

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Military surpasses 30,000 cases of virus

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The Army surpassed 10,000 coronavirus cases Friday as overall military cases now exceed 30,000, according to the Pentagon.

The Army has had 10,245 cases, an increase of 548 cases since Monday, according to Pentagon data, which is posted online every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The Army announced Tuesday that the fourth military death from the virus was Spc. Curtis Fort, a 61-year old Army reservist from Virginia.

Last month, Thomas McCaffery, the assistant secretary of defense for health affairs, said the Defense Department is seeing increases in military cases in loca-

tions where there has been a rise in civilian cases. The states with the highest number of cases in the last seven days include Texas, Florida, California and Georgia, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. These states also have several military installations.

The Navy has had 7,166 cases as of Friday — the second highest number among the services — an increase of 278 cases since Monday. The Marine Corps has had 3,746 cases as of Friday, an increase of 301 cases since Monday. The Air Force has had 4,789 cases of the virus, an increase of 194 cases since Monday, and the National Guard, which has troops deployed throughout the country for the pandemic response, has had 4,151 cases, an increase of 294 cases since Monday.

The military as a whole has had 30,392 cases of the coronavirus as of Friday, and 510 service members have been hospitalized.

Air Force Brig. Gen. Paul Friedrichs said last week that the rate of positive coronavirus cases in the military is slightly lower than the American average in all age groups except for troops between the ages of 18 and 24. The Pentagon has not released those rates.

As of Friday, the United States has had 4.9 million cases of the coronavirus, the highest number of cases in the world, according to Johns Hopkins University. More than 160,000 people have died from the virus in the U.S., which is also the most worldwide.

## Remains recovered from sunken USMC assault amphibious vehicle

*Associated Press*

SAN DIEGO — Authorities on Friday recovered the bodies of nine people killed when a Marine vehicle sank in hundreds of feet of water off the Southern California coast, authorities said.

The remains of seven Marines and a Navy sailor were found after underwater salvage operations that followed the sinking on July 30. They will be flown to Dover Air Force Base in Delaware to be prepared for burial by mortuary affairs teams, according to a statement Friday night from the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force.

The remains “will then be released to their families in accordance with their wishes,” the statement said.

The amphibious vehicle sank in 385 feet of water as it headed back to a Navy ship after completing routine training, the military said.

The craft sank less than a mile from San Clemente Island off the coast of San Diego. A diving and salvage ship carrying special equipment arrived on Thursday and recovered the bodies and the vehicle, the military said.

The dead were identified earlier this week as: Pfc. Bryan J. Baltierra, 19, of Corona,

Calif.; Lance Cpl. Marco A. Barranco, 21, of Montebello, Calif.; Pfc. Evan A. Bath, 19, of Oak Creek, Wis.; U.S. Navy Hospitalman Christopher Gnem, 22, of Stockton, Calif.; Pfc. Jack Ryan Ostrovsky, 21, of Bend, Ore.; Cpl. Wesley A. Rodd, 23, of Harris, Texas; Lance Cpl. Chase D. Sweetwood, 19, of Portland, Ore.; and Cpl. Cesar A. Villanueva, 21, of Riverside, Calif.

Eight other people were rescued but one died at the scene. He was identified as Marine Lance Cpl. Guillermo S. Perez, 19, of New Braunfels, Texas. His body was flown to Dover Air Force Base on Wednesday.

All of the Marines aboard were attached to the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, based at nearby Camp Pendleton, north of San Diego.

“We hope the successful recovery of our fallen warriors brings some measure of comfort” to their families, said a statement from Col. Christopher Bronzi, commanding officer of the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit.

The commandant of the Marine Corps has suspended all waterborne operations of its more than 800 amphibious assault vehicles until the cause of the accident is determined.

## Pair sentenced for role in failed Venezuelan coup

*Associated Press*

CARACAS, Venezuela — A Venezuelan court has sentenced two former U.S. Special Forces soldiers to 20 years in prison for their part in a failed beach attack aimed at overthrowing President Nicolas Maduro, prosecutors announced.

Former Green Berets Luke Denman and Airan Berry admitted to taking part in the May 4 operation orchestrated by a third ex-U.S. soldier who remains in the United States, Venezuela’s chief prosecutor Tarek William Saab announced on Twitter on Friday.

“THEY ADMITTED THEIR RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FACTS,” Saab wrote, adding that the case will continue for dozens of other defendants. He did not offer details.

“Operation Gideon” was launched from makeshift training camps in neighboring Colombia and left at least eight rebel soldiers dead while a total of 66 were jailed. Former Green Beret Jordan Goudreau, who operated a private, Florida-based security firm called Silvercorp USA, claimed responsibility for the failed attack.

# Fort Hood chief's transfer delayed for investigation

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Army leaders have delayed the planned transfer of the Fort Hood commander, as a team of independent investigators heads to the base to determine whether leadership failures contributed to the murder of a soldier earlier this year, and several other deaths.

Maj. Gen. Scott Efflandt, commander of Fort Hood, Texas, was slated to go to Fort Bliss, which is near El Paso, and take over leadership of the 1st Armored Division. Command of a division is a key step in an Army officer's career. The Army said in a statement Friday that he will now stay at Fort Hood, as Army leaders consider whether there were systemic problems at the base, and who should be held accountable.

Army Spc. Vanessa Guillen, 20, was killed and dismembered by a fellow soldier. She had been missing since April, and her

remains were found and identified last month. The soldier suspected in Guillen's slaying, Spc. Aaron Robinson, shot and killed himself early last month as police were trying to take him into custody. A civilian, Cecily Aguilar 22, of Killeen, has been arrested and charged with allegedly helping Robinson dispose of Guillen's body.

Speaking at Fort Hood on Thursday, Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy said members of the independent panel will arrive at the base by the end of the month to begin their review. The 3rd Cavalry Regiment, which is stationed at Fort Hood, is also conducting a routine internal investigation into the matter.

McCarthy was asked whether anyone, including leaders, will be disciplined or fired. He said that the independent panel will look into the "command climate of the installation," to determine if there is a "sexual harassment-type toxic

environment that exists." McCarthy said that will help the Army "better understand more broadly, is it 3rd ACR (Armored Cavalry Regiment) or is it larger? Is it the entire installation?"

He acknowledged that there have been other deaths and incidents of violence that could point to broader problems.

In addition to Guillen's murder, the body of another Fort Hood soldier, Pvt. Mejhor Morta, was found last month by Stillhouse Hollow Lake, a reservoir near the base. In June, officials discovered the remains of another missing soldier, Gregory Morales, about 10 miles from that lake.

Once the independent panel's investigation is done, McCarthy said that if the panel's conclusions "point to leaders or individuals, in particular, of course, we will take the appropriate accountability" measures.

## Space Force inks launch contracts

Orlando Sentinel

The U.S. Space Force is going to send its military hardware into space on SpaceX and United Launch Alliance rockets.

The Department of Defense announced the two companies beat out Blue Origin and Northrop Grumman for the \$653 million National Security Space Launch Phase 2 contract for missions planned from 2023-2028 from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station and Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.

ULA, which will be using its next-generation Vulcan Centaur rockets landed the larger portion, \$337 million, for 60% of the launch services with SpaceX, which will continue to use its Falcon 9 and Falcon Heavy rockets, landing \$316 million.

The contract announcement is using money set aside for at least 25 missions from fiscal 2020-2024, that will be flown starting in early 2023 and expected to run through March 2028.

## Ground robots could be next generation of warfighters

By STEVE BEYNON

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Army and Marine Corps are working on robots for the next generation of mechanized warfare and troops are already testing their effectiveness in combat and reconnaissance, Army officials said Thursday.

Troops with the 4th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division have been testing unmanned Bradley Fighting Vehicles and M113 armored personnel carriers in platoon training events, including a live-fire exercise the past few weeks at Fort Carson,

Colo.

Army leaders said unmanned combat vehicles require soldiers to operate them at a relatively short distance away, roughly 1,500 to 2,000 meters depending on the terrain. But the ability for a cavalry unit to send Bradleys to scout an area or engage an enemy allows more soldiers to stay in the rear, potentially saving lives, they said.

"This isn't about robots, this isn't about technology," Brig. Gen. Ross Coffman said. "It's about soldiers, reducing the risk to our men and women. These robots are absolutely going to do that. We aren't there yet, but this technology is emerging.

This technology can add a lot of benefits to the battlefield. I can guarantee we'll have robots sensing, shooting and detecting, conducting support by fire and route reconnaissance [in the future]."

Sergeant Major of the Army Michael Grinston called unmanned mechanized combat the "way of the future" in a call with reporters Thursday.

But robots are still in their infancy. There is a long road ahead on figuring out how to integrate these robots into mechanized infantry and cavalry units, figuring out how many soldiers should operate them, and overcoming technical obstacles.

A traditional manned Bradley requires at least three soldiers to operate — a commander, a driver and a gunner. This is also the case with almost all ground combat vehicles. The Army officials said they are developing vehicles that are essentially ground drones that can both minimize the risk of troops getting killed in combat, and in the long term requires fewer soldiers to operate.

Coffman said unmanned vehicles require two remote operators — a driver, and a gunner. However, he said that could change, there's no standard operating procedure yet.



# Trump considers action as talks on jobless aid collapse

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A last-ditch effort by Democrats to revive Capitol Hill talks on vital COVID-19 rescue money collapsed in disappointment at week's end, making it increasingly likely that Washington gridlock will mean more hardship for millions of people who are losing enhanced jobless benefits and further damage for an economy pummeled by the still-raging coronavirus.

President Donald Trump said Friday night he was likely to issue more limited executive orders related to COVID, perhaps in the next day or so, if he can't reach a broad agreement with Congress.

The day's negotiations at the Capitol added up to only "a disappointing meeting," declared top Senate Democrat Chuck Schumer, saying the White House had rejected an offer by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to curb Democratic demands by about \$1 trillion. He urged the White House to "negotiate with Democrats and meet us in the middle. Don't say it's your way or no way."

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said, "Unfortunately we did not make any progress today." Republicans said Pelosi was relying on budget maneuvers to curb costs and contended she has overplayed her hand.

Speaking from his New Jersey golf club Friday evening, Trump said "if Democrats continue to hold this critical relief hostage I will act under my authority as president to get Americans the relief they need."

Trump said he may issue executive orders on home evictions, student loan debt and allowing states to repurpose COVID relief funding into their unemployment insurance programs. He also said he'll likely issue an executive order to defer collection of Social Security payroll taxes, an idea that has less support among his Republican allies.

White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows said, "This is not a perfect answer — we'll be the first ones to say that — but it is all that we can do, and all the president can do within the confines of his executive power."

## Protests in Portland to go on into weekend

Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. — More protests are expected in Portland, Ore., throughout the weekend following violent demonstrations this week that have brought more unrest to the Northwest city.

Since George Floyd was killed in Minneapolis protests have occurred nightly for 70 days. Friday night, Portland police declared an unlawful assembly at the Penumra Kelly public safety building, ordering everyone in the area to leave. Authorities had previously warned people not to trespass on the property.

Protesters remained for several hours before officers began to rush the crowd away from the building using crowd control munitions early Saturday. Several people were arrested, police said.

The crowd was dispersed because items including rocks, frozen or hard-boiled eggs and commercial-grade fireworks had been thrown or launched toward officers, police said in a statement. Oregon State Police worked with Portland officers to clear the protesters.

Some demonstrators also filled pool noodles with nails and placed them in the road, causing extensive damage to a patrol vehicle, police stated.

Democratic Mayor Ted Wheeler said this week the violent protesters are also serving as political "props" for President Donald Trump in a divisive election season where the president is hammering on a law-and-order message. Trump has tried to portray the protesters as "sick and dangerous anarchists" running wild in the city's streets.

The chaos started Thursday night and lasted into Friday morning in a residential neighborhood about 6 miles from downtown.

## US intel officials: Russia acting against Biden while China opposing president

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — U.S. intelligence officials believe that Russia is using a variety of measures to denigrate Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden ahead of the November election and that individuals linked to the Kremlin are boosting President Donald Trump's reelection bid, the country's counterintelligence chief said in the most specific warning to date about the threat of foreign interference.

U.S. officials also believe China does not want Trump to win a second term and has accelerated its criticism of the White House, expanding its efforts to shape public policy in America and to pressure political figures seen as opposed to Beijing's interests.

The statement Friday from William Evanina is believed to be the most pointed declaration

by the U.S. intelligence community linking the Kremlin to efforts to get Trump reelected — a sensitive subject for a president who has rejected intelligence agency assessments that Russia tried to help him in 2016. It also connects Moscow's disapproval of Biden to his role as vice president in shaping Obama administration policies supporting Ukraine, an important U.S. ally, and opposing Russian leader Vladimir Putin.

Asked about the intelligence assessment Friday evening in Bedminster, N.J., Trump appeared to dispute the idea that Russia was disparaging Biden.

"I think the last person Russia wants to see in office is Donald Trump because nobody has been tougher on Russia than I have — ever," he said.

But the president seemed to agree with the intelligence indicating China didn't want him reelected.

"If Joe Biden was president, China would own our country," he said.

Evanina's statement, three months before the election, comes amid criticism from House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and other congressional Democrats that the intelligence community has been withholding from the public specific intelligence information about the threat of foreign interference in American politics.

The latest intelligence assessment reflects concerns not only about Russia but China and Iran as well, warning that hostile foreign actors may seek to compromise election infrastructure, interfere with the voting process or call into question voting results. Despite those efforts, officials see it as unlikely that anyone could manipulate voting results in any sweeping way, Evanina said.



# Cuomo clears NY schools statewide to open

Associated Press

ALBANY, N.Y. — New York schools can bring children back to classrooms for the start of the school year, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced Friday, citing success in battling the coronavirus in the state that once was the U.S. heart of the pandemic.

The Democratic governor's decision clears the way for schools to offer at least some days of in-person classes, alongside remote learning. Students will be required to wear masks throughout each school day.

"Everywhere in the state, every region is below the threshold that we established," Cuomo told reporters. He said New York can revisit the issue if the infection rate spikes.

Many New York school districts planned to start the year with students in school buildings a few days a week, while learning at home the rest of the time. The state has left tough decisions — on how to handle sick students, how much time children will spend in class, whether to delay in-person instruction — up to individual districts.

"If any state can do this, we can do this," Cuomo said.

More than 1 million public school students in New York City — the largest district in the U.S. — had their last day of in-class instruction March 13, just as waves of sick people were beginning to hit city hospitals. All schools statewide were closed by March 18.

## Arkansas

LITTLE ROCK — Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson and education officials on Friday proposed setting aside \$20 million for teachers who have to miss work because of the coronavirus as the state reported one of its biggest increases in confirmed virus cases since the pandemic began.

Hutchinson proposed using federal coronavirus relief funds to provide up to two weeks of paid leave for teachers and staff who have to quarantine because of the virus. The proposal goes before a state panel this week.

Teachers and staff would use this leave before using any of their own sick days or personal leave under the plan, state Education Secretary Johnny Key said.

Arkansas public schools reopen later this month, despite objections from teachers and pediatricians about resuming on-site instruction during the pandemic. The Education Department said schools must remain open all five days a week, complicating some districts' plans to limit onsite instruction because of the virus outbreak.

Key said the state doesn't expect schools to teach all students onsite five days a week, but said that option should be available for students who need it.

## Louisiana

BATON ROUGE — Gov. John Bel Edwards is questioning why Louisiana must pay a portion of the costs to use the state's National Guard in coronavirus response work if the federal government is picking up the full tab in some other states.

The Democratic governor sent a letter Friday to President Donald Trump, asking that the federal government continue to cover all costs of activating the Louisiana National Guard as it did earlier this year. If Louisiana has to pay a 25% cost share through December, that would cost the state \$2.5 million a month, Edwards said.

Louisiana is using 1,100 members of the National Guard to staff virus testing sites, support food bank operations and distribute protective equipment to hospitals, schools and other locations.

## Montana

HELENA — The Crow Tribe in Montana ordered its members to lock down for two weeks beginning Friday as tribal leaders moved to slow a sharp spike in coronavirus cases and deaths on yet another reservation in the country.

Crow Tribe Chairman Alvin Not Afraid said the lockdown is necessary because a stay-at-home order in effect since mid-March has been ineffective.

"We cannot afford to risk our future and the risks are just too great for the Crow people," Not Afraid said.

Big Horn County, where the reservation is located, is on pace to record more confirmed virus cases in August than the previous two months combined. The county reported 85 new cases during the first week of August, compared to 249 in July and 44 in June.

## New Mexico

SANTA FE — The New Mexico Public School Insurance Authority board unanimously voted Thursday to send a letter warning schools and districts about the dangers of not complying with coronavirus guidelines.

The letter to member districts and charter schools warns that if they do not comply with state health restrictions, they may jeopardize their chances of receiving coverage for coronavirus-related work claims, The Santa Fe New Mexican reported.

Executive Director Richard Valerio said districts that violate mask-wearing mandates, bring students back to school too soon or prematurely order employees back to in-person work can be at risk of losing their coverage.

The authority provides insurance for all school districts in the state except for Albuquerque.

## South Carolina

COLUMBIA — Fans can watch September's NASCAR race at Darlington in person and have a four-course meal while watching a medieval jousting tournament thanks to exceptions granted to South Carolina's rule banning gatherings of more than 250 people during the COVID-19 pandemic.

At least 71 events have been given permission to draw the larger crowds, according to the South Carolina Department of Commerce, which reviews the requests.

Gov. Henry McMaster lifted the ban on gatherings of up to 250 people on Aug. 3, but allowed anyone who wanted to have more people to ask the state's business agency for an exception. The Commerce Department requires any group with a large gathering to require masks and detail other ways they can keep the crowd safe from COVID-19.

## Texas

AUSTIN — Official numbers in new COVID-19 infections were down slightly in Texas on Friday compared to the day before, but the infection rate remained high.

State officials reported at least 7,039 new cases, almost 560 fewer than they reported Thursday. That would bring the total caseload to almost 475,000 dating to early March when tracking began of the disease caused by the coronavirus.

The state reported 293 new COVID-19 deaths Friday in Texas, bringing the total death toll for the outbreak to almost 8,100. The state estimated that 134,760 cases were active with 8,065 patients hospitalized, 237 fewer than Thursday.

But the rate of positive COVID-19 test results remains high, with a rolling seven-day positivity rate of 16.9%, well above the threshold of 5% recommended for reopening by the World Health Organization.

## Utah

SALT LAKE CITY — The Utah Board of Education rejected multiple proposals requiring stricter precautions against the coronavirus as schools reopen across the state.

The board voted 9-5 against a series of mandates, including one that would limit the number of students in a classroom if community spread spikes above the 5% reopening threshold set by the World Health Organization, the Deseret News reported.

The board did move to require school districts to draw plans and protocols for how they would respond in the event of an outbreak. Each district must also decide how to balance education against current public health risks.



# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## 2 workers fired after refusing to serve officer

**IA** DES MOINES — Two former doughnut franchise employees were fired after refusing to serve a Des Moines police officer, the shop's corporate headquarters said.

Sgt. Paul Parizek, a spokesman for the Des Moines Police Department, said he was refused service at a local Dunkin' doughnut shop because he's a police officer, television station KCCI reported.

Parizek said he asked a woman behind the shop's counter, "What's going on?"

"She said, 'We're not going to serve you today and you need to leave,'" Parizek recounted.

Corporate Dunkin' officials sent a statement to KCCI saying the Des Moines store's franchise owner fired two employees over the incident and had contacted police to apologize.

## Deadly crash believed to be intentional

**ND** FARGO — A head-on crash that killed two people in Fargo was believed to be intentionally caused by one of the drivers, police said.

Authorities said Nathaniel Wilson, 30, of West Fargo was driving at a high rate of speed on a north Fargo street when he crossed into the opposite lane and collided with a vehicle driven by Thomas Edmunds, 49, of Fargo.

Wilson was pronounced dead at the scene. Edmunds died at a hospital.

Police said in a statement that witness accounts and other evidence lead them to believe that Wilson purposely caused the collision. The two men did not know each other and police said it was not a case of road rage.

## Couple get probation for leading illegal hunts

**LA** ALEXANDRIA — A Louisiana couple who admitted leading illegal woodcock hunts have been sentenced to probation, fines and \$7,850 restitution.

U.S. Attorney David Joseph said that William K. Sutton, 66, of Monterey was fined \$5,000 and Karen S. Sutton, 61, was fined \$1,000. Each is on three years' probation.

Over two years, the Suttons netted more than \$100,000 from 82 illegal woodcock hunts, including some on the Richard K. Yancey Wildlife Management Area, according to Joseph's news release.

William Sutton pleaded guilty in August 2019 to violating the federal Lacey Act, and his wife to aiding and abetting him.

## Police say 16-year-old booked in bank robbery

**AZ** GOODYEAR — Good-year police said a 16-year-old boy who had two prior armed robbery convictions was arrested on charges that he held up another bank and tried to rob two others.

Authorities said the Litchfield Park teen, whose identity wasn't released by police, robbed a First Convenience Bank in Goodyear. He was later seen getting into a taxi.

About 20 minutes later, police said they were told the boy was about to rob the Desert Financial Credit Union in Goodyear. The suspect, who matched the description of the boy, refused a request to remove his mask and instead walked out of the bank and headed toward a taxi.

The boy was seen the next day wearing the same clothes as he looked through the front window of a Wells Fargo location in Goodyear, before finally leaving in a cab.

## Judge keeps gambling machines shut down

**ND** BISMARCK — A federal judge denied a request by a gaming equipment company to reactivate hundreds of electronic pull tab machines that were shut down by the attorney general in North Dakota.

Powerhouse Gaming argued Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem and the state's gaming director, Deborah McDaniel, interfered with its business and contracts and violated its right to operate the machines.

Stenehjem suspended the company's gambling license because he said it failed to show it had purchased a software license for each device in the state. The move shut down nearly 500 pull tab machines.

## Explosion, fire sinks 2 boats near marina

**MI** ST. CLAIR SHORES — Two boats burned and sank following an explosion and fire near a marina off Lake St. Clair in Michigan.

A 26-foot Bayliner was adrift and engulfed in flames when deputies arrived at a gas dock in St. Clair Shores, the Macomb County sheriff's office said.

A larger boat was moored to the end of a dock and also was burning. The St. Clair Shores Fire Department and the sheriff's patrol boats extinguished the fires on both vessels.

The explosion on the Bayliner was reported to have occurred after two men obtained fuel for the boat and departed the gas dock. The two men jumped into the water, swam to shore and ran from the area after the explosion, according to the sheriff's office.

The Bayliner then drifted into the docked boat which also caught fire.

## Man arrested after trying to stun officer

**GA** VALDOSTA — A south Georgia man was charged with five felonies including aggravated assault on a police officer after he tried to shoot a police officer with a stun gun.

Valdosta police arrested Adam Nolff after a woman reported that Nolff was trying to set her vehicle on fire. When an officer arrived, police said he saw Nolff assaulting the woman.

When the officer tried to stop Nolff, police said the man unsuccessfully tried to grab the officer's gun, and then grabbed his electrical stun gun and tried to use it to shock the officer. Police said the officer held onto Nolff, even as Nolff punched him in the head until other officers arrived.

The woman later told other officers that Nolff had grabbed her around the neck, dragged her through the house, and choked her.

## Wanted man from one state arrested in another

**ME** WILTON — A Massachusetts man who is on the state's Most Wanted list for charges of murder and armed robbery was taken into custody in Maine.

Police took Derell Guy into custody in Wilton after searching for him for about a day. Guy, who is from Lynn, Mass., fled into the woods in Wilton after a traffic stop.

Guy had been on the Massachusetts State Police's Most Wanted list for almost three weeks. He's wanted in connection with the shooting death of Bryan Omar Mendez, 25, of Worcester, Mass.

From wire reports

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## NHL roundup

## Islanders advance over Panthers

Associated Press

TORONTO — Anthony Beauvillier scored twice, and the New York Islanders beat the Florida Panthers 5-1 to clinch an NHL best-of-five preliminary round playoff series in four games on Friday.

Brock Nelson and Mathew Barzal had a goal and assist each in a game the Islanders never trailed. Defenseman Ryan Pulock made a diving stick save to prevent Florida's Aleksander Barkov from scoring into an open side to maintain New York's 3-1 lead midway through the second period.

Semyon Varlamov stopped 24 shots, Jean-Gabriel Pageau scored an empty-netter, and the Eastern Conference's seventh-seeded Islanders bounced back from a 3-2 loss in Game 3 on Wednesday.

**Coyotes 4, Predators 3 (OT):** At Edmonton, Brad Richardson scored on a rebound in overtime, Darcy Kuemper stopped 49 shots and Arizona advanced in the postseason for the first time in eight years.

Michael Grabner and Phil Kessel also scored for the Coyotes, who face Colorado or Vegas in the next round after advancing in the postseason for the first time since reaching the 2012 Western Conference finals.

**Canadiens 2, Penguins 0:** At Toronto, Artturi Lehkonen flipped a shot past Tristan Jarry with 4:11 remaining to lift Montreal to a stunning victory and clinching the Canadiens' first playoff berth in three years.

Shea Weber added an empty-net goal in the final seconds as the 12th-seeded Canadiens captured the best-of-five qualifying round over fifth-seeded Pittsburgh in four games.

**Blackhawks 3, Oilers 1:** At Edmonton, Brandon Saad, Mathew Highmore and Dominik

Kubalik scored and Chicago beat Edmonton, knocking the Oilers out of the postseason tournament.

The Blackhawks won the best-of-five qualifying series 3-1. Chicago advances to the round of 16.

Josh Archibald and Ryan Nugent-Hopkins scored for Edmonton.

The Oilers had been expected to beat Chicago, given they were the fifth-seeded team in the Western Conference tournament and the Hawks were the bottom seed at 12.

**Maple Leafs 4, Blue Jackets 3 (OT):** At Toronto, Auston Matthews scored on a power play 13:10 into overtime and Toronto rallied from a three-goal deficit in the third period to beat Columbus, tying the best-of-five qualifying series at two wins apiece.

The Leafs scored three times in 3:34 to knot the score late in a game that Columbus and goalie Elvis Merzlikins had largely controlled until then.

This time, with Nick Foligno in the penalty box for tripping, Matthews beat Elvis Merzlikins from the right circle to push the series to a decisive Game 5 on Sunday.

**Canucks 5, Wild 4 (OT):** At Edmonton, Christopher Tanev's slap shot just 11 seconds into overtime gave Vancouver a victory over Minnesota and a win in the best-of-five Western Conference qualifying round series in four games.

Tanev's snipe from just in front of the blue line zipped through traffic and beat Stalock stick side to give the Canucks their first postseason series win since 2013. This is the first time in five years that Vancouver has reached the playoffs.

## Summer hockey looking like a young man's game

Associated Press

After making his playoff debut at age 19 and winning the Stanley Cup at 20, Brandon Saad knows all about the value of youth in the NHL postseason.

He looks at 18-year-old Kirby Dach and 19-year-old Adam Boqvist now and is glad to have them as Chicago Blackhawks teammates.

"To be that young and to be able to hold their own and contribute, we're happy to have them," Saad said.

More than a dozen players age 20 or younger are benefiting from an extra few months of maturation and thriving in the most unique playoffs in NHL history. Dach and Vancouver defenseman Quinn Hughes each have four assists, Andrei Svechnikov led Carolina with five points in a three-game sweep and youngsters Nick Suzuki and Jesperi Kotkaniemi have been among Montreal's best players.

Turns out summer hockey is a very young man's game.

"A lot of times, those guys get worn down as the year goes on," Chicago coach Jeremy Colliton said. "They were able to have a couple months off and regroup and get some training in and get their rest and come in fresh and older. They've used that to their advantage."

The 2020 playoffs are a showcase of youth, speed and skill. Experience is still valuable in the chase for the Cup, but coaches aren't worried about throwing teenagers into the fire.

"I'll err with the youth," said Columbus coach John Tortorella, who has teenage forwards Alexander Texier and Liam Foudy in his lineup. "I like guys that just go out and play, make some mistakes but they don't worry about it."

Or don't make many mistakes at all.

Canadiens coach Claude Julien showed that in Game 1 against Pittsburgh when he sent Suzuki out as the only forward in a 3-on-5 penalty-killing situation. Julien said Suzuki hit

a wall before the regular season was shut down in March, then noticed a different kind of player come back for training camp 2.0 and is relying on him like a veteran.

"I was confident going in," Suzuki said. "Just nice to get the confidence from the coach to trust me in that situation."

Trusting young players could be an ingredient to a long playoff run. Not stopping them is a recipe for an early exit.

The New York Rangers found that out as Svechnikov recorded a hat trick against them in Game 2 of Carolina's qualifying-round sweep. When Hurricanes coach Rod Brind'Amour first met Svechnikov at age 18 during training camp in 2018, he thought the Russia-born forward was 24 and "built like an ox."

Now in his second playoffs, Svechnikov is playing and producing beyond his years.

"There's really not a lot he can't do," Rangers coach David Quinn said. "He's quickly emerging as one of the best players in this league."

He's not alone in making that kind of impression. Hughes leads the Canucks in scoring after three games and might have taken his play up another notch after being a finalist for rookie of year honors in the regular season.

"I don't think you can put a price on experience," Hughes said. "And I think this is really big for all the young guys here."

Born almost eight months after Dach, Toronto's Nick Robertson is the youngest player in the playoffs and scored a goal in his third opportunity.

"My confidence level's obviously getting higher and higher each day," said the 18-year-old from Pasadena, Calif.

Confidence is the common denominator between point-producers Dach and Svechnikov and players such as Philadelphia's Joel Farabee and Arizona's Barrett Hayton, who are looking to make a difference. Getting ice time gives them that chance.

## NBA roundup

## Nets beat Kings, clinch playoff berth

Associated Press

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Caris LeVert scored 22 points, Jarrett Allen added 17 points, 11 rebounds and eight assists and the patchwork Brooklyn Nets clinched a playoff berth by beating the Sacramento Kings 119-106 on Friday.

The surprising Nets came to the bubble without stars Kevin Durant and Kyrie Irving but continued to display plenty of fight, improving to 3-2 since coming to Florida. Joe Harris added 21 points, shooting 8-for-11 from the field, including 5-for-7 from three-point range.

"It's been great to see these guys trust each other in the limited amount of time we've been together and embrace playing together," Brooklyn coach Jacques Vaughn said.

The Nets bounced back from a 149-115 loss to the Boston

Celtics two nights before.

"We actually have a group of people who really like each other," Brooklyn guard Tyler Johnson said. "So we come back in, regroup, come in the next day and get ready to work. We don't sit around and feel bad for ourselves. It's a telltale sign of a maturing team."

The Kings were one day removed from an impressive 140-125 win over the New Orleans Pelicans but couldn't string together two wins and fell further behind in a crowded race for the final Western Conference playoff spot. Sacramento is 1-4 in the bubble. Bogdan Bogdanovic led the Kings with 27 points.

**Celtics 122, Raptors 100:** Jaylen Brown scored 20 points, Jayson Tatum added 18 and Boston never trailed on the way to an emphatic win over Toronto.

Kemba Walker scored 17

points in 23 minutes for the Celtics, who led by 40 at one point and kept slim hope alive of catching the Raptors for the No. 2 spot in the Eastern Conference postseason race. Boston also won the season series against Toronto.

**Grizzlies 121, Thunder 92:** Dillon Brooks scored 22 points, and Memphis claimed its first win since the restart, beating Oklahoma City.

Jonas Valanciunas had 19 points and 11 rebounds and Ja Morant had 19 points and nine assists for the Grizzlies.

**Spurs 119, Jazz 111:** Derrick White scored 24 points, Jakob Poeltl added 19 points and 10 rebounds and San Antonio got a much-needed win over short-handed Utah.

Lonnie Walker and Rudy Gay finished with 14 points for the Spurs, who moved into sole possession of 10th place in the Western Conference, a half-

game ahead of surging Phoenix. The Suns are 4-0 since the NBA restart, but were idle Friday.

**76ers 108, Magic 101:** Tobias Harris had 23 points and 15 rebounds, Joel Embiid turned in a strong second half and finished with 23 points and 13 rebounds and Philadelphia held off Orlando in their first game without All-Star Ben Simmons.

Simmons is out indefinitely after injuring his knee Wednesday night.

Alec Burks had 22 points off the bench and Al Horford stepped into the starting lineup and finished with 21 points and nine rebounds.

**Pelicans 118, Wizards 107:** Jrue Holiday scored 28 points, and New Orleans defeated Washington without star rookie Zion Williamson, improving its chances of earning a Western Conference playoff spot.

## Li Haotong leads PGA at halfway point

Associated Press

Like too many tour pros, the guy leading the PGA Championship after two rounds is not above letting his clubs do the talking. What makes Li Haotong stand out from the crowd is what one of those clubs says about him.

"HAOTONG IS THE MOST HANDSOME MAN IN CHINA," reads the stamp — in red capital letters, no less — on the back of Li's 60-degree wedge.

While that remains open to debate, the fun-loving 25-year-old is definitely the first Chinese player to hold the lead after any round in a major championship, thanks to a bogey-free 65 Friday that left him two shots clear of the field at 8-under 132. Any doubts Li has enough guts or firepower to contend on the weekend at a toughening TPC Harding Park course should have been vaporized when he shot 63 in the final round of the British Open over a similarly cool, windy Royal Birkdale layout three years ago to finish third.

"He plays pretty much all guns blazing,"

said Adam Scott, Li's playing partner in the Presidents Cup matches last December, "and when it comes off, it's really good."

The more relevant question is whether Li, who spent much of the layoff caused by the COVID-19 pandemic back in China, can play consistently enough to hold off a pursuing pack chock-full of major winners and top-tier young stars with considerably more experience in the game's biggest events. A total of two dozen players were separated by only five shots at the midway point.

Brooks Koepka, the two-time defending champion, a surging Jason Day, the first round co-leader, and Tommy Fleetwood, who carded the low round of 64, were among the half-dozen golfers at 6-under. After an opening-round 68 put him within shouting distance of the lead, Tiger Woods skidded to a 72 and a tie for 44th.

The longer putter Woods credited for his success Thursday may be headed to the trunk of his rental car for the weekend after the total length of the putts he made

dropped precipitously from 115 feet to just 48 in round two.

Koepka wasn't pleased with his performance on the greens, either. But his biggest worry might be a tightening left hip that forced him to wince noticeably after several tee shots. On at least three occasions during his round, Koepka lay down on the grass and called over a trainer to loosen up the muscles on his left side.

"I felt like I could be 10 (under) right now," he said afterward.

Li, on the other hand, was pleasantly surprised to be where he was.

"I didn't even (think) I could play like this ... got no confidence," he said.

Equally puzzling was the to-do over the logo on Li's hat. The fate of the Chinese social media company WeChat, one of Li's biggest sponsors, was thrown into doubt a day after President Donald Trump threatened a ban on WeChat and TikTok in 45 days.

"I don't know," Li responded when asked about that development. "Who knows?"



# Series postponed

Cards players, staff test positive for virus

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — The entire three-game series between the Chicago Cubs and St. Louis at Busch Stadium was postponed Friday night after two more Cardinals players and a staff member tested positive for the coronavirus.

Major League Baseball announced that the whole weekend set was off. Hours earlier, MLB said Friday night's game had been scrapped to ensure everyone affected on the Cardinals was identified.

There have been 24 games postponed in the majors this season because of coronavirus concerns.

St. Louis has missed 10 games while Miami and Philadelphia each have had seven postponements. In order to complete the 60-game schedule in this shortened season, the Cardinals will have to play 55 games in 49 days once they return to the field.

The Cardinals have been off since last Friday, when two players returned positive coronavirus tests. Eight St. Louis players in total have tested positive, including star catcher Yadier Molina.

The Cardinals spent five days in quarantine in a Milwaukee hotel before finally being cleared to travel back to St. Louis late Tuesday, when they returned negative tests for the second straight day. They got workouts in at home and had been prepared to return to the field Friday.

St. Louis' next game is scheduled for Monday at home against Pittsburgh. The Cubs are set to play Tuesday at Cleveland.

Before Friday's postponement, the Cardinals had already added three double-headers against the Brewers to a previously scheduled series to make up their three games postponed last weekend.

## MLB roundup

# Athletics go the distance, drop Astros for 7th straight victory

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Marcus Semien singled home the winning run in the bottom of the 13th to lift Oakland to a 3-2 defeat of Houston. It was the Athletics' seventh straight win in a game that matched the longest this season with baseball's new extra-innings rule.

Alex Bregman hit an RBI double in the top of the 13th inning only for the A's to tie it on Austin Allen's single in the bottom half against Cy Sneed (0-2).

J.B. Wendelken (1-0) worked three strong innings and the A's finally delivered after squandering bases-loaded chances in the 10th and 12th.

"There's added pressure, especially at this level and you know that all you have to do is hit the ball in the outfield, but it's really not that easy," Semien said.

Houston lost its third straight.

The Astros were supposed to visit Oakland months ago in late March for their first road trip of 2020 after a sign-stealing scam that blemished baseball during the offseason. Coronavirus delayed the Bay Area trip.

Robbie Grossman hit a tying homer in the seventh and Gold Glove third baseman Matt Chapman made a terrific stop on Jose Altuve's sharp grounder to keep the game tied in the 10th.

**Rays 1, Yankees 0:** Pinch-hitter Michael Perez hit a sacrifice fly in the eighth inning on his 28th birthday, six Tampa Bay pitchers combined on a two-hitter and the host Rays beat AL East-leading New York Yankees.

Yoshi Tsutsugo drew a lead-off walk from Adam Ottavino (2-1) in the eighth and went to second with one out when Kevin Kiermaier walked. Both runners advanced a base on

a wild pitch before Perez put the Rays up 1-0 on his fly to center.

**Marlins 4, Mets 3:** Francisco Cervelli hit a three-run homer, Humberto Mejia impressed in his abbreviated major league debut and Miami kept up its surprising surge with a win at New York.

The Marlins won their sixth in a row and improved to 7-1 — they're 5-0 since missing more than a week because of the team's coronavirus outbreak.

Cervelli waved and pointed to the imaginary fans in the seating areas after hitting his second homer of the season. Jonathan Villar added an RBI double in Miami's four-run second.

**White Sox 2, Indians 0:** Dylan Cease worked his way through five shutout innings, and host Chicago beat Aaron Civale and Cleveland.

Cease walked the leadoff man four times and hit a batter, but wiggled out of trouble each time. The right-hander allowed two hits and struck out four.

The Indians went 1-for-8 with runners in scoring position and left 10 runners on base, continuing a season-long problem.

**Red Sox 5, Blue Jays 3:** Alex Verdugo hit two solo homers over the Green Monster, Mitch Moreland had a two-run shot and host Boston's beleaguered staff rebounded in a defeat of Toronto.

Verdugo also robbed Travis Shaw of a homer with a leaping grab and Moreland had a bases-loaded walk to help their Red Sox win their second straight following a four-game losing streak.

Cavan Biggio hit a solo homer, and Vladimir Guerrero Jr. and Bo Bichette each had an RBI double for Toronto, which has dropped five of six.

Moreland's homer sailed just over the 380-foot sign at the edge of the Blue Jays' bullpen

in right.

**Royals 3, Indians 2:** Ryan McBroom hit a go-ahead homer in the sixth inning and host Kansas City held Minnesota to a pair of solo homers.

Nick Heath and Nicky Lopez also drove in runs for the Royals, who have won two straight after a six-game slide.

**Reds 8, Brewers 3:** Trevor Bauer turned in another stellar outing, and Matt Davidson and Nick Castellanos homered to lead Cincinnati to a win at Milwaukee.

**Padres 3, Diamondbacks 0:** Zach Davies retired the first 13 Arizona batters, Fernando Tatis Jr. hit a leadoff homer and rookies Jake Cronenworth and Edward Olivares also went deep to lead host San Diego.

**Tigers 17, Pirates 13 (11):** Niko Goodrum drove in five runs, two on a double in a big 11th inning that sent Detroit to a win at Pittsburgh.

**Rockies 8, Mariners 4:** Daniel Murphy had a key two-run single and later hit a two-run home run, Garrett Hampson and Charlie Blackmon added solo shots, and visiting Colorado won for the sixth time in seven games.

**Dodgers 7, Giants 2:** Mookie Betts homered for the first time at Dodger Stadium, and Max Muncy, Will Smith and Edwin Rios went deep to lead host Los Angeles.

**Rangers 4, Angels 3:** Mike Trout homered again on his birthday, but Robinson Chirinos drove in two runs without a hit and host Texas snapped a three-game losing streak.

**Orioles 11, Nationals 0:** Even Chris Davis got in on the act for the suddenly slugging Orioles, doubling his season total by collecting two of Baltimore's 19 hits and raising his average from .087 to .143 in a big win over visiting Washington.