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1st Black service chief ‘simply in awe today’

By COREY DICKSTEIN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Gen. Charles Brown was sworn in Thursday morning as the Air Force’s 22nd chief of staff, becoming the first Black military service chief in the 245 year history of the U.S. armed forces.

The longtime fighter pilot known as “CQ” beamed as top Pentagon leaders praised his service that has taken him across the globe, commanding in recent years all U.S. air forces in the Middle East and the Pacific. He took over the service during a ceremony at Joint Base Andrews, Md., from

another career fighter pilot, as Gen. David Goldfein retired after leading the service since July 2016.

“I’m simply in awe today,” Brown said in brief remarks after assuming the role of the service’s top general. He acknowledged his selection made Thursday a “very historic day” in U.S. history as he thanked past African American military leaders for paving his way, including the famed Tuskegee Airmen of World War II and Air Force Gen. Daniel “Chappie” James, who in 1975 became America’s first Black four-star general.

“I do not take this moment lightly,” he said. “It is due to

their trials and tribulations in breaking barriers that I can address you today as the Air Force chief of staff.”

In his remarks, Brown noted his promotion to lead the Air Force would never have come had his father — a career Army officer — not talked him out of quitting the ROTC program at Texas Tech University after just one semester. Even after commissioning into the service in 1994, Brown said he only planned to serve four years.

But Brown fell in love with flying fighter jets. He’s flown some 20 different airplanes and helicopters, primarily F-16 Fighting Falcons, including some 130 hours in

combat, according to his service biography.

Brown has commanded a fighter squadron, the U.S. Air Force Weapons School, two fighter wings, and served as an adviser to top Air Force uniformed and civilian leaders, according to his bio. He also served as the No. 2 general for U.S. Central Command from July 2016 to July 2018 before taking command of U.S. Pacific Air Forces.

“In ‘CQ,’ we have all that is good about America,” said Army Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff. “In ‘CQ,’ we see that America can be a better place.”

Navy families seek compensation for extra time apart

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS

Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The Navy’s coronavirus precautions are increasing the time sailors spend apart from their families, and some spouses say Congress should change the Family Separation Allowance to reflect that burden.

To avoid bringing the virus onto its ships, the Navy in March began requiring sailors to leave their homes for at least 14 days of restricted movement in barracks before shipping out for sea duty. For those on large ships, such as the 5,000-crew aircraft carriers, the process is completed in phases and takes even longer.

Though families are effectively separated weeks or months before sailors actually go to sea, they are ineligible until the ship leaves the pier for the Defense Department’s \$250-per-month Family Separation Allowance. The

allowance kicks in after 30 continuous days of deployment.

Bettie Annable is encouraging her fellow spouses to write Congress about the issue. Annable last saw her husband, Petty Officer 1st Class Ernest Annable, when he left home April 8, exactly two months before his ship, the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan, left its homeport, Yokosuka.

“They’re using the homeport scenario as a scapegoat,” Bettie Annable said in an interview last month. “This scenario is new and is pretty much uncharted waters because they don’t have instruction, per se, as to separation pay regarding quarantine.”

The allowance, intended to offset “added expenses incurred because of an enforced family separation,” starts only after service members leave their home bases for the deployment, according to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service website. That leaves a

gap in coverage for those service members already separated but not yet deployed.

Neither does the statute account for “bubble ship” port visits. That’s when deployed ships make brief stops at their homeports but do not allow sailors to disembark to keep them clear of the coronavirus. Under the current instruction, separation pay is halted when the ship is in its homeport, even when sailors cannot see their families.

“The Reagan has returned home twice since the initial deployment date to pick up those who were quarantined and everybody was forced to remain on that ship, therefore making their duty days seemingly everlasting and the longing for home even deeper,” Annable wrote July 28 in a letter to her congressman, Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas. “I truly feel that because they were forced to remain aboard while in port they are entitled to their [Family

Separation Allowance].”

The separation allowance doesn’t have an explicit expense it’s meant to reimburse, but Bettie Annable said it helps her feed her four children while her husband’s Basic Allowance for Subsistence, which isn’t meant to cover dependents’ meals, is cut while he’s underway.

The issue isn’t one the Navy can fix itself. Congress would have to change the statute behind the allowance “to pay family separation in this circumstance,” Navy spokesman Cmdr. Dave Hecht wrote in an email July 23.

“While we recognize that there is hardship for families that have additional separation due to pre-deployment restriction of movement, under the current instruction, family separation allowance cannot be awarded in this circumstance because the statute requires the ship to be away from the homeport to qualify for family separation allowance,” he said.

Esper: George Floyd killing is 'wake-up call' for the military

BY COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Mark Esper on Wednesday called George Floyd's killing on Memorial Day by Minnesota police a "wake-up call" to military leadership about the racism and inequality minority Americans face, including those serving in the armed forces.

"I don't think what everybody [in the Defense Department's leadership] appreciated, at least me personally, is the depth of sentiment out there among our service members of color, particularly Black Americans, about how much [impact] the killing of George Floyd ... had on them, and what they are experiencing in the ranks, as well," Esper told an audience for the annual Aspen Security Forum, which is being conducted virtually this week due to coronavirus concerns.

In June, as protests spread across all 50 U.S. states over Floyd's death and other cases of police brutality, Esper said he was moved to look more

deeply at race relations within the military, where Black and other minority troops were speaking out about injustices that they felt they had faced.

In recent weeks, Esper and other top Pentagon leaders have met with groups of service members as they travel throughout the United States and abroad to discuss race issues. Those meetings, time and again, revealed that minority service members faced discrimination in their lives, he said.

Among the service members who publicly shared issues they have faced in uniform were some of the military's most senior minority personnel — including Gen. Charles "CQ" Brown, who on Thursday became the Air Force chief of staff, the first-ever Black leader of a service branch. In a video in June, Brown talked about the discrimination that he had faced as a young fighter pilot, including disbelief among others that he was a pilot because of his skin color.

Last month, Esper ordered the

creation of two separate panels to study the military's handling of racial issues, its diversity and equal opportunity for troops of all races and ethnicities. One panel, which began work last month, is made up of military officials tasked with quickly establishing recommendations for Esper to implement department-wide by December.

The internal panel is led by Air Force Secretary Barbara Barrett and Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman Ramon Colon-Lopez, the military's top enlisted service member. The 15-member board includes high-ranking and mid-ranking officers, and enlisted troops with varying backgrounds.

The second board — to be called the Defense Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion in the Armed Forces — will be made up of outside experts and is intended to stand permanently, charged with looking critically at the military's race issues and regularly providing Pentagon leaders with recommendations for improvement.

New Tricare enrollment fees to rise next year

BY STEVE BEYNON
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Defense Department on Wednesday announced that thousands of Tricare beneficiaries will be required to pay new enrollment fees in 2021.

Tricare Select Group A retirees will be required to pay new fees starting Jan. 1, 2021. An individual's monthly enrollment fee will be \$12.50 or \$150 annually.

Monthly family fees will be \$25 or \$300 annually. There are 407,431 beneficiaries of Tricare Select, according to 2019 data from the Defense Department.

The new fees were mandated by the 2017 National Defense Authorization Act's reorganization of Tricare, the health care program for service members, retirees and their families.

Any service member who joined the military before Jan. 1, 2018, is in Select Group A. Select Group B are those who enlisted or commissioned after Jan. 1, 2018, and have already been paying enrollment fees. The Defense Health Agency said there are no changes to Group B.

Beneficiaries will need to contact their Tricare regional contractors and set up their enrollment payments. The Tricare regions are: Humana Military in the eastern United States, HealthNet Federal Services in the west and International SOS Government Services overseas.

"In order to maintain health coverage unless waived by law, Tricare Select Group A retired beneficiaries must take action and pay their Tricare Select enrollment fees," according to a statement from the Defense Health Agency, which oversees health care for the military.

Enrollment fees, however, are waived for Chapter 61 retirees, their family and survivors of deceased service members.

Special Forces colonel court-martialed on 5 counts of sexual assault and rape

BY COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Army has charged a Special Forces colonel based at Fort Bragg, N.C., with multiple counts of sexual assault in a court-martial scheduled to take place in three weeks, according to the service's public court docket.

Col. Kevin Russell faces five counts of violating Article 120 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, which covers allegations of rape and sexual assault, the Army docket shows. Russell was arraigned on the charges during a hearing at Fort Bragg in June and has pleaded not guilty, court records show. His court-martial is sched-

uled for Aug. 25.

Army officials on Wednesday said additional information about Russell's case, including a charge sheet, was not immediately available. Lt. Col. Loren Bymer, a spokesman for U.S. Army Special Operations Command, said officials were working to release some documents with more information about the allegations against Russell. He did not say when such documents would be made available.

Michael Waddington, listed on the docket as Russell's lead defense attorney, did not immediately return messages sent Wednesday seeking comment on the case.

StarsandStripesreporterCaitlinKenneycontributedtothisstory.

Hiroshima mayor urges nuclear disarmament

BY JAMES BOLINGER
AND HANA KUSUMOTO
Stars and Stripes

HIROSHIMA, Japan — The mayor of the first city to be devastated by an atomic bomb urged the world's nations, including Japan, to take nuclear disarmament more seriously as Hiroshima marked the attack's 75th anniversary Thursday.

"I ask the Japanese government to heed the appeal of the hibakusha (atomic bomb survivors) to sign, ratify and become a party to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons," Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui told an audience that included Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. "As the only nation to suffer a nuclear attack,

Japan must persuade the global public to unite with the spirit of Hiroshima."

The city was effectively leveled by the attack on Aug. 6, 1945. Days later, a second bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, leading to Japan's surrender and the end of World War II.

Matsui spoke during a ceremony at Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park that paused for a tolling bell at 8:15 am., the precise moment 75 years earlier that a U.S. B-29 Superfortress dropped the bomb, dubbed Little Boy, over the city center. The annual ceremony was scaled back significantly this year because of concerns over the coronavirus.

The bell sounded seven

times for the 324,129 lives lost either in the atomic bombing or from its effects in the years since. The wavering tone swept across the crowd of survivors, mourners who lost family in the attack, dignitaries, media and Hiroshima residents who gathered to mark the anniversary.

"It was said that nothing will grow here for 75 years, but 75 years later, Hiroshima city is vibrant and full of greenery," Shunsuke Omori, a sixth-grader from a local school, said during the ceremony.

Next to him, fellow sixth-grader Natsumi Nagakura, who goes to a different school, described modern-day Hiroshima, in which families laugh and children go to school and

play in city parks.

That normal life changed again this spring, Omori said, referencing the appearance of the coronavirus, and with it, social distancing, masks and lockdowns.

"We realized that ordinary life is not always ordinary," he said. "Now we understand how fortunate we are to have [an ordinary life]."

About 800 people attended the ceremony, less than 10% of the average number of attendees, according to a report by public broadcaster NHK. The pandemic also forestalled attendance by some world leaders and forced those who did attend to stand apart from one another and wear masks.

Tokyo, Okinawa remain near peak case numbers

BY JOSEPH DITZLER
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — Japan's capital on Thursday passed its 10th consecutive day logging more than 200 new coronavirus cases while Okinawa counted another 73, a continuing surge that began in late July.

The U.S. military in Japan the same day reported seven new cases: four at Yokosuka Naval Base south of Tokyo and three on Okinawa.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government reported 360 new cases, according to public broadcaster NHK, citing preliminary government numbers. U.S. military personnel can't visit central parts of the city due to the pandemic.

At Yokosuka, the new cases all appeared since Monday, according to a base Facebook post. One new case was identified through testing by Japanese airport authorities after the person arrived from outside the country, according to the post. It did not identify the person's country of origin.

The three other cases are recent arrivals who tested posi-

tive before being released from a 14-day quarantine. All four patients remain in isolation and are monitored by health professionals, the post stated. The base now has 10 active cases.

Okinawa prefecture has counted 645 cases the past month, and 788 since the pandemic began. The prefecture's website on Wednesday reported 174 patients hospitalized, with three in critical condition.

The U.S. military on Thursday reported one new case at Naval Hospital Okinawa and two at Kadena Air Base, according to announcements on their official Facebook pages.

One of the Kadena cases was a person already quarantined after contact with another infected individual. The other case was someone who reported coronavirus symptoms. That person's contacts were traced and also placed in quarantine, according to the air base's Facebook post.

The new case is connected to three others reported there Wednesday, according to a post by Marine Corps Installations Pacific. The hospital is at the Marine Corps' Camp Foster.

Esper: Romania, Baltics might get more US troops

BY JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — Romania could get a U.S. troop boost and so might the Baltics as part of the plan to reduce force levels in Germany, Defense Secretary Mark Esper said.

"We see putting more rotational forces into the Black Sea region, Romania in particular," Esper said Tuesday during a virtual talk with the Aspen Institute think tank.

The Pentagon also wants to send more forces to the Baltic states and Poland, he said.

The U.S. military has invested heavily in Romania in recent years to support expanded troop rotations in places such as Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base and Campia Turzii Air Base, an emerging Air Force hub.

As the Pentagon prepares to move the 2nd Cavalry Regiment from Vilseck, Germany, back to the U.S., the idea is to rotate forces from that unit and others back into Europe, Esper said.

The 2nd Cavalry Regiment is

the only brigade-sized ground unit left in Germany, and with about 4,500 soldiers is the largest unit impacted by the plan outlined last week by Esper to cut the number of U.S. troops in Germany by around 12,000.

Ultimately, the goal is to have a brigade-size force on rotation in Europe to compensate for the removal of 2nd Cavalry, Esper said. It could be a Stryker unit that is rotated back to Europe, but tank brigades are also a possibility, he said.

If the Pentagon also continues with its current strategy of rotating a U.S.-based armored brigade to Europe every nine months, the Army would eventually have to manage two brigade-size rotations.

Those come with a hefty price tag and have been shown by studies to be more expensive than forward-basing units.

Moving troops out of Germany will also be costly, Pentagon officials have said.

The U.S. has 36,000 troops in Germany. Adding 16,000 American civilians attached to the military brings the total to 52,000.

Over 1M seek jobless aid after checks end

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Nearly 1.2 million laid-off Americans applied for state unemployment benefits last week, evidence that the coronavirus keeps forcing companies to slash jobs just as a critical \$600 weekly federal jobless payment has expired.

The government's report Thursday did offer a smidgen of hopeful news: The number of jobless claims declined by 249,000 from the previous week, after rising for two straight weeks, and it was the lowest total since mid-March.

Still, claims remain at alarmingly high levels: It is the 20th straight week that at least 1 million people have sought job-

less aid. Before the pandemic hit hard in March, the number of Americans seeking unemployment checks had never surpassed 700,000 in a week, not even during the Great Recession of 2007-2009.

Rubeela Farooqi, chief U.S. economist at High Frequency Economics, called the drop in weekly claims "a move in the right direction." But in a research note, she added: "Repeated shutdowns for virus containment remain a threat to the labor market, which is already weak. The possibility of mounting layoffs that could become permanent is high. Without effective virus containment, the recovery remains at risk from ongoing job losses that could

further restrain incomes and spending."

The pandemic, the lockdowns meant to contain it and the wariness of many Americans to venture back out to eat, shop or travel have delivered a devastating blow to the economy despite the government's emergency rescue efforts. The nation's gross domestic product, the broadest measure of economic output, shrank at an annual rate of nearly 33% from April through June. It was by far the worst quarterly fall on record, though the economy has rebounded somewhat since then.

On Friday, the government is expected to report a sizable job gain for July — 1.6 million.

Death toll rises from storm; millions without power

Associated Press

WINDSOR, N.C. — At least nine people, including a 5-year-old girl with autism, were killed as Tropical Storm Isaias battered the U.S. East Coast with rain and fierce winds after making landfall as a hurricane in North Carolina. Millions of people were without power on Wednesday after felled trees downed power lines.

The sound of generators and chainsaws punctuated the sunrise in New Jersey, where more than 1 million homes and businesses were without electricity. NJ Transit train service remained suspended while crews cleared about 150 trees and repair signals and overhead wires.

Regional rail service was also suspended in Philadelphia after Isaias raised the Schuylkill River and sent an unsecured construction barge into a bridge. Inspectors were checking for damage. Interstate 676, which crosses the bridge, was also closed in both directions.

Patrick Foye, chairman of New York's Metropolitan Transportation Authority, said more than 2,000 trees fell across the system's train and bus network.

"This storm caused severe damage," Foye said Wednesday. "Not since Superstorm Sandy has our system experienced this type of wind."

Two people died when Isaias spun off a tornado that struck a North Carolina mo-

bile home park. Another person died in Pennsylvania when their vehicle was overtaken by water and swept downstream. The 5-year-old girl had gone missing from her Philadelphia-area home during the height of the storm Tuesday and was found dead Wednesday. Authorities said they believed she was swept away by floodwaters in the creek behind her house.

Three others were killed by falling trees toppled by the storm in Maryland, Connecticut and New York City, and another person died in Delaware when a tree branch fell on them, authorities said. A woman was found dead inside a New Hampshire house Tuesday evening.

Beirut residents vent their fury at leaders over blast

Associated Press

BEIRUT — Residents of Beirut vented their fury at Lebanon's leaders Thursday during a visit by French President Emmanuel Macron, blaming them for the deadly explosion that ravaged the capital. Shouting, "Revolution!" they crowded around the visiting leader who promised to press the politicians for reform.

For many Lebanese, Tuesday's giant blast was the last straw after years of corruption and mismanagement by a political elite that has ruled for decades.

The blast, which killed more than 130 people, wounded

thousands and left tens of thousands homeless, is believed to have been caused when a fire touched off a stockpile of 2,750 tons of highly explosive ammonium nitrate that authorities left sitting in a warehouse for years — despite a customs official's repeated warnings.

Macron visited the devastated port and toured a hard-hit neighborhood lined with heavily damaged buildings. A crowd gathered around him and shouted their anger, chanting, "Revolution!" and "The people want to bring down the regime!" — slogans used at mass protests last year.

Macron told them he would

speak to Lebanon's political leaders.

"I will propose to them a new political pact this afternoon," he said. "I will be back on the first of September and if they can't do it, I will keep my responsibility toward you."

He also promised that French aid would be given out with transparency and "will not go into the hands of corruption." France once governed Lebanon as a protectorate and maintains close ties.

Elsewhere, he said his visit was "an opportunity to have a frank and challenging dialogue with the Lebanese political powers and institutions."

France will work to coordinate aid, he said, but warned that "if reforms are not made, Lebanon will continue to sink."

There have been widespread pledges of international aid to Lebanon, but the country has been mired in a severe economic crisis and faces a daunting challenge in rebuilding. It's unclear how much support the international community will offer the notoriously corrupt and dysfunctional government.

Losses from the blast were estimated by Beirut Gov. Marwan Abboud to be between \$10 billion to \$15 billion, who said nearly 300,000 people are homeless.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

2 arrested following fight that rolled SUV

SD SIOUX FALLS — A Sioux Falls driver and a passenger have been arrested following an argument that caused their vehicle to roll over with two others inside, including a 3-year-old.

Sioux Falls police say a 19-year-old woman riding in the car grabbed the steering wheel during the fight about 2 a.m. Tuesday. That caused the 26-year-old man who was driving to lose control and crash the SUV.

Police spokesman Sam Clemens said the two got out of the vehicle and the woman started hitting the man, who walked away from the crash. Clemens said none of the four were seriously injured, the Argus Leader reported.

Officials say the woman was arrested on a tentative charge of aggravated assault and several other counts. The driver, who was found several blocks away, was arrested on suspicion of driving drunk and hit-and-run.

4 charged with theft of guns on day of protest

CA OAKLAND — Four people have been charged with stealing at least 27 firearms from a San Francisco Bay Area gun store on a night in May when thousands of people took to the streets to protest police brutality.

Dashawn Taylor, Anthony Craft Jr., Tyronza Hampton Jr. and a fourth person whose name is still sealed because they have not been arrested were indicted Monday for the theft May 31 at Richardson Tactical in Hayward, federal prosecutors said in a statement.

“My office stands in support of all Americans exercising their First Amendment

rights to peaceable assembly and speech. But we will also investigate and seek justice for those who use the cover of lawful protests to break the law,” said Northern District U.S. Attorney David Anderson.

In a partially unsealed indictment, the grand jury also charged Taylor with possession of a stolen firearm and Craft with being a felon in possession of a firearm.

Official: K-9 fatally shot by deputy during search

GA ATLANTA — A Georgia county K-9 was fatally shot by a deputy after the dog approached the investigator aggressively during a search for a rape suspect, authorities said.

The incident happened Tuesday afternoon as deputies from the DeKalb County Sheriff’s Office were attempting to serve an arrest warrant at an apartment complex in Atlanta, news outlets reported.

The dog escaped from his handler and advanced toward a deputy who was dressed in plain clothes, DeKalb County Chief Deputy Randy Akies said in a statement. That’s when the deputy fired at the K-9, who died at the scene. The incident has been a tragedy for the dog’s handler and the sheriff’s office, Akies said.

Public school partners with equine industry

KY LEXINGTON — A public school system in Kentucky has partnered with the state’s thoroughbred industry to provide students with career opportunities, and experience learning on farms.

Nearly two dozen thoroughbred businesses have pledged more than \$300,000 for the three-year agreement announced Tuesday, said Fayette

County Public Schools Superintendent Manny Caulk. The program targets middle and high school students at the public school in Lexington, news outlets reported.

“As our nation grapples with the issue of racial and social justice, our moral imperative in the district is to provide access and opportunity for students who otherwise would not have those advantages,” Caulk added.

The instructions will be held at the Locust Trace Agriculture Center. Anne DeMott, the center’s principal, told the Lexington Herald-Leader the program will also include internships and apprenticeships opportunities.

Officials: 3,700 gallons of sewage spills

NC MARION — Excessive rain from Tropical Storm Isaias caused nearly 3,700 gallons of sewage to spill into a river in North Carolina, officials said.

The discharge happened at the Clinchfield sewer pump station in Marion when rainfall entered into the collection system Monday, the city said in a news release. The untreated waste water then spilled into an “unnamed tributary of Lake James” in the Catawba River Basin, the release said.

About 3,500 gallons of untreated water was discharged into the Catawba River Basin from the same sewer pump in May, The McDowell News previously reported. City officials had said that spill was also caused by excessive rain.

City pays \$45K ransom after cyberattack

CO BOULDER — Lafayette, Colo., officials announced Tuesday the city’s computer systems were hacked

and they were forced to pay a ransom to regain access.

Lafayette officials said hackers disabled the city’s network services and blocked its access until the city paid a \$45,000 fee, the Daily Camera reported.

The attack caused city emails, phones, online payments and reservation systems to temporarily shut down. The city’s system servers and computers are still being cleaned and rebuilt. Once finished, the relevant data will be restored into the system and operations will resume. In the meantime, the city is using temporary phone numbers and emails.

A preliminary investigation shows the ransomware entered the network through a phishing scam or by guessing passwords.

To combat future attacks, the city said it is installing cryptosafe backups, deploying additional cybersecurity systems and implementing regular vulnerability assessments.

Upgraded Space Needle reopens to visitors

WA SEATTLE — Seattle’s Space Needle has reopened to visitors after recently completing \$1 million in upgrades intended to provide a safer experience during the coronavirus pandemic.

Chief Operating and Marketing Officer Karen Olson said the skyline-defining tourist attraction, which closed in March, has focused on air quality, sanitation and touchless procedures, The Seattle Times reported.

The Space Needle has installed ultraviolet lights designed to kill airborne viruses and bacteria, a fresh air circulation system in the elevators and reverse-ATM kiosks that will convert cash into card for a more touch-free experience.

From wire reports

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Notre Dame-Navy called off for season

Associated Press

Notre Dame opens its season as an Atlantic Coast Conference football member against visiting Duke on Sept. 12 and won't face Navy for the first time in more than nine decades as part of the ACC's reconfigured schedule due to the coronavirus.

The league on Thursday released the schedule featuring the Fighting Irish, who are giving up their coveted football independence and competing for the ACC title this season. The ACC had announced plans last week for a 10-game league slate with one nonconference game and its championship game played either Dec. 12 or 19.

Those nonconference games are required to be played in the member school's home state, while opponents must meet ACC medical protocol requirements that

include regular testing for athletes, coaches and staff to try to control the potential spread of coronavirus. That report from ACC's medical advisory group also recommends schools evaluate travel policies for games, including modes of travel such as buses or flights, lodging accommodations and the size of the travel party. That comes as the 15 teams travel within a footprint spanning nearly the entire Atlantic Seaboard from Massachusetts to Florida, and moving west into Kentucky and Indiana.

Games within 250 miles of the school are considered reasonable for bus travel while schools typically take charter flights when needed, according to information the league provided by email to The Associated Press. The ACC "maxed out" on 17 scheduling opportunities to pair league schools within 250 miles of each other

while the decision on whether to travel by bus or plane beyond that distance is left to the member schools.

Until Thursday, teams had been holding offseason workouts or starting pre-season practices without knowing for sure who they would play or where in roughly a month. The Fighting Irish and Midshipmen were originally scheduled to play for the 94th straight season in Dublin, Ireland. The pandemic forced the relocation to Navy's home field in Annapolis, Md., for the first time in the history of the series on Sept. 5, along with the cancellation of Notre Dame's games against Wisconsin, Stanford and Southern California as the Big Ten and Pac-12 went to league-only schedules.

Now Notre Dame's lone nonconference game will be a Sept. 19 visit from Western Michigan.

Signs ominous, hopeful with college sports in balance

Associated Press

The announcements came within 40 minutes of each other Wednesday morning, one bleak, the other providing a glimmer of hope for a college football season that is looking iffy at best right now.

First, Connecticut canceled what was supposed to be its first season as a major college football independent because it could not endure the strains of the coronavirus pandemic.

Then the Big Ten unveiled the conference-only schedule it devised to withstand COVID-19 disruptions, with football games slated to kick off in a month.

Those two decisions epitomized the current state of college sports and help explain why the NCAA Board of Governors on Wednesday directed each division of the association to decide independently by Aug. 21 whether it will be able to safely conduct championship events in fall sports such as soccer and lower-division football.

NCAA President Mark Emmert told The Associated Press that whether college sports, and more specifically major college football, can play through the pandemic is likely to be determined not by the association or even conferences.

"It's actually going to have to

be each institution," Emmert said.

"You have to look at the huge variability around the country. When you look at what are the facts on the ground in Syracuse, New York, versus Miami, Florida, they're very, very different. And those schools are going to have to operate consistent with their local municipal policies, their state policies, federal policies, and then also whatever they decide collectively in the conference.

"So it really isn't the time where you can say we're going to have one rule to govern all of football or all of any sport in that sense."

Instead of making a broad decision across three divisions, the Board of Governors set parameters for each to make its own call.

Within hours of the board's announcement, presidents councils from both Division II and III canceled fall sports championships and determined they will not be made up in the spring.

According to the board's decision, at least 50% of teams competing in a fall sport in any division must conduct a regular season this fall for a championship to be held.

The board emphasized that all fall sports activity, whether it be preseason practices, regu-

lar-season games or postseason national championship tournaments, must follow the NCAA's return-to-sport guidelines.

"What we did today with the board is we said, look, you have to meet these kinds of standards and you have to provide these kinds of opportunities and this kind of information to students to even move forward on this," Emmert said.

The NCAA has little, if any, control over the highest tier of Division I football, where the Big Ten competes with the other Power Five conferences, the Big 12, Atlantic Coast Conference, Southeastern Conference and Pac-12.

Those leagues along with the five other FBS conferences have methodically put plans in place to play a season that will be worth billions in revenue — most of it landing in the Power Five.

The commissioners of those conferences talked a lot about collaboration, but in the end each league did what was in its best interest.

The NCAA's main role has been to provide guidelines for how to attempt to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 as athletes return to campus, practice and ultimately competition.

The NCAA cannot stop regular-season competition. When

the board considered pulling the plug on fall championships last month, conference leaders throughout all of Division I pushed back. There was even discussion among the most powerful conferences that they could stage their own championship events without the NCAA.

The pandemic has exposed college sports' lack of clearly defined, top-down leadership, though Emmert said the current problems wouldn't be easier to solve with a different structure.

"We're at a place where all of the answers to all of the questions are complicated because they are very complicated questions," Emmert said. "And so I guess I understand people that say, 'You know, somebody make a decision.' And I would hope that those same people would recognize that I and my board are more than willing to make decisions. We did it in March (canceling the NCAA basketball tournament)."

"This isn't about any one person or any one group not wanting to take leadership. It's about trying to find the right answer for our student-athletes and it's complicated. And anybody that doesn't recognize that is not paying attention."

MLB roundup

Undermanned Marlins sweep Orioles

Associated Press

BALTIMORE — Five pitchers combined on a four-hitter for Don Mattingly's undermanned, gritty and first-place Miami Marlins, who beat the Baltimore Orioles 2-1 Wednesday night for a doubleheader sweep.

Brian Anderson homered in opener, and Miami won 1-0 despite getting only two hits.

The sweep kept the Marlins atop the NL East and earned Mattingly his 281st win as Miami's manager, tying Jack McKeon's club record.

The Marlins won their third straight game since emerging from a coronavirus-prompted layoff that left them with a roster filled with callups, free agents and rookies. Miami has allowed a total of one run and 10 hits in those three games at Camden Yards.

In the nightcap, Jon Berti hit an RBI double off Asher Wojciechowski (0-2) in the first inning and scored on a fly ball by Jesus Aguilar. That proved to be enough. Josh A. Smith started, Brian Moran (1-0) struck out three over one inning and Stephen Tarpley got four outs for his first save.

In the opener, Anderson produced the game's lone run with an opposite-field drive to right off Alex Cobb (1-1).

Miami starter Elieser Hernandez gave up a one-out double to Chance Sisco in the fifth and Pedro Severino followed with a single before Nick Vincent (1-0) got Han- ser Alberto to hit into a double play, ending Baltimore's only threat.

Phillies 11-1, Yankees 7-3: Mike Tauch- man's tiebreaking double in the seventh inning sent visiting New York over Philadel- phia and a split of their doubleheader.

Bryce Harper and J.T. Realmuto hom- ered to back Zack Wheeler (2-0) and lead the "visiting" Phillies to a victory over the Yankees in the opener, snapping New York's seven-game winning streak despite Aaron Judge hitting his seventh homer in just the 10th game of the season.

Phillies ace Aaron Nola tied a career high with 12 strikeouts in the nightcap, allowing one run on Luke Voit's homer and three hits in six innings. Giancarlo Stanton and Voit greeted reliever Tommy Hunter (0-1) with consecutive singles, and Tauchman lined a double to right-center for a 2-1 lead.

Mets 3, Nationals 1: Nationals starter Max Scherzer exited because of a ham- string problem after laboring through just one inning, overshadowing Juan Soto's eventful 2020 debut for the World Series champs, and Rick Porcello collected his 150th career win.

Porcello (1-1) went seven innings, allow- ing one run and five hits and retiring the last 10 batters he faced.

Scherzer revealed afterward that he first felt something wrong with the hamstring before his previous start, six days earlier against Toronto. But he pitched anyway in that one and ended up throwing an MLB season-high 112 pitches.

Dodgers 7, Padres 6: Joc Pederson had two homers and five RBIs, left fielder Chris Taylor threw out Trent Grisham at the plate for the final out and visiting Los Angeles beat San Diego.

Kenley Jansen made it interesting in the ninth by allowing one run before the game ended on a double play. With runners on the corners, Manny Machado lined out to Tay- lor, who threw out Grisham trying to score the tying run. The Padres challenged but the play stood after review.

Brewers 1, White Sox 0: Adrian Houser dominated over seven innings and visiting Milwaukee snapped Chicago's six-game winning streak.

Milwaukee held struggling star Christian Yelich out of the lineup, with the 2018 NL MVP and two-time defending NL batting champion mired in a season-opening 3-for-34 slump.

Mariners 7, Angels 6: Scorching slugger Kyle Seager hit a three-run homer, rookie Kyle Lewis stayed hot with an RBI single, and host Seattle overcame two home runs by Mike Trout.

Albert Pujols remained on 659 career home runs, one behind Willie Mays on the career list.

Marco Gonzales (2-1) gave up solo home runs to Trout, Max Stassi and David Fletch- er but was otherwise strong. The lefty didn't walk a batter and struck out seven.

Athletics 6, Rangers 4: Matt Olson hom- ered twice, Ramon Laureano also went deep and host Oakland rallied to beat Texas.

Austin Allen hit his first career homer, a go-ahead, two-run drive in the seventh inning.

Shin-Soo Choo homered on the game's first pitch for the second time in six days for the Rangers.

Twins 5, Pirates 2: Minnesota's Randy Dobnak dominated in his homecoming, al- lowing three hits in six innings.

Dobnak, who grew up a half-hour south of PNC Park in the Pittsburgh suburb of South Park, didn't walk a batter and struck out just one.

Marwin Gonzalez went 2-for-4 with two RBIs for the Twins.

Max Kepler gave Minnesota some breathing room in the ninth with a three-

run home run off Pirates' reliever Dovydas Neverauskas.

Red Sox 5, Rays 0: Martin Perez pitched out of trouble all night, and Alex Verdugo and Michael Chavis homered to help visit- ing Boston stop a four-game skid.

Perez (2-1) allowed four hits and three walks, wiggling out of jams for five in- nings. Colten Brewer, Austin Brice, Matt Barnes and Brandon Workman completed a four-hitter.

Blue Jays 2, Braves 1: Hyun-Jin Ryu combined with four relievers on a three-hit- ter and visiting Toronto beat shorthanded Atlanta.

Ryu (1-1) lasted only five innings but was dominant as he gave up only one hit, an in- field single by Adam Duvall in the second.

The Braves were forced to recast their lineup after placing Ozzie Albies and Matt Adams on the injured list and giving Fred- die Freeman a day off.

Diamondbacks 14, Astros 7: Kole Cal- houn hit his first career inside-the-park homer with the help of a crazy bounce, David Peralta had four RBIs and host Ari- zona used nine-run burst in the fourth in- ning to beat Houston.

Calhoun hit a pitch from Lance McCull- ers Jr. (1-1) down the right-field line, and the ball hit the metal base of the fence in the corner, which sent it ricocheting past George Springer and down the warning track into right center.

Giants 4, Rockies 3: Brandon Belt ex- tended his success against Colorado starter Jon Gray with a three-run homer and a double, and visiting San Francisco won de- spite Nolan Arenado homering in his third straight game.

Cubs 6, Royals 1: Yu Darvish (2-1) pitched seven sharp innings and visiting Chicago earned its sixth straight victory.

Javier Baez drove in two runs for the Cubs, who handed Kansas City its sixth consecu- tive defeat. Kris Bryant and Anthony Rizzo each had two hits and scored twice.

Indians 2, Reds 0: Mike Clevinger didn't have his best stuff but did enough to pitch into the sixth inning and lead host Clev- land as the Indians wait for manager Terry Francona's return from a gastrointestinal problem.

Clevinger (1-1) worked around five walks, including three in the sixth. The right-hand- er's strong start — he gave up just two hits — continued a pattern for the Indians, who have had great pitching while their offense remains in a team-wide funk.

NBA roundup

Simmons hurts knee but Sixers survive

Associated Press

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Joel Embiid had 30 points and 11 rebounds, and the Philadelphia 76ers held on to beat the Washington Wizards 107-98 on Wednesday despite losing two-time All-Star Ben Simmons to a knee injury in the third quarter.

There was no immediate word from the 76ers on the extent of Simmons' injury, which occurred as he landed awkwardly after grabbing an offensive rebound. At the next break in the action he walked gingerly to the locker room and did not return.

He was shown leaving the locker room in street clothes late in the fourth quarter.

Tobias Harris added 17 points for the 76ers, who pulled within a game of the Pacers for fifth place in the Eastern Conference standings.

Thomas Bryant had 19 points and 10 rebounds for the fast-fading Wizards, who have gone 0-4 since the restart and are on the brink of being eliminated from playoff contention.

Thunder 105, Lakers 86: Chris Paul had 21 points, seven rebounds and six assists in Oklahoma City's victory over poor-shooting Los Angeles.

Danilo Gallinari scored 19 points and Steven Adams had 18 for the Thunder (42-25), who never trailed in their first win over the Lakers in four meetings this season. Oklahoma City pulled even with Houston for the fifth seed in the Western Conference playoff picture with five games left.

LeBron James had 19 points and 11 rebounds for the Lakers (51-16), who had another possibly concerning offensive performance while dropping to 2-2 in the bubble. Los Angeles, which has already clinched the top seed in the West and the Pacific Division title, never held a lead for the first time all season.

Nuggets 132, Spurs 126: Michael Porter Jr. had 30 points and 15 rebounds, and Denver rallied in the fourth quarter to beat San Antonio.

Two days after posting a career-high 37 points in Denver's win over Oklahoma City, Porter stayed hot, scoring 10 of the Nuggets' first 16 points against San Antonio.

San Antonio, which started the day two games behind Memphis for the final playoff spot in the West, dropped to 2-2 since the restart.

Jazz 124, Grizzlies 115: Joe Ingles scored 12 of his 25 points in the fourth

quarter, and Utah kept Memphis winless in the NBA bubble.

Mike Conley had 23 points and seven assists against his former team for the Jazz (43-25), who improved to 2-2 in the seeding round and nudged ahead of Houston (42-25) for the fourth spot in the Western Conference standings.

Jonas Valanciunas had 21 points and 14 rebounds, and Ja Morant added 20 points and nine assists for Memphis (32-37). But the Grizzlies have lost five straight overall since March, and Portland (31-38) leads a pack of four teams now within three games of the eighth seed.

Raptors 109, Magic 99: Fred VanVleet had 21 points and 10 assists, and Toronto held on to beat Orlando.

The Raptors (49-18) have won their last seven dating back to before the hiatus and three straight games since the restart.

The Magic (32-37) missed an opportunity to clinch a playoff spot following Washington's loss to Philadelphia.

Celtics 149, Nets 115: Jaylen Brown stayed hot with 21 points on five three-pointers, and Boston rolled past Brooklyn without All-Star point guard Kemba Walker.

NHL roundup

Blackhawks edge Oilers, take 2-1 series edge

Associated Press

EDMONTON, Alberta — Matthew Highmore tied the score with 5:47 left in the third period, and Jonathan Toews got his second of the game 4½ minutes later to give the Chicago Blackhawks a 4-3 win over the Edmonton Oilers in Game 3 of their qualifying round series Wednesday night.

"We stuck with it and I think it was a great team effort," Toews said.

On the winner, Oilers defenseman Ethan Bear errantly tipped a Blackhawks shot off Toews and past Mikko Koskinen. It was Toews' fourth goal of the series.

Olli Maatta also scored for Chicago, which trailed by a goal entering the third period. Corey Crawford finished with 25 saves.

Canadiens 4, Penguins 3: Jeff Petry scored 5:33 into the third period as Montreal rallied from two goals down and beat

Pittsburgh in Game 3 in Toronto, pushing the Penguins to the brink of elimination in the best-of-five series.

Shea Weber had a goal and two assists for Montreal, Paul Byron added a goal and an assist, and Jonathan Drouin also scored. Ben Chariot also had had assists.

Panthers 3, Islanders 2: Mike Hoffman and Brian Boyle scored 2:07 apart in the opening minutes of the third period, and Florida avoided a sweep by New York in Toronto.

Erik Haula also scored and Sergei Bobrovsky stopped 20 shots. The 10th-seeded Panthers trail the best-of-five series 2-1 with Game 4 on Friday.

Jean-Gabriel Pageau and Brock Nelson, with 1:27 remaining, scored for the Islanders, the East's seventh seed.

Coyotes 4, Predators 1: Conor Garland and Taylor Hall each scored in the third period to lead Arizona past Nashville

in Edmonton, Alberta.

The Coyotes, seeded 11th in the West in the NHL's restart, can eliminate the sixth-seeded Predators in Game 4 on Friday in this best-of-five qualifying series.

Christian Dvorak scored on Arizona's first shot of the game, and the Coyotes scored three in the third for the victory, capped by Carl Soderberg's empty-netter inside the final two minutes.

Lightning 3, Bruins 2: Tyler Johnson scored the tiebreaking goal with 87 seconds left and Tampa Bay handed Presidents' Trophy-winning Boston its second straight loss in the NHL's playoff seeding round in Toronto.

Avalanche 4, Stars 0: High-scoring 21-year-old rookie defenseman Cale Makar connected on an early power-play goal, 30-year-old Pavel Francouz recorded a shut-out in his postseason debut and Colorado defeated Dallas in round-robin play.