

## Zelenskyy demands justice for war crimes

*Associated Press*

BUCHA, Ukraine — Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy accused Russian troops of gruesome atrocities in Ukraine and told the U.N. Security Council on Tuesday that those responsible should immediately be brought up on war crimes charges in front of a tribunal like the one set up at Nuremberg, Germany, after World War II.

Zelenskyy, appearing via video from Ukraine, told council members that civilians had been shot in the back of the head after being tortured, blown up with grenades in their apartments and crushed to death by tanks while in cars.

“They cut off limbs, cut their throats. Women were raped and killed in front of their children. Their tongues were pulled out only because their aggressor did not hear what they wanted to hear from them,” he said, recounting what he described as

the worst atrocities since World War II.

Likening the troops’ actions to those of Islamic State, Zelenskyy said: “The Russian military and those who gave them orders must be brought to justice immediately for war crimes in Ukraine.”

Over the past few days, grisly images of what appeared to be civilian massacres carried out by Russian forces on the outskirts of Kyiv before they pulled back from the capital have stirred global revulsion and led Western nations to expel dozens of Moscow’s diplomats and propose further sanctions, including a ban on coal imports from Russia.

He said that both those who carried out the killings and those who gave the orders “must be brought to justice immediately for war crimes” in front of a tribunal similar to what was used in postwar Germany.

Reiterating what the Kremlin has been saying for days, Moscow’s U.N. ambassa-

dor, Vassily Nebenzia, denied Russian troops targeted civilians and said the horrors depicted had been staged by the Ukrainians.

“You only saw what they showed you,” he said. “The only ones who would fall for this are Western dilettantes.”

High-resolution satellite imagery from Maxar Technologies showed that many of the bodies had been lying in the open for weeks, during the time that Russian forces were in the town.

Zelenskyy stressed that Bucha was only one place and that there are more with similar horrors.

The head of NATO, meanwhile, warned that Russia is regrouping its forces in order to deploy them to eastern and southern Ukraine for a “crucial phase of the war,” and said that more horrors may come to light as Russian troops continue to pull back in the north.

## Lawsuit blocks Navy SEAL drills in Washington parks

**By CHAD GARLAND**

*Stars and Stripes*

Pacific Northwest neighbors Oregon and Washington offer terrain ideal for training special operations troops, but while Army Green Berets have trained in one of those states in recent years, the Navy SEALs have had their plans derailed in the other.

On Friday, a judge in Olympia, Wash., sided with an activist group that had been fighting a decision to allow the Navy limited use of some two dozen waterfront parks for nighttime SEAL training. Group members said they didn’t want the Navy’s “ninjas” creeping around areas reserved for recreation.

The Navy had trained in the coastal recreation sites for over 30 years, state officials said. But the service paused activities in the face of organized opposition to the renewal and expansion of a five-year agreement that expired in 2020.

Thurston County Superior Court Judge James J. Dixon rescinded permission for the SEAL training, ruling that state law does not give Washington’s parks and recreation commission the power to let parks

be used for military purposes.

But about 70 miles southwest of Olympia in Astoria, Ore., at the mouth of the Columbia, Army Green Beret training continued last year with little attention or outcry, just as it has for some five decades, officials told Stars and Stripes.

The coastal terrain and conditions in both states provide valuable training grounds for special operations troops, officials in both services have said.

The main difference between the two services’ approach seems to be that the Army coordinates with property owners to use their land and facilities rather than drilling its personnel on state grounds.

Opponents of the Navy’s use of Washington state parks were concerned about SEALs making amphibious landings, carrying simulated weapons and lurking in the dark, which they described as “creepy.”

In public comments, many residents said they would stop using the parks as a result.

“That’s a significant adverse impact on recreation, even if the recreational users never see the so-called ninjas in the woods,” Zachary Griefen, an attorney rep-

resenting Whidbey Environmental Action Network, said in a court hearing that was recorded and shared online.

Griefen said the Navy itself has described the SEALs as “training to be essentially the ninjas.”

At a meeting of the state parks and recreation commission in November 2020, however, Navy Chief Warrant Officer Esteban Alvarado said the SEALs are not “your ‘Rambo’ guys” or the “loud explosion guys.”

In the 1982 movie “First Blood,” starring Sylvester Stallone as Vietnam veteran John Rambo, the former Green Beret battles the military and the police after fleeing into the forest outside the fictional town of Hope, Wash.

The SEALs, Alvarado said, are like ninjas, “the guys who ghost into the environment and they disappear.”

He said Puget Sound’s coastline, cold water and currents provide a challenging environment that can’t be found anywhere else in the continental U.S. and forms a “critical cornerstone” of training them to be undetected.

# Koreas trade nuclear-tinged threats

BY DAVID CHOI

*Stars and Stripes*

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — Representatives for North Korea's leader and South Korea's president-elect volleyed threats of nuclear attack and pre-emptive strikes in public on Tuesday.

Seoul would not hesitate to strike "without the slightest error" to a threat or provocation from Pyongyang, Kim Eun-hye, spokeswoman for President-elect Yoon Seok-youl, said at a press briefing. Pre-emptive strikes, she said, are "one of the

actions accepted in the world."

Yoon, whose public stance favors stronger ties with the United States, is scheduled to take office May 10.

Earlier Tuesday, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's sister, Kim Yo Jong, threatened nuclear retaliation against the South in the event of a conflict, while simultaneously dismissing its military as a viable threat.

North Korea "will not fire even a single bullet or shell toward South Korea" because "we do not regard it as a match for our armed forces," she said in a statement

released through the state-run Korean Central News Agency.

Kim Yo Jong, along with being part of North Korea's ruling family, holds a post in the ruling Workers' Party of Korea.

"We have already clarified that South Korea is not our principal enemy," she said in Tuesday's statement. "In other words, it means that unless the South Korean army takes any military action against our state, it will not be regarded as a target of our attack." However, she continued, North Korea's "nuclear combat force will have to inevitably carry

out its duty" during a military conflict.

Kim Yo Jong was responding to remarks Friday by South Korean Defense Minister Suh Wook, who spoke during a reorganization ceremony for the Army Missile Strategic Command. Suh said the South Korean military could strike any North Korean target "accurately and swiftly," including sites from which attacks appeared to originate.

Kim Yo Jong described Suh's comments as "abrupt bluffing" that shows South Korea's military is frightened.

## Japan mulls acquiring means to counterstrike enemy bases

BY SETH ROBSON

*Stars and Stripes*

TOKYO — A capability to strike enemy bases would let potential adversaries know they'd "pay a price" for attacking Japan, according to the country's defense minister.

The Japanese government, in closed-door hearings the past few months, has heard from security experts about possibly acquiring the means to conduct counterstrikes, Kyodo News reported Monday.

The Defense Ministry plans discussions over acquiring this capability, Defense Minister Nobuo Kishi said in another Kyodo report Tuesday.

Chinese Communist Party channels screened a video last summer that threatened a nuclear strike if Japan were to intervene in war over Taiwan, Australia's Sky News reported July 19.

North Korea test-fired an intercontinental ballistic missile March 24 for the first time since November 2017. The missile splashed down in waters within Japan's exclusive economic zone,

prompting Vice Defense Minister Makoto Oniki to call it "a serious threat to our country's security."

There's a consensus among Japanese defense experts that their country needs a strike capability, according to Tetsuo Kotani, a senior research fellow at The Japan Institute of International Affairs.

Japan operates Patriot and Aegis missile defense systems on shore and at sea. But simply aiming to defeat incoming missiles from China and North Korea will not be enough, Kotani told Stars and Stripes by phone Tuesday.

"We are trying to introduce counterstrike capabilities," he said. "We will rely on existing missile defense systems to intercept the first wave of missiles, but after missile strikes start, we need to eliminate the missile launchers or runways in enemy territory to disrupt their operations."

The Japanese government might allow the United States to deploy medium-range guided missiles inside Japanese territory, Kotani said.

## Judge blocks USAF discipline over virus vaccine objections

*Associated Press*

TOLEDO, Ohio — A federal judge has blocked the military from disciplining a dozen U.S. Air Force officers who have been asking for religious exemptions to the mandatory COVID-19 vaccine.

The officers, mostly from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, Ohio, along with a handful of airmen and reservists, filed a lawsuit in February after their exemption requests were denied.

U.S. District Court Judge Matthew McFarland in Cincinnati granted a preliminary injunction last Thursday that stops the Air Force from acting against the officers, airmen and reservists until their lawsuit is resolved.

The plaintiffs accuse the Air Force of using a double standard when it comes to approving exemption requests, saying it had allowed thousands of medical and administrative exemptions but only a handful for religious reasons.

Last week, a federal judge in

Texas barred the Navy from taking action for now against sailors who have objected to being vaccinated on religious grounds.

U.S. District Judge Reed O'Connor had, in January, issued a preliminary injunction preventing the Navy from disciplining or discharging 35 sailors who sued over the Navy's vaccine policy while their case played out. A week ago, O'Connor agreed the case could go forward as a class action lawsuit and issued a preliminary injunction covering about 4,000 sailors who have objected on religious grounds to being vaccinated.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin last year made vaccinations mandatory for service members, saying the vaccine is critical to maintaining military readiness and the health of the force. But members of Congress, the military and the public have questioned if the exemption reviews have been fair.

Those who refuse the vaccine can face discipline up to being discharged from the service.

# Commander out after 3rd Hawaii fuel spill

By ALISON BATH  
*Stars and Stripes*

The Navy officer who oversaw the fuel storage facility thought to be the source of jet fuel contaminating the water supply to thousands of homes on and near Joint Base Pearl Harbor was relieved of duty Monday, the Navy said.

The Navy took the action against Capt. Albert Lee Hornyak, commanding officer of Naval Supply Systems Command Fleet Logistics Center, citing a lack of confidence in his ability to perform his duties following a series of leadership and oversight failures at the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility in Honolulu, a Navy statement said Monday.

Hornyak had served as commanding officer since August. Rear Adm. Kristin Acquavella has been temporarily assigned as commanding officer while a replacement is iden-

tified, the Navy said.

Rear Adm. Peter Stamatopoulos, NAVSUP commanding officer, relieved Hornyak of duty. Stamatopoulos will also assign additional senior fuel supply experts to assist Acquavella, the statement said.

It wasn't clear where Hornyak was reassigned. Commanding officers are typically sent to a higher headquarters command following an involuntary relief, while their future with the service is determined.

Hornyak previously served as the military deputy at the Office of Research and Engineering, director of Advance Capabilities, Prototyping and Software in the Office of the Secretary of Defense from September 2020 through July, according to his LinkedIn profile.

He also served as the ordnance logistics director for U.S. Pacific Fleet at Pearl Har-

bor from August 2018 to September 2020, among multiple military assignments since 2003.

The decision to remove Hornyak follows an additional spill Friday at the beleaguered underground facility, which the Navy said released "no more than 30 gallons of a water and fuel mixture."

That spill — the third in less than a year — happened during routine maintenance that flushes water out of holding tanks, the Navy said in a Friday statement.

In November, Adm. Samuel Paparo, head of U.S. Pacific Fleet, ordered an investigation into the causes of Nov. 20 and May 6 fuel leaks from Red Hill after jet fuel turned up in one of three wells the Navy uses for its water distribution system.

Last month, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin ordered the facility permanently closed.

## Senators agree to \$10B COVID funding measure focused on US

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Senate bargainers have reached agreement on a slimmed-down \$10 billion package for countering COVID-19 with treatments, vaccines and other steps, the top Democratic and Republican negotiators said, but ended up dropping all funding to help nations abroad combat the pandemic.

The compromise drew quick support Monday from President Joe Biden, who initially pushed for a \$22.5 billion package. In a setback, he ended up settling for much less despite administration warnings that the government was running out of money to keep pace with the disease's continued — though diminished — spread in the United States.

"Every dollar we requested is essential and we will continue to work with Congress to get all of the funding we need," said White House press secretary Jen Psaki. "But time is of the essence. We urge Congress to move promptly on this \$10 billion package because it can begin to fund the most immediate needs."

Biden and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., his party's lead bargainer, abandoned Biden's request to include \$5 billion to help countries — especially poorer ones — where the disease is still running rampant.

The inability of Biden and top Democrats to protect the additional spending they wanted came after the two parties gridlocked over

GOP demands to pay for it by pulling back unspent aid from earlier pandemic measures. It also reflected the diminished political force that battling COVID-19 has this election year, two years into a pandemic that began with bipartisan support for throwing trillions of dollars at it.

Sen. Mitt Romney, of Utah, the lead GOP bargainer, hailed the accord as one that would address "urgent COVID needs." He also trumpeted the measure's savings, which he said meant it "will not cost the American people a single additional dollar."

Still uncertain Monday was whether objections by some Republicans might prevent the Senate from considering the bill this week, as Biden wants, before Congress begins a two-week spring recess. It was also not yet certain there would be the minimum 10 GOP votes needed for passage in the 50-50 chamber.

In the House, Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and many liberals have criticized the ejection of global assistance. But leaders signaled they were ready to accept compromise.

While short of Biden's agreement full request, "this package will fulfill immediate needs to secure more vaccines, boosters, testing and therapeutics to keep the pandemic at bay — and it must be enacted as quickly as possible," Pelosi set in a statement released overnight.

## Fuel is removed from Navy plane in fatal Va. crash

*Stars and Stripes*

Workers safely removed jet fuel over the weekend from a Navy aircraft that crashed in Virginia last week, killing one crew member and injuring two others.

The fuel was emptied Saturday from an E-2D Advanced Hawkeye that crashed near Wallops Island and the coastal town of Chincoteague while on routine operations, the Navy said in a statement.

The Navy didn't specify how much fuel had been removed from the plane. But measures were taken to ensure that "environmental safeguards (were) in place to protect the local ecosystem throughout the entirety of the defueling process," Alan Kersnick, the Navy on-scene coordinator, said Sunday in the statement.

The Navy is working with local and state officials on salvage planning efforts, the statement said.

The Hawkeye was attached to VAW-120, the Greyhawks Command and Control Squadron. It crashed last Wednesday, killing Lt. Hyrum Hanlon, a pilot. The crash remains under investigation.

Hanlon was a student pilot nearing the end of his syllabus at VAW-120, Capt. Chris Hulitt, commodore of the Airborne Command and Control and Logistics Wing, said in a Sunday post on the VAW-120 Facebook page.

# Two more in GOP back high court nominee

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Republican Sens. Lisa Murkowski and Mitt Romney said they will vote to confirm Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson's historic elevation to the Supreme Court, giving President Joe Biden's nominee a burst of bipartisan support and all but assuring she'll become the first Black female justice.

The senators from Alaska and Utah announced their decisions Monday night ahead of a procedural vote to advance the nomination and as Democrats pressed to confirm Jackson by the end of the week. GOP Sen. Susan Collins of Maine announced last week that she would back Jackson, noting her "stellar qualifications" as a federal judge, public de-

fender and member of the U.S. Sentencing Commission.

All three Republicans said they did not expect to agree with all of Jackson's decisions, but they found her extremely well qualified. Romney said Jackson "more than meets the standard of excellence and integrity." Murkowski said she will "bring to the Supreme Court a range of experience from the courtroom that few can match given her background in litigation."

With three Republicans supporting her in the 50-50 split Senate, Jackson is on a glide path to confirmation and on the brink of making history as the third Black justice and only the sixth woman in the court's more than 200-

year history. Beyond the historic element, Democrats have cited her deep experience in nine years on the federal bench and the chance for her to become the first former public defender on the court.

Both Collins and Murkowski said they believed that the Senate nomination process has become broken, as it has become more partisan in the past several decades.

Murkowski, who is up for reelection this year, said her decision partly rests "on my rejection of the corrosive politicization of the review process for Supreme Court nominees, which, on both sides of the aisle, is growing worse and more detached from reality by the year."

## 2 brothers arrested on gun charges in Calif. shooting

*Associated Press*

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — A second suspect was arrested Tuesday in connection to the mass shooting in Sacramento that killed six people and wounded 12 in California's capital, and police said he is the brother of the first suspect.

Smiley Martin, 27, was arrested while hospitalized with serious injuries from the gunfire, making him one of the wounded. When he is fit for jail, he will be booked for possession of a firearm by a prohibited person and possession of a machine gun, a police statement said.

More than 100 shots were fired early Sunday in downtown Sacramento, creating a chaotic scene with hundreds of people try-

ing desperately to get to safety. A day later, police announced the arrest of Dandrae Martin, 26, as a "related suspect" on charges of assault with a deadly weapon and being a convict carrying a loaded gun. His first court appearance was set for Tuesday.

Detectives and SWAT team members found one handgun during searches of three area homes. Smiley Martin was located at the scene and taken to a hospital, police said.

"Smiley Martin was quickly identified as a person of interest and has remained under the supervision of an officer at the hospital while his treatment continues. Based on information developed during this investigation, Smiley Martin was taken into custody by Sacramento Police Department detec-

tives on April 5, 2022," the statement said.

The arrests came as the three women and three men killed were identified. The shooting occurred at about 2 a.m. Sunday as bars were closing and patrons filled the streets near the state Capitol.

The fallen included a father of four, a young woman who wanted to be a social worker, a man described as the life of the party and a woman who lived on the streets nearby and was looking for housing.

The Sacramento County coroner identified the women killed as Johntaya Alexander, 21; Melinda Davis, 57; and Yamile Martinez-Andrade, 21. The three men were Sergio Harris, 38; Joshua Hoye-Lucchesi, 32; and De'vazia Turner, 29.

## Ukrainian prosecutors are building war crimes cases

*The Washington Post*

KOSIV, Ukraine — Sitting stage left in an empty auditorium at School No. 2 in this sleepy village about 30 miles from the Romanian border, a woman and her adult son described to a Ukrainian prosecutor how Russian tanks arrived in their village outside Kyiv on March 25, how part of their roof collapsed from Russian bombing and how they helped bury an elderly neighbor in his own front yard while munitions screamed over their heads.

Olga Gazhurova, a 34-year-old prosecutor from the bombarded city of Kharkiv in northeast Ukraine, typed their account into her laptop, pausing for clarification.

"From which street, exactly, did the tanks

enter?" she asked.

Before the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine began on Feb. 24, Gazhurova was a criminal prosecutor in Kharkiv, more than 500 miles from Kosiv, a village of about 8,400 people that has seen little of the war's violence but a significant chunk of its consequences. Hundreds of displaced people have bunked in Kosiv's schools or with its residents. Millions of Ukrainians have been forced to leave their homes, and more than 4.2 million Ukrainians have left the country as of April 3, according to the United Nations.

The prosecutor general's office estimates the country is using about 50,000 investigators from five different law enforcement

agencies to investigate war crimes. They are conducting interviews across the country and meticulously documenting evidence they hope to use in war crimes prosecutions against Russian President Vladimir Putin and the military force he sent to invade Ukraine.

So they have fanned out across Ukraine, addressing small groups of mostly female and elderly displaced people in churches, classrooms and auditoriums like this one in Kosiv. They explain that one day, there may be compensation for their lost loved ones, personal injuries and property losses, and that Russia can only be held accountable if its victims tell their stories in painstaking detail.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Cops corral slippery seal on jaunt through town

**NY** RIVERHEAD — A wayward seal has been captured after an early morning foray through a Long Island, N.Y., town.

Police in Southampton said they received a call from a person who saw the roving mammal, later identified as a phocid, or earless seal, in the parking lot of a beverage store about 500 feet from the Peconic River in Riverhead.

When officers arrived, the seal fled southwest toward a motel but eventually was corralled and taken into custody.

The seal was handed over to the Riverhead Foundation for Marine Research and Preservation for evaluation, according to police.

### Man on parole for murder sentenced in foiled theft

**NE** OMAHA — A Nebraska man on parole for murder has been sentenced to more than 22 years in prison for plotting a home invasion robbery that was foiled when he tried to buy a gun from an undercover agent and recruited a confidential FBI informant to act as his getaway driver, authorities said.

Chief United States District Judge Robert F. Rossiter Jr. said the reason he ordered Rufus Dennis, 43, of Omaha, to serve so much time is that he intended to murder victims.

The U.S. attorney's office said that Dennis repeatedly "cased" the home of a single mother of two young children in January 2020 as he made plans to physically harm her in the

presence of her elderly mother. The FBI obtained recordings of Dennis in which he said he wasn't going to be caught or identified and would leave no witnesses behind.

### Woman survived crash, struck by first responder

**MN** SILVER LAKE — Authorities said a woman who got out of her vehicle after a crash near Silver Lake was struck by an SUV driven by a first responder.

The Minnesota State Patrol said Rhiannon Phillippi, 28, of Hutchinson, is hospitalized with life-threatening injuries.

Phillippi crashed on Highway 7 in McLeod County before she was struck by a vehicle driven by Silver Lake Fire Chief Dale Kosek, the Star Tribune reported.

No further details about the incident were released. The patrol said there were dry road conditions at the time.

### Police chase suspect in taco truck robberies

**CA** FRESNO — A man suspected in a series of armed robberies of taco trucks was arrested after leading police on a high-speed chase that ended with a crash in central California, authorities said.

The chase began after witnesses reported someone shooting at a taco truck after a robbery attempt in Fresno, police Lt. Brian Valles said. Nobody was injured in the shooting.

Officers followed a suspect vehicle, which led them on a pursuit for several blocks before the driver hit a curb and flattened all four tires, police

said. The man was arrested after police used a K9 and a stun gun to restrain him, officials said.

### Century-old lumber yard, hardware store catches fire

**IN** SCOTTSBURG — An overnight fire heavily damaged a century-old hardware store and lumber yard that abuts a southern Indiana city's historic downtown square, authorities said.

Firefighters arrived at the scene in Scottsburg to find heavy flames coming from the roof of the Vail True Value Lumber Co. building.

Once crews realized they couldn't do much to save the building they shifted their focus to containing the blaze and protecting the city's historic square, said Scottsburg Fire Chief James Richey.

Richey said with the help of several other fire departments, crews were able to extinguish the flames without any additional fire damage to neighboring buildings. No injuries were reported.

### Snowmobile driver dies during race at ski area

**VT** POMFRET — A 56-year-old New York resident has died during a snowmobile race in Vermont, police said.

State police troopers from the Royalton Barracks responded to the Suicide Six ski area in Pomfret for a report of a snowmobile crash, the state Department of Public Safety said in a statement.

One of the snowmobile operators was traveling down the mountain when he left the

course area and crashed into a tree, the statement said.

The operator suffered fatal injuries and was not transported to the hospital, according to police.

State police did not release the name of the victim, but Rock The Hills VT, which organized the race, identified him in a statement posted on Facebook as Jim Darrow.

"We are deeply saddened to announce the death of one of our long time racers, Jim Darrow while he was returning down the hill after a winning run," the organization posted on Facebook. "While we may never be sure exactly what happened, today was a tragic accident, there is no other way to say it."

### Copper theft could delay opening of hospital

**AR** DE QUEEN — The opening of an Arkansas hospital could be delayed after thieves stole copper lines that had already been installed at the facility, according to hospital officials.

Thieves broke into the construction site of Sevier County Medical Center in De Queen and took the copper lines, the Texarkana Gazette reported.

The thieves also took tools and other items being used in the construction.

The Sevier County Sheriff's Office is investigating the theft at the hospital, located about 50 miles northwest of Texarkana, near the Oklahoma border.

The hospital had been set to open on Sept. 20 but that could be delayed, hospital CEO Lori House said in statement.

— From wire reports

STARS AND STRIPES®

Single source convenience, reliably independent. Visit [www.stripes.com](http://www.stripes.com).

Reporting  
World, National  
and Military News

# Kansas rallies to win NCAA crown

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — Best. Comeback. Ever. Sounds pretty good next to Rock Chalk, Jayhawk.

What looked like a lost cause turned into one of the sweetest wins ever for Kansas.

The Jayhawks brought their fourth NCAA title back to Allen Fieldhouse on Monday thanks to a second-half flurry that erased a 16-point deficit and eventually overcame North Carolina 72-69 in an epic battle of power programs.

It was the largest comeback in national championship history, surpassing the 1963 title game when Loyola overcame a 15-point deficit to beat Cincinnati at the buzzer, 60-58.

“We just locked in as a family, as a team, and that’s what we do,” said Kansas big man David McCormack, after making the last two baskets of the game. “We overcome the odds. We overcome adversity. We’re just

built for this.”

McCormack scored the go-ahead bucket from close range with 1:21 left, then another at the 22-second mark to put the Jayhawks ahead by three.

The Tar Heels missed their final four shots, including Caleb Love’s desperation three at the buzzer. His heave came up short after officials ruled that Kansas guard DaJuan Harris Jr. stepped out on an inbounds pass with 4.3 seconds left.

North Carolina went scoreless over the final 1:41. It couldn’t find an answer for KU over the final 20 minutes.

“They were penetrating and doing whatever they wanted,” Love said.

After McCormack’s go-ahead bucket, Love drove to the basket but his shot got blocked. The Tar Heels grabbed an offensive rebound and got the ball to Armando Bacot under the bucket. But he lost his footing and turned it over, then limped off

the court, unable to return.

“I thought I really got the angle that I wanted and then I just rolled my ankle,” Bacot said.

That put Brady Manek, not as good a defender, on McCormack, and the big man backed in Manek for the shot that put the Jayhawks ahead by three.

“When we had to have a basket, we went to Big Dave, and he delivered,” said Kansas coach Bill Self, who has two of the program’s four championships.

McCormack and Jalen Wilson led KU with 15 points each. Christian Braun scored 10 of his 12 in the second half and transfer Remy Martin had 11 of his 14 over the final 20 minutes. The Jayhawks outscored Carolina 47-29 in the second half.

“When we saw our own blood, we didn’t panic and we came out the second half coming in hot,” Self said. “I was thinking at the 14-minute mark, ‘There’s no way these guys can play for 20 minutes defense like this,’ but

they did.”

The Tar Heels shot 11-for-40 in the second half.

But it was Kansas that couldn’t buy a basket late in the first half, as Carolina ran over and around the Jayhawks during a 16-0 run. The Tar Heels led 40-25 at the break. Then, top-seeded KU (34-6) started trapping and pressing more, moving the ball around on offense, and Carolina started getting a taste of what everyone else has this season: You can’t stop ‘em all.

The Jayhawks went on a 31-10 run to take a six-point lead at the 10-minute mark and set up a fantastic finish.

Bacot had 15 points and 15 rebounds to become the first player to record double-doubles in all six tournament games. He finished the season with 31 double-doubles, but it was not enough. The Tar Heels were trying to join 1985 Villanova as only the second 8 seed to win March Madness.

## Post play proved to be a big deal in the Final Four

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — David McCormack’s two late baskets in the paint to help Kansas surge past North Carolina during the NCAA championship game followed a Final Four trend.

The way teams played in the post had a major influence on how the games turned out.

McCormack scored the final four points of Monday night’s national title game to finish with 15 points and 10 rebounds in the Jayhawks’ 72-69 triumph.

“It shows how much trust coach (Bill Self) and teammates have in me,” McCormack said. “Coach called the play and said we’re going to throw it inside and we have trust in you and faith in you to deliver and get us a basket. I

just prevailed, I made the basket happen. I appreciate them for allowing me to have that opportunity.”

The late-game heroics capped a memorable Final Four for Kansas’ big man.

McCormack’s final basket came after Tar Heels center Armando Bacot, whose strong start helped stake North Carolina to a 15-point halftime lead, needed help getting to the bench after re aggravating an ankle injury that occurred during the second half of his influential semifinal performance on Saturday night.

In Saturday’s semifinal game against Villanova, the Wildcats lacked the size to handle the 6-foot-10 McCormack, who had two inches on anyone guarding him. He threw down several thunder-

ous dunks and motioned repeatedly to fans to “raise the roof” of the Superdome on his way to a game-high 25 points.

The Jayhawks rolled to an 81-65 victory in which they led most of the second half by double digits.

Bacot, meanwhile, outplayed Duke’s post players in the other semifinal.

With 7-1 Blue Devils center Mark Williams in foul trouble and playing just 16 minutes, Bacot was able to take command of the paint, grabbing 21 rebounds to go with his 11 points. Williams finished with eight points and four rebounds, and the Tar Heels pulled out an 81-77 victory.

With McCormack and the Jayhawks’ 6-8 Mitch Lightfoot limited by foul trouble in the first half of the final, Bacot had

12 points and 10 rebounds through the first 20 minutes, despite his sore ankle. North Carolina led by as many as 16 points late in the first half.

But McCormack asserted himself in the second half, when he had nine points and seven rebounds. Bacot was limited to just three points and five rebounds in the final 20 minutes as Kansas outscored the Tar Heels by 18 to pull off the largest comeback in an NCAA Tournament title game.

Bacot said playing McCormack while hobbled “was definitely tough just because he’s a bigger guy.”

“I really couldn’t, the whole game, get the push on anything on my post-ups, defensively, anything,” Bacot added. “It was just hard for me to really just stand my ground.”

# Woods says he plans to play Masters

Associated Press

AUGUSTA, Ga. — Tiger Woods says, for now anyway, he's planning to play this week in the Masters, a little more than a year after nearly losing a leg in a car crash.

The five-time champion at Augusta National made the announcement Tuesday morning. He will play nine more practice holes on Wednesday before making a final decision, but will be doing so with the intention of playing Thursday.

"As of right now," Woods said, "I feel like I'm going to play."

Woods was asked if he believes he can win this week. "I do," he said.

"I can hit it just fine," Woods added. "I don't have any qualms about what I can do physically from a golf standpoint. It's now, walking's the hard part. This is not an easy walk to begin with. Now given the condition that my leg is in, it gets a little more difficult. And 72 holes is a long road. It's going to be a tough challenge and a challenge that I'm up for."

There had been plenty of signals in recent days that Woods was on the cusp of deciding it was time to play again. He came to Augusta National for a practice round last week, then returned Sunday — saying he'd be "a game-

time decision" — and Monday for more. On Tuesday morning, with bad weather in the forecast, he spent plenty of time in the practice areas.

"It's great to be back," Woods said.

He's scheduled to tee off Thursday at 10:34 a.m. with Louis Oosthuizen and Joaquin Niemann. That threesome plays again Friday starting at 1:41 p.m.

"There's always buzz around this place," Billy Horschel said. "But there's just another level of buzz to see him and see him play. I've thought about it in the past, and I may be on the first tee watching him tee off if my tee works out and everything, just because it's a special moment."

Woods played in December at the PNC Challenge, a 36-hole scramble on a flat Florida course where he and his son Charlie finished second to John Daly and his son. Woods was allowed to use a cart in that event, and when those rounds were over he flatly dismissed any notion that his game was tour-ready again.

"I can't compete against these guys right now, no," Woods said on Dec. 19. "It's going to take a lot of work to get to where I feel like I can compete at these guys and be at a high level."

About 3½ months later, Woods apparently feels differently. If he plays, he'll be in the Masters for the 24th time; he's finished in the top five 12 times in his previous 23 appearances.

"I love competing," Woods said. "I feel like if I can still compete at the highest level, I'm going to. And if I feel like I can still win, I'm going to play. But if I feel like I can't, then you won't see me out here."

Thursday's opening round would mark the first time Woods competes against the world's best players since Nov. 15, 2020, which was the final round of that year's pandemic-delayed Masters.

He had his fifth back surgery two months later and was still recovering from that on Feb. 23, 2021 when he crashed his SUV over a median on a suburban coastal road in Los Angeles and down the side of a hill.

Woods' injuries from that crash were so severe that doctors considered right leg amputation, before reassembling the limb by placing a rod in the tibia and using screws and pins to stabilize additional injuries in the ankle and foot.

"It's been a tough, tough year ... but here we are," Woods said.

# Matthews' hat trick leads Leafs past Lightning

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Auston Matthews had three goals to tie the franchise single-season record for goals, and the Toronto Maple Leafs beat the Tampa Bay Lightning 6-2 on Monday night.

Matthews, who also had an assist and extended his goal streak to six games, had his seventh career hat trick — and fourth this season. The center equaled Rick Vaive's mark with 54 goals set in 1981-82.

Mitchell Marner had a goal and two assists, giving him 22 points (six goals, 16 assists) during a 10-game point streak.

He also recorded his sixth straight multipoint game as the Maple Leafs took a two-point lead over Tampa Bay and Boston for second place in the Atlantic Division.

Pierre Engvall and Alexander Kerfoot had the other Toronto goals. Jack Campbell had 32 saves.

The Lightning got goals from Nikita Kucherov and Jan Rutta, and Andrei Vasilevskiy stopped 33 shots.

**Bruins 3, Blue Jackets 2 (OT):** Jake DeBrusk scored his second goal of the game 1:03 into overtime to lift visiting Boston.

DeBrusk scored in his fifth straight game, Craig Smith also scored for the Bruins and Linus Ullmark stopped 20 shots in the penalty-filled game as the Bruins bolstered their playoff positioning. They moved into third place in the Atlantic Division, even with Tampa Bay but holding the tiebreaker with one more win with 13 games left.

Boston has won three

straight and 10 of the last 12.

Emil Bemstrom and Zach Werenski scored for Columbus, which lost a season-high seventh in a row. Elvis Merzlikins had 34 saves.

Werenski scored late in the second period to tie the score for the Blue Jackets. After a scoreless third, DeBrusk beat Merzlikins following a Columbus turnover in OT.

**Flames 3, Kings 2:** Johnny Gaudreau had two goals and an assist, and visiting Calgary extended its lead in the Pacific Division.

Elias Lindholm also scored for the Flames, who have 91 points and a five-point advantage over Los Angeles atop the division. Jacob Markstrom stopped 27 shots as Calgary snapped a three-game losing streak.

Adrian Kempe had two

goals and Anze Kopitar had two assists for the Kings, who had earned at least a point in five of their last six coming into the game. Los Angeles has 86 points and is only one point in front of the Edmonton Oilers for second.

**Blues 5, Coyotes 1:** Vladimir Tarasenko scored twice, Pavel Buchnevich had a goal and two assists, and host St. Louis beat Arizona.

Ivan Barbashev and Brayden Schenn also scored for the Blues, who snapped a four-game losing streak at home to the Coyotes. Ville Husso made 21 saves as St. Louis won for the fourth time in its last five games (4-0-1).

Nick Schmaltz scored in the third period and Ivan Prosvetov made 24 saves for Arizona, which lost for the eighth time in 10 games.

# Dodgers' Urias has big shoes to fill

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — As Los Angeles Dodgers left-hander Julio Urias awaits to hear if he will be the team's No. 2 starter this season, an even greater honor awaits down the road.

Urias is in line to take over as the Dodgers' top left-handed starter at some point in the near future. Clayton Kershaw, who signed a one-year deal with Los Angeles once the lock-out ended, still has the top lefty honor. He's one of the best baseball has ever seen, but the Dodgers' internal torch will have to be passed eventually.

In Urias' final tuneup before the regular season starts for Los Angeles on Friday at Colorado, Urias did not exactly look like the heir apparent the team hopes he eventually will become. He gave up five runs on six hits with three walks in just two-plus innings (61 pitches) in a 10-4 Freeway Series loss to the Los Angeles Angels.

"First and foremost, I felt good and I felt healthy," Urias

said through an interpreter. "Obviously the results didn't show, but I felt good and that's the goal getting ready for our (season) start at Colorado."

Dodgers manager Dave Roberts declined to say Monday if Urias will be his No. 2 starter on Saturday against the Rockies. Right-hander Walker Buehler already has been tabbed to pitch in Los Angeles' season opener at Denver on Friday.

"I think we're set as far as the five guys that are going to start (the first) five games, I just don't know what order," Roberts said.

There is not a situation unfamiliar to Urias over the last few seasons. He was a hero of the Dodgers' 2020 World Series championship run, and last year he tried in vain to deliver on short rest in the National League Championship Series.

Urias coughed up the lead in relief in Game 2 of the NLCS against the Atlanta Braves, then was rocked as a starter

while taking the loss in Game 4. Both outings came on two days' rest as the club was ultimately eliminated.

The Mexico native remains one of the most popular Los Angeles pitchers, getting one of the biggest ovations before Monday's game, along with free-agent addition Freddie Freeman. In Game 4 of last season's NLCS, Freeman hit a home run off Urias, one of three he gave up that day.

The page now turned, and his spring work complete, Urias is ready to follow his 20-win season from 2021. He had never won more than five games in any of his previous five seasons and his 20-win year was the first from a Dodgers pitcher since Kershaw in 2014.

"Obviously winning 20 games is very difficult, but those are goals we are going to set for ourselves," Urias said. "But first and foremost, you just want to be healthy."

One of the runs Urias gave up Monday was a solo home

run by Brandon Marsh, who is now a part of the Angels' everyday lineup flanking center fielder Mike Trout. The other young everyday outfielder is Joe Adell, while first baseman Jared Walsh rounds out a trio of young Angels hitters that could extend a lineup charged by Trout, Shohei Ohtani and Anthony Rendon.

"Last year, without Anthony and Mike in there, it was really different, obviously," Angels manager Joe Maddon said about injuries to two of the team's stars. "Walsh was ascending, (Taylor) Ward was still putting his feet on the ground. Listen, we still have to (lean on Trout, Ohtani and Rendon). But the skill level of all these guys, when you go Adell and Marsh, it's pretty nice."

After getting home runs from Rendon, Ward and Ohtani on Sunday against the Dodgers, the Angels had two Monday as Marsh and Jose Rojas went deep.

# Astros' Baker passes on his lockout experience

Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — Houston Astros players trust that manager Dusty Baker's sometimes unorthodox approach to the lockout-shortened spring training has them better prepared for the rigors of the 2022 season.

"He's been through it a few times," pitcher Justin Verlander said. "That's wonderful insight, and maybe gives us a leg up because a lot of these other managers weren't around when Dusty was and went through these processes. And he was playing through them, so he knows what it takes to get ready. I think guys have a lot of faith in his opinion on this."

No manager has more experience dealing with labor stoppages than Baker. He's been around for all of them.

Baker played in 127 games for Atlanta in 1972 following a player strike. Players either went on strike or were locked out five more times during his playing career.

In 1990, Baker was San Francisco's hitting coach when a lockout delayed the start of the regular season by a week. He'd been elevated to manager by the time a players' strike ended the 1994 season prematurely, and was still at the helm when baseball returned in 1995.

"How many people have even been in this situation?" Baker said. "I've been in every situation of this type, but they've all been different. Even though I think I have really good experience, you don't know, man, until you get into it."

Baker applied lessons learned during those work stoppages to this year's condensed spring.

Notably, when some teams deployed potential opening day lineups in their first spring games, Baker held nearly all major league position players out of the Astros' first four Grapefruit League games.

While the Astros' core group of hitters exit camp healthy, it remains to be seen whether

their bats are ready for the season. Only three regulars — Yuli Gurriel, Jose Altuve and Jeremy Pena — will head west from Florida with a batting average above .300. Most have fewer than 25 plate appearances.

"We always trust his experience," said third baseman Alex Bregman, who went 6-for-24 this spring.

Baker also slow-played his pitching staff. Entering spring already on a throwing program as he worked his way back from Tommy John surgery in 2020, Verlander made four starts. The remaining four pitchers in Houston's rotation combined to make six starts.

"I think you have to have faith in Dusty on this one," Verlander said. "It's something that none of us have been through."

On Monday, in Houston's final spring training game, José Urquidy made only his second start on a main ballpark mound, tossing five shutout innings against the New York Mets.