

## Demonstrations escalate on US campuses

*Associated Press*

NEW YORK — Dozens of protesters took over a building at Columbia University in New York early Tuesday, barricading the entrances and unfurling a Palestinian flag out of a window in the latest escalation of demonstrations against the Israel-Hamas war that have spread to college campuses nationwide.

The occupation at Columbia — where protesters shrugged off an ultimatum to abandon a tent encampment Monday or be suspended — unfolded as other universities stepped up efforts to clear out encampments. Police swept through some campuses, spurring confrontations with protesters and plenty of arrests. In rarer instances, university officials and protest leaders have struck agreements to restrict the disruption to campus life.

Protesters on Columbia's Manhattan campus locked arms in front of Hamilton Hall early Tuesday and carried furniture and metal barricades to the

building, among several that were occupied during a 1968 civil rights and anti-Vietnam War protest. Posts on an Instagram page for protest organizers shortly after midnight urged people to protect the encampment and join them at Hamilton Hall. A "Free Palestine" banner hung from a window.

"An autonomous group reclaimed Hind's Hall, previously known as 'Hamilton Hall,' in honor of Hind Rajab, a martyr murdered at the hands of the genocidal Israeli state at the age of six years old," CU Apartheid Divest posted on the social platform X early Tuesday.

Hamilton Hall opened in 1907 and is named for Alexander Hamilton — one of the founding fathers of the United States — who attended King's College, Columbia's original name.

The takeover occurred nearly 12 hours after Monday's 2 p.m. deadline for the protesters to leave an encampment of around 120 tents or face suspension.

In a statement Tuesday, Columbia spokesperson Ben Chang said, "Students occupying the building face expulsion." He said those who didn't agree to the terms from Monday were being suspended.

"Protesters have chosen to escalate to an untenable situation — vandalizing property, breaking doors and windows, and blockading entrances — and we are following through with the consequences we outlined yesterday," he said.

The public safety department said in a statement that access to the campus was limited to students living in the residential buildings and essential employees, and that their safety "is paramount." There was just one access point into and out of campus.

New York Police Department Chief Jeffrey Maddrey, speaking at a news conference Tuesday, said police won't enter Columbia's campus without a request from the college administration or an imminent emergency.

Protesters insisted they will remain at the hall until the university agrees to three demands: divestment, financial transparency and amnesty.

At many campuses, including Columbia, the conflict over protests appeared to be coming to a head.

The standoffs have drawn concern from the White House. National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby said President Joe Biden believes students occupying an academic building is "absolutely the wrong approach," and "not an example of peaceful protest."

At California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt, where protesters have occupied two buildings, dozens of police officers in helmets and carrying batons marched onto campus early Tuesday and cleared both halls. The university said 25 people were arrested and there were no injuries.

## Netanyahu vows invasion of Rafah will move forward

*Associated Press*

TEL AVIV, Israel — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu pledged Tuesday to launch an incursion into the southern Gaza city of Rafah, where hundreds of thousands of Palestinians are sheltering from the almost 7-month-long war, just as cease-fire negotiations between Israel and Hamas appear to be gaining steam.

Netanyahu's comments came hours before U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken arrives in Israel to advance the truce talks — which appear to be one of the most serious rounds of negotia-

tions between Israel and Hamas since the war began. The deal is meant to free hostages, bring some relief to the population and avert an Israeli offensive into Rafah and the potential harm to civilians there.

Netanyahu said Israel would enter Rafah to destroy Hamas' battalions there regardless of whether a truce-for-hostages deal is struck. His comments appeared to be meant to appease his nationalist governing partners but it was not clear whether they would have any bearing on any emerging deal with Hamas.

"The idea that we will stop the

war before achieving all of its goals is out of the question," Netanyahu said, according to a statement from his office. "We will enter Rafah and we will eliminate Hamas' battalions there — with or without a deal, to achieve the total victory."

Netanyahu has faced pressure from his governing partners not to proceed with a deal that might prevent Israel from invading Rafah, which it says is Hamas' last major stronghold. His government could be threatened if he agrees to a deal because hard-line Cabinet members have demanded an attack

on Rafah.

Netanyahu met on Tuesday with one of those partners, National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, according to the minister's office, who said Netanyahu promised him that "Israel will enter Rafah, promised that we are not stopping the war and promised that there won't be a reckless deal."

With more than half of Gaza's 2.3 million people sheltering in Rafah, the international community, including Israel's top ally, the United States, has warned Israel against any offensive that puts civilians at risk.

# China fires water cannons at Philippine ships

*Associated Press*

MANILA, Philippines — Chinese coast guard ships fired water cannons at two Philippine patrol vessels Tuesday near a disputed shoal in the South China Sea, causing minor damage to one vessel, in the latest flare-up in an increasingly tense territorial conflict.

There were no immediate reports of injuries in the incident off Scarborough Shoal, one of two hotly disputed areas where confrontations between China and the Philippines have flared on and off since last year.

A Philippine coast guard ship and an accompanying fisheries vessel were patrolling the waters off Scarborough Shoal when four Chinese coast guard ships, backed by six suspected

militia ships, executed dangerous blocking maneuvers, Philippine coast guard spokesperson Commodore Jay Tarriela said.

A Chinese coast guard ship used a water cannon against the fisheries vessel, the BRP Bankaw, and two other Chinese coast guard ships hit the Philippine coast guard ship, the BRP Bagacay, simultaneously from both sides, damaging part of its deck railing and a canopy, Tarriela said.

Chinese officials did not immediately issue any comment. They have repeatedly insisted on China's sovereignty over virtually all of the South China Sea, a key global trade route, and warned they would defend their territory at any cost.

The Philippine vessels

pressed on with their patrol despite the Chinese coast guard's actions, Tarriela said,

"They were not deterred and will persist in carrying out their legitimate operations to support Filipino fishermen and ensure their safety," Tarriela said in a statement.

He said the Philippine ships were deployed to distribute fuel and food to Filipino fishermen on the high seas.

The Chinese coast guard has also re-installed a floating barrier across the entrance to the shoal's vast fishing lagoon, he said.

The Philippine coast guard removed a similar barrier in the past to allow Filipinos to fish in the lagoon.

In addition to the Philippines

and China, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan have also been involved in the territorial disputes.

The increasing frequency of the skirmishes between the Philippines and China, which have injured Filipino navy personnel and damaged supply boats in the past, has sparked fears the territorial conflict could degenerate into an armed confrontation that could put China and the United States on a collision course.

The U.S. lays no claims to the South China Sea but has warned that it is obligated to defend the Philippines, a longtime treaty ally, if Filipino forces, ships and aircraft come under an armed attack including in the contested waters.

## Solomon Islands' pro-China PM won't return to top post

*Associated Press*

MELBOURNE, Australia — Solomon Islands pro-Beijing Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare on Monday withdrew from the contest to remain head of the strategically important South Pacific island nation's government following general elections two weeks ago that are central to the U.S.-China rivalry in the region.

Sogavare has been reelected to the parliament. But he told a news conference in the capital Honiara he would not be nominated as a candidate when the 50 newly elected lawmakers vote Thursday for the prime minister, Australian Broadcasting Corp. reported.

Sogavare had hoped to become the first Solomons prime minister to maintain power in consecutive four-year terms following the April 17 election. During his previous term, China's influence increased more in the Solomons than anywhere else in the South

Pacific. Sogavare switched diplomatic allegiances from Taiwan to Beijing and struck a secret security pact that has raised fears of the Chinese navy gaining a foothold in the region.

Sogavare said in his press conference he had been "vilified by media" and his family had been subjected to "unprecedented abuse," the ABC reported.

Observers expect China to have secretly backed more candidates than Sogavare at the election in a bid to ensure the government change does not diminish Beijing's influence.

Sogavare could again return to power during the current four-year term. He was elected prime minister after the last election in 2019. But he has served as prime minister three times before 2019 because his predecessors had quit or were ousted by fellow lawmakers in a precarious political system.

## 'Rogue Army major' hid weapons to Ghana in rice

**By J.P. LAWRENCE**

*Stars and Stripes*

A U.S. Army officer assigned to Fort Liberty was convicted of five charges related to trafficking firearms overseas, according to the Justice Department.

Maj. Kojo Owusu Dartey, 42, smuggled nine pistols, a shotgun and a rifle inside barrels filled with rice and innocuous household goods headed to Ghana, DOJ officials said in a statement Monday. A federal court jury in North Carolina found Dartey guilty April 23 of dealing in firearms without a license, delivering firearms without notice to the carrier, smuggling goods from the United States, illegally exporting firearms without a license and conspiracy.

"Through a partnership with Ghanaian officials, this rogue Army Major was convicted at trial," U.S. attorney Michael Easley said in a statement Monday.

Dartey purchased seven firearms in the summer of 2021 in the Fort Liberty area from pawn shops and a military exchange store, an indictment filed in U.S. district court in Wilmington said, which said he is also known by the nickname "Killa K."

He conspired with a U.S. Army staff sergeant at Fort Campbell, Ky., named George Archer, who bought three Glock 19 pistols from an Army exchange before shipping them to North Carolina, the indictment said.

Dartey hid all the firearms, as well as 50-round magazines and suppressors, in barrels, prosecutors said. He then paid \$300 for someone to bring the barrels onto a container ship from Baltimore to Tema, Ghana, where authorities found the weapons and alerted American agents, the indictment said. He faces a maximum of 20 years in prison and is due for sentencing July 23.

# Judge holds Trump in contempt, fines \$9K, warns of jail

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Donald Trump was held in contempt of court Tuesday and fined \$9,000 for repeatedly violating a gag order that barred him from making public statements about witnesses, jurors and some others connected to his New York hush money case. And if he does it again, the judge warned, he could be jailed.

Prosecutors had alleged 10 violations, but New York Judge Juan M. Merchan found there were nine. Trump stared down at the table in front of him as the judge read the ruling, frowning slightly.

The ruling was a stinging rebuke of the Republican former president's insistence that he was exercising his free speech rights and a reminder that he's a criminal defendant subject to the harsh realities of trial procedure.

The judge's subtle threat to jail a former president signaled that Trump's already precarious legal standing could further spiral depending on his behavior during the trial.

Merchan wrote that he is "keenly aware of, and protective of," Trump's First Amendment rights, "particularly given his candidacy for the office of President of the United States."

"It is critically important that defendant's legitimate free speech rights not be curtailed, that he be able to fully campaign for the office which he seeks and that he be able to respond and defend himself against political attacks," Merchan wrote.

Still, he warned that the court would not tolerate "willful violations of its lawful orders and that if necessary and appro-

priate under the circumstances, it will impose an incarceration punishment."

Trump's campaign was already fundraising off the violations.

And he has long tried to distance himself from controversial messages he's amplified to his millions of followers by insisting they're "only retweets."

But he does have experience with gag orders, which were also imposed in his civil fraud trial. After he was found to have violated those orders, he paid more than \$15,000 in fines.

Tuesday's ruling came at the start of the second week of testimony in the historic case, in which Manhattan prosecutors argue Trump and his associates took part in an illegal scheme to influence the 2016 presidential campaign by purchasing and then burying negative stories. He has pleaded not guilty.

Trump was ordered to pay the fine by the close of business Friday. Merchan also ruled that he must remove seven offending posts from his Truth Social account and two from his campaign website by 2:15 p.m. EDT Tuesday, Merchan said. The judge is also weighing other alleged gag order violations by Trump and will hear arguments Thursday.

Of the 10 posts, the one Merchan ruled was not a violation came on April 10, a post referring to witnesses Michael Cohen and Stormy Daniels as "sleaze bags."

Merchan said Trump's contention that he was responding to previous posts by Cohen "is sufficient to give" him pause on whether the post was a viola-

# Fed eyes rapid surge of US workers' paychecks

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Pay and benefits for America's workers grew more quickly in the first three months of this year, a trend that could contribute to higher inflation and raise concerns about the future path of price increases at the Federal Reserve.

Compensation as measured by the government's Employment Cost Index rose 1.2% in the January-March quarter, up from a 0.9% increase in the previous quarter, the Labor Department said Tuesday.

Compared with the same quarter a year earlier, compensation growth was unchanged at 4.2%.

The increase in wages and benefits could add to concerns at the Fed that inflation may remain too high in the coming

months. The Fed is expected to keep its key short-term rate unchanged after its latest policy meeting concludes Wednesday.

Big price increases for rents, car insurance and health care have kept inflation stubbornly above the Fed's 2% inflation target.

As a result, Fed officials have swung from suggesting they could cut rates as many as three times this year to emphasizing that they will wait until there is evidence that inflation is steadily declining toward 2% before making any moves.

The pace of worker compensation plays a big role in businesses' labor costs. When pay accelerates especially fast, it increases the labor costs of companies, which often respond by raising their prices. This cycle can perpetuate inflation.

# Judges: W.Va. and NC trans care discriminates

Associated Press

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — West Virginia's and North Carolina's refusal to cover certain health care for transgender people with government-sponsored insurance is discriminatory, a federal appeals court ruled Monday in a case likely headed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Richmond, Va.-based 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled 8-6 in the case involving coverage of gender-affirming care by North Carolina's state employee health plan and the coverage of gender-affirming surgery by West Virginia Medicaid.

Specifically, North Carolina's policy bars treatment or studies "leading to or in connection with sex changes or modifications and related care," while West Virginia's bars coverage of "transsexual surgery."

"The coverage exclusions fa-

cially discriminate on the basis of sex and gender identity, and are not substantially related to an important government interest," Judge Roger Gregory wrote in the majority opinion.

Similar cases are under consideration in other courts, but Monday's is the first U.S. Court of Appeals decision to consider government-sponsored coverage exclusions of gender affirming medical care.

West Virginia Attorney General Patrick Morrisey said his office planned to appeal Monday's health care case decision.

North Carolina State Treasurer Dale Folwell, whose department oversees the state's health plan, said in a news release that Monday's majority decision was in "direct conflict" with other decisions from federal appeals courts and hopefully will be corrected by the U.S. Supreme Court.

# New cars will require auto emergency braking

Associated Press

DETROIT — In the not-too-distant future, automatic emergency braking will have to come standard on all new passenger vehicles in the United States, a requirement that the government says will save hundreds of lives and prevent thousands of injuries every year.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration unveiled the final version of the new regulation Monday and called it the most significant safety rule in the past two decades. It's designed to prevent many rear-end and pedestrian collisions and reduce the roughly 40,000 traffic deaths that happen each year.

"We're living through a crisis in roadway deaths," Transportation

Secretary Pete Buttigieg said in an interview. "So we need to do something about it."

It's the U.S. government's first attempt to regulate automated driving functions and is likely to help curb some of the problems that have surfaced with driver-assist and fully automated driving systems.

Although about 90% of new vehicles have the automatic braking standard now under a voluntary agreement with automakers, at present there are no performance requirements, so some systems may not be that effective. The new regulations set standards for vehicles to automatically stop and avoid hitting other vehicles or pedestrians, even at night.

"Part of how I think we're going to turn the corner on the unacceptable level of roadway deaths that we just lived with for my entire lifetime is through these kinds of technologies," said Buttigieg. "We need to make sure we set high performance standards."

The regulation, which will require additional engineering to bolster software and possibly add hardware such as radar, won't go into effect for more than five years. That will give automakers time to bolster their systems during the normal model update cycle, NHTSA said.

It also will drive up prices, which NHTSA estimates at \$354 million per year in 2020 dollars, or \$82 per vehicle. But Buttigieg

said it will save 362 lives per year, prevent about 24,000 injuries and save billions in property damage.

Critics have said the standards should have come sooner, and that they don't appear to require that the systems spot people on bicycles, scooters or other vulnerable people.

The new rule requires all passenger vehicles weighing 10,000 pounds or less to have forward collision braking, automatic emergency braking and pedestrian detection braking.

The standards require vehicles to stop and avoid hitting a vehicle in front of them at speeds up to 62 mph. They must also apply the brakes automatically at up to 90 mph if a collision with a vehicle ahead is imminent.

## SD governor vilified after she writes about killing her dog

Associated Press

Politicians and dog experts are criticizing South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem after she wrote in a new book about killing a rambunctious puppy. The story — and the vilification she received on social media — has some wondering whether she's still a viable potential running mate for presumptive Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump.

Experts who work with hunting dogs like Noem's said she should have trained — not killed — the pup, or found other options if the dog was out of control.

Noem has tried to reframe the story from two decades ago as an example of her willingness to make tough decisions. She wrote on social media that the 14-month-old wirehaired pointer named Cricket had shown aggressive behavior by biting.

"As I explained in the book, it wasn't easy," she said on X. "But often the easy way isn't the right way."

Still, Democrats and even some conservatives have been critical.

"This story is not landing. It is

not a facet of rural life or ranching to shoot dogs," conservative commentator Tomi Lahren posted online.

Posters described Noem as Cruella de Vil, the villain from the Disney classic "101 Dalmatians."

"I'm not sure which thing she did was stupider: The fact that she murdered the dog, or the fact that she was stupid enough to publish it in a book," said Joan Payton, of the German Wirehaired Pointer Club of America.

But South Dakota Democratic Senate Minority Leader Reynold Nesiba considered the disclosure more calculated than stupid. He said the story has circulated for years among lawmakers that Noem killed a dog in a "fit of anger" and that there were witnesses. He speculated that it was coming out now because Noem is being vetted as a candidate for vice president.

"She knew that this was a political vulnerability, and she needed to put it out there, before it came up in some other venue," he said. "Why else would she write about it?"

## Utah cat ends up in Calif. after hiding in Amazon box

Los Angeles Times

Matt Clark needed to return five pairs of steel-toed work boots that he ordered from Amazon, so he packaged them up in a big box — along with the family cat.

Now the family has a tale with a tail, all about the journey of Galena, a 6-year-old short-haired feline who traveled nearly 630 miles inside the sealed package from her home in Lehi, Utah, to an Amazon warehouse in Riverside, Calif., in early April.

Clark's wife, Carrie, said Galena loves to play in boxes, hide and hunt. She is known to be quiet. But nobody expected her to become a stowaway.

Galena's accidental journey started April 10, when Matt Clark put the five boxes of boots in a 3-foot by 3-foot package. The Clarks suspect Galena jumped into the box when Matt walked away to get a pair of scissors and tape to seal it. Matt did not really inspect the box because he had already placed the boots inside. He sealed it up and took the large package to the local UPS store,

which handles Amazon shipping, Carrie Clark said.

That evening, the Clarks and their two daughters noticed Galena wasn't anywhere in the house. For the next seven days, the family checked their house multiple times. They checked their neighborhood, nearby communities and the Jordan River that runs behind their home.

For an entire week, the distraught Clark family wept over their lost cat. They had started to give up hope when they got a text message and phone call from an out-of-state veterinary office on April 17. The person on the other end of the line said they had scanned Galena's microchip and found the Clarks' information. Their cat was in California. The vet passed the phone to Brandy Hunter, the Amazon Warehouse worker who helped rescue her.

Clark and her husband booked a flight for California the next day to reunite with their furry family member. Other than mild dehydration and a little weight loss, Galena was healthy.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Pair of giant pandas to travel from China to US

**CA** SAN DIEGO — A pair of giant pandas will soon make the journey from China to the U.S., where they will be cared for at the San Diego Zoo as part of an ongoing conservation partnership between the two nations, officials said Monday.

The San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance said its caretakers visited China to meet the giant pandas, Yun Chuan and Xin Bao, ahead of their planned trip to Southern California. An exact date for the handoff hasn't been set.

Yun Chuan, a mild-mannered male who's nearly 5 years old, has "deep connections" to California, the wildlife alliance said. His mother, Zhen Zhen, was born at the San Diego Zoo in 2007 to parents Bai Yun and Gao Gao.

Xin Bao is a nearly 4-year-old female described as "a gentle and witty introvert with a sweet round face and big ears."

## Lawmakers weigh labels for macadamia nuts

**HI** HONOLULU — For decades, tourists to Hawaii have brought home gift boxes of the islands' famous chocolate-covered macadamia nuts for friends and family, but these days many of the kernels in the package might not be Hawaii-grown.

This little-known fact is surfacing at the state Legislature as lawmakers wrestle over legislation that would force macadamia-nut processors of iconic brands like Mauna Loa to disclose whether their products contain nuts from outside the is-

lands.

Growers want the measure to protect their crops and farms, while commercial nut brands say what Hawaii needs is more capacity to process mac nuts locally.

It's the latest tussle over labels for agricultural products from a specific geographic area, a topic familiar to Hawaii due to long-running disputes over Kona coffee. It echoes similar challenges faced by maple syrup producers in Vermont and distilleries in Champagne, which have had to fend off sparkling wine producers from other places trying to appropriate the French region's name.

Foreign nuts are being "marketed cleverly as Hawaiian," said Jeffrey Clark, chief operating officer of a trust that owns Hamakua Macadamia Nut Co.

"It's not clear to consumers what is Hawaii grown and what is foreign grown," Clark told state lawmakers during a recent committee hearing. "It creates a problem for the farmers here in Hawaii."

## Sleep apnea device maker to pay \$1.1B to settle suits

**DC** WASHINGTON — Medical device maker Philips said Monday it will pay \$1.1 billion to settle hundreds of personal injury lawsuits in the U.S. over its defective sleep apnea machines, which have been subject to a massive global recall.

The Dutch manufacturer did not admit any fault and said it reached the agreement to resolve any uncertainty over the cases. The payout also includes medical monitoring claims from patients who used the company's devices and could be

exposed to future risks.

Philips has recalled more than 5 million breathing machines since 2021 because their internal foam can break down over time, leading users to inhale tiny particles and fumes while they sleep. Efforts to repair or replace the machines have been plagued by delays that have frustrated regulators and patients in the U.S. and other countries.

Monday's announcement is another step toward resolving one of the biggest medical device recalls in the industry's history.

## GOP picks nominee to replace Mitt Romney

**UT** SALT LAKE CITY — The Utah Republican Party selected Trent Staggs as its nominee to replace Mitt Romney in the U.S. Senate, hours after the local official received former President Donald Trump's endorsement.

While the endorsement carried Staggs through convention with more than two-thirds of delegate votes, that support may not translate to success at the ballot box. The mayor from Riverton, just south of Salt Lake City, still must face other top contenders in the June 25 GOP primary, including U.S. Rep. John Curtis and former Utah House Speaker Brad Wilson.

Republican Party nominations historically have had little bearing on the decisions of Utah voters.

## CDC says HIV transmitted through cosmetic needles

**NM** ALBUQUERQUE — Three women who were diagnosed with HIV after getting "vampire facial"

procedures at an unlicensed New Mexico medical spa are believed to be the first documented cases of people contracting the virus through a cosmetic procedure using needles, federal health officials said.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said in its Morbidity and Mortality Report that an investigation into the clinic from 2018 through 2023 showed it apparently reused disposable equipment intended for one-time use.

Although HIV transmission from contaminated blood through unsterile injection is a well-known risk, the report said this is the first documentation of probable infections involving cosmetic services.

## State to purchase opioid overdose reversal drug

**CA** SACRAMENTO — California is partnering with a New Jersey-based pharmaceutical company to purchase a generic version of Narcan, the drug that can save someone's life during an opioid overdose, under a deal announced Monday by Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom.

Amneal Pharmaceuticals will sell naloxone to California for \$24 per pack, or about 40% cheaper than the market rate. California will give away the packs for free to first responders, universities and community organizations through the state's Naloxone Distribution Project.

The deal is significant because it means California will be able to buy a lot more naloxone — 3.2 million packs in one year instead of 2 million — for the same total cost.

— From wire reports

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# Analysis: NHL playoffs produce surprises

Associated Press

The greatest goal-scorer of his generation was held without a point for the first time in a series in his nearly two-decade NHL career.

The best goaltender in the league this season has given up a first round-high 19 goals. Vancouver has lost a Vezina Trophy finalist, used three different guys in net and taken a 3-1 series lead anyway; the Canucks, in fact, won Game 3 at Nashville 2-1 while putting the puck on net just 12 times. Edmonton, with all of its scorers, won a game with just 13 shots—a 1-0 shutout behind the goalie everyone thought was their biggest liability to make a run at the Stanley Cup.

The start of the playoffs has been anything but predictable, which is exactly what hockey fans have come to expect this time of year.

Bucking the trend of recent Presidents' Trophy winners bowing out early, the New York Rangers swept Washington in

the first round by keeping Alex Ovechkin off the scoresheet for the first time in his 15 trips to the postseason.

How did they do it? "It's a secret," MVP candidate and fellow Russian winger Artemi Panarin said.

Whatever secret sauce the Canucks are using, everyone in the league would take it. They lost Vezina Trophy finalist Thatcher Demko to injury after he won Game 1 against Nashville but Casey DeSmith bounced back from a loss to beat the Predators in Game 3. When he was unavailable, it was Arturs Silovs to the rescue in his playoff debut, backstopping a comeback overtime victory to put the Predators one loss from elimination.

"I don't think the moment's too big for him," coach Rick Tocchet said. "I'm proud of the goaltenders. It's a next-man-up mentality. Those guys know it's the next man up."

Connor Hellebuyck is unquestionably the man for Win-

nipeg, and he's the front-runner to win the Vezina after being the best goalie in the league during the regular season. In four playoff games against Colorado, Hellebuyck has allowed 19 goals for a save percentage of .870 — a far cry from his .921 over 60 starts from before the series began.

Hellebuyck allowed four goals to the Avalanche on 30 shots in a blowout loss Sunday that pushed the Jets to the brink of elimination. Coach Rick Bowness pulled him after two periods because he was under pressure the entire time he was in net.

"I don't think those goals are his fault," center Mark Scheifele said. "He's our backbone. He's our heart and soul. Just a change of scenery, I'm sure. He's our backbone."

The Edmonton Oilers didn't expect goalie Stuart Skinner to be their backbone, especially having reigning MVP Connor McDavid and longtime running mate Leon Draisaitl around to

score a bunch of goals. So, naturally, they beat the Los Angeles Kings 1-0 in Game 4 thanks to one goal set up by McDavid and Draisaitl, and Skinner stopping every shot he faced.

"He was great for us," said defenseman Evan Bouchard, who scored. "He was the rock. When we made mistakes he was there to support us. When you're not letting in any goals, you're going to win the game."

The other Vezina finalist, Florida's Sergei Bobrovsky, gave up 14 goals in the Panthers' five games against Tampa Bay. Yet he and the defending Eastern Conference champions still won the series and move on to face Boston or Toronto.

The Bruins are up 3-1 in that series and the Maple Leafs losing in the first round is a familiar stumble for Toronto fans. The team's core group led by Auston Matthews, Mitch Marner and William Nylander is 1-6 in the first round over the previous seven years.

## Panthers notch first series win over Lightning

Associated Press

SUNRISE, Fla. — Before the final minutes even ticked off the clock at Amerant Bank Arena on Monday night, Florida Panthers fans — clad in red jerseys and waving light-up rally towels in the air — were singing goodbye to the Tampa Bay Lightning.

Tampa Bay's season ended there, in a 6-1 loss to Florida in the first round of the NHL playoffs. And the Panthers will march on after beating their in-state rivals in a playoff series for the first time in four tries.

Aleksander Barkov and Carter Verhaeghe each had two goals and an assist to go along with 31 saves from Sergei Bobrovsky. Niko Mikkola had a goal and an assist, Evan Rodrigues also scored and Matthew Tkachuk

had two assists.

The Panthers won four of five games in the series thanks to stellar play on the penalty kill and some clutch performances from Bobrovsky and their other stars. They'll face either the Boston Bruins or Toronto Maple Leafs in the second round. The Bruins lead their first-round series 3-1 with Game 5 in Boston on Tuesday.

"Really happy for the players who went through the pain of not having success," Panthers coach Paul Maurice said. "Barkov and Bobrovsky, when you're a leader, when you're the No. 1 goaltender and the captain, and you have a series that doesn't go your way, those are the guys to look at. They have to answer for it."

Both players answered in the

first round this year after being part of Panthers teams that lost 4-2 to Tampa Bay in 2021 and were swept in 2022. Barkov scored both of his opening-round goals in Game 5. Bobrovsky had a .896 save percentage. Verhaeghe scored five goals as they all hope to carry the Panthers into the next round.

"Every series is different and this group of guys is special and works so hard," Bobrovsky said. "We have a great structure and everybody executed and worked hard for it. We're really close."

Even after what many Panthers players described as a hard-fought, emotional series in Round 1, they believe that they have the group to avoid a drop-off.

The Panthers killed off 16 of

18 Tampa Bay power plays, staying aggressive and keeping the Lightning out of the offensive zone.

**Stars 4, Golden Knights 2:** Wyatt Johnston scored his third goal in two games, and visiting Dallas beat defending champion Las Vegas to even their first-round series.

Evgenii Dadonov, Ty Dellandrea and Roope Hintz also scored for the Stars, and Jake Oettinger made 33 saves.

Michael Amadio and Jack Eichel had goals for the Golden Knights, and Logan Thompson stopped 28 shots. Eichel has scored goals in three straight games and has six points in this series.

Game 5 is Wednesday night in Dallas. The road team has won every game.

# Nationals finish 4-game sweep of Marlins

Associated Press

MIAMI — CJ Abrams hit a two-run homer and the Washington Nationals beat the Miami Marlins 7-2, completing a four-game sweep of the NL's worst club in front of a season-low 6,376 fans at loanDepot Park.

The Marlins (6-24), who made the playoffs last season, have lost seven straight, their worst skid since opening the season 0-9.

Jake Irvin (2-2) allowed two runs on four hits in six innings, bouncing back from allowing 12 hits and six runs to the Los Angeles Dodgers in his previous start.

"I'm just trying to make those guys earn it, throw strikes and get ahead," Irvin said. "It makes my job easier when I do."

Ildemaro Vargas had two hits and an RBI for the Nationals, who swept Miami over four games for the first time since Sept. 18-21, 2014.

Washington has won four straight for the second time since the start of 2022 and improved to 14-14, its first .500 mark since it was 1-1 on March 30. The Nationals have not been over .500 since July 1, 2021.

"The boys played well as a team, which I love," Nationals manager Dave Martinez said. "I keep saying this, but they keep feeding off one another. If one guy doesn't do it, the next guy is gonna go up there and do everything he can to get it done. It was like that this whole weekend."

Marlins shortstop Tim Anderson exited after the third inning because of a mild left thumb sprain. Anderson and Call collided at second base when Call slid into the bag for his double.

Anderson was not the only Marlins starter who left early. Miami manager Skip Schumaker removed right fielder Jesús Sánchez in the fourth for what he said was "lack of effort" while fielding Call's double.

"I have literally no rules ex-

cept for giving me everything you have," Schumaker said. "He lost the ball in the lights. I've lost the ball in the lights many times. After that, I felt like the effort wasn't there. Sánchez plays hard. He's a good kid. There's teaching moments and he hurt himself and he hurt the team by me having to remove him from the game."

**Orioles 2, Yankees 0:** Gunnar Henderson homered to lead off the first inning and host Baltimore defeated New York in the opener of a four-game series.

Grayson Rodriguez threw 5½ shutout innings for the Orioles, who won the first meeting of the season between the top two teams in the AL East.

New York left 10 men on base and was 0-for-8 with runners in scoring position.

**Cubs 3, Mets 1:** Christopher Morel hit a two-run homer off Edwin Díaz to snap a ninth-inning tie and visiting Chicago beat New York after being held hitless by Luis Severino into the eighth.

Dansby Swanson singled off Severino with nobody out in the eighth for Chicago's first hit, putting runners at first and second following a leadoff walk to Michael Busch.

With runners at the corners and one out, pinch-hitter Nick Madrigal hit a broken-bat grounder to third baseman Joey Wendle, who had just entered for defense. Wendle easily could have thrown out Busch at the plate, cutting off the tying run. Instead, the veteran infielder made an ill-advised decision to try for an inning-ending double play. Madrigal beat the relay to first and the Cubs evened it 1-all.

**Rays 1, Brewers 0:** Ryan Pepiot and three relievers combined on a three-hit shutout and visiting Tampa Bay withstood a ninth-inning comeback attempt to beat Milwaukee.

Brewers manager Pat Murphy was ejected in the ninth in-

ning after arguing a call that prevented Milwaukee from scoring the apparent tying run. The Brewers had runners on second and third with one out when a potential third strike to Jake Bauers got past catcher Ben Rortvedt for a wild pitch, enabling Bauers to reach first while Sal Frelick came home. But plate umpire Ryan Additon ruled Bauers had hit Rortvedt on the backswing, resulting in Bauers getting called out while Frelick had to stay at third.

After Jason Adam hit Rhys Hoskins with a pitch to load the bases, he struck out Blake Perkins to end the game and earn his first save in two opportunities.

**Blue Jays 6, Royals 5:** Justin Turner hit two home runs, Danny Jansen added a solo homer and host Toronto held on to beat Kansas City.

Turner hit a two-run home run in the first inning and had a leadoff homer in the third. It was the 16th multihomer game of his career.

The Blue Jays scored more than five runs for the first time in 21 games, ending a streak that dated back to a 9-8 loss at Yankee Stadium on April 6.

**Twins 3, White Sox 2:** Max Kepler had a tiebreaking RBI single in the ninth inning, and visiting Minnesota beat Chicago for its eighth straight win.

Byron Buxton doubled to lead off the ninth against John Brebbia (0-1). Kepler, who entered the game as a pinch-hitter in the sixth, then drove him in with a line-drive single to right.

Caleb Thielbar pitched out of a first-and-third jam in the ninth, striking out Corey Lee to end the game after walking Tommy Pham and giving up a two-out single to Robbie Grossman.

**Athletics 5, Pirates 1:** Tyler Nevin homered for the second straight game and host Oakland beat Pittsburgh.

Nevin added a single and a sacrifice fly as the A's won for

the fourth time in their last five games.

The Pirates had a season-low two hits while losing for the fifth time in six games.

**Mariners 2, Braves 1:** Mitch Garver hit a two-run, game-ending home run in the ninth inning to give host Seattle a walk-off win over Atlanta.

A game that was dominated by spectacular pitching from Atlanta starter Max Fried and Seattle starter Bryce Miller, both of whom pitched six no-hit innings, ended with Garver tossing his bat in front of home plate to celebrate the first walk-off home run of his career.

**Reds 5, Padres 2:** Elly De La Cruz's 443-foot home run into the bullpen sent a few San Diego relievers scrambling out of the way, and Nick Lodolo combined with two relievers on a four-hitter and struck out 11 to lift visiting Cincinnati.

The Reds retired 23 straight batters from the second inning into the ninth and had a combined one-hitter going into the final frame.

**Dodgers 8, Diamondbacks 4:** Teoscar Hernández and Andy Pages both hit two-run doubles in a big fifth inning, Will Smith added a solo homer and visiting Los Angeles beat Arizona.

Pages finished with three RBIs, the second time he had that many in 12 career games. The 23-year-old rookie pushed his hitting streak to seven games and is batting .298 with an .846 OPS since his big league debut on April 16.

**Angels 6, Phillies 5:** Ehire Adrianza and Mike Trout scored on a wild pitch and throwing error in the seventh inning as host Los Angeles rallied from an early three-run deficit to beat Philadelphia and snap a four-game losing streak.

Adrianza had two hits and drove in a run, and Jo Adell homered as the Angels won on manager Ron Washington's 72nd birthday.

# Nuggets oust Lakers on Murray's clutch shot

Associated Press

DENVER — Jamal Murray overcame a strained left calf, management's suggestion he sit this one out and another haymaker from the Los Angeles Lakers to score 32 points and sink the game-winner with 3.6 seconds left Monday night.

That sent LeBron James to his earliest playoff exit ever and the Denver Nuggets tottering into Round 2 with a 108-106 win in Game 5 that featured 16 lead changes and 10 ties and was only secured when Taurean Prince's halfcourt heave fell short as time expired.

"Shoutout to the Lakers, they gave us a great series," said Murray, who also hit the franchise's first playoff buzzer-beater in Game 2.

"Those are shots that you dream of as a little kid," said Murray, who called this one just "a little better."

If not for his dogged determination — and defiance — Murray never would have had the chance to seal the series.

"I came in a little earlier today to see if I was going to be able to go, and I felt like I could and they just didn't want me to risk it," recounted Murray, who warmed up with an ice pack strapped to his injured calf. "They told me no. They told me no."

"And I didn't say no. I didn't want to leave my teammates out there," added Murray, who missed 23 games due to injury in the regular season. "We've been battling all season. Everybody's hurt at some point, everybody's going through something and I just wouldn't be able to live with myself if I wasn't able to play this game."

"I'm just glad they listened to me — and listened to me listening to my body — and just trusting me with it."

James' two free throws tied it at 106 with 26 seconds left and the Nuggets, just as they did in Game 2, eschewed the timeout and Murray took the ball on a high screen-and-roll to his left, shaking Austin Reaves as he

crossed through the lane and swishing the 14-footer.

"That kid's a warrior, man," Nuggets coach Michael Malone said. "The bigger the moment, the kid just continues to shine."

Nikola Jokic, who committed an uncharacteristic seven turnovers, narrowly missed his 19th career playoff triple-double with 25 points, 20 rebounds and nine assists and Michael Porter Jr. scored 26.

James had 30 points and 11 assists and Anthony Davis had 17 points and 15 rebounds, but appeared bothered down the stretch after banging his left shoulder into MPJ in the second half.

The Nuggets advanced to face the Minnesota Timberwolves in the second round starting next weekend. That series starts in Denver, where the Nuggets are a Western Conference-best 36-8.

Not that it has been easy.

The Nuggets trailed for about three-fourths of the minutes in this series, they scuffled

through extended shooting slumps and they're a banged-up bunch that can definitely use the rest.

"First of all, tip your hat to them," James said. "Defending champions. They're a great team. Super-well coached and made the plays down the stretch to win the series."

The only other time James was eliminated in the first round of the playoffs came in 2021 when the Phoenix Suns beat L.A. in six games.

So this was the shortest of James' 17 trips to the playoffs despite the Lakers taking the reigning champs to the brink in all five games.

"I couldn't be more proud of our crew despite everything that happened," said Lakers coach Darvin Ham, who's sure to be on the hot seat. "Obviously the series didn't go in our favor, didn't start the way we wanted it to, but to win that one at home, fight tooth and nail today to get this one, our guys showed a lot of guts and a lot of character."

# Gilgeous-Alexander leads Thunder to sweep of Pelicans

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — For all the scoring Shai Gilgeous-Alexander does for Oklahoma City, his hustle back on defense after having a shot blocked was a pivotal part of a playoff series-clinching victory over the New Orleans Pelicans.

"To win basketball games, a lot goes into it," Gilgeous-Alexander said. "We just know those little things come with winning and we do it every opportunity we get."

Gilgeous-Alexander had 24 points and 10 rebounds and the Thunder beat the Pelicans 97-89 on Monday night to complete a four-game sweep of their first-round playoff series.

The game turned on a fourth-quarter sequence which began with Pelicans guard Jose Alvara-

do knocking the ball from Gilgeous-Alexander as he attempted a mid-range shot. Pelicans guard CJ McCollum grabbed the ball and dribbled the other way on a two-on-one fast break against the Thunder's Jalen Williams.

When McCollum's layup attempt missed, Gilgeous-Alexander, trailing from behind, grabbed the rebound.

"I turned it over, clearly. And then they would have got a layup if it wasn't for Dub," Gilgeous-Alexander said, referring to Williams' defense under the basket. "I just wanted to make sure that if he did his part, I was there to do my part"

Soon after, Chet Holmgren's putback and Josh Giddey's 3 tied it at 80 and ignited a decisive 18-2 run, capped by Williams' 3, that put the Thunder up 93-82

with 3:08 left.

"Guys played with great confidence and when we play offense the way we did in the fourth quarter, the shots will go in a little bit more," said Thunder coach Mark Daigneault, who a day earlier had been named the NBA's coach of the year. "When we needed to, we really worked together, executed, got great shots. The guys delivered."

Williams finished with 24 points. Giddey and Holmgren each scored 14 points. Holmgren also had nine rebounds.

"We knew tonight was going to be a challenge," Giddey said. "Guys came in with the right mindset ... and we put it to bed."

McCollum scored 20 for New Orleans, which was plagued by poor 3-point shooting. The Pelicans hit just eight of 34 shots from deep (23.5%).

"We were right there," McCollum said. "This is a really good team we played against. Obviously, they are the No. 1 team for a reason, and it's disappointing we weren't able to get one game."

**Celtics 102, Heat 88:** Derrick White scored a career-high 38 points, Jayson Tatum added 20 points and 10 rebounds, and visiting Boston beat Miami to take a 3-1 lead in their Eastern Conference first-round series.

Jaylen Brown scored 17 points and Jrue Holiday had 11 for the top-seeded Celtics, who lost Kristaps Porzingis in the first half to what the team said was a right calf injury. Boston won at Miami for the sixth straight time.