

# STARS AND STRIPES<sup>®</sup>

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Drawdown may mean brief rise in troops

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — More American troops could deploy to Afghanistan in the coming months to help with U.S. withdrawal efforts from the country, Pentagon's chief spokesman said Friday.

"It is not out of the realm of the possible that for a short period of time, there will have to be some additional enabling capabilities added to Afghanistan to help affect a safe, orderly and deliberately planned drawdown of everybody by the president's deadline by early September," John Kirby said during a news briefing.

President Joe Biden on Wednesday announced he had decided to withdraw the 2,500 or so U.S. troops in Afghanistan by

Sept. 11, the 20th anniversary of the terrorist attacks that led to the invasion of the country. The withdrawal was originally supposed to happen by May 1 as laid out in peace agreement with the Taliban, but Biden had previously said meeting that deadline would be difficult.

Preliminary plans had already been written for the May withdrawal, Kirby said. Those plans will now need to be updated and could possibly include logisticians and engineers as the U.S. needed when leaving Iraq in 2011, and security forces to protect withdrawing troops, he said.

"We've seen [the Taliban] threats, and it would be imprudent for us not to take those threats seriously. It would also be imprudent for the Taliban to not take seriously

what the president and what [Defense] Secretary [Lloyd] Austin both made clear, that any attack on our draw down, on our forces, or our allies and partners as they draw down, will be met very forcefully," Kirby said.

He also said the Pentagon will be limited in how transparent it will be about day-to-day details regarding the drawdown due to the Taliban threats.

Whether some Defense Department-funded contractors will remain in the country after the drawdown to help Afghan forces is still being determined, according to Kirby. With the end of the military mission in Afghanistan, the United States support to Afghan forces will mostly be financial, he said.

## Global coronavirus death toll passes 3 million

*Associated Press*

RIO DE JANEIRO — The global death toll from the coronavirus topped a staggering 3 million people Saturday amid repeated setbacks in the worldwide vaccination campaign and a deepening crisis in places such as Brazil, India and France.

The number of lives lost, as compiled by Johns Hopkins University, is about equal to the population of Kyiv, Ukraine; Caracas, Venezuela; or metropolitan Lisbon, Portugal. It is bigger than Chicago (2.7 million) and equivalent to Philadelphia and Dallas combined.

And the true number is believed to be significantly higher because of possible government concealment and the many cases overlooked in the early stages of the outbreak that began in Wuhan, China, at the end of 2019.

When the world back in January passed the bleak threshold of 2 million deaths, immunization drives had just started in Europe and the United States. Today, they are underway in more than 190 countries, though progress in bringing the virus under control varies widely.

While the campaigns in the U.S. and Britain have hit their stride and people and businesses there are beginning to contem-

plate life after the pandemic, other places, mostly poorer countries but some rich ones as well, are lagging behind in putting shots in arms and have imposed new lockdowns and other restrictions as virus cases soar.

Worldwide, deaths are on the rise again, running at around 12,000 per day on average, and new cases are climbing too, eclipsing 700,000 a day.

In Brazil, where deaths are running at about 3,000 per day, accounting for one-quarter of the lives lost worldwide in recent weeks, the crisis has been likened to a "raging inferno" by one World Health Organization official.

As cases surge, hospitals are running out of critical sedatives. As a result, there have been reports of some doctors diluting what supplies remain and even tying patients to their beds while breathing tubes are pushed down their throats.

The slow vaccine rollout has crushed Brazilians' pride in their own history of carrying out huge immunization campaigns that were the envy of the developing world.

Taking cues from President Jair Bolsonaro, who has likened the virus to little more than a flu, his Health Ministry for months bet big on a single vaccine, ignoring other producers. When bottlenecks

emerged, it was too late to get large quantities in time.

This situation is similarly dire in India, where cases spiked in February after weeks of steady decline, taking authorities by surprise. In a surge driven by variants of the virus, India saw over 180,000 new infections in one 24-hour span during the past week, bringing the total number of cases to over 13.9 million.

The challenges facing India reverberate beyond its borders since the country is the biggest supplier of shots to COVAX, the U.N.-sponsored program to distribute vaccines to poorer parts of the world. Last month, India said it would suspend vaccine exports until the virus's spread inside the country slows.

The WHO recently described the supply situation as precarious. Up to 60 countries might not receive any more shots until June, by one estimate. To date, COVAX has delivered about 40 million doses to more than 100 countries, enough to cover barely 0.25% of the world's population.

Globally, about 87% of the 700 million doses dispensed have been given out in rich countries. While 1 in 4 people in wealthy nations have received a vaccine, in poor countries the figure is 1 in more than 500.

# Army revising policy on sex-crime cases

By ROSE L. THAYER  
*Stars and Stripes*

AUSTIN, Texas — A report of sexual harassment from a soldier under Army Forces Command now will be investigated by an officer outside of that soldier's brigade, according to a new policy from the command.

More so, the Army plans to implement the change servicewide as a way to stabilize its sexual assault and harassment response program while also creating a complete overhaul of the 10-year-old program that was found to be failing soldiers.

"The investigating officer will be from outside of that soldier's chain of command, so that they are completely separated from what the problem set may be, and it's not

something that is embedded inside of the formation where they're kind of policing their own," said Diane Randon, the Army's assistant deputy chief of staff for military intelligence and one of three leaders of the People First Task Force.

The Army announced the policy change alongside 20 others made since the Fort Hood Independent Review Committee released a report Dec. 8 about the Texas Army base. The report included 70 recommendations to improve the command climate and culture at Fort Hood and the entire Army. The People First Task Force was created to implement all the recommendations.

Randon, alongside Lt. Gen. Gary M. Brito, the deputy chief of staff for Army per-

sonnel, and Sgt. Maj. Julie A.M. Guerra, the deputy chief of staff for personnel sergeant major, lead the task force. They took questions Friday about the five recommendations implemented across the Army and the 16 implemented at Fort Hood, III Corps and Army Forces Command, known as FORSCOM.

The Army created the committee to review Fort Hood's command climate and culture and the Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention program last year after the disappearance and death of Spc. Vanessa Guillen. The 20-year-old soldier was killed in an arms room by a fellow soldier nearly one year ago. Her family has said she was sexually harassed on base prior to her death.

## 51 West Point cadets caught cheating to repeat year

*Associated Press*

Most of the 73 West Point cadets accused in the biggest cheating scandal in decades at the U.S. Military Academy are being required to repeat a year, and eight were expelled, academy officials said Friday.

The cadets were accused of cheating on an online freshman calculus exam in May while students were studying remotely because of the coronavirus pandemic. An investigation was launched after instructors noticed irregularities in answers. All but one were freshmen, or plebes, in a class of 1,200. The other was a sophomore.

Cadets at the centuries-old officer training academy on the Hudson River are bound by an honor code that they "will not lie, cheat, steal, or tolerate those who do." The cheating scandal is the biggest at West Point since 1976 and preceded the tightening of an academy policy that spared many cadets in this case from being kicked out.

West Point said that of the 73 cases investigated by the cadet honor committee, six cadets resigned during the investigation, four were acquitted by a board of their peers, and two cases were dropped due to insufficient evidence.

Most of the cadets, 51, were "turned back" one full year after admitting to cheating, and two were turned back six months. Those cadets are under probation until graduation.

Lt. Gen. Darryl A. Williams, West Point's superintendent, personally adjudicated each case.

"The tenets of honorable living remain immutable, and the outcomes of our leader development system remain the same, to graduate Army officers that live honorably, lead honorably, and demonstrate excellence," Williams said in a prepared release.

## Divers return to search for the crew of capsized ship

*Associated Press*

PORT FOURCHON, La. — Divers returned Saturday to the murky, roiling waters of the Gulf of Mexico in search of lost crew members aboard a capsized lift boat off Louisiana, the Coast Guard said.

"They took a break overnight because of the weather, operating as long as they could, but got back out there this morning and they're in the water now," said Petty Officer John Michelli.

Michelli said an update on the search progress would be released later Saturday.

Late Friday, divers recovered two more unresponsive crew members, the Coast

Guard said. Commercial divers on the capsized Seacor Power lift boat found them, the Coast Guard statement said. But the Coast Guard said it was not releasing the names of any of those rescued, recovered or still missing out of respect for the privacy of their families.

"Our deepest sympathy goes out to the family, friends and loved ones of everyone involved in this tragic incident," said Capt. Will Watson, commander of Coast Guard Sector New Orleans. "We are using every asset available to us to continue our search efforts."

The Lafourche Parish Coroner's Office

did not immediately respond Saturday to an emailed request for comment regarding the latest victims recovered from the water.

Rescuers in the air and the sea have been searching for the 19 workers who were aboard the vessel, which is designed to support offshore oil rigs, when it overturned Tuesday in rough weather about 8 miles south of the Louisiana coast. Nine remain missing.

Six people were rescued Tuesday shortly after the vessel capsized, and one body was recovered from the water Wednesday. A second body was found Thursday night, according to a Coast Guard news release.

# FBI questioned FedEx shooter in 2020

*Associated Press/Report for America*

INDIANAPOLIS — The former employee who shot and killed eight people at a FedEx facility in Indianapolis was interviewed by FBI agents last year, after his mother called police to say that her son might commit “suicide by cop,” the bureau said Friday.

Coroners released the names of the victims late Friday, a little less than 24 hours after the latest mass shooting to rock the U.S. Four of them were members of Indianapolis’ Sikh community. The attack was another blow to the Asian American community a month after six people of Asian descent were killed in a mass shooting in the Atlanta area and amid ongoing attacks against Asian Americans during the coronavirus pandemic.

The shooter was identified as Brandon Scott Hole, 19, of Indianapolis, Deputy Police Chief Craig McCartt told a news conference. Investigators searched a home in Indianapo-

lis associated with Hole and seized evidence, including desktop computers and other electronic media, McCartt said.

Hole began firing randomly at people in the parking lot of the FedEx facility late Thursday, killing four, before entering the building, fatally shooting four more people and then turning the gun on himself, McCartt said. He said he did not know if Hole owned the gun legally.

“There was no confrontation with anyone that was there,” he said. “There was no disturbance; there was no argument. He just appeared to randomly start shooting.”

McCartt said the slayings took place in a matter of minutes, and that there were at least 100 people in the facility at the time. Many were changing shifts or were on their dinner break, he said. Several people were wounded, including five who were taken to the hospital.

Paul Keenan, special agent in charge of the

FBI’s Indianapolis field office, said Friday that agents questioned Hole last year after his mother called police to say that her son might commit “suicide by cop.” He said the FBI was called after items were found in Hole’s bedroom but he did not elaborate on what they were. He said agents found no evidence of a crime and that they did not identify Hole as espousing a racially motivated ideology. A police report obtained by The Associated Press shows that officers seized a pump-action shotgun from Hole’s home after responding to the mother’s call. Keenan said the gun was never returned.

McCartt said Hole was a former employee of FedEx and last worked for the company in 2020. The deputy police chief said he did not know why Hole left the job or if he had ties to the workers in the facility. He said police have not yet uncovered a motive for the shooting.

## Biden plans to raise refugee cap by May 15

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Facing swift blowback from allies and aid groups, the White House said President Joe Biden plans to lift his predecessor’s historically low cap on refugees by next month, after initially moving only to expand the eligibility criteria for resettlements.

In an emergency determination signed by Biden earlier Friday, he stated the admission of up to 15,000 refugees set by former President Donald Trump this year “remains justified by humanitarian concerns and is otherwise in the national interest.” But if the cap is reached before the end of the current budget year and the emergency refugee situation per-

sists, then a presidential determination may be issued to raise the ceiling.

That set off a deluge of criticism from top allies on Capitol Hill such as the second-ranking Senate Democrat, Dick Durbin of Illinois, who called that initial limit “unacceptable.”

White House press secretary Jen Psaki said later that Biden is expected to increase the refugee cap by May 15, though she didn’t say by how much.

Biden has been consulting with his advisers to determine what number of refugees could realistically be admitted to the United States between now and Oct. 1, the end of the fiscal year, Psaki said. “Given the decimated refu-

gee admissions program we inherited,” she said it’s now “unlikely” Biden will be able to boost that number to 62,500, as he had proposed in his plan to Congress two months ago.

But Biden, she said, was urged by advisers to “take immediate action to reverse the Trump policy that banned refugees from many key regions, to enable flights from those regions to begin within days; today’s order did that.”

The new allocations provide more slots for refugees from Africa, the Middle East and Central America and lift Trump’s restrictions on resettlements from Somalia, Syria and Yemen.

## 1st suspect pleads guilty in Capitol insurrection

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — A member of the far-right Oath Keepers militia group and heavy metal guitarist on Friday became the first defendant to plead guilty to federal charges in connection with the insurrection at the U.S. Capitol.

Jon Ryan Schaffer, the frontman of the band Iced Earth, has agreed to cooperate with investigators in hopes of getting a lighter sentence, and the Justice Department will consider putting Schaffer in the

federal witness security program, U.S. District Judge Amit Mehta said.

This signals that federal prosecutors see him as a valuable cooperator as they continue to investigate militia groups and other extremists involved in the insurrection on Jan. 6 as Congress was meeting to certify President Joe Biden’s electoral win.

Schaffer, a supporter of former President Donald Trump, was accused of storming the Capitol and spraying police officers with bear spray. He pleaded guilty

in a deal with prosecutors in federal court in Washington to two counts: obstruction of an official proceeding, and entering and remaining in a restricted building with a dangerous or deadly weapon.

Schaffer, of Columbus, Ind., was wearing a tactical vest and baseball hat that read “Oath Keepers Lifetime Member” on Jan. 6, and acknowledged in his plea agreement that he is a “founding lifetime member” of the extremist group, prosecutors said.



# Arrests made on sixth night of Minn. protests

*Star Tribune*

MINNEAPOLIS — A sixth night of protests outside the twin-fenced Brooklyn Center police headquarters ended within a few chaotic minutes Friday night when the National Guard and State Patrol rushed a dwindling but increasingly volatile crowd and made arrests.

At its peak, the crowd protesting Sunday's fatal shooting of 20-year-old Daunte Wright by a former Brooklyn Center police officer swelled to about 1,000 people, one of the week's largest gatherings. And early on, the protest had the air of a block party.

But everything changed about 9 p.m., when arguments erupted within the crowd about protest tone and tactics after one speaker called for the fences to be rushed and taken down, with some attempting to do just that.

Troops and officers who had stood back behind the fences and simply watched most of the night swiftly issued dispersal orders, fired flash-bang grenades and moved in to arrest people after the attempt to breach the fences and when an increasing number of objects were thrown at them by a few protesters.

For most of the night, no curfew was in effect, but late Friday, an 11 p.m.-to-6 a.m. curfew was hastily declared.

In a news conference early Saturday, law enforcement leaders stressed that Friday's gathering was peaceful and legal until its last few minutes, and expressed disappointment that Thursday night's strategy of backing off and waiting out the protest did not work Friday.

When law enforcement observed some people who were wearing helmets, hockey or gas masks and tactical gear moving on the front and back fences with baseball bats, shields, bleach and other items that they had been hiding behind nearby Dumpsters and buildings, they issued three dispersal orders and then quickly moved in to make arrests, John Harrington, commissioner of the state Department of Public Safety said. He said most people fled at that point and officers focused on those who were hard by the fences.

"This is a night that should have been about Daunte Wright," Harrington said with visible emotion, adding that the chaos of the last few minutes hijacked an otherwise legal, nonviolent protest.

## Chicago shooting videos elicit mixed reactions from viewers

*Associated Press*

CHICAGO — Newly released video that shows a Chicago police officer fatally shoot a 13-year-old will be key evidence when prosecutors consider a case against the officer and are confronted with both the emotions surrounding the chilling footage and legal precedent that makes it difficult to bring charges against law enforcement.

Video of last month's encounter was released Thursday and provoked an outpouring of grief and outrage. It shows Officer Eric Stillman shooting Adam Toledo less than a second after the boy drops a handgun, turns toward Stillman and begins raising his hands.

Some viewers have called for Stillman to be charged or fired. But for others, the video shows how difficult such decisions

might be for prosecutors and police higher-ups, with an officer making a quick decision to shoot after chasing a suspect down a dark alley while responding to a report about gunshots.

Whether Stillman is charged will be up to the Cook County state's attorney's office, which will get the Civilian Office of Police Accountability's report after the independent board completes its investigation.

Several legal experts said Friday that they don't think Stillman could be charged under criteria established by a landmark 1989 Supreme Court ruling on the use of force by police, though another said prosecutors might see enough evidence to justify an involuntary manslaughter charge and let a jury decide guilt or innocence.

## Riot declared in Ore. after fatal shooting

PORTLAND, Ore. — Police declared a riot Friday night after authorities said protesters smashed windows and burglarized businesses during demonstrations that started earlier in the day after police fatally shot a man while responding to reports of a person with a gun.

The vandalism downtown came after the Friday morning police shooting but also was part of vigils and demonstrations already planned for the night in the name of people killed in other police shootings nationwide. They include 13-year-old Adam Toledo of Chicago and Daunte Wright, a Black man in Minneapolis.

Deputy Police Chief Chris Davis told reporters earlier in the day that a white man in his 30s was shot and killed by police, who opened fire with a gun and weapons that fire non-lethal projectiles.

The man was pronounced dead at the scene in Lents Park.

Police said later Friday they had used pepper spray on protesters in order to disengage. Some people hit officers with sticks and chased officers as they were leaving, police said in a news release.

**From The Associated Press**

## Fires, destruction at protest in Oakland

OAKLAND, Calif. — A protest that began peacefully in California ended with multiple fires set, several cars damaged and numerous windows shattered.

The protest against police brutality in Oakland began calmly Friday night, news outlets reported. A subsequent march drew around 300 people with some setting fires and breaking windows.

A car dealership was among the buildings damaged. At least one car was set on fire. A fire was also set outside a bank. Demonstrators were seen walking past the scene of a car crash.

Photos and videos posted online showed marchers with signs and flags. Many chanted the names of Daunte Wright, a 20-year-old who was shot and killed by an officer in Brooklyn Center, Minn., and Adam Toledo, a 13-year-old fatally shot by an officer in Chicago.

People in the crowd threw bottles and other objects at officers during the march, Oakland police said. One officer suffered an injury from being struck in the head.

**From The Associated Press**

**AMERICAN ROUNDUP**

**Man gets prison for killing elephant seal**

**CA** LOS ANGELES — A man was sentenced to three months in federal prison for shooting a protected northern elephant seal to death on the central California coast near San Simeon.

A Los Angeles federal judge also sentenced Jordan Gerbich, 30, to a year of supervised release after his prison term, three months of home detention, 120 hours of community service and ordered him to pay a \$1,000 fine, the U.S. Attorney's Office said.

Gerbich, who lived in Santa Maria at the time and now lives in Coalville, Utah, pleaded guilty last year to a misdemeanor count of illegally taking a marine mammal, the office said.

Northern elephant seals are protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

**School to swap KKK name for athlete's**

**GA** ATLANTA — An Atlanta high school that was named after a Ku Klux Klan leader will strip the name and instead honor the late baseball Hall of Famer Hank Aaron.

The Atlanta Board of Education voted unanimously to change the name of Forrest Hill Academy to Hank Aaron New Beginnings Academy, news outlets reported. The new name is expected to be in place by the time students return to the southwest Atlanta alternative school in August.

Aaron, a former Atlanta Braves baseball player, died in January at the age of 86.

Forrest Hill Academy had been named after Nathan Bed-

ford Forrest, a Confederate general and an early leader of the Ku Klux Klan.

**Homeless Army vet pulls man from burning vehicle**

**FL** PENSACOLA — A homeless Army veteran is being called a hero for pulling a man to safety when his car caught fire after a head-on crash in Florida's Panhandle.

Freddie Finkley, 56, was standing near an intersection with his girlfriend Stephanie Tidwell on April 7 when they witnessed the crash on an I-10 overpass near Pensacola.

Finkley told the Pensacola News Journal he pulled Eric Lopez, 34, from the vehicle as flames were coming through the dashboard.

"Anybody that helps out another person — especially in this case where it could have or did save a life — we certainly appreciate that," Pensacola Police Department spokesman Officer Mike Wood told the newspaper.

**Students disciplined over 'slave trade' on Snapchat**

**TX** ALEDO — Students at a North Texas high school were disciplined for their role in a mock slave auction they conducted on social media.

A group of students at the Daniel Ninth Grade Campus in the Fort Worth suburb of Aledo set up the so-called "slave trade" of Black classmates on Snapchat, civil rights activists told the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

A screenshot provided to the Star-Telegram showed a Snapchat group with various names, including "Slave Trade" and another name that includes a racial

slur. One person typed they would spend \$1 on a peer, and another person wrote they would pay \$100 for someone else.

Aledo school Superintendent Susan Bohnsaid in a statement that district officials have spoken with all the students involved and their parents.

**Caution urged of boaters after rare whales spotted**

**MA** BOSTON — A group of rare whales has been spotted east of Boston, prompting the federal government to urge caution among boaters.

The whales are North Atlantic right whales, which number only about 360 in the world. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said it is asking mariners to route around the area or transit through it at 10 knots or less until April 23.

The animals are often seen off Massachusetts as they head north.

**Mom arrested for gun threat at school drop-off**

**KS** KANSAS CITY — Anyone who has ever negotiated the line of vehicles at a school drop-off zone knows how frustrating the daily process can be. But police in Kansas City said one mom took matters too far when she used a gun to threaten another mother in a school drop-off line.

Police said in reports that a mother was dropping off her children when another car sped around hers. As the line was stopped, the mother got out of her car and confronted the other driver — a woman who also was dropping off students.

That's when the woman who was confronted displayed a handgun and made threatening statements to the first mother, police said. School officials reported the incident to police, and officers arrested the woman a short time later.

**State gets 55K inquiries for remote work program**

**WV** CHARLESTON — West Virginia received 2,000 applications in the first two days after announcing it is recruiting remote workers, Gov. Jim Justice said.

The program would give participants \$12,000 cash and free passes for a year to recreational destinations such as whitewater rafting, golf and rock climbing.

Justice said state Tourism Cabinet Secretary Chelsea Ruby told him the state had received 55,000 inquiries into the program since it was announced.

**Teen who took explosive to school charged**

**MI** NEWAYGO — A 16-year-old student who lost both thumbs after his homemade explosive went off in a high school classroom in western Michigan has been charged.

He is charged with manufacture/possession of a Molotov cocktail or similar device and possession of a weapon in a weapon-free school zone, the Newaygo County prosecutor's office said.

A homemade explosive was taken March 8 to Newaygo High School and accidentally detonated, police said. The teen, four students and a teacher were hurt. He was also suspended.

— From the Associated Press



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# Marleau poised to set games mark

Associated Press

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Growing up on a farm as a hockey-loving kid in Saskatchewan, the knowledge that players like Gordie Howe had made the journey from that remote province to the NHL gave Patrick Marleau belief that he could one day follow that same path.

Marleau has done far more than just make it to the NHL. Now nearly a quarter-century after leaving Saskatchewan to sign with the San Jose Sharks as a fresh-faced teenager, Marleau is set to eclipse Mr. Hockey's games played record in the NHL.

Marleau has played in 1,766 career games and was poised to tie Howe's mark of 1,767 on Saturday night in Minnesota and break it Monday night in Las Vegas.

"Just first and foremost is loving the game and I just love being out there and playing," Marleau said Thursday about what has kept him going all these years. "Obviously, every kid's dream is to hoist that Stanley Cup, so I've been chasing it all

this time and that goal hasn't changed for me, since you know what the Stanley Cup's about."

The Stanley Cup has eluded Marleau, who got to the Final once in 2016 in a career with many playoff disappointments.

The 41-year-old Marleau has accomplished plenty in his career: 566 goals, 1,196 points, three All-Star appearances and two Olympic gold medals for Canada in 2010 and '14.

But it is his supreme skating skill and dependability that has allowed him to play 895 consecutive games since last missing a contest when he was 29 that will be his legacy. He has played through bouts with the flu, various other bumps and bruises and even chartered a plane to join his teammates in Nashville for a game in 2009 after the birth of one of his sons.

"I want to be looked upon when I'm gone that I gave it my all," he said. "Enjoyed the game, loved the game, loved being around the team, loved winning games. Those are the biggest things."

Marleau made his debut on

Oct. 1, 1997, at age 18 years and 16 days, which is the youngest for any player in the NHL since Lee Wharton debuted at 17 years, 81 days in 1945 for the Rangers.

He scored 13 goals as a rookie and then had his first of 15 20-goal seasons the following season as he quickly established himself as a top player.

"He was an effortless skater from day one," said Sharks executive Mike Ricci, who spent seven years as Marleau's teammate. "That might be a thing he was blessed with. Being a natural skater and being in tip-top condition and working hard off ice and on the ice these are the results you get. There are a lot of effortless players out there who can't play this long. I remember we used to joke around and I would tell him he could play until he was 60. Obviously I was exaggerating a bit, but maybe I wasn't exaggerating as much as I thought."

While Marleau won't play until he is 60, he isn't ready to hang it up after this season, either. It's a similar mindset to Howe, who

retired at 52 after posting 41 points in his final season for Hartford. Howe also played an additional 419 games in the WHA, which don't count toward his NHL record.

While players like Jaromir Jagr, Mark Messier and Chris Chelios approached Howe's mark, no one has been able to reach a record many thought was unbreakable when Howe retired.

"Records are made to be broken," said Howe's son Mark, a scout for Detroit who played 1,355 games combined in the NHL and WHA. "This one here, I thought would be a really, really tough one to break but Patrick is finally going to do it."

Mark Howe joked that the oatmeal from Saskatchewan might have been what fueled both his father and Marleau through all those games. But there is something else that Marleau and Gordie Howe have in common.

"You can't do it unless you love what you're doing," Mark Howe said. "If you love going to the rink every day and have fun at it, it's a great job to have."

# Hall, Swayman help Bruins shut out Islanders

Associated Press

BOSTON — Taylor Hall scored his second goal in two nights, Jeremy Swayman stopped 25 shots and the Boston Bruins beat the Islanders 3-0 on Friday, their second win over New York in two nights.

David Pastrnak added his 17th goal of the season and Curtis Lazar had a late empty-netter as Boston put more distance between itself and the idle New York Rangers for the East Division's final playoff spot.

Ilya Sorokin had 21 saves for the Islanders, who have lost three of four.

Coming off a 4-1 win on Thursday night, the Bruins

were again solid defensively, turning back all five of New York's power play chances.

**Golden Knights 4, Ducks 0:** Robin Lehner made 16 saves for his first shutout of the season and 16th of his career, and visiting Vegas extended its winning streak to five games.

William Karlsson, Chandler Stephenson, Nicolas Roy and Brayden McNabb scored for the Golden Knights, who moved within two points of the West Division-leading Colorado Avalanche. Stephenson added an assist and Mark Stone had two assists to help Vegas improve to 3-0 on its four-game trip to Southern California.

Lehner, who missed over a

month of play between February and March with a concussion, made just his 13th start of the season while picking up his 10th win. It was his first shutout since March 3, 2020, against the New Jersey Devils.

John Gibson made 44 saves as last-place Anaheim saw its two-game winning streak end.

**Canadiens 2, Flames 1:** Tyler Toffoli scored two goals, including the winner in the third period, to lift host Montreal to a victory that snapped Calgary's three-game winning streak.

Toffoli was credited with the go-ahead goal at 15:45 of the third after he deflected in a pass from Joel Armia over the

glove of Jacob Markstrom.

Jake Allen made 13 of his 28 saves in the first period for the Canadiens, who had lost three of their previous four games — including a 4-1 loss to the Flames on Wednesday night.

Elias Lindholm scored the lone goal for the Flames.

**Wild 3, Sharks 2:** Nick Bonino had a goal and an assist, Cam Talbot made 20 saves and host Minnesota held on to win.

Mats Zuccarello and Zach Parise also scored for the Wild, who won their second straight.

Tomas Hertl and Evander Kane scored, and Martin Jones stopped 15 of 18 shots for the Sharks, who lost their fourth in a row.



# Seager HR in 12th lifts Dodgers

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — Corey Seager hit a tiebreaking, two-run homer on Tim Hill's first pitch of the 12th inning and the Los Angeles Dodgers beat the San Diego Padres 11-6 Friday night in a tense, entertaining first matchup this season between NL West rivals who have visions of deep playoff runs.

It took 4 hours, 57 minutes to decide this one, which ended early Saturday morning. The benches emptied after Dodgers reliever Dennis Santana hit Jorge Mateo with a pitch to put runners on the corners with one out in the 10th. Trent Grisham walked to load the bases, but Santana struck out Fernando Tatis Jr. to escape.

"I'm very hesitant to get ahead of things, but it was like a playoff game," said Dodgers manager Dave Roberts, a multi-sport high school star in northern San Diego County. "They played a lot of guys, we played a lot of guys — the intensity was there. Man, I can look up and down my lineup card and everyone contributed."

The teams met for the first time since the Dodgers swept San Diego in their Division Series last year en route to winning the World Series. The Padres responded by beefing up their rotation, trading for Yu Darvish, Blake Snell and Joe Musgrove.

Darvish and Snell are scheduled to pitch in the final two games of the three-game series.

"Yeah, it felt like a rivalry tonight," said Roberts, who downplayed that notion during spring training.

Seager homered to center field, his second, with Mookie Betts on second base after making the last out of the 11th. The Dodgers added three more runs in the inning, including a sacrifice fly by reliever David Price (1-0) that was caught by Musgrove, who took over in left field after the Padres ran out of

relievers.

Left fielder Jurickson Profar moved to second base as infielder Jake Cronenworth came in to pitch. He got the final two outs, including striking out Betts to end the inning.

"It's always there, something I kind of have in my back pocket," said Cronenworth, a college closer at Michigan. "I wanted maybe to throw a little harder, but they told me not to."

Hill (0-2) allowed five runs, three earned, and four hits in 1⅓ innings.

**Nationals 1, Diamondbacks 0:** Kyle Schwarber hit a game-ending homer in the ninth inning, giving host Washington a win over Arizona after Max Scherzer passed Cy Young on baseball's career strikeouts list.

The lefty-batting Schwarber connected on a 2-1 pitch from left-hander Alex Young (0-3), sending a drive to right that traveled an estimated 463 feet for his first homer for Washington.

Brad Hand (1-0) worked a scoreless ninth for the win. The Nationals allowed just three hits.

Scherzer, a three-time Cy Young Award winner, struck out the side in the seventh while passing Cy Young to move into 22nd place on baseball's strikeout list. He finished with 10 on the day, giving him 2,808 for his career.

**Rays 8, Yankees 2:** Brandon Lowe hit a two-run double in the first inning off opener Nick Nelson (0-2), and AL champion Tampa Bay kept up its domination of host New York, setting off frustrated fans who caused a brief interruption.

The young, athletic Rays spurred to an 8-0, seventh-inning lead and beat the Yankees for the 16th time in their last 21 meetings, including during last year's Division Series. New York walked seven Rays, had just three hits, struck out 14 times and made three errors that led to three unearned runs.

**Athletics 3, Tigers 0:** Frankie Montas (2-1) allowed two hits in six sharp innings and host Oakland won its sixth straight game by beating Detroit.

**Mariners 6, Astros 5:** Ty France hit a game-ending RBI single, lifting host Seattle to its third straight win.

**Angels 10, Twins 3:** Justin Upton hit a grand slam in the seventh inning, and Jared Walsh homered and drove in three runs in host Los Angeles' victory.

**Phillies 8, Cardinals 2:** Zach Eflin (1-0) pitched into the eighth inning and J.T. Realmuto hit a two-run homer, leading host Philadelphia past St. Louis.

**Braves 5, Cubs 2:** Kyle Wright plunked four Chicago batters but still left with the lead after a last-minute call-up, and Will Smith stranded the bases loaded in the bottom of the ninth inning for visiting Atlanta.

Willson Contreras homered off Wright as the Cubs lost their second straight and fifth of six.

**Marlins 4, Giants 1:** Starling Marte snapped an eighth-inning tie with a three-run homer and host Miami defeated San Francisco.

Jazz Chisholm Jr. also homered for the Marlins. Marte's shot to left-center field off reliever Wandy Peralta sent Miami to its fifth victory in six games.

**Orioles 5, Rangers 2:** Rio Ruiz and D.J. Stewart homered, Jorge López (1-2) struck out eight in five innings and Baltimore topped Texas for its latest road win.

**Reds 10, Indians 3:** Joey Votto hit a two-run homer to cap a seven-run third inning and host Cincinnati cruised past Cleveland.

**Pirates 6, Brewers 1:** JT Brubaker (2-0) struck out eight in six impressive innings and visiting Pittsburgh extended its recent surge by beating Milwaukee.

# Sounders cruise past Minnesota

Associated Press

SEATTLE — João Paulo scored a goal of the season candidate early in the second half, Raul Ruidiaz added two goals three minutes apart, and the Seattle Sounders welcomed fans back to its home stadium with a 4-0 win over Minnesota United on Friday night.

The start to the 2021 season for the reigning Western Conference champions was a rousing celebration welcoming fans back to Lumen Field for the first time in 13 months. João Paulo ignited the cheers with a deft moment of skill, scoring on a 25-yard volley in the 49th minute to give Seattle the lead.

Ruidiaz scored his first in the 70th minute off a terrific pass by Will Bruin and moments later collected a second goal after Cristian Roldan found Ruidiaz with a step behind the Loons defense. Fredy Montero, playing his first game for Seattle since 2012, added the final goal in the 86th minute.

The crowd of 7,042 wasn't the nearly 40,000 that has become the norm in Seattle, but was a sellout under the current COVID-19 restrictions.

**Dynamo 2, Earthquakes 1:** Memo Rodríguez scored the opening goal of the Major League Soccer season and Maximiliano Urruti added a goal in the second half as host Houston beat San Jose.

Rodríguez raced to Joe Corona's through ball in the 39th minute and bent a shot around JT Marcinkowski. Urruti was left wide open at the penalty spot in the 56th and he easily slotted home Tyler Pasher's cross to make it 2-0. Rodríguez also sent a shot off the crossbar in the first minute after halftime and Urruti forced a diving save in the 80th.

Paul Marie scored for San Jose in the 74th on a curling shot from distance.

# Vaccine approach varies across motorsports

Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. — Bubba Wallace says get the shot, like he did.

Brad Keselowski says he hasn't decided yet whether to get vaccinated against COVID-19 while Austin Dillon and reigning NASCAR Cup Series champion Chase Elliott say it's a personal choice and no one else's business, though Dillon's Richard Childress Racing team did host a voluntary vaccination clinic on site for employees and their families.

Throughout motorsports, which has long prided itself on face-to-face access for fans and glad-handing time with sponsors, approaches to stifling the spread of the coronavirus that has cost the sports world billions still vary greatly. In IndyCar, teams are pushing toward 100% vaccination.

But in NASCAR, with a fan base traditionally more conservative in its Southern strongholds, it is the rare driver who touts vaccination.

One of the few is Wallace, driver of the new-this-year 23XI team co-owned by NBA Hall of Famer Michael Jordan and NASCAR star Denny Hamlin. Like RCR, 23XI had a mass vaccination day at its shop for employees and their families. Wallace also partnered this week with Novant Health to address the hesitancy some have to getting vaccinated; after CNN showed him receiving his jab, the 27-year-old Wallace said he's trying to lead by example.

Wallace is the only Black driver in NASCAR's top series, and the Black community has been especially hard hit by the pandemic, which has claimed more than 561,000 lives in the United States alone.

"I'm not trying to shove it down people's throats," Wallace said Friday. "I'm just saying, 'Hey, I'm comfortable taking this route to get us back to a normal capacity in all aspects of life.'"

Wallace's former boss, retired great Richard Petty, filmed a promotion showing him getting vaccinated, but few others have taken such steps.

"I think it's a personal decision that everyone has a right to, and so, accordingly, I think once it's open to everyone, those who feel comfortable getting it should certainly get it if that's what they want to do," said Keselowski, the 2012 Cup Series champion. "I haven't made a decision on what I'm going to do."

His crew chief has. Jeremy Bullins said: "I don't have it yet, but I do have an appointment scheduled."

With talk that NASCAR would like to — local governments permitting — begin increasing the number of fans at races, and perhaps allow sponsor access into the garage, it's an easy choice, Bullins said.

"I read this weekend they're going to start letting fans back in," he said. "From that regard, I think our sport is not sustainable without fans, and I think the level of access

that we've always provided is second to none compared to other sports."

IndyCar is preparing to kick off its season at Barber Motorsports Park in Birmingham, Ala., this weekend and Mark Miles, president and CEO of Penske Entertainment Corp., said "somewhere around 90% of the team personnel will be vaccinated, and I think that's going to continue to move up."

IndyCar also is considering regular COVID-19 testing for participants who choose not to receive the vaccine, Miles said.

"I expect it to be very close to 100% by the time we get here to race," he said, speaking of the Indianapolis 500, which is scheduled for May 30 amid hopes for full attendance of some 400,000 fans.

NASCAR is also eager to have the full return of fans; the biggest turnouts in the past year have been approximately 30,000 at Bristol (twice) and then 30,000 for the season opener at Daytona.

Chase Briscoe also hasn't said what he plans to do about vaccination, but noted he hopes race weekends get back to normal. He said that last weekend at the race in Martinsville he "probably signed (autographs) for 30 or 40 fans walking in because they're all standing there."

"I feel like it's no different if we have sponsors in the garage or whatever," Briscoe said. "I think the sponsors in the garage is a huge thing that we've been needing to have happen."

## Knicks' Randle scores 44 in win over hometown Mavs

Associated Press

DALLAS — Julius Randle scored 44 points in his best game in his hometown, leading the New York Knicks to a 117-109 victory over the Dallas Mavericks on Friday for a five-game winning streak, their longest in seven years.

RJ Barrett had 24 points and eight rebounds. Derrick Rose added 15 points with fellow backup guard Alec Burks sidelined by COVID-19 protocols.

"I was locked in and focused," said Randle, whose third career 40-point game came a night after scoring 32 in a 116-106 victory at New Orleans. "I always love playing at home in front of my friends, in front of my family. I never take those moments for

granted."

It's the longest winning streak for New York since an eight-game run in 2014. The Knicks haven't finished above .500 since 2012-13.

Luka Dončić scored 22 points and tied a career high with 19 assists, while Porzingis had 23 points and 12 rebounds.

**Jazz 119, Pacers 111:** Donovan Mitchell scored 22 points before leaving the game with a sprained ankle in the third quarter, and the NBA-leading Jazz beat visiting Indiana.

**76ers 106, Clippers 103:** Joel Embiid had 36 points and 14 rebounds and host Philadelphia snapped Los Angeles' seven-game winning streak.

**Nets 130, Hornets 115:** Ke-

vin Durant had 25 points and 11 assists, Joe Harris scored 26 points and Brooklyn beat visiting Charlotte.

**Wizards 117, Pelicans 115 (OT):** Russell Westbrook scored 10 of his team's 12 points in overtime, including a pair of free throws to break a tie with 1 second left after he was fouled by Zion Williamson, and host Washington edged New Orleans.

**Trail Blazers 107, Spurs 106:** CJ McCollum scored 29 points and Portland escaped with a victory after host San Antonio missed three shots on the final possession.

**Nuggets 128, Rockets 99:** Nikola Jokic scored 29 points, Michael Porter Jr. added 21 and visiting Denver cruised past

Houston.

**Pistons 110, Thunder 104:** Josh Jackson scored 29 points and host Detroit overcame several key absences to hand Oklahoma City its ninth straight loss.

**Grizzlies 126, Bulls 115:** Dillon Brooks scored a season-high 32 points and visiting Memphis beat Chicago.

**Timberwolves 119, Heat 111:** Karl-Anthony Towns scored 24 points, including eight in the fourth quarter before fouling out, to lead host Minnesota past Miami.

**Raptors 113, Magic 102:** At Tampa, Fla., Paul Watson Jr. scored 20 of his career-high 30 points in the third quarter and Toronto pulled away to beat Orlando.