

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## New guidelines for soldier, family travel

BY KIM GAMEL

*Stars and Stripes*

SEOUL, South Korea — The Army will require soldiers and family members to test negative for the coronavirus before leaving the United States and to self-quarantine for two weeks before the journey, officials said Friday.

The new guidelines were to take effect on Aug. 21 amid concerns that troops and their families may be exposed to the virus or contagious themselves while in transit after the Pentagon lifted a travel ban for many locations.

Personnel must take the test on the 11th day of the two-week pre-travel restriction of movement, less than 72 hours prior to departure from the U.S., the Army said.

The new requirements, which apply to personnel traveling on military and commercial flights, may mean that soldiers have to undergo two periods of quarantine if one is also required upon arrival, a spokeswoman told Stars and Stripes.

“The Army seeks to reduce risk of COVID-19 transmission during official travel from the U.S. to international destinations across the globe, acknowledging that additional risk mitigation measures may be required upon arrival at host nation destinations,” Col. Catherine Wilkinson said in an email.

The order doesn’t specify the type of test, but the Army’s currently approved test is the PCR test, she added. Polymerase chain reaction tests analyze the

genetic composition of the virus from a nasal or throat swab.

The order, known as FRAGO 9, was initially due to start Friday but was pushed back to provide time to adjust and prevent confusion among service members already en route, officials said.

Eighth Army commander Lt. Gen. Mike Bills said that soldiers traveling to new assignments in South Korea should continue as planned.

“With FRAGO 9, it only applies in terms of the ROM or the quarantine, at any camp, post, or station back in the States after the 21st of August,” Bills said in a video posted Friday on the command’s Facebook page.

“Please continue your travel; we look forward to you joining our team,” he said, adding that any questions should be

referred to individual chains of command or the Eighth Army, which has its headquarters on Camp Humphreys.

Many service members have tested positive for the virus after arriving at their destination, suggesting they either had it before getting on the plane or contracted it during their travels.

The issue has prompted further concern in South Korea, where 115 troops, dependents and civilian employees have received positive results after traveling to the divided peninsula since mid-April.

U.S. Forces Korea insists that the patients pose no risk to the general population because of a mandatory testing and two-week quarantine that begins as soon as they arrive to reduce the risk of the virus spreading.

## DOD has \$349M in projects underway in Germany

BY JOHN VANDIVER

*Stars and Stripes*

STUTTGART, Germany — Trucks are now pouring concrete for a new \$50 million school at Stuttgart’s Patch Barracks, but when the doors open in two years, there may not be any students to attend.

In Vilseck, a new high school field house is slated to open next year, even as the U.S. 2nd Cavalry Regiment prepares to leave.

The Army Corps of Engineers said it has 80 projects underway in Germany at a cost of \$349 million for the current fiscal year. But any number of those projects could eventually prove to be a multimillion-dollar waste if the Pentagon puts into action its plan to pull nearly 12,000 troops in the country.

The big questions are how long it will take for the myriad units to leave, and depending on who wins the presidential election in November, whether the troop reduction will happen at all. While Presi-

dent Donald Trump has personally called for the reduction based on Germany’s inadequate defense spending, the Biden campaign has criticized the plan. U.S. European Command says there are no plans to pause construction as it works through how to implement Trump’s directive.

“Planning is occurring at the highest levels, and the proposed changes will take time to be fully developed and executed. As such, no changes are being made at this time to construction projects that are already underway,” said Bob Ditchey, a EUCOM spokesman.

Enormous investments in infrastructure are required to support a force of 36,000 and thousands more civilians spread across various bases.

The biggest ongoing project is the \$1 billion replacement for Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, which treats both personnel based in Europe and those returning from downrange, including the Middle East.

For the past six years, workers have also been building a new hospital at Rhine Ordnance Barracks in Kaiserslautern. The project was slated to open in 2022, but now the target completion date is December 2025.

With so much already sunk into the facility and its vital role, its future appears secure.

Next year, the Army Corps of Engineers said it will break ground on 15 projects across Germany, ranging from family housing and clinics to a new elementary school.

Regarding Stuttgart, the work at Patch Elementary will proceed even though the base appears destined for closure under the reduction plan.

With EUCOM slated to move to Mons, Belgium, U.S. Africa Command going to a country still to be decided and a special operations command moving as well, the Stuttgart garrison would be left without a mission.

# Ramstein welcomes new commander

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN  
*Stars and Stripes*

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany — The largest U.S. Air Force wing in Europe welcomed a new commander Friday at a ceremony where public health guidance trumped tradition.

Brig. Gen. Joshua M. Olson took command of the 86th Airlift Wing from Brig. Gen. Mark R. August in an open-door hangar next to Ramstein's flight line.

There were no bleachers and guests sat far apart in folding chairs, holding face masks alongside printed programs in their laps. In a break from tra-

dition, the passing of the wing colors, where the outgoing commander hands the guidon to the new boss, was skipped.

The receiving line, where airmen say farewell to the old commander, also was omitted. Elbow bumps replaced handshakes among the official party on stage.

Being here feels "definitely different, trying to pull off a change of command in a COVID environment," August said.

Olson, like all incoming airmen from the U.S. is subject to a 14-day quarantine and returned to his lodging after the ceremony.

Ramstein is familiar to Olson,

whom, like August, previously commanded the wing's 37th Airlift Squadron. He spent the last month as the executive officer for the head of U.S. Transportation Command at Scott Air Force, Ill. Prior to that he commanded the 22nd Air Refueling Wing at McConnell Air Force Base, Kan.

While Olson was in charge at McConnell, the base finished runner-up to August and Ramstein in 2019 as the Air Force's best installation.

Olson told airmen the wing needs their leadership to "expedite global mobility and air power throughout Europe and Africa" and also to "overcome COVID through strict

discipline, common sense and accountability."

August commanded the wing for two years, overseeing seven groups, 29 squadrons and 8,500 personnel at four bases in Germany, Spain, Belgium and Portugal. He's moving to the Pentagon to be the director of Air Force global reach programs, which includes work on critical aircraft acquisitions.

August's leadership during the coronavirus pandemic got "us through a very dark period" due to strong relationships built with local leaders in the base's surrounding communities, Maj. Gen. Randall Reed, 3rd Air Force commander, said at the ceremony.

## Army, Marine Corps in Hawaii boost health safety levels

BY WYATT OLSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — Army and Marine Corps bases on Hawaii ramped up their health protection condition a notch Thursday in the wake of a growing number of coronavirus infections in the state.

The Army raised the level to condition Charlie — second in intensity only to Delta — meaning that the area is experiencing sustained community transmission of the coronavirus.

Marine Corps Base Hawaii, which shut down an on-post Subway shop last week after an employee tested positive for the virus, also jumped to condition Charlie that day.

Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam raised its level from Bravo to Charlie last Saturday.

According to Defense Department guidelines, Bravo indicates a moderate risk of coronavirus infection, and

Charlie represents a substantial risk.

Military installations in the state had been at condition Charlie during the initial weeks of the pandemic in the spring but lowered it to Bravo in early summer as daily new cases remained at single digits.

The state had a record high of 173 new infections Wednesday, according to the Hawaii Department of Health. The daily tally has been steadily rising since mid-July. The health department does not publish a tally of military-related cases.

As of Thursday, the state has had 2,914 infections and 29 deaths from COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus.

The military services have in general followed orders issued by Hawaii Gov. David Ige and Kirk Caldwell, mayor of the city and county of Honolulu on Oahu, where almost all the military is based.

## Taliban prisoners' release paves way for peace talks

BY J.P. LAWRENCE  
*Stars and Stripes*

KABUL, Afghanistan — Some 400 Taliban prisoners will soon be set free, setting the stage for talks between militants and the Afghan government, according to a statement released Sunday by President Ashraf Ghani's administration.

The decision came after a council of 3,400 Afghan delegates, known as a loya jirga, concluded Sunday with a declaration that agreed to the prisoner release.

"Today I am signing an order ... for the release of 400 prisoners," Ghani said in a speech Sunday.

The declaration released by the loya jirga demanded negotiations start as soon as possible after the release of the 400 prisoners, with other demands including a permanent ceasefire and guarantees that the prisoners do not return to the battlefield.

The prisoner release is a key condition of a deal signed

between the U.S. and the Taliban that could pull American troops from the country.

The deal called for Kabul to release up to 5,000 prisoners and for the Taliban to free up to 1,000 government and military prisoners prior to the start of intra-Afghan talks to determine the future of the country.

The Afghan government, which was not part of the U.S.-Taliban deal, initially stated its resistance to a prisoner release without a ceasefire.

Negotiations between Kabul's political leadership and the Taliban could begin as early as next week in Qatar, where the Taliban maintains a political office, the Associated Press reported.

The U.S. has already significantly cut its troop numbers in Afghanistan and plans to go below 5,000 troops in the country by the end of November, Defense Secretary Mark Esper said Saturday in an interview with Fox News.

# US tops 5M virus cases, to Europe's alarm

Associated Press

ROME — With confirmed coronavirus cases in the United States hitting 5 million Sunday, by far the highest of any country, the failure of the most powerful nation in the world to contain the scourge has been met with astonishment and alarm in Europe.

Perhaps nowhere outside the U.S. is America's bungled virus response viewed with more consternation than in Italy, which was ground zero of Europe's epidemic. Italians were unprepared when the outbreak exploded in February, and the country still has one of the world's highest official death tolls at 35,000.

But after a strict nationwide, 10-week lockdown, vigilant tracing of new clusters and

general acceptance of mask mandates and social distancing, Italy has become a model of virus containment.

"Don't they care about their health?" a mask-clad Patrizia Antonini asked about people in the U.S. as she walked with friends along the banks of Lake Bracciano, north of Rome. "They need to take our precautions ... They need a real lockdown."

Much of the incredulity in Europe stems from the fact that America had the benefit of time, European experience and medical know-how to treat the virus that the continent itself didn't have when the first COVID-19 patients started filling intensive care units.

Yet more than four months into a sustained outbreak, the U.S. reached the 5 million mark,

according to the running count kept by Johns Hopkins University. Health officials believe the actual number is perhaps 10 times higher, or closer to 50 million, given testing limitations and the fact that as many as 40% of all those who are infected have no symptoms.

"We Italians always saw America as a model," said Massimo Franco, a columnist with daily *Corriere della Sera*. "But with this virus we've discovered a country that is very fragile, with bad infrastructure and a public health system that is nonexistent."

Italian Health Minister Roberto Speranza hasn't shied away from criticizing the U.S., officially condemning as "wrong" Washington's decision to withhold funding from the World Health Organization

and expressing amazement at President Donald Trump's virus response.

After Trump finally donned a mask last month, Speranza told La7 television: "I'm not surprised by Trump's behavior now; I'm profoundly surprised by his behavior before."

With America's world's-highest death toll of more than 160,000, its politicized resistance to masks and its rising caseload, European nations have barred American tourists and visitors from other countries with growing cases from freely traveling to the bloc.

Mistakes were made in Europe, too, from delayed lockdowns to insufficient protections for nursing home elderly, critical shortages of tests and protective equipment for medical personnel.

## Trump orders encroach on Congress' powers

Associated Press

BEDMINSTER, N.J. — President Donald Trump has bypassed the nation's lawmakers as he claimed the authority to defer payroll taxes and replace an expired unemployment benefit with a lower amount after negotiations with Congress on a new coronavirus rescue package collapsed.

Trump's orders on Saturday encroached on Congress' control of federal spending and seemed likely to be met with legal challenges. The president cast his actions as necessary given that lawmakers have been unable to reach an agreement to plunge more money into the stumbling economy, which has imperiled his November reelection.

Trump moved to continue paying a supplemental federal unemployment benefit for millions of Americans out of work during the outbreak. His order, however, called for up to \$400 payments each week, one-third less than the \$600 people were

receiving. How many people would receive the benefit and how long it might take to arrive were open questions.

The previous unemployment benefit, which expired on Aug. 1, was fully funded by Washington, but Trump is asking states to now cover 25%. He is seeking to set aside \$44 billion in previously approved disaster aid to help states, but said it would be up to states to determine how much, if any of it, to fund, so the benefits could be smaller still.

Trump hopes the four executive orders he signed will signal to Americans that he is acting where Congress will not to address economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic, which has upended nearly all aspects of American life. It's unclear what the economic impact of his actions will be, and his orders do not address several areas that have been part of the congressional negotiations, including funding for schools and state and local governments.

## Ohio governor's conflicting test results raise backlash

Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The Ohio governor's positive, then negative, tests for COVID-19 have provided fuel for skeptics of government pandemic mandates and critics of his often-aggressive policies.

"I'm sure the internet is lighting up with 'Well, you can't believe any test,'" Mike DeWine said in a WCOL radio interview Friday, after a whirlwind of events the day before when the initial positive showing forced the Republican to scrub a planned meeting with President Donald Trump.

Instead of seeing Trump at the Cleveland airport, DeWine returned to the state capital for new testing with his wife, Fran, through Ohio State University's medical center. They then went to their southwestern Ohio farm in Cedarville, where DeWine said he planned to quarantine for 14 days. But within hours, he had received Columbus test results that were negative. The first test, part of protocol for people meeting with the presi-

dent, was a rapid-result antigen test, while the Columbus testing was a genetic, laboratory test whose results are considered more reliable.

The governor's office said Saturday another test for each by Ohio State's Wexner Medical Center again returned negative results for DeWine and his wife.

State Rep. Nino Vitale, a conservative GOP gadfly from Urbana, tweeted a photo of DeWine wearing a mask minutes after the positive test was announced Thursday.

"I think the question must be asked. Has he not been wearing his mask, or do masks not stop the spread?" Vitale said in his post, which also stated he wished the governor no ill will.

DeWine said he received some "not so nice" texts during the day Thursday about wearing masks. He reasserted Friday that while they might not be 100% effective, they do help prevent the spread and have been made a noticeable difference in the state's most populated cities.

# Bikers descend on Sturgis rally with few masks in sight

Associated Press

STURGIS, S.D. — The coronavirus may be changing the world, but there aren't many signs of the pandemic at the massive annual motorcycle rally being held this week at a small city along Interstate 90 in western South Dakota.

The scene Saturday at the 80th Sturgis Motorcycle Rally was familiar to veterans of the event, with throngs of maskless bikers packing the streets.

Organizers expected the overall crowd to be smaller, perhaps half the size of a normal year, when some half-million people from across the country roar into a town whose population is around 7,000.

The sheer numbers raise the prospect that this year's rally could spread the COVID-19 virus in a state with no special limits on indoor crowds, no mask mandates and a governor who is eager to welcome visitors and their money.

## Arizona

PHOENIX — Arizona health officials on Saturday reported 1,054 additional confirmed COVID-19 cases with 56 more deaths amid slowing of the state's coronavirus outbreak.

Declines that saw COVID-19 hospitalizations and related usage of intensive care beds and ventilators begin to drop in mid-July continued as of Friday, according to Department of Health Services figures.

The latest figures increased the state's total confirmed COVID-19 cases to 186,107 and the reported death toll to 4,137.

According to data from Johns Hopkins University, the seven-day rolling average of daily new cases in Arizona dropped over the past two weeks, going from 2,539.71 new cases per day on July 24 to 1,577.57 new cases per day on Aug. 7.

## California

VENTURA — The pastor of a California church has vowed to continue holding indoor worship in defiance of coronavirus health orders after a judge issued a temporary restraining order barring the church from doing so.

Ventura County Superior Court Judge Matthew Guasco cited "an immediate threat to public health and safety due to the 2019 novel coronavirus" in issuing the temporary restraining order. The order will be in place until another hearing is held Aug. 21.

The county north of Los Angeles and its health officer sued the Godspoke Calvary Chapel in Newbury Park after pastor Rob McCoy repeatedly defied health orders designed to limit the spread of COVID-19.

## Florida

TALLAHASSEE — Florida's coronavirus numbers remain high as in-person early voting begins ahead of the state's primary and some school districts prepare to reopen Monday.

Florida reported 187 new coronavirus deaths Saturday, bringing the state's total to 8,238.

That pushes the average number of reported deaths over the last seven days to 156, down from a high of 185. There were more than 8,500 new confirmed coronavirus cases, bringing the state's total to nearly 527,000 cases.

The number of people who are hospitalized because of the virus continued to decline. There were 6,836 hospitalizations late Saturday morning compared to 7,174 the day before.

## Hawaii

HONOLULU — The Hawaii Department of Public Safety announced Friday that a new inmate at the Oahu Community Correction Center tested positive for COVID-19 last week, raising concerns about the safety of others crowded in jails and prisons statewide.

The inmate, who remained unidentified, was brought to the facility last Monday and was tested Tuesday after officials learned of a possible exposure prior to entering the facility, the Honolulu Star-Advertiser reported.

The inmate is believed to be the first inmate at a Hawaii jail or prison to have tested positive.

The Oahu Community Correction Center is currently housing 938 inmates. The facility's design capacity is 628, and its operational capacity is 954.

## South Carolina

COLUMBIA — State health officials are sending up an alarm about the rate of COVID-19 infections in people who don't have symptoms and likely don't know they're carrying the disease.

"Evidence is increasing about the high rates of infection in people who do not have symptoms and don't know they are infectious," the Department of Health and Environmental Control said in a statement.

Health officials announced Saturday that 1,178 more South Carolinians tested positive for the coronavirus, bringing the total number of cases identified since March up to 98,743.

Department of Health and Environmental Control officials also reported that 67 more people died after contracting COVID-19, one of the highest numbers of deaths announced.

## Tennessee

COOKEVILLE — More than 80 students in a Tennessee school district were quarantined during the first week of classes after a student tested positive for COVID-19, officials said.

News outlets reported that a student at Cookeville High School tested positive, and others who were in close contact with the student have been told to quarantine for 14 days, according to the school district in mostly rural Putnam County.

An additional seven teachers and staff, and a bus driver, are also at home due to a positive test or coming into close contact with someone who tested positive.

Many of the contacts occurred outside of school, which started this week, the district said.

## Texas

AUSTIN — Texas Gov. Greg Abbott on Saturday extended a statewide disaster declaration he first issued in March to allow the state to better respond to the coronavirus pandemic.

"Renewing this Disaster Declaration will provide communities with the resources they need to respond to COVID-19," Abbott said in a statement. "I urge Texans to remain vigilant in our fight against this virus. Everyone must do their part to slow the spread of COVID-19 by wearing a mask, practicing social distancing and washing your hands frequently and thoroughly."

State health officials on Friday reported 481,483 people with the virus that has left at least 8,343 dead. The true number of cases in Texas is likely higher because many people have not been tested, and studies have suggested that people can be infected and not feel sick.

## New Hampshire

New Hampshire health officials are investigating a potential coronavirus outbreak linked to a Windham church.

The state Department of Health and Human Services said Friday that 16 people who have tested positive for COVID-19 have connections to the Windham Crossing Life Church.

Health officials said anyone who attended events associated with the church since July may have been exposed to the virus and should be tested. That includes a YouthStorm Inc. camp event held July 16 through 18, the department said.

"The public should not attend events related to the Windham Crossing Life Church over the next week while DHHS investigates these illnesses further," it said in a statement.

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Youth praised for returning lost wallet

**MI** WAYLAND — Two western Michigan boys who found a wallet filled with cash were praised for turning their find over to local police.

The Wayland Police Department said the two boys, identified only as Austin and Logan, approached officers who were talking behind the department's headquarters and gave them the wallet.

The officers found that the wallet contained a total of \$364 that belonged to a man from the nearby community of Hopkins. A deputy later delivered the wallet to its rightful owner, MLive.com reported.

## Anti-litter campaign highlights costs, fines

**AL** MONTGOMERY — A new campaign by the Alabama Department of Transportation highlights both the huge cost of removing roadside trash and the potential penalties for being a litterbug.

The fine for a first conviction for littering is \$500, and a second conviction can cost \$1,000 plus community service. Lawmakers increased the penalties last year as the cost of removing litter reached \$7 million.

The trash highlighted in the "Trash Costs Cash" public service announcement includes cigarette butts, fast-food trash, plastic bottles and old drink cans.

"If we each play our part in keeping our state clean, we won't be impacted by the rising litter fines. More ALDOT funding can be spent on improving the roads we drive instead of (on) litter pickup," Allison Green, coordinator of Drive Safe Alabama, said in a statement.

## Interstate pursuit ends after car hits people

**OH** CINCINNATI — A police pursuit that began in Cincinnati continued into Kentucky, where four pedestrians were struck and two were killed, police said.

Cincinnati police said an organized crime investigation squad and a federal task force tried to stop a vehicle with three people.

The vehicle fled and went over a suspension bridge into Newport, Ky., where it went out of control and struck four people, police said. Two of the people struck died and the other two had non-life-threatening injuries, police said.

The three suspects were arrested and also had non-life-threatening injuries.

Police in both cities, along with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, will investigate the alleged criminal actions of the suspects, about which no details were released, police said.

## Driver crashes into toll plaza, charged with DUI

**NH** PORTSMOUTH — Police arrested a Massachusetts man who they say was impaired when he drove a pickup into a concrete barrier at a toll plaza in New Hampshire.

Robert Scott Jr., 67, of Hopkinton, Mass., ran into the concrete barrier at the toll plaza in Dover. No one was hurt other than Scott, who was taken to Portsmouth Regional Hospital for treatment, police said.

New Hampshire State Police arrested him at the scene of the crash on charges of driving under the influence and reckless operation. It is Scott's second DUI charge, police said in a statement.

## Man fleeing police gets stuck in chimney

**IN** EVANSVILLE — An Evansville man was arrested after being rescued from a chimney where he got stuck trying to hide from police, authorities said.

Officers from the Vanderburgh County Sheriff's Office, Evansville Police Department and Indiana State Police were searching for Cody Methanial Sargent, 29, who sheriff's office deputies said was wanted for violating his probation in drug-related convictions.

Sargent tried to escape from officers by climbing up a fireplace chimney. But he became stuck about three-quarters of the way up and could not free himself, the Evansville Courier & Press reported.

The Evansville Fire Department partially dismantled the chimney and rescued Sargent, the sheriff's office said.

## Reward offered for info about fire that killed 5

**CO** DENVER — A \$14,000 reward was offered for information leading to the arrest of those responsible for setting a house fire that killed five people with ties to Senegal.

The victims were members of a family who were "headed in the right direction," Joe Montoya, division chief of investigations for Denver police, said at a press conference also attended by Senegal Consul General Elhadji Ndao and members of Colorado's Senegalese community.

Montoya released few details about the investigation into the fire at the house in Denver's Green Valley Ranch neighborhood.

## Thieves steal 22 cars before used lot opening

**MI** GRAND RAPIDS, — Nearly two dozen vehicles were stolen in Grand Rapids, spoiling a weekend grand opening for a used car business, police and the owner said.

"This sets us way back," said Don Miller, owner of Autowest in Grand Rapids.

Thieves threw rocks through a window and grabbed keys to all 60 vehicles, Miller said.

Twenty-two vehicles were stolen, though at least three were recovered, including two at a Taco Bell across the street, general manager Dan Reese told WOOD-TV. The value of the loss is estimated at \$300,000. Security cameras were not recording at the time of the break-in.

## Residents urged to help save museum

**LA** LAFAYETTE — A group of Louisiana residents is trying to drum up support for reopening the Lafayette Science Museum, which the mayor says the city can't afford to keep up and running.

Renee Sonnier and Blake Lagneaux are among those hoping to bring attention to the museum now that it's on the chopping block.

KATC-TV reported that Lafayette Mayor-President Josh Guillory announced layoffs at the museum in May, saying there wasn't enough funding.

Lagneaux started the "Save Our Museum" Facebook page to strategize, keep people informed and share the museum's history. The group is asking people to call their local council members and urge support for the science museum.

From wire reports

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# Bubblicious: Suns are a surprising 5-0

Associated Press

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — The last time Devin Booker walked off the court as a winner in five consecutive games, these were the opponents: Arkansas, Hampton, Cincinnati, West Virginia and Notre Dame.

That is, until now.

Booker and the Phoenix Suns — the team that came to the NBA restart at Walt Disney World with the worst record in the Western Conference and the second-worst record of the 22 teams in the field — are perhaps the best story of the bubble.

They're 5-0 at Disney, breathing real life into playoff hopes that basically were non-existent when the season was suspended because of the coronavirus pandemic on March 11.

It's the team's first five-game winning streak since December 2014. For Booker, it's his first run of five wins in a row since helping Kentucky make its Final Four run in 2015.

"I think this bubble opportunity was big for us and we're taking advantage of it," Booker said.

With Toronto losing to Boston on Friday

night, the Suns are the lone team that has yet to lose in the bubble. The Raptors had been 3-0 going into that game against the Celtics.

The Suns have played like serious playoff contenders. Led by Booker, Phoenix had wins over Washington, Dallas, the Los Angeles Clippers and Indiana before beating Miami. The Suns entered Saturday's schedule only 2½ games behind eighth-place Memphis.

A team that had a stretch of four wins in 20 games during November and December, then a run of four wins in 15 games during January and February, got to the bubble and are now 5-for-5.

The Suns are riding a 10-year playoff drought, the second-longest current one in the NBA, but now they're thinking big and for good reason.

"Well, you know, this is in the fledgling stages, for sure," Suns coach Monty Williams said. "We've got a lot more work to do. And there's a process that we've kind of gotten ourselves involved in and we're going to stick to that. So, fun? I don't have time to have fun right now. It's always good to win, but I'm working right now. And I

want guys to understand, it's fun when you win — but then you've got to turn the page and get right back to work."

Williams understands the reality for the Suns right now. While the 5-0 start has been noteworthy, even an 8-0 mark in the seeding games wouldn't guarantee the Suns a trip to that play-in round.

The Suns finish the regular season against Oklahoma City, Philadelphia and Dallas.

"I've been in five years now and haven't had that much success," Booker said. "But, you know, I'm working hard every day to turn that narrative and change that narrative. We have a good bunch in here to do it. A lot of young players mixed with some veteran presence and it's a good look for us. So, we're going to keep our head down, keep working."

Booker is averaging 29.4 points in the five games. Deandre Ayton, another big piece of the young Suns' core, is averaging 18.3 points and 9.3 rebounds. There are six players averaging double figures in all, including Cameron Payne, who is shooting 50% from three-point range in his first five games with the Suns.

## NBA roundup

# Doncic, Mavericks outlast Bucks in overtime

Associated Press

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Luka Doncic scored 36 points in his NBA-leading 17th triple-double and the Dallas Mavericks scored the last seven points of regulation to force overtime, going on to a 136-132 win over the Milwaukee Bucks on Saturday.

Doncic also had a career-high 19 assists and 14 rebounds on the day the 2019 NBA Rookie of the Year was named a finalist for the most improved award.

Milwaukee star Giannis Antetokounmpo had 34 points, 13 rebounds and five blocks before fouling out in the final seconds on the day the reigning MVP was named a finalist for the award along with LeBron James and James Harden.

Brook Lopez scored a season-high 34 points for the Bucks,

who have already clinched the top seed in the Eastern Conference.

Doncic's final assist was a between-the-legs pass to Maxi Kleber for a three-point play and a 133-128 lead.

In a matchup that included three of the four players averaging at least 30 points and 10 rebounds in the bubble, Doncic and Antetokounmpo hit those marks again. Dallas' Kristaps Porzingis fell short, getting 26 points and 11 rebounds before fouling out.

**Nuggets 134, Jazz 132 (2OT):** Jamal Murray scored 23 points in his first game of the NBA restart, including the tying and go-ahead baskets, and Denver beat Utah.

The Nuggets overcame Donovan Mitchell's 35 points for Utah, including a three-pointer with 4.2 seconds remaining in the second overtime. But he

missed a desperation heave from near half-court as the game ended.

Nikola Jokic scored 10 of his 30 points in the first overtime for Denver, which solidified its hold on third place in the Western Conference playoff standings.

**Clippers 122, Trail Blazers 117:** Rodney McGruder hit a three-pointer with 26.5 seconds left, and Los Angeles beat Portland even with Kawhi Leonard resting on the bench.

Portland had a chance to ensure a play-in for the Western Conference's final playoff berth and eliminate Sacramento with a win. The Trail Blazers led much of the game, but the NBA's top-scoring team inside the bubble was outscored 12-2 in the final 96 seconds as Paul George also sat the final five minutes. George finished with 21 points.

**Suns 119, Heat 112:** Devin Booker scored 35 points and Jevon Carter added a season-high 20 as Phoenix remained undefeated in the NBA restart, beating Miami.

Carter made six of eight three-pointers as the Suns improved to 5-0 in the restart.

Miami is currently the No. 4 team in the Eastern Conference playoff standings. Duncan Robinson and Tyler Herro each had 25 points to lead the Heat.

**Pacers 116, Lakers 111:** T.J. Warren scored 39 points, including seven straight to put Indiana ahead in the final two minutes, and the Pacers beat the Los Angeles Lakers.

The Pacers improved to 4-1 in the bubble and moved a half-game ahead of Philadelphia for the fifth seed in the East.

## MLB roundup

## Cueto, Giants defeat Dodgers, Kershaw

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Austin Slater had his first multi-homer game, Johnny Cueto took a no-hitter into the sixth inning and the San Francisco Giants beat the Los Angeles Dodgers 5-4 on Saturday.

Slater hit solo shots over the wall in center in the third and fifth innings off Clayton Kershaw and became only the seventh player to hit two homers in the same game off the Dodgers' ace.

"In the moment it felt great and I think this will go down as a career highlight so far. He's a pitcher who has been the most dominant over the last 12 years," Slater said.

It was a tough night for Kershaw (1-1), who has traditionally dominated the Giants. The right-hander allowed four runs and six hits in 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings with a walk and six strikeouts.

Cueto (1-0) only allowed a third-inning walk to Chris Taylor in the first five innings before hitting a wall in the sixth. He went 5<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings and allowed four runs on two hits with three walks and three strikeouts.

Mike Yastrzemski also homered in the third to extend San Francisco's lead to 2-0.

**Diamondbacks 3, Padres 2:** Starling Marte and Stephen Vogt homered off Chris Pad-

dack in the sixth inning, and Arizona won at San Diego.

The Padres failed to capitalize on two more home runs by Fernando Tatis Jr., including his second leadoff homer in two nights.

**Rangers 2, Angels 0:** Joey Gallo hit a two-run homer, six Texas pitchers combined on a four-hitter to give host Texas consecutive wins for the first time this season.

Edinson Volquez (1-1), the first reliever after starter Kolby Allard's five innings, worked the sixth for his first major league victory since 2017. It was his first win for the Rangers since 2007, before the former starter was traded to Cincinnati for Josh Hamilton. Rafael Montero worked a perfect ninth for his second save in two nights.

**Orioles 5, Nationals 3:** Pat Valaika, Pedro Severino and Anthony Santander homered during a five-run rally in the eighth inning as visiting Baltimore roughed up Washington's relievers.

The Orioles went into eighth with just two hits and trailing 3-0. Sean Doolittle relieved and Baltimore began the eighth with back-to-back, pinch-hit homers by Valaika and Severino.

**Royals 9, Twins 6:** Jorge Soler homered in back-to-back innings, the second coming in

a go-ahead six-run fourth in which host Kansas City went deep three times.

Nicky Lopez hit a two-run shot off reliever Lewis Thorpe (0-1) and Salvador Perez also went deep as the first seven Royals reached base in the fourth. Soler and Perez went back-to-back for the second time this season, and it was the first time the club had hit three homers in an inning since Aug. 19, 2018, against the White Sox.

**Athletics 3, Astros 1:** Marcus Semien homered in the first after hitting a walkoff single to end a 13-inning win a night earlier and host Oakland beat Houston for their eighth straight victory.

Frankie Montas (2-1) pitched seven shutout innings, allowing two hits without walking a batter and striking out five for the AL West-leading A's.

**Phillies 5, Braves 0:** Jake Arrieta tossed six strong innings for his first win in more than a year and Jay Bruce and J.T. Realmuto each homered to lead host Philadelphia.

Arrieta (1-1) tossed three-hit ball and struck out six for his first win since June 30, 2019. Realmuto continued his hot streak, homering for the third straight game, with a 427-foot solo shot in the fourth off Braves starter Kyle Wright (0-

2). Wright put the next runners on base and Bruce hit a three-run homer to make it 4-0.

**Mets 8, Marlins 4:** J.D. Davis homered and drove in a career-high four runs, Pete Alonso and Michael Conforto also connected, and New York finally slowed down visiting Miami.

**Blue Jays 2, Red Sox 1:** Five Toronto pitchers combined on a four-hitter and Lourdes Gurriel Jr. scored the tiebreaking run in the eighth inning on a groundout to lift the visiting Blue Jays.

**Reds 4, Brewers 1:** Anthony DeSclafani allowed two singles over six scoreless innings and Eugenio Suarez hit a three-run homer to lift Cincinnati to a win at Milwaukee.

**Rockies 5, Mariners 0:** Charlie Blackmon added three more hits to his major league-leading total and drove in three runs, and four Colorado pitchers combined for a one-hitter to win at Seattle.

**Tigers 11, Pirates 5:** Niko Goodrum, Miguel Cabrera, C.J. Cron and Jeimer Candelario all hit home runs in the first inning against Pittsburgh's Derek Holland to lead visiting Detroit.

**Indians 7, White Sox 1:** Zach Plesac tossed six strong innings and Cleveland snapped a scoring drought with a six-run fourth at Chicago.

## Meadows helps Rays split doubleheader with Yankees

Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — Austin Meadows hit a two-run single, and the Tampa Bay Rays held off the New York Yankees 5-3 for a split of seven-inning games in a doubleheader Saturday.

The Yankees won the opener 8-4 as ace Gerrit Cole came within one strike of earning his 20th straight regular-season win.

Cole, who had won his first three starts since signing a \$324 million, nine-year contract in the offseason, took a 5-0 lead into the fifth inning but gave up three runs with two outs and was pulled because of a

high pitch count.

In the nightcap, the Rays used six pitchers during a bullpen game. Aaron Judge, who hit his eighth home run of the season in the opener, flied out with a runner on base to end it.

Lefty-swinging Mike Ford hit for Yankees slugger Giancarlo Stanton against lefty Jalen Beeks in the sixth inning of Game 2 with two on and no outs. Stanton, who also homered in the first game, exited with tightness in his left hamstring.

"It was when he moved up on the wild pitch (in the fourth), that's where (it) tight-

ened up on him." Yankees manager Aaron Boone said. "We're going to get an MRI, but it does look like an IL situation."

Stanton, limited to 18 games last season due to injuries, was hurt during spring training this season and rehabbed during the shutdown at the Yankees' complex in Tampa, Fla.

DJ LeMahieu got the Yankees within 5-3 on a two-run single in the seventh off Beeks. Nick Anderson relieved and retired Judge on the long fly for his second save.

"Crossed my fingers that it wasn't going out," Anderson said.

# Johnson emerges from pack, leads PGA

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Dustin Johnson supplied the birdies, eight of them Saturday at the PGA Championship, the most he has ever made in his 157 rounds of major championship golf for a 5-under 65 and a one-shot lead.

Brooks Koepka supplied the needle.

Koepka recovered from three straight bogeys to salvage a 69 and stay within two shots of a leaderboard more crowded than any of San Francisco's congested highways. At stake is a chance to become only the seventh player to win the same major three straight times. He surveyed the cast of contenders, and focused on the guy at the top.

"I like my chances," Koepka said. "When I've been in this position before, I've capitalized. He's only won one. I'm playing good. I don't know, we'll see."

As he stepped away from

the microphone, Koepka smiled and said to Jason Day, "How about that shade?" They laughed.

Too bad this isn't a two-man show.

The final round at Harding Park figures to be wide open, just like it was on a Saturday so wild that eight players had at least a share of the lead during the third round.

Johnson lost his yardage book and still found his way through an enormous crowd of contenders. He made a double bogey on the ninth hole and still bounced back with a 31 on the tough, windy back nine.

He needed all eight of those birdies on a day of low scores, long putts and endless possibilities.

One possibility is Koepka hoisting the Wanamaker Trophy for the third straight year, which hasn't happened since Walter Hagen won four in a row in the 1920s when it was match play. The last player to win any

major three straight times was Peter Thomson at the British Open in 1956.

Koepka was two shots behind on a board that features only two major champions among the top six.

Scottie Scheffler, the PGA Tour rookie from Texas, ran off three straight birdies only to miss a 6-foot par putt on the final hole. He still shot a 65 and was one shot behind, in the final group at his first PGA Championship. Cameron Champ, who has the most powerful swing on tour, shot 67 and joined Scheffler one shot behind.

Johnson was at 9-under 201 as he goes for his second major title. For all the chances he has had, this is only the second time he has led going into the final round. The other was down the coast at Pebble Beach, his first chance at winning a major. He had a three-shot lead in the 2010 U.S. Open and shot 82.

Now he is more seasoned with experiences good (21 tour

victories) and bad (five close calls in the majors).

"I'm going to have to play good golf if I want to win. It's simple," Johnson said. "I've got to hit a lot of fairways and a lot of greens. If I can do that tomorrow, I'm going to have a good chance coming down the stretch. ... I'm just going to have to do what I did today. Just get it done."

Among the cast of contenders are major champions like Koepka, Jason Day and Justin Rose, and fresh faces like Scheffler, Champ and Collin Morikawa. Also right there was Bryson DeChambeau, thanks to a 95-foot putt for birdie on his last hole. Turns out he can hit long putts, too.

Missing from all this action is Tiger Woods, who didn't make a birdie until the 16th hole and is out of the mix for the fourth straight major since his emotional Masters victory last year.

## NHL roundup

### Flyers defeat Lightning, earn East's top seeding

Associated Press

TORONTO — Rookie Nicolas Aube-Kubel scored twice, and the Philadelphia Flyers defeated the Tampa Bay Lightning 4-1 on Saturday night to clinch the Eastern Conference's top seed through the playoffs.

The Lightning not only dropped the game in completing preliminary round-robin play with a 2-1 record, Tampa Bay's star defenseman Victor Hedman did not return after appearing to twist his right ankle while going down untouched midway through the first period.

Coach Jon Cooper didn't have an update on Hedman's status or how much time he might miss, though acknowledged his

potential loss would create a notable hole in the Lightning's lineup.

**Golden Knights 4, Avalanche 3 (OT):** Alex Tuch scored 4:44 into overtime, Jonathan Marchessault had two goals and Vegas beat Colorado to earn the No. 1 seed in the Western Conference.

The Golden Knights will face Chicago in the first round of the playoffs. The second-seeded Avs take on Arizona.

Tuch scored the winner on a shot over the shoulder of Avalanche goaltender Philipp Grubauer. The Avalanche tied the game with 1:02 left in regulation when J.T. Compher poked in the puck.

Nicolas Roy also scored for the Golden Knights.

## Harvick wins his fifth Cup race of the season

Associated Press

BROOKLYN, Mich. — Kevin Harvick forced his way past Kyle Busch, then fended off hometown threat Brad Keselowski.

It takes a lot to beat Harvick these days — especially in Michigan.

Harvick raced to his fifth NASCAR Cup Series victory of the season, outlasting Keselowski in overtime Saturday in the opener of a weekend doubleheader at Michigan International Speedway. Harvick now has four victories at Michigan, including three in the last three years. He's been a big part of what is now a five-race winning streak for Ford at the Cup level at MIS.

"Just got challenged by a whole bunch of restarts at the end that made it kind of crazy,"

Harvick said. "But in the end it was a great day for us. Everybody did a great job, called a great race, and we capitalized on a fast car and put it in Victory Lane."

Keselowski was denied again in his home state. He's never won a Cup race at Michigan, but he'll have another chance Sunday. It would have been a tall order to overcome Harvick's dominant No. 4 car on this day. Harvick also won the race's first two stages.

"At no time did I think us or anybody else was better than the 4," Keselowski said.

Martin Truex Jr. finished third, followed by Ryan Blaney and Kyle Busch.

Busch remained winless on the year with five races left in the regular season.