people attended to receive their first shot of the Pfizer vaccine.

The Special Olympics athletes and coaches said they decided to receive the vaccine because they felt it was important to do their part for society.

“I think it’s important to get this because if you don’t, you cannot go out, but if you do have one vaccination you still got to keep your distance and wear a mask,” said Cassilly Woll, a Special Olympics athlete.

Kaiser Permanente hosted the vaccination clinic to inoculate community members who are at higher risk of severe illness after contracting the virus, Hawaii News Now reported.

“One of the challenges that individuals with intellectual disabilities have is social isolation, so you can imagine the effect that COVID has had on this community,” said Daniel Epstein, president and CEO of Special Olympics Hawaii.

## Alaska

BETHEL — Alaska tribes will receive over \$1 billion from the most recent \$1.9 trillion federal coronavirus relief bill.

The tribes can take as long as three years to spend these funds, unlike a similar bill that was passed in 2020, which had a shorter deadline, KYUK-AM reported Wednesday.

Teresa Jacobsson from the Alaska Tribal Administrators Association said tribes will have more leeway on how to spend the funds compared to previous legislation. But, the government

will not just give tribal members checks without a reason.

“You have to show a need, which is show basic living essentials like housing and rent expenses, utilities, internet connectivity, personal cleaning and sanitation products,” Jacobsson said. “You have to tie the money to a COVID-related need.”

## Connecticut

STORRS — The University of Connecticut has put five dorms under quarantine after an outbreak of COVID-19 that officials said may be related to several large, off-campus parties last weekend.

Thirty-five positive cases had been identified on campus in the two days leading up to Friday, the Hartford Courant reported. Residents at the five dorms are able to receive meals at designated dining halls, but aren’t allowed to attend in-person classes or events.

Officials said the quarantine will likely last until the end of this week, when students are scheduled to leave for spring break and learn remotely the rest of the semester.

On March 27, state police arrested two people after breaking up an off-campus house party involving more than 100 people. Another party involving as many as 200 maskless revelers was shut down earlier in March for violating state restrictions in gatherings.

## Florida

GAINESVILLE — Starting Monday, any adult in Florida is eligible to receive the coronavirus vaccine. In addition, the state announced that teens ages 16 and 17 can also get the vaccine with parental permission.

In an effort to get students inoculated, the University of Florida’s Athletics Department is working with UF Health and the local health department to administer the vaccine at Ben Hill Griffin Stadium. University and health officials plan to inoculate

up to 5,000 people, starting at 11 a.m. Monday. Officials hope to meet a goal of vaccinating 20,000 per week, a news release said. The event is open to anyone eligible for the vaccine.

## Delaware

DOVER — All Delawareans above the age of 16 will soon become eligible to sign up for the coronavirus vaccine.

The Delaware State News reported that the expanded eligibility begins Tuesday.

The state has fully vaccinated more than 174,000 people, according to the Delaware Division of Public Health. That’s more than 17% of Delaware’s total population.

## Maryland

BALTIMORE — Health officials in Maryland have reported 1,669 new cases of the coronavirus as well as eight more virus-related deaths.

The Baltimore Sun reported Sunday that the state posted its highest number of daily coronavirus cases since Jan. 31. On that day, state health officials had reported 1,747 cases.

The total number of coronavirus cases in Maryland is now more than 417,000. More than 8,000 people have died. Both figures come from the Maryland Department of Health.

More than 1,100 people are also hospitalized in the state due to complications from the virus. That’s 67 more people than on Saturday.

## Michigan

DETROIT — A historic Detroit church reopened its doors Easter Sunday for in-person services for the first time in over a year, a move that comes amid a statewide COVID-19 surge.

Hartford Memorial Baptist Church, which was closed last Easter for the first time in its more than 100-year history, limited worshipers and required masks Sunday. Christians worldwide marked a second

Easter Sunday marked by pandemic precautions.

“We believe that the church should be a part of the resurrection of our society, and an effort to return to a sense of normalcy,” the Rev. Charles Christian Adams told The Detroit Free Press. “We know that other sectors of society are doing it. Restaurants have reopened, they’re letting people in to athletic events, the malls are open and all of those people are laying it all on the line to get society going again. And we feel that the church should not sit on the sidelines, and wait until all is well to reopen. ... People need the church.”

Hartford was hit hard by the pandemic: At least 14 congregations died from COVID-19.

Michigan’s number of new COVID-19 cases topped 8,400 Saturday for the highest daily total since early December, according to the state’s Department of Health and Human Services. Michigan doesn’t report new COVID-19 data on Sundays.

## Vermont

MONTPELIER — Vermonters age 40 and over are now eligible to make appointments to be vaccinated against the virus that causes COVID-19.

The Vermont Health Department website will begin accepting appointments at 8:15 a.m. Monday. A week later, the age limit drops to age 30 and over. On April 19, all adult Vermonters will be eligible to be vaccinated.

The presence of the virus in Vermont has been increasing in recent weeks. Officials have said the state is in a race to vaccinate as many people as possible to help stop the spread of the virus. Officials blame the increase on a number of more transmissible variants of the virus that are being found in Vermont, and among young people who are more socially active but not yet eligible to be vaccinated.

**AMERICAN ROUNDUP**

**Police find \$20K of cocaine in man's car**

**WI** OSSEO — A Chicago man is in trouble with the law after police in western Wisconsin discovered \$20,000 worth of cocaine in his car.

The La Crosse Tribune reported that court documents show a Trempealeau County Sheriff's deputy stopped 33-year-old Dajuan Cortez Thomas on Interstate 94 near Osseo on Monday for multiple traffic violations.

A police dog alerted to narcotics in the car. A search of the vehicle revealed 300 grams of cocaine.

Online court records show Thomas has been charged with possession of cocaine with intent to deliver. He posted a \$20,000 cash bond on Tuesday and is due back in court for a preliminary hearing April 19.

**30 dogs abandoned at park in last 2 weeks**

**NV** RENO — Authorities said more than two dozen dogs were abandoned at Sun Valley Regional Park in the last two weeks. Investigators are asking for the public's help in identifying anyone involved in the incidents.

Washoe County Regional Animal Services officials said there were initially about 10 to 15 dogs found abandoned at the park. That number grew to 27 dogs within the last two weeks.

The Reno Gazette Journal reported that by Friday, three more dogs were captured and that pushed the total to 30.

Authorities suspect the person or people involved have been leaving the dogs at the

park during the cover of darkness. They also believe the dogs may be from the same household.

**Couple leaves \$144K to wildlife, K-9 programs**

**NH** CONCORD — A couple who enjoyed New Hampshire's outdoors left \$144,000 from their estate to the state Fish and Game Department for its K-9 and endangered wildlife programs.

Clarence and Gertrude Sleeper, of Littleton, traveled throughout New England and other areas, skied, gardened, and had three dogs. They died in December 2019 in what was determined to be a murder-suicide after both had suffered health issues and limited mobility, the Caledonian-Record reported.

Late last month, the Executive Council authorized the department to accept the donation to help the programs survive. It came as "a complete surprise to us," said Col. Kevin Jordan, the department's top law enforcement officer.

The K-9 teams are used in search-and-rescue missions and finding missing people, such as stranded hikers. The Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program monitors and manages more than 400 species of mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians not hunted, trapped or fish, as well as thousands of insect species.

**Omelette festival comes back after 2020 break**

**LA** LAFAYETTE — Louisiana's Giant Omelette Celebration is return-

ing this fall after taking a year off because of the coronavirus pandemic.

KATC-TV reported that the event, which features a giant omelette cooked by multiple chefs in front of crowds in Abbeville, will be held Nov. 6 and 7. Organizers announced the festival's return by saying: "We are soooo Egggcited!!"

The Vermilion Parish festival — which celebrated its 35th anniversary in 2019, the last time it was held — draws people from around the country.

The Abbeville recipe started years ago with 5,000 eggs — with one more egg added each year. Also used in the dish are 50 pounds of onions, 75 bell peppers, gallons of onion tops and parsley, gallons of cooking oil and milk, 52 pounds of butter and boxes of pepper and salt. The omelette is served free to all who gather to watch with a side of French Bread.

In addition to the cooking of the omelette, the festival includes music, contests, a charity walk and an arts and crafts show.

**Inmate damages unit during escape attempt**

**CO** HUGO — A Lincoln County Jail inmate who tried to escape from a housing unit was caught and tried to escape again while being transported to another facility.

The inmate, 33-year-old Nathaniel Gallion, of Arriba, is facing multiple felony charges, according to the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office.

The jail declared an emergency at 8:15 p.m. Thursday in the male housing unit after deputies discovered that an inmate

used a desktop that had been bolted to the wall as a battering ram. During his escape attempt, he destroyed windows and equipment inside the housing unit, officials said.

At about 11 a.m. Friday, sheriff's deputies and the Colorado State Patrol were taking the inmate to another facility when he got around security measures and became armed with a metal object. A regional emergency was declared and members from across the area responded to help contain and control of the inmate.

**Piece of SpaceX rocket debris lands at farm**

**WA** EPHRATA — A piece of burning rocket debris seen streaking across the Pacific Northwest sky last week crashed on a farm in east Washington state, authorities said.

After the March 25 event, a farmer discovered a nearly intact piece of rocket in a private field, The Tri-City Herald reported.

The approximately 5-foot composite-overwrapped pressure vessel used for storing helium left a nearly 4-inch dent in the ground, Grant County sheriff's spokesman Kyle Foreman said. No one was hurt.

The farmer, who authorities said didn't want to be identified, suspected the debris may have come from the rocket and left a message with the sheriff's office over the weekend, Foreman said. Deputies responded Monday and contacted SpaceX officials. SpaceX confirmed it was part of the rocket and has since retrieved it, Foreman said.

— From wire reports



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# Stanford women win NCAA hoops title

*Associated Press*

SAN ANTONIO — Tara VanDerveer hugged each of her Stanford players as they climbed the ladder to cut down the nets, capping a taxing whirlwind journey and ending an exhausting championship drought for the Cardinal.

It took 29 years, that included 10 weeks on the road this season because of the coronavirus, for VanDerveer and the Cardinal to be crowned NCAA women's basketball champions again.

"We had some special karma going for us," VanDerveer said. "Had the comeback against Louisville, dodge a bullet against South Carolina, dodge bullet against Arizona. Sometimes you have to be lucky. I'll admit it, we were very fortunate to win."

Haley Jones scored 17 points and Stanford beat Arizona 54-53 on Sunday night, giving the Cardinal and their Hall of Fame coach their first national championship since 1992.

"Getting through all the things we got through, we're excited to win the COVID championship," VanDerveer said.

"The other one was not quite as close, the last one. But we're really excited. No one knows the score, no one knows who scored, it's a national championship."

It wasn't a masterpiece by any stretch, with both teams struggling to score and missing easy layups and shots, but Stanford did just enough to pull off the win — its second consecutive victory by a point.

Stanford (31-2) built a nine-point lead in the fourth quarter before Arizona (21-6) cut

it to 51-50 on star guard Aari McDonald's three-pointer.

After a timeout, Jones answered with a three-point play with 2:24 left. That would be Stanford's last basket of the game. McDonald got the Wildcats to 54-53 with 36.6 seconds left by converting three of four free throws.

"I just owe it all to my teammates, they have confidence in me when I don't have confidence in myself," said Jones, who was honored as the tournament's Most Outstanding Player. "I saw they needed me to come up big and I did."

After another timeout, the Cardinal couldn't even get a shot off. Arizona got one last chance with 6.1 seconds left, but McDonald's contested shot from the top of the key at the buzzer bounced off the rim.

It's been quite a journey for VanDerveer and the Cardinal this season. The team was forced on the road for nearly 10 weeks because of the coronavirus, spending 86 days in hotels during this nomadic season.

"It was a long, very difficult journey being on the road, sleeping in hotels, living out of your bag. It's just a lot. You're on the bus, you're on planes all the time and there's just never really an end in sight so it's difficult," Jones said.

"But I think from that experience and losing on the road and dropping one at home I think it just really kind of grew this extra like chip on our shoulder almost."

The team didn't complain and went about their business and now have another NCAA championship. Along the way the Hall of

Fame coach earned her 1,099th career victory to pass Pat Summitt for the most in women's basketball history.

VanDerveer had many great teams between titles, including the ones led by Candice Wiggins and the Ogwumike sisters — Nneka and Chiney, but the Cardinal just couldn't end their season with that elusive win in the title game until Sunday night.

It was the first women's basketball championship for the Pac-12 since VanDerveer and Stanford won the title in 1992. The last time a team from the conference was in the title game was 2010 when the Cardinal lost to UConn. That game was also played in the Alamodome — the site of every game in this tournament from the Sweet 16 through Sunday's championship game.

The entire NCAA Tournament was played in the San Antonio area because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

While Stanford had history on its side, Arizona has been building under coach Adia Barnes, who was the fourth Black woman to lead her team to the championship game, joining Carolyn Peck, Dawn Staley and C. Vivian Stringer.

Peck and Staley won titles.

Barnes starred for the Wildcats as a player in the late '90s and came back to her alma mater five years ago. She guided the team to the WNIT title in 2019 and led them to their first NCAA title game. This was the team's first appearance in the NCAA Tournament since 2005 — although the Wildcats would have made the NAAs last season had it not been canceled by the coronavirus.

## Overlooked Arizona was good to the last shot

*Associated Press*

SAN ANTONIO — Aari McDonald's small shoulders carried Arizona through a rebuilding project to the brink of a national championship.

Then the wild ride out of the desert ended on a last-second shot that bounced helplessly, and heartlessly, off the rim in Texas.

McDonald's desperate attempt couldn't carry the Wildcats to the title, but the program that has been routinely overlooked and was on the bottom of the Pac-12 just four years ago fought perennial power Stanford to the end. And despite the 54-53 loss, Arizona has served notice the program is a new power out West and one to be reckoned with nationally going forward.

"We want to come back here," Wildcats

coach Adia Barnes said.

McDonald and the Wildcats nearly snatched the title from the overall No. 1 seed in the women's NCAA Tournament with a late defensive flurry that rallied them from nine points down in the final quarter. But what began as a difficult night for McDonald — 2 of 11 shooting in the first quarter — ended in the player slumped at midcourt after she launched a desperate three-pointer over three defenders that bounced off the rim as the buzzer sounded.

"I got denied hard, I tried to turn the corner, they sent three at me . . . It didn't fall, that's what I remember," McDonald said.

McDonald had been the the most dynamic scorer of the tournament until Sunday night when her early shots wouldn't fall, her spin-

ning drives wouldn't move defenders, and the biggest stage of her career turned into solo act of frustration for nearly 35 minutes of play.

Still, the Wildcats almost did enough to nearly beat a team that has handled them easily twice during the regular season. McDonald made two three-pointers in the fourth quarter and her three free throws in the final minute gave the Wildcats a last chance to win when Arizona forced a shot clock turnover with six seconds to play.

"They just built on their confidence, just built and built and built throughout the tournament," Stanford coach Tara VanDerveer said. "The fact that we (had) beaten them twice and, quite honestly, in Arizona we beat them very badly. A real credit to their team and staff. They played great."

# Ohtani's play, Walsh's HRs lift Angels

Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — In the first inning alone, Shohei Ohtani threw a ball nearly 101 mph and hit a homer that jumped off his bat at 115 mph.

By the time he left, the Los Angeles Angels' two-way star had dazzled on the mound and at the plate in a historic two-way performance.

And after Sho-time ended, Jared Walsh put on his own impressive effort to secure another win for the Halos.

Ohtani smashed a 451-foot homer and pitched two-hit ball into the fifth inning, and Walsh hit a walkoff homer to end the Angels' 7-4 victory over the Chicago White Sox on Sunday night.

"I'm glad I got one game like this under my belt, and it's going to lead to a lot of confidence for me," Ohtani said through his translator.

Ohtani reached another milestone in his unique career when he took the mound and occupied the No. 2 slot in the batting order for the Angels. He was just the third pitcher

in 45 seasons to hit for himself in a game with the designated hitter available, and the first to bat second since Jack Dunleavy did it for the Cardinals in 1903.

Although he lost a three-run lead and narrowly avoided injury in a home plate collision during the fifth inning, Ohtani left both teams amazed by his abilities.

"He's everything we thought he could be, right?" Angels manager Joe Maddon said. "That's the complete baseball player. He just needed the opportunity to do it. ... What he did tonight was pretty special, and you're going to see a lot more of that."

Chicago's Leury García put it more succinctly: "Oh, he nasty."

So was Walsh, who hit two homers — including a big three-run shot off Matt Foster to end the Angels' third win over Chicago in their four-game, season-opening series.

In that wild first inning, Ohtani both threw the hardest pitch by any starting pitcher in baseball this season and his first-pitch homer off Chicago's Dylan Cease was the hardest hit by any batter this season.

Even Ohtani's 109.7-mph lineout to center in the second inning was hit harder than any other ball in the game except his own homer.

Ohtani didn't allow a run through the first four innings, but his control problems abetted Chicago's three-run rally in the fifth. Ohtani left after a passed ball and a throwing error by catcher Max Stassi led to a collision between Ohtani and José Abreu.

Ohtani finished with seven strikeouts and five walks, showcasing his typical duo of otherworldly speed and shaky control.

David Fletcher and Justin Upton drove in early runs for the Angels. After Chicago tied it in the fifth by scoring three runs without an RBI, Walsh reclaimed the lead for Los Angeles in the fifth — but new Angels closer Raisel Iglesias (1-0) couldn't quite come up with a five-out save.

Ohtani left the game with general soreness, but no injury, general manager Perry Minasian said. "I feel fine as of now," Ohtani said. "It wasn't as bad as it looked."

# Phillies pitchers dominate Braves again for sweep

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Alec Bohm had a tiebreaking single in the eighth inning, Zach Eflin gave Philadelphia another strong start and the Phillies completed a three-game sweep of the defending NL East champion Atlanta Braves with a 2-1 win Sunday.

Philadelphia's starting trio of Aaron Nola, Zack Wheeler and Eflin (1-0) surrendered three runs, 11 hits and one walk in 20  $\frac{2}{3}$  innings against an Atlanta lineup that led the majors in 2020 with 556 hits.

The Phillies bullpen, which posted a 7.06 ERA in 2020, didn't yield a run in 7  $\frac{1}{3}$  innings in the set.

"Everyone did their job," Phillies manager Joe Girardi said. "The starters came in and did their job. The bullpen did their job. To limit this team to the amount of runs that we did is not easy to do."

Eflin went seven strong innings, allowing only four hits and one walk while striking out eight.

**Reds 12, Cardinals 1:** Nick Castellanos came out swinging with his bat a day after being ejected for inciting a bench-clearing melee, hitting a three-run homer off Carlos Martinez (0-1) and triple to finish the series 6-for-11 with five RBIs.

**Indians 9, Tigers 3:** Jordan Luplow hit a two-run homer to cap a four-run seventh, and Cleveland overcame a home run by Akil Baddoo on the first pitch of his first major league at-bat.

**Orioles 11, Red Sox 3:** Boston dropped to 0-3 at Fenway Park for the first time since 1948 and the second time ever as Trey Mancini and Austin Hays hit two-run doubles during a seven-run third inning.

Maikel Franco added a first-inning, two-run double, helping Baltimore to its first three-game sweep at Fenway since Aug. 25-27, 2017.

**Blue Jays 3, Yankees 1:** Vladimir Guerrero Jr. and Randal Grichuk homered off Domingo Germán (0-1), who allowed three runs over three innings in his first appearance since Sept. 18, 2019, after serving a suspension under Major League Baseball's domestic violence policy.

**Cubs 4, Pirates 4:** Zach Davies (1-0) permitted two runs and four hits in 5  $\frac{2}{3}$  innings in his Chicago debut against short-handed Pittsburgh.

Ian Happ homered and Kris Bryant reached three times as Chicago earned its second straight win after losing on opening day.

**Rangers 7, Royals 3:** Nate Lowe hit a

three-run homer in the third for Texas, which avoided a sweep, and had a team-record nine RBIs in the first three games of the season, a Texas record.

**Twins 8, Brewers 2:** Miguel Sanó and Mitch Garver homered to back up Michael Pineda (1-0), who gave up just one unearned run and four hits in five innings.

Luis Arraez went 3-for-3 with a pair of walks as the Twins took two of three.

**Dodgers 4, Rockies 2:** Julio Urías (1-0) gave up one run and three hits in seven-plus innings in the longest start of the 24-year-old left-hander's major league career. He struck out six and walked one.

**Astros 9, Athletics 2:** Jason Castro homered in his first start with Houston since signing as a free agent following the 2016 season, helping complete a four-game sweep. Kyle Tucker and Chas McCormick also homered for the Astros, off to their best start since 2001. Yuli Gurriel had three hits and two RBIs.

**Diamondbacks 3, Padres 1:** Rookie Taylor Widener (1-0) held San Diego to three hits in six scoreless innings to win his first big league start and David Peralta hit a two-run triple as Arizona avoided a four-game sweep.

# Clippers rout short-handed Lakers

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES— Marcus Morris scored 22 points as the Los Angeles Clippers dominated the short-handed Los Angeles Lakers in a 104-86 victory on Sunday to end a two-game skid.

Kawhi Leonard had 19 points, 10 rebounds and eight assists, and Paul George added 16 points for the Clippers.

“We set the tone early defensively, we were physical and got into bodies,” Clippers coach Tyronn Lue said.

The Lakers trailed the entire game in which they were without injured All-Star duo of LeBron James and Anthony Davis, as well as Andre Drummond and Wesley Matthews. They’ve dropped six of nine.

Montrezl Harrell led the Lakers with 19 points against his old team. Marc Gasol was the only starter in double figures with 11.

Kyle Kuzma’s shooting typified the Lakers’ offensive woes. He was held to six points as one of four starters who combined to shoot 12 of 41.

“We got to play the right way on the offensive end,” Kuzma said. “Defensively, we’ll be all right. Offensively, we got to find ways to play together. Can’t win games scoring in the 80s and 90s. Got to find ways to incorporate everyone.”

The Clippers built a double-digit lead midway through the second that the Lakers never reduced to single digits the rest of the way.

“Credit the Clippers’ defense,” Lakers coach Frank Vogel said. “They got up into us and we didn’t handle their pressure at all and we had a tough shooting night. We got to play through their pressure and physicality better than we did.”

**Grizzlies 116, 76ers 100:** Grayson Allen had 11 of his 15 points during a game-changing third quarter, lifting visiting Memphis over short-handed Philadelphia, which was without All-Star center Joel Embiid.

Dillon Brooks scored 17 points for the Grizzlies, who began play ninth in the Western Conference.

Embiid returned from a 10-game absence due to a bone bruise in his left knee in Saturday night’s victory over Minnesota, but he didn’t play in the second game of a back-to-back in order to recover.

**Pelicans 122, Rockets 115:** Lonzo Ball had 27 points and a career-high eight three-pointers as visiting New Orleans defeated Houston to end a two-game skid.

Ball made all four of his three-point attempts in the first quarter in his return after missing seven games with a hip injury.

**Bulls 115, Nets 107:** Nikola Vucevic had 22 points and 13 rebounds, Zach LaVine added 25 points and host Chicago beat Brooklyn to snap a six-game losing streak.

Kyrie Irving had 24 points and 15 assists to lead short-handed Brooklyn, which played without James Harden and Kevin Durant.

**Hawks 117, Warriors 111:** Clint Capela had 24 points and 18 rebounds, Danilo Gallinari scored 25 points and host Atlan-

ta beat Golden State for its third straight win.

Stephen Curry and Draymond Green returned after injuries forced both to miss an embarrassing blowout against Toronto on Friday.

Curry had 37 points as the Warriors lost their seventh in the last eight games.

**Celtics 116, Hornets 86:** Jayson Tatum had 22 points and eight rebounds, and host Boston blew past short-handed Charlotte.

Charlotte was without LaMelo Ball (fractured right wrist), Malik Monk (sprained right ankle) and Gordon Hayward, who went on the injured list Friday after he sprained his right foot during a win at Indiana.

**Nuggets 119, Magic 109:** Aaron Gordon scored 24 points against his former team, rallying host Denver past Orlando.

Gordon scored Denver’s first dozen points, then helped the Nuggets erase an 18-point half-time deficit for their 14th win in 17 games and their 10th straight over the Magic.

# Ovechkin scores on power play as Caps sweep Devils

Associated Press

NEWARK, N.J. — The Washington Capitals came up with two Great 8s against the New Jersey Devils.

Alex Ovechkin hit another milestone in his amazing career and the Capitals finished off a rare eight-game sweep of their season series with the Devils with a 5-4 win on Sunday.

Ovechkin scored his 265th power-play goal to move into a second-place tie with Brett Hull on the NHL’s all-time list in that category. He is 10 shy of passing all-time leader Dave Andreychuk (274).

Like most of his personal marks, he downplayed it.

“Keep going,” said the 35-year-old Russian who now has

725 goals, six goals shy of tying Marcel Dionne for fifth place all time in the NHL. “It is what it is.”

The Great 8 was more impressed with the sweep and the play of goaltender Ilya Samsonov, who had 35 saves in a game the Caps were outshot 39-19.

“I think Sammy today was unstoppable,” Ovechkin said. “Obviously he gave us the victory.”

T.J. Oshie, Conor Sheary, Carl Hagelin and Evgeny Kuznetsov also scored for Washington. The eight-game sweep was the first in team history against a single opponent.

**Red Wings 5, Lightning 1:** Thomas Greiss made 27 stops to lead Detroit to its first road win against Tampa Bay in the regu-

lar season in more than 10 years.

Marc Staal, Valtteri Filppula, Michael Rasmussen, Darren Helm and Dylan Larkin all scored for the Red Wings, who snapped a three-game winless streak.

**Panthers 3, Blue Jackets 0:** Aleksander Barkov had a goal and an assist, Chris Driedger posted his third career shutout, and host Florida won its sixth straight.

Frank Vatrano and Gustav Forsling also scored as the Panthers moved into sole possession of first place in the Central Division.

**Hurricanes 1, Stars 0:** Petr Mrazek made 28 saves in his first game back after a two-month absence as host Carolina

beat Dallas.

Stars coach Rick Bowness didn’t return to the bench for the third period because of what the team announced was a COVID protocol.

Jordan Martinook’s second-period goal was enough scoring.

**Maple Leafs 4, Flames 2:** Auston Matthews and John Tavares each had a goal and an assist and visiting Toronto beat Calgary.

Morgan Rielly and Alex Galchenyuk also scored for the Maple Leafs, who are 6-3-1 in their past 10 and continue to top the NHL’s North Division.

**Coyotes 3, Ducks 2 (OT):** Jakob Chychrun scored his third goal 1:47 into overtime and visiting Arizona beat Anaheim.