

## Pleas for rescue amid Russian advance

*Associated Press*

KHARKIV, Ukraine — Ukrainian forces fought village by village Saturday to hold back a Russian advance through the country's east, while the United Nations worked to broker a civilian evacuation from the last Ukrainian stronghold in the bombed-out ruins of the port city of Mariupol.

An estimated 100,000 civilians remain in the city, and up to 1,000 are living beneath a sprawling Soviet-era steel plant, according to Ukrainian officials. Ukraine has not said how many fighters are also in the plant, the only part of Mariupol not occupied by Russian forces, but the Russians put the number at about 2,000.

Russian state news outlets reported Saturday that 25 civilians had been evacuated from the Azovstal steelworks, though there was no confirmation from the U.N. or Ukrainian officials. Russia's RIA Novosti news agency said 19 adults and six children were brought out of the plant, but gave no further details.

Video and images from inside the plant, shared with The Associated Press by two Ukrainian women who said their husbands are among the fighters refusing to surrender there, showed unidentified wounded men with stained bandages in need of changing;

others had open wounds or amputated limbs.

A skeleton medical staff was treating at least 600 wounded people, said the women, who identified their husbands as members of the Azov Regiment of Ukraine's National Guard. Some of the wounds were rotting with gangrene, they said.

In the video the women shared, the wounded men tell the camera they eat once a day and share as little as 50 ounces of water a day among four. Supplies inside the surrounded facility are depleted, they said.

The AP could not independently verify the date and location of the footage, which the women said was taken in the last week in the warren of passageways beneath the steel mill.

One shirtless man spoke in obvious pain as he described his wounds: two broken ribs, a punctured lung and a dislocated arm that "was hanging on the flesh."

"I want to tell everyone who sees this. If you will not stop this here, in Ukraine, it will go further, to Europe," he said.

Getting a full picture of the unfolding battle in the east has been difficult because airstrikes and artillery barrages have made it extremely dangerous for reporters to move around. Both Ukraine and the Moscow-backed rebels fighting in the east also have

introduced tight restrictions on reporting from the combat zone.

But Western military analysts suggested that Moscow's offensive in the eastern Donbas region, which includes Mariupol, was going much slower than planned. So far, Russia's troops and the separatist forces Moscow has backed in the region since 2014 appeared to have made only minor gains.

Numerically, Russia's military manpower vastly exceeds Ukraine's. In the days before the war began, Western intelligence estimated Russia had positioned near the border as many as 190,000 troops; Ukraine's standing military is about 200,000, spread throughout the country.

In part because of the tenacity of the Ukrainian resistance, the U.S. believes the Russians are "at least several days behind where they wanted to be" as they try to encircle Ukrainian troops in the east, said a senior U.S. defense official who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the American military's assessment.

With plenty of firepower still in reserve, Russia's promised offensive still could intensify and overrun the Ukrainians. Overall, the Russian army has an estimated 900,000 active-duty personnel. Russia also has a much larger air force and navy than Ukraine.

## Kim: North Korea could 'preemptively' use nukes

*Associated Press*

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un warned again that the North could preemptively use its nuclear weapons if threatened, as he praised his top army officials for a massive military parade in the capital, Pyongyang, last week.

Kim expressed "firm will" to continue developing his nuclear-armed military so that it could "preemptively and thoroughly contain and frustrate all dangerous attempts and threatening moves, including ever-escalating nuclear threats from

hostile forces, if necessary," the North's official Korean Central News Agency said Saturday.

KCNA said Kim called his military officials to praise their work during Monday's parade, where the North showcased the biggest weapons in its nuclear arsenal, including intercontinental ballistic missiles that could potentially reach the U.S. homeland. The North also rolled out a variety of shorter-range solid-fuel missiles designed to be fired from land vehicles or submarines, which pose a growing threat to South Korea and Japan.

KCNA didn't say when Kim's meeting with military brass took place.

The parade marking the 90th anniversary of North Korea's army came as Kim revives nuclear brinkmanship aimed at forcing the United States to accept the idea of his country as a nuclear power and remove crippling economic sanctions.

Speaking to thousands of troops and spectators mobilized for the parade, Kim vowed to develop his nuclear forces at the "fastest possible speed" and threatened to use them if provoked. He said his nuclear

weapons would "never be confined to the single mission of war deterrent" in situations where the North faces external threats to its "fundamental interests."

Kim's comments suggested he would continue a provocative run in weapons testing to dial up the pressure on Washington and Seoul. South Korea will inaugurate a new conservative government this month that could take a harder line on Pyongyang following the engagement policies of outgoing liberal President Moon Jae-in that produced few results.

# Navy fires commander of submarine training facility

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The commanding officer of Submarine Training Facility San Diego was fired following a Navy investigation, the Naval Education and Training Command said Friday in a statement.

Cmdr. Jared Severson, who is from Colorado, lost his position Thursday “due to a loss of confidence” in his leadership ability based on the findings of a command investigation, according to the statement.

The Navy declined to detail the investigation’s focus or its findings.

“Due to the ongoing nature of the investigation, it would be inappropriate to provide further information at this time,” said Cmdr. Brian Wierzbicki, NETC spokesman.

Capt. Steve Antcliff, commander of the service’s Submarine Learning Center, made the decision to remove Severson, who had led the training facility command since June, according to the Navy.

The submarine training facility at Naval Base Point Loma in San Diego provides basic training for officers and enlisted sailors to attain necessary qualifications and certi-

fications, according to its website.

Severson was reassigned to Submarine Squadron 11, also at Point Loma. The service did not say what his position will be there.

Severson, a submarine warfare officer, enlisted in the Navy in May 1999 and commissioned as an officer in September 2001, according to his service record. He previously served at Submarine Development Squadron 5 in Silverdale, Wash., and Submarine Force Atlantic in Norfolk, Va.

Lt. Cmdr. Chris Lindahl, who is from North Carolina, has taken command in Severson’s place. He had been serving previously as the training facility’s executive officer.

Severson’s photograph and biography were removed from the Submarine Learning Center’s website and replaced with Lindahl’s as of Friday morning.

Lindahl commissioned in 2007 through the Naval ROTC program at Virginia Tech University, according to the website. He holds a Bachelor of Science in electrical engineering and a master’s degree in engineering management.

# US Guardsmen again training Ukrainian forces

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Florida National Guard soldiers who trained troops in Ukraine before Russia’s invasion are now training Ukrainian forces again outside the war-torn country, chief Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said Friday.

“The United States has commenced training with the Ukrainian armed forces on key systems at U.S. military installations in Germany,” Kirby said. “This new training effort ... is in direct support of recent U.S. security assistance packages.”

About 160 of the Army National Guard troops deployed in December to Ukraine for a training mission before they were pulled out of the country Feb. 12 as Russia prepared to launch its invasion less than two weeks later.

The U.S. troops were sent to an undisclosed location in Europe, but recently had a sentimental reunion with the Ukrainians they had once trained, Kirby told reporters at the Pentagon.

For now, there are no plans to return to training forces inside Ukraine as President Joe Biden has said he will not send U.S. troops into the country, but the Pentagon is considering remote training for Ukrainian troops there.

“The trainers would be obviously outside Ukraine, but able to communicate with Ukrainian troops inside Ukraine virtually,” Kirby said. “So that’s an option available to us [but it] hasn’t started.”

The Florida National Guard troops are still deployed on their original December orders, he said. There has been no decision made on whether their deployment will be extended.

Training is necessary because Ukrainian forces are unfamiliar with some of the weapons that the U.S. sent Ukraine, such as the 90 155mm howitzers included in recent back-to-back \$800 million military aid packages, Kirby said.

“These efforts build on the initial artillery training that Ukraine’s forces already have received elsewhere, and also includes training on the radar systems and armored vehicles that have been recently announced as part of security assistance packages,” he said.

# Texas governor OKs nearly \$500M for National Guard border mission

BY ROSE L. THAYER  
*Stars and Stripes*

AUSTIN, Texas — Gov. Greg Abbott approved nearly \$500 million to fund the deployment of thousands of Texas National Guard troops to the state’s border with Mexico just days before the mission was set to run out of money.

Maj. Gen. Thomas Suelzer, commander of the Texas Military Department, told state lawmakers Wednesday that the state-sponsored border security mission is spending about \$1.4 billion a year, which is more than was appropriated by the Texas Legislature.

Before the governor’s cash infusion Friday, Suelzer said the Texas Military Department only had enough money to make it to May 1. The Guard will now be able to sup-

port the deployment of nearly 10,000 troops through the end of August, which is the end of the fiscal year in Texas.

The Guard will then need an additional \$1.4 billion to continue the work for another year, Suelzer said.

“This funding will address immediate border security needs while future funding needed to protect Texans continues to be evaluated,” according to Abbott’s office.

The border mission, known as Operation Lone Star, began in March 2021 and puts Texas National Guard troops along the state’s border with Mexico to stop criminal activity between the legal ports of entry. The service members have the authority to arrest and work closely with the Department of Public Safety.

# Schools see decrease in students, budgets

*Associated Press*

MISSION, Kan. — A school system in suburban Kansas City is eliminating over 100 jobs, including kindergarten aides and library clerks. Oakland, Calif., is closing seven schools. Other districts around the country are merging classrooms, selling buildings and leaving teaching positions unfilled in order to close budget gaps.

Public school systems are beginning to feel the pinch from enrollment losses tied to the coronavirus pandemic.

Money for schools is driven partly by student headcounts, and emergency provisions in many states allowed schools to maintain funding at pre-pandemic levels. But like the billions of dollars of federal relief money that have helped schools weather the crisis, those measures were not meant to last forever.

In Olathe, Kan., where the school system is cutting 140

jobs, Deputy Superintendent John Hutchison said the extra federal money merely put off the inevitable.

Now it is trimming millions of dollars from its budgets because enrollment, having peaked at more than 30,000 students in fall 2019, fell by around 900 in the first full school year of the pandemic. Less than 100 of those students have returned.

“Where did those kids go?” Hutchison asked during a recent public meeting. “Where are they? They didn’t come back this year. That’s what’s laying on that additional reduction in our funding.”

Families opting for homeschooling, private schools and other options sent enrollment down sharply in the first full school year of the pandemic, and generally it has been slow to recover.

In Houston, the largest district in Texas, enrollment tumbled by more than 22,000 to

around 183,000 in fall 2021 and only about half of those students have returned. The district was shielded from making cuts in the first two years of the pandemic by what are known as “hold harmless” provisions, but those protections are expected to end. Superintendent Millard House has asked departments to cut \$60 million from next year’s budget.

Among other states that took steps to protect school budgets, Delaware provided \$9.3 million in one-time funding in the fiscal year that ended in summer 2021 to school districts and charter schools to prevent layoffs over enrollment declines, and North Carolina lawmakers decided to allow schools to use pre-pandemic attendance levels.

More districts will make cuts in coming years, said Alex Spurrer, an associate partner at Bellwether Education Partners, a think tank. The last of the federal aid must be spent by 2024.

“Once the federal funding dries up, it will put a lot more districts in a lot more difficult position if they’re kind of kicking the can down the road of making the adjustments that they’ll need if they are going to be serving smaller student populations in the years to come,” he said.

Some districts have struggled to explain the need for cuts. Albuquerque Public Schools announced this spring that it anticipates a budget shortfall of about \$25 million.

“That might sound crazy,” the district wrote in a blog post, acknowledging the influx of federal aid. But it explained that enrollment declines have accelerated amid the pandemic, with the student population falling to 73,000 from 85,000 in just six years. The district hasn’t released a cost-cutting plan but legislative analysts say it will require layoffs and school closures.

## Racial split on COVID endures as restrictions ease

*Associated Press*

Black and Hispanic Americans remain far more cautious in their approach to COVID-19 than white Americans, recent polls show, reflecting diverging preferences on how to deal with the pandemic as federal, state and local restrictions fall by the wayside.

Despite majority favorability among U.S. adults overall for measures like mask mandates, public health experts said divided opinions among racial groups reflect not only the unequal impact of the pandemic on people of color but also apathy among some white Americans.

Black Americans (63%) and Hispanic Americans (68%) continue to be more likely than white Americans (45%) to say they are at least somewhat worried about themselves or a fam-

ily member being infected with COVID-19, according to an April poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Throughout the pandemic, Black and Hispanic communities have experienced higher rates of illness and death from COVID, said Amelia Burke-Garcia, public health program area director at NORC. Those experiences have resulted in greater levels of stress, anxiety and awareness of the risks of catching COVID-19, she said, which means people of color are more likely to feel measures like mask mandates are needed.

“We’ve seen these trends endure throughout the entire pandemic,” Burke-Garcia said. “What we’re seeing now as mitigation measures are being rolled back is there’s still great concern amongst Black Ameri-

cans and Hispanic Americans around the risk of getting sick.”

Dr. Celine Gounder, an infectious disease specialist and epidemiologist and editor-at-large at Kaiser Health News, said people’s lived experiences deeply shape how they perceive the pandemic.

Anecdotes and personal experience can have a larger impact on behavior than numbers, she said, and people of color are more likely to have had negative experiences with health care prior to and during the pandemic.

While new medicines and vaccines have made it easier to treat COVID-19, Gounder said many people still face systemic barriers to accessing that medical care.

Others risk losing their jobs or are unable to take time off if they do fall ill, she said, or can-

not avoid things like public transit to reduce their exposures.

In March, an AP-NORC poll showed Black and Hispanic Americans, 69% and 49%, were more likely than white Americans, 35%, to say they always or often wear a face mask around others.

Lower support for mask mandates and other precautions among white Americans may also reflect less sensitivity towards what occurs in communities of color.

In a 2021 study of mask wearing during the early part of the pandemic, researchers found that mask wearing among white people increased when white people were dying at greater rates in the surrounding community.

When Black and Hispanic people were dying, mask usage was lower.



# Trump grand jury ending with no charges

*The Washington Post*

NEW YORK — A six-month grand jury that was convened late last year to hear evidence against Donald Trump was set to expire last week, closing a chapter in a lengthy criminal investigation that appears to be fizzling out without charges against the former president, people familiar with matter said.

Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg, a Democrat who took office in January, inherited a probe launched by his predecessor, Cyrus Vance, who was convinced that there was a case against Trump for crimes related to manipulating the value of property assets to secure tax advantages or better loan rates.

The grand jury was convened in November with a mandate to hear evidence against the former president. But the decision on whether to finish the presentation and ask the panel to vote on charges would ultimately fall on Bragg, who decided to pause the process, according to people with knowl-

edge of the situation, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss information that has not been declared publicly.

A key problem, some of those people said, was Bragg's concern over whether former Trump fixer Michael Cohen could be used as a witness.

Bragg has said he will announce when the investigation is over, noting that even after the special grand jury disbanded, other grand juries hearing a broad range of criminal cases in New York would be available to take action in this one if needed.

Still, the expiration of the grand jury — and the departure in February of two senior prosecutors who said Bragg was stalling the inquiry — makes any potential indictment of Trump seem unlikely, legal observers have said. By the time Mark Pomerantz and Carey Dunne quit, the grand jury had been inactive for weeks, with jurors being told to stay home, a person with knowledge of the issue previously said.

Lawyers in the office of New York Attorney General Letitia James, a Democrat who is a partner in the probe, are skeptical that any criminal case will be brought, people familiar with the situation said. They also spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter. A spokeswoman for James said the investigation continues.

James is separately running a civil investigation of Trump's business practices, and a lawyer from her office signaled Monday that a lawsuit could be filed in that case soon. A judge is holding Trump in contempt of court and fining him \$10,000 a day for failing to provide records James is seeking or to properly document the nature of his search for those records.

Trump's lawyers are appealing both that order and a ruling by New York Supreme Court Judge Arthur Engoron requiring Trump and two of his adult children to be deposed by the attorney general's team.

## More evacuations expected near Southwest wildfires

*Associated Press*

SANTA FE, N.M. — Thousands of firefighters battled destructive wildfires in the Southwest as more residents prepared to evacuate Friday into the weekend in northern New Mexico where strong winds and dangerously dry conditions have made the blazes hard to contain.

The biggest fire in the U.S. grew to more than 117 square miles through the afternoon northeast of Santa Fe. Gusty winds prevented any aerial attacks by midmorning and crews lost some of the containment they had established in previous days.

The rapid rate of the spread of the fire

was exceeding dire predictions in some areas, incident commander Carl Schwoppe said Friday night.

"We're in a very dangerous situation. Evacuation statuses are changing as we speak," he warned at a briefing in Las Vegas, N.M., about 50 miles east of Santa Fe.

More air and ground forces were on the way, he said, to fortify the nearly 1,000 firefighters on the fire lines there and winds that gusted up to 65 mph were beginning to subside as nightfall approached.

There were no immediate reports of any new structures that have been lost since the local sheriff confirmed Thursday night at

least 166 homes have been destroyed in northeast New Mexico's rural San Miguel County.

But erratic wind shifts in some of the driest conditions the region has seen in years were forecast again Saturday, and authorities were making preparations to evacuate some residents as far north as Taos.

"Just getting people out of the way, that's been the mission today," Sheriff Chris Lopez said at the briefing in Las Vegas. Some of the most active fire was heading in the direction of that town but he said the town itself was not in immediate danger.

## Suspected tornado rips through Kan., causes damage

*Associated Press*

WICHITA, Kan. — A suspected tornado that barreled through parts of Kansas damaged buildings, injured several people and left more than 6,500 people without power, officials said Saturday.

Officials said the suspected twister moved through parts of southeast Wichita and Andover on Friday evening. Andover Fire Chief Chad Russell said during a news conference early Saturday that 50 to 100 buildings were damaged in Sedgwick

County, though it was not immediately known how many buildings were damaged in Andover.

Russell said in some neighborhoods homes "were completely blown away."

Officials said only a few injuries had been reported. In Sedgwick County, three people were injured, including one woman who suffered serious injuries. Russell said no injuries had been reported in Butler County, but a secondary assessment would be conducted Saturday morning.

He said some neighborhoods were "damaged enough that houses were completely blown down" and cited areas that suffered "very bad damage."

City Hall also sustained damage, which hampered "some of our efforts," Russell said. Other buildings reportedly damaged included the Dr. Jim Farha Andover YMCA and Prairie Creek Elementary School.

Gov. Laura Kelly declared a State of Disaster Emergency for the hardest hit areas.

# Google expands privacy options in searches

Associated Press

Google has expanded options for keeping personal information private from online searches.

The company said earlier this week that it will let people request that more types of content such as personal contact information like phone numbers, email and physical addresses be removed from search results.

The new policy also allows the removal of other information that may pose a risk for identity theft, such as confidential log-in credentials.

The company said in a statement that open access to information is vital, “but so is empowering people with the tools they need to protect themselves and keep their sensitive, personally identifiable information private.”

“Privacy and online safety go hand in hand. And when you’re using the internet, it’s important to have control over how your sensitive, personally identifiable information can be found,” it said.

Google Search earlier had permitted people to request that highly personal content

that could cause direct harm be removed. That includes information removed due to doxxing and personal details like bank account or credit card numbers that could be used for fraud.

But information increasingly pops up in unexpected places and is used in new ways, so policies need to evolve, the company said.

Having personal contact information openly available online also can pose a threat and Google said it had received requests for the option to remove that content, too.

# Amputee reaches goal of 102 marathons in 102 days

Associated Press

GILBERT, Ariz. — As Forrest Gump in the Oscar-winning 1994 film of the same name, lead actor Tom Hanks abruptly trots to a halt after more than three years of nonstop running and tells his followers: “I’m pretty tired — I think I’ll go home now.”

Jacky Hunt-Broersma can relate. On Thursday, the amputee athlete achieved her goal of running 102 marathons in as many days, setting an unofficial women’s world record.

And she can’t stop/won’t stop, saying she would run two more for good measure and wrap up her challenge on Saturday with 104. “I might as well end April with a marathon,”

she told The Associated Press.

Britain-based Guinness World Records did not immediately respond to an email requesting comment. It can take up to a year for the organization to ratify a world record.

Guinness lists the men’s record for consecutive daily marathons as 59, set in 2019 by Enzo Caporaso of Italy.

“I’m just happy that I made it — I can’t believe it,” she said. “The best thing was the incredible support I’ve received from people around the world who’ve reached out, telling me how this has inspired them to push themselves.”

Hunt-Broersma, 46, began her quest on Jan. 17, covering the classic 26.2-mile mara-

thon distance on a loop course laid out near her home in Gilbert, Ariz., or on a treadmill indoors. Since then, it’s been “rinse and repeat” every day for the South Africa native, who lost her left leg below the knee to a rare cancer and runs on a carbon-fiber prosthesis.

Her original goal was to run 100 marathons in 100 days so she’d beat the record of 95 set in 2020 by Alyssa Amos Clark, a nondisabled runner from Bennington, Vt., who took it on as a pandemic coping strategy. But earlier this month, after nondisabled British runner Kate Jayden unofficially broke Clark’s record with 101 marathons in 101 days, Hunt-Broersma realized she’d need to run at least 102.

# Conn. Senate OKs bill that protects abortion providers

Associated Press

HARTFORD, Conn. — The Connecticut Senate gave final legislative approval shortly before midnight Friday to a bill abortion rights advocates contend is needed to protect in-state medical providers from legal action stemming from out-of-state laws, as well as the patients who travel to Connecticut to terminate a pregnancy and those who help them.

Senate President Pro Tempore Martin Looney, D-New Haven, said lawmakers in Connecticut, a state with a long history of supporting abortion rights, needed to pass the legisla-

tion “in defense of our own values and our own legal system.” It comes after Texas enacted a law that authorizes lawsuits against clinics, doctors and others who perform or facilitate a banned abortion, even in another state.

The bill, which already cleared the House of Representatives last month, passed in the Senate on a 25-9 vote. It now moves to Gov. Ned Lamont’s desk. The Democrat has said he will sign it.

Supporters voiced concern about the spate of new abortion restrictions being enacted in a growing number of conservative states and

the possibility the U.S. Supreme Court may overturn or weaken *Roe v. Wade*, the landmark 1973 decision that established a nationwide right to abortion.

Under the bill, state and local agencies in the state of Connecticut, which codified the *Roe v. Wade* decision in state law in 1990, would be prevented from cooperating in investigations and prosecutions of abortion providers in the state. The bill also modifies the state’s extradition statutes and prevents an out-of-state patient’s medical records from being disclosed.

STARS AND STRIPES®

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

Reporting  
World, National  
and Military News

# QBs left waiting in early rounds of draft

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — It took 42 selections Friday before a second quarterback was taken in the NFL Draft. And it was a proven commodity in college, Cincinnati's Desmond Ridder.

A full 54 spots after Kenny Pickett of Pittsburgh went 20th to the Steelers on Thursday night, Ridder was taken by Atlanta.

The Falcons traded longtime starter Matt Ryan to Indianapolis in the offseason and they have Marcus Mariota as the potential starter. Ridder, who led a non-Power Five team to the College Football Playoff for the first time, has a skill set that's been compared to Mariota's.

This is the first draft since 2000 that only one quarterback went in the first two rounds: Pickett this year, Chad Pennington to the Jets back then. It's the latest since 1996 for the second QB to go: Bobby Hoying went 85th that year.

"We're sitting there waiting and waiting and waiting and we're not getting anything and I

finally texted Malik Willis and I'm like 'What's going on?'" Ridder said, referring to the Liberty quarterback. "Man, they don't like us or what? He was just like 'Let's sit and be patient. God is going to do his thing.'"

Willis didn't quite hear his name before Hoying did way back when. The next quarterback chosen, he went to Tennessee at No. 86 when the Titans traded up with the host Raiders.

"Hey I'm just blessed I have somewhere to go, someplace to call home," said Willis, who rented out a bowling alley in Las Vegas for about 100 people. "I'm appreciative of the opportunity to play at the next level."

The Raiders finally went at No. 90, getting Memphis guard Dylan Parham, four spots before another passer, Mississippi's Matt Corral, was taken by Carolina with its first selection since the sixth overall pick.

Before Ridder was called, both players of the year from the Big 12, a standout receiver from an FCS powerhouse, and more trades marked yet another

er dizzy and busy round.

The drafting began Friday with Houston defensive tackle Logan Hall going to the Buccaneers. Tampa Bay, under new head coach Todd Bowles after Bruce Arians retired last month, owned the spot after trading with Jacksonville the previous night. Bowles' background is on defense, so Hall seems a natural choice. He goes 6-foot-6, 275 pounds and is known for his relentlessness.

"We need D-linemen," said Bowles. "We like depth. We play a lot of people down there and platoon a lot of people, so it has no bearing on the other guys."

Green Bay began another bevy of trades by moving up to the second spot to at last help Aaron Rodgers with a highly drafted rookie receiver. Rodgers famously has sought more input into Green Bay's drafts, and the Packers didn't select a wideout in the first round with their two picks because the top prospects were gone. But they used the second slot in the second round to grab North Dakota State's

Christian Watson, who averaged 20.4 yards per reception in his career. The Packers drafted his father, former Howard defensive back Tim Watson, in 1993.

The Packers traded their All-Pro receiver, Davante Adams, to Las Vegas this offseason.

"Obviously being able to catch passes from one of the best to ever do it is something I'm definitely excited about," Watson said. "I feel like I'm going to be able to learn and grow a lot through not just him but all the other receivers and everyone else in the organization as well."

Ten teams didn't select on Thursday, when the Jets got three players. On Friday, they made another deal, with the other New York team. Getting the fourth position in the round from the Giants, the Jets not only took the first running back, two-time All-American Breece Hall of Iowa State, but the first player from the Big 12, the only Power 5 conference blanked on opening night.

# Grizzlies rally past Timberwolves, reach 2nd round

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — The Memphis Grizzlies didn't act their age in this first-round series against Minnesota, especially when they faced a double-digit deficit — all three times — entering the fourth quarter.

With another relentless and resolute finish, the Grizzlies finished off the Timberwolves. Their next challenge is coming fast: the Golden State Warriors.

Desmond Bane and Dillon Brooks each scored 23 points and the Grizzlies rallied yet again to eliminate the Timberwolves, winning 114-106 in Game 6 on Friday.

"I wish we got better starts so we don't have to put ourselves in that predicament," Brooks said, "but we're always going to

find a way to fight."

Brandon Clarke added 17 points and 11 rebounds in another stellar effort off the bench for the Grizzlies, who withstood another quiet night by star Ja Morant and another double-digit deficit entering the fourth quarter.

"We stick together, stay on the same page, and I think it really showed on the big stage this series," said Bane, who led the Grizzlies in scoring in the series.

The Grizzlies advanced in the playoffs for the first time in seven years, this time to meet Golden State, the NBA champion in 2015, 2017 and 2018. Game 1 is in Memphis on Sunday.

"Physically, mentally, this se-

ries was a battle," said a visibly drained Morant, who went 4-for-14 from the field and had 17 points and 11 assists. "Obviously, the wins were pretty ugly outside of Game 2, but we got it done."

Anthony Edwards had 16 of his 30 points in the first quarter for Minnesota. Jaden McDaniels had 24 points off the bench and Karl-Anthony Towns added 18 points and 10 rebounds, but late-game struggles were evident again.

"We showed it in our shot selection in the fourth, and it's baked in our DNA right now," coach Chris Finch said. "We know we have to learn from this. We're not all just going to be able to save the day."

With the Grizzlies already the

first team in NBA history to win multiple games in the same playoff series by erasing a double-digit-point fourth-quarter deficit, the here-we-go-again feeling was palpable in the building as an 84-74 lead for the Wolves at the third-quarter break quickly vanished.

Bane and Brooks each hit tying three-pointers midway through the fourth, and Brooks fouled out just 26 seconds after his evened the score at 97.

"I think they thought I was going to shoot 1-for-10 again. I'm a pro. I figure stuff out," said Brooks, who went 9-for-19 including 5-for-6 from deep.

Bane then swished another one from deep at 3:03 for a 101-99 lead, the first for the Grizzlies since they were up 39-38.



# Five Mets combine to throw no-hitter

Associated Press

NEW YORK — New York Mets starter Tylor Megill and four relievers combined on the first no-hitter of the Major League Baseball season, teaming up to throw a whopping 159 pitches and beat the Philadelphia Phillies 3-0 Friday night.

Megill was pulled after five innings and 88 pitches. The bullpen took over from there, with Drew Smith, Joely Rodríguez, Seth Lugo and Edwin Díaz completing the second no-hitter in Mets history.

Díaz finished it off in style, striking out Bryce Harper, Nick Castellanos and J.T. Realmuto in the ninth. Mets pitchers combined to fan 12 and walk six.

Johan Santana threw the Mets' only previous no-hitter on June 1, 2012, when he struck out eight and needed 134 pitches in an 8-0 win over the St. Louis Cardinals.

Megill (4-0) struck out five and walked three in his 23rd major league start. Smith got four outs, Rodríguez got three and Lugo recorded the last two outs in the eighth before Díaz

took over.

Jeff McNeil hit a two-run single in the fifth off Aaron Nola (1-3). Pete Alonso homered with two outs in the sixth.

**Marlins 8, Mariners 6:** Jorge Soler and Miguel Rojas homered and host Miami won its sixth straight game with a victory over Seattle.

**Angels 5, White Sox 1:** Taylor Ward and Shohei Ohtani hit first-inning solo home runs off Lucas Giolito and visiting Los Angeles rode a combined three-hitter to beat Chicago and get its sixth straight win.

**Nationals 14, Giants 4:** Juan Soto homered and visiting Washington pounded out a season-high 22 hits, ending an eight-game losing streak by beating virus-ravaged San Francisco.

**Astros 11, Blue Jays 7:** Jeremy Peña hit a three-run home run, Yordan Alvarez and Alex Bregman also connected, and visiting Houston beat Toronto to extend its winning streak to four games.

**Rays 6, Twins 1:** Josh Lowe and Mike Zunino homered for

the first time this season, Corey Kluber gave up one hit in six innings and host Tampa Bay beat Minnesota to halt the Twins' seven-game winning streak.

**Braves 6, Rangers 3:** William Contreras hit two long home runs, Austin Riley also connected and Travis Demeritte had an inside-the-park homer as visiting Atlanta beat Texas.

**Yankees 12, Royals 2:** Aaron Judge, Giancarlo Stanton, Anthony Rizzo and Gleyber Torres all homered and visiting New York won its seventh in a row by topping Kansas City in a rain-shortened eight-inning game.

**Guardians 9, Athletics 8:** Andrés Giménez hit his first career grand slam, Josh Naylor's two-run home run capped a four-run seventh inning and visiting Cleveland rallied to beat Oakland and snap a seven-game losing streak.

**Padres 7, Pirates 3:** Ha-Seong Kim and Jake Cronenworth homered, and Yu Darvish pitched six effective innings to lead visiting San Diego over

Pittsburgh.

**Red Sox 3, Orioles 1:** Christian Arroyo ended his team's long-ball drought with a two-run shot, and Rich Hill combined with four relievers on a five-hitter to help visiting Boston beat Baltimore.

**Diamondbacks 6, Cardinals 2:** Madison Bumgarner pitched five strong innings, Daulton Varsho had two hits and visiting Arizona beat St. Louis.

**Brewers 11, Cubs 1:** Hunter Renfroe hit two of his team's season-high six home runs, Adrian Houser struck out six and scattered two hits over six shutout innings and host Milwaukee beat Chicago. Houser (2-2) struck out six and walked two.

**Rockies 10, Reds 4:** Ryan McMahan hit a tiebreaking, three-run home run in the fifth inning and host Colorado sent Cincinnati to its major league-worst 17th loss in 20 games.

**Dodgers 5, Tigers 1:** Justin Turner and Chris Taylor each hit their first home runs of the season to lead host Los Angeles over Detroit.

## Dodgers' Bauer ready to fight MLB over suspension

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Trevor Bauer is fighting to protect his pitching career, reputation and earning power in the face of his unprecedented two-season suspension without pay by Major League Baseball for violating MLB's domestic violence and sexual assault policy.

Now, it's an arbitrator's turn to decide whether he ever plays for the Los Angeles Dodgers — or any other MLB team — again.

His punishment was meted out Friday for sexual abuse allegations he denies.

If the arbitrator sides with MLB, the 31-year-old pitcher's full suspension of 324 games without pay would be upheld and Bauer would lose just over \$60 million from a \$102 million, three-year contract he signed last year. By that time, his contract with the team will have expired.

If Bauer wins, he faces the prospect of re-

building his reputation, as well as potential public backlash and mending fences with MLB and his team.

Bauer became the Dodgers' highest-paid player after they outdueled the New York Mets to bring the right-hander home in 2021. He was born in North Hollywood, attended high school in Santa Clarita and played at UCLA.

Public reaction at the time was mixed, not because of Bauer's performance on the field, but his behavior off it. He had been involved in multiple controversies on social media, where he has a huge following, and some of the higher-profile incidents involved women.

Back then, Bauer told reporters, "I'm doing my best to be better." And Andrew Friedman, the Dodgers' president of baseball operations, said the team's due diligence focused on talking to Bauer, his for-

mer teammates and previous organizations.

"We came away from it feeling good about it," Friedman said at the time. "Now, obviously time will tell, but I feel like he's going to be a tremendous add, not just on the field, but in the clubhouse and the community."

By early July, everything had changed for the 2020 NL Cy Young Award winner.

A San Diego woman, whom the pitcher had met through social media, alleged Bauer beat and sexually abused her earlier in 2021. She later sought but was denied a restraining order. Los Angeles prosecutors said in February there was insufficient evidence to prove the woman's accusations beyond a reasonable doubt.

Bauer repeatedly has said that everything that happened between the two was consensual. He vehemently denied that he abused the woman.

# Penguins secure third in Metro Division

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Evgeni Malkin scored his 20th goal of the season and had an assist, and the Pittsburgh Penguins beat the Columbus Blue Jackets 5-3 Friday night in the season finale to clinch third place in the Metropolitan Division.

Kris Letang, Brian Boyle, Evan Rodrigues and Marcus Pettersson also scored for the Penguins, who will open the Stanley Cup playoffs next week at the New York Rangers.

Casey DeSmith, starting for the fifth time in six games with All-Star goalie Tristan Jarry out indefinitely with a foot injury, stopped 33 shots.

Oliver Bjorkstrand had a goal for the fourth straight game for Columbus, and Gustav Nyquist and Justin Danforth also scored. The Blue Jackets lost for the sixth time in their last eight games. J-F Berube started in goal for Columbus and gave up three

goals on eight shots in the first 6½ minutes. He was replaced by Elvis Merzlikins, who had 40 saves the rest of the way.

**Stars 4, Ducks 2:** Jason Robertson scored on a power play against an emergency replacement goalie midway through the third period and Dallas beat Anaheim.

**Wild 4, Avalanche 1:** Kirill Kaprizov had a goal and an assist and host Minnesota clinched home-ice advantage in the first round of the playoffs.

Finishing second in the Central Division, Minnesota is 10-1-2 in its past 13 games and 21-3-4 in its past 28. Minnesota will face St. Louis in the first round. The Wild were 0-3 against the Blues this season.

**Golden Knights 7, Blues 4:** Jack Eichel had two goals and an assist, leading visiting Vegas past St. Louis.

For the first time since entering the NHL as an expansion franchise in the 2017-18

season, the Golden Knights missed the playoffs.

**Lightning 6, Islanders 4:** Steven Stamkos scored three goals for his first hat trick of the season, and visiting Tampa Bay rallied to beat New York.

Andrei Vasilevskiy stopped 33 shots as the Lightning secured third place in the Atlantic Division. Tampa Bay will face Toronto in the first round.

**Maple Leafs 5, Bruins 2:** William Nylander scored twice and host Toronto beat Boston in a regular-season finale with both teams resting most of their stars.

The Maple Leafs ensured they will face the two-time defending Stanley Cup champion Tampa Bay Lightning in the first round, while the Bruins are set to meet the Carolina Hurricanes.

**Senators 4, Flyers 2:** Brady Tkachuk had a goal and an assist to lead visiting Ottawa past Philadelphia.

Josh Norris and Travis Ha-

monic also scored and Austin Watson had an empty-netter for the Senators, who finished out of the playoffs for the fifth straight season.

**Rangers 3, Capitals 2:** Dryden Hunt scored the go-ahead goal in the third period, Alexander Georgiev made 34 saves and host New York beat Washington in the regular-season finale.

**Jets 3, Flames 1:** Connor Hellebuyck made 32 saves to help host Winnipeg beat playoff-bound Calgary.

**Sabres 3, Blackhawks 2 (OT):** Casey Mittelstadt scored 2:07 into overtime to lift host Buffalo over Chicago.

**Red Wings 5, Devils 3:** Pius Suter scored the tiebreaking goal midway through the third period and visiting Detroit beat New Jersey.

**Canadiens 10, Panthers 2:** Cole Caufield had his first NHL hat trick and host Montreal routed Presidents' Trophy champion Florida.

## Hendrick drivers trying to defend their dominance

Associated Press

DOVER, Del. — Sure, it was bright on Monday for the Hendrick Motorsports team photo filled with virtually every employee, drivers and the four cars that swept the top four spots last year at Dover. Sun or not, bleary-eyed race winner Alex Bowman needed his shades.

"It was a little bit rough," Bowman said with a laugh. "Sunday night was a good celebration with me and my team. We got a cool picture. But I have sunglasses on for a reason. It was an enjoyable time."

Bowman led a Hendrick pack that found a little slice of history at the Monster Mile with the 1-2-3-4 finish a year ago. Kyle Larson led a race-high 263 laps and finished second, Chase Elliott was third and William Byron fourth. Hendrick Motorsports won its 267th NASCAR race and now has a record 284 wins headed into Sunday's race.

Hendrick joined Peter DePaolo Racing (1956 at Titusville and 1957 at North Wilkesboro) and Roush Fenway Racing (2005 Homestead-Miami Speedway) as the only race

teams to claim the top four spots in a Cup Series race.

"I was definitely glad to have the bragging rights at being in the front of that," Bowman said.

A year later, Hendrick wouldn't surprise anyone if it snagged the first four spots again.

Ross Chastain of Trackhouse Racing has emerged as the surprise of the season with two wins over the first 10 Cup races but Hendrick has four. Bowman won the third race of the season in Las Vegas, has six top-10 finishes and has followed up a career-best four wins in 2021 with the type of effort that should stamp him in the championship picture.

"You always want more but we're trying our best to keep that consistency through the summer," he said. "I think we've been doing a good job so far. Just need to keep digging."

Bowman drives the No. 48 Chevrolet, the same number and manufacturer that former Hendrick driver Jimmie Johnson used on his way toward a track-record 11 wins. Bowman said after his win he tried to run "the Jimmie Johnson line" on the concrete mile track. But

the old playbook doesn't work anymore as NASCAR moved this season to its "Next Gen" car and takes it to Dover for the first time.

"Your notebook is out the window," Bowman said. "I wouldn't have predicted that it did what it did in Martinsville. I think while it is hard to pass, we've run up front there from really deep in the field."

No matter the car through the years, Hendrick is usually the betting favorite to win at Dover for a reason. Thanks in large part to Johnson, HMS has 21 wins at Dover. Hall of Famer and current Hendrick executive Jeff Gordon won five times at the Monster Mile.

Speaking of Gordon, how is he settling in during his first season as vice chairman at Hendrick?

"He's riding his one-wheeler in the parking lot, the last I saw," Bowman said. "He didn't know how to stop. I was driving next to him and I was like, I've got to get out of here. I can't be responsible for anything that happens here. Hopefully he's off of that thing and back at his desk."