

# STARS AND STRIPES®

Friday, December 6, 2019

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

## Saudi student kills 3 at Fla. Navy base

Associated Press

PENSACOLA, Fla. — An aviation student from Saudi Arabia opened fire in a classroom building at Naval Air Station Pensacola on Friday, a U.S. official said, an attack that left three dead in addition to the assailant.

The student, who was fatally shot by a sheriff's deputy, was a second lieutenant in the Saudi air force, said two U.S. officials who spoke on condition of anonymity to disclose information that had not yet been made public. The officials said authorities were investigating whether the attack was terrorism-related.

The attack was the second at a Navy base in three days. A sailor whose submarine was docked at Pearl Harbor, Ha-

waii, opened fire on three civilian employees Wednesday, killing two before taking his own life.

In Pensacola, 11 people were shot, including two sheriff's deputies who were the first to respond, one of whom killed the shooter, Escambia County Sheriff David Morgan said. One of the deputies was shot in the arm and the other in the knee, and both were expected to recover, he said.

The attack prompted a massive law enforcement response and a lockdown at the base.

The base remained closed until further notice and those still there would be evacuated when authorities decided it was safe to do so, base commander Capt. Timothy Kinsella Jr. said.

Lucy Samford, 31, said her husband, a Navy reservist and civilian worker on the base, was about 500 yards from where the shooting happened. She said she got a call from him a little after 7 a.m. and "one of the first things out of his mouth was, 'I love you. Tell the kids I love them. I just want you to know there's an active shooter on base.'"

Her husband, whom she declined to identify, later told her he was OK.

NAS Pensacola employs more than 16,000 military and 7,400 civilian personnel, according to its website. One of the Navy's most historic and storied bases, it sprawls along the waterfront southwest of downtown Pensacola and dominates the economy of the surrounding area.

Part of the base resembles a college campus, with buildings where 60,000 members of the Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard receive training each year in multiple fields of aviation.

The base is home to the Blue Angels flight demonstration team and includes the National Naval Aviation Museum, a popular regional tourist attraction.

Alex McGinley, a tattoo artist who works near the Pensacola base, said he was alerted to the shooting by one of his clients, most of whom are military personnel. He said none of his clients was among those shot.

"What kind of things go through a person's mind to a level that makes them do something like that?" McGinley asked.

## Sailor who killed 2 at Pearl Harbor said unhappy with commanders

Associated Press

HONOLULU — The Navy sailor who fatally shot two people at Pearl Harbor before killing himself was unhappy with his commanders and had been undergoing counseling, a U.S. military official said Friday.

The sailor, Gabriel Romero, 22, also faced nonjudicial punishment, an administrative process for minor misconduct, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss personnel matters.

Romero also wounded another person in Wednesday's attack at a naval shipyard before turning the gun on himself at the storied military base, officials said.

The sailor's job was to stand watch and provide security for the fast attack submarine USS Columbia, which is at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam for maintenance. He used his ser-

vice rifle to shoot the victims, then killed himself with his service pistol, the official said.

Navy officials said they didn't know the motive for the shooting. It wasn't known if the sailor and victims knew each other.

In a second attack at a Navy base this week, a shooter opened fire in a classroom building Friday at Naval Air Station Pensacola in Florida — leaving four people dead, including the assailant, and multiple people wounded.

In the Pearl Harbor shooting, Tara Kapoi told The Associated Press that her 30-year-old husband, Vincent Kapoi Jr., was among those killed. He worked at the shipyard and grew up in Waianae, a town on the west side of Oahu, she said.

The other victim who died was identified by family members as Roldan Agustin, 49.

Jamie Hiranaka, the presi-

dent of the union representing the three workers, said they were all quality assurance inspectors who checked welding and other work completed by shipyard workers.

The union, the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers Local 121 Hawaii, said in a statement it was doing everything possible to help workers get through the shooting.

"Workers were in lockdown on base for hours yesterday; some were witnesses, others heard the gun shots, others locked down into the closest building they could find but most were locked in their offices not knowing (what) was happening. Many emotions were felt yesterday but most were of fear, terror, sadness and grief," it said.

Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard repairs, maintains and modernizes the ships and submarines

of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, which is headquartered at Pearl Harbor. The base is the home for 10 destroyers, 15 submarines and Air Force units.

The incident came just days before Saturday's ceremony to remember those lost in the attack on Pearl Harbor 78 years ago when security will be beefed up. The National Park Service, which hosts the event with the Navy, declined to provide specifics on the heightened security measures, many of which aren't readily apparent, Pearl Harbor National Memorial spokesman Jay Blount said. Increased security for the event is typical.

The commemoration of the anniversary of the Japanese bombing that propelled the U.S. into World War II is expected to draw survivors, veterans, dignitaries and the public to honor more than 2,300 Americans who perished on Dec. 7, 1941.

# Coast Guard, Navy boats collide

Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — A U.S. Coast Guard vessel collided with a U.S. Navy boat, injuring nine people, including one critically, off Alaska's Kodiak Island.

The accident occurred Wednesday evening in Women's Bay near Kodiak's Coast Guard base, said Lt. Comm. Scott McCann, a Coast Guard Alaska District spokesman in Juneau.

A Coast Guard 38-foot special purpose training boat had just completed a helicopter hoist training session with aircraft from the agency's air base, McCann said. Training sessions are aimed at maintaining pilot proficiency for search and rescue missions.

"They had just completed training with the air station and were headed back home," McCann said.

The boat collided with a Navy vessel of

about the same size, McCann said. The vessels were not training together.

The Kodiak Coast Guard Base is the nation's largest and was home to 1,100 active duty members as of 2018. The base conducts missions connected to search and rescue, buoy tending and oversight of the North Pacific fishing fleet.

The Navy vessel in the collision was a "combatant craft medium" used by Naval Special Warfare personnel, said Navy spokesman Lt. Matt Stroup. The Navy uses facilities on Kodiak for cold weather training of special warfare personnel, which includes Navy SEALs and supporting forces.

The Navy vessel is a reconfigurable multi-mission boat primarily used to deliver and support special operation forces, Stroup said. The approximately 60-foot boat can carry 19 special operations personnel.

Stroup could not comment on which

Navy personnel were training Wednesday.

Details of the collision have not been released and will be the subject of an investigation. Both boats were damaged but able to return to port.

All nine of the injured were taken to a Kodiak hospital. The six injured Coast Guardsmen were treated and released. Two of the Navy personnel were discharged but one with serious injuries was flown to Anchorage for additional treatment.

The Coast Guard boat carries a minimum crew of three and usually four, McCann said. Additional personnel would have been on board for the training session.

McCann did not have an indication of how badly the boats were damaged.

"The extent will be determined by the investigation," he said.

## Company assists probe into base housing fraud

BY ROSE L. THAYER  
Stars and Stripes

A company that manages housing on military bases has fired 17 employees and is cooperating with a federal fraud investigation, company officials told a House subcommittee Thursday.

"We take the issue of fraud seriously, including the allegations that certain members of our staff handled work orders inappropriately," said Richard C. Taylor, president of facility operations, renovations and construction for the company and a former Navy civil engineer corps officer.

Top officials from five of the 14 companies that manage base housing were on Capitol Hill to face questions from the House Armed Services Committee's subpanel on readiness about ongoing reports of families enduring unsafe and unhealthy housing conditions.

Members of military families have also testified to lawmak-

ers, describing houses filled with mold, rodent and insect infestations and lead paint. For many of them, their attempts to seek remedies were met with slow responses and substandard repairs.

Taylor on Thursday took heat from lawmakers over a November report from Reuters that his company falsified work order records at three Air Force bases to receive bonus payouts. Those allegations are now under investigation by the FBI and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations. He said the company has hired an accounting and audit firm to conduct a forensic accounting review of Balfour Beatty's requests for incentive fees.

Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., Travis Air Force Base, Calif., and Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash., where fraud allegations are under investigation, make up just a fraction of Balfour Beatty's military housing, said Rep. Kendra Horn, D-Okla.

## Helicopter crash kills 3 in Minnesota National Guard

Associated Press

ST. CLOUD, Minn. — Three soldiers from the Minnesota National Guard were killed Thursday when the Black Hawk helicopter they were riding in for a routine maintenance test flight crashed in central Minnesota, Gov. Tim Walz confirmed.

The identities of the soldiers were not immediately released, pending notification of family.

The crash was being investigated and preliminary information on the cause was not released.

"My heart breaks for the families, the friends and fellow soldiers," Walz said at a news conference. "The coming days will be dark and difficult." He said Minnesota stands ready to assist the families of the soldiers who were killed.

Maj. Gen. Jon Jensen, the adjutant general of the Minnesota National Guard, said in a tweet: "Our Minnesota National Guard family is devastated by the deaths of these soldiers.

Our priority right now is ensuring that our families are taken care of."

The National Guard said the helicopter was a UH-60 Black Hawk from the guard's Army Aviation Safety Facility in St. Cloud.

The Guard lost contact with the helicopter shortly after it took off on a maintenance test flight from St. Cloud on Thursday afternoon, Guard Master Sgt. Blair Heusdens said. The helicopter called mayday about nine minutes after takeoff.

Stearns County Chief Sheriff's Deputy Dan Miller told reporters that the mayday call came in at about 2:15 p.m. Crews from multiple departments spent several hours searching before finding the crash, Miller said.

The Minnesota State Patrol was called to bring in a helicopter to help with the search. A State Patrol Cirrus aircraft, equipped with thermal imaging cameras, also helped in the search.

# Esper: 14K troops aren't going to Mideast

By COREY DICKSTEIN

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon will not send 14,000 new U.S. troops to the Middle East, Defense Secretary Mark Esper said Friday, a day after a senior Defense Department official told lawmakers that more military forces could deploy to the region to counter Iran.

“As the Department [of Defense] has stated repeatedly, we were never discussing or considering sending 14,000 additional troops to the Middle East,” Esper said in the statement. “Reports of this are flat out wrong.”

The statement came nearly 24 hours after Sen. Josh Hawley, R-Mo., called for Esper to publicly clarify any Pentagon planning to increase U.S. forces in the Middle East. John Rood,

the undersecretary of defense for policy, told Hawley during a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing Thursday that the Defense Department was monitoring threats from Iran and considering sending new forces to the region.

That admission from Rood came after he had testified earlier that a news report that the Pentagon could send up to 14,000 troops to the Middle East was “erroneous.” The Pentagon’s press secretary, Alyssa Farah, also issued two statements Thursday denying such planning had occurred.

The confusion followed a Wall Street Journal report late Wednesday that defense officials had discussed sending up to 14,000 new service members to the Middle East as a check on Iran. The report, which cited

unnamed U.S. officials, said no decisions had been made, but President Donald Trump could approve new deployments this month.

Trump, in a tweet Thursday, wrote the United States would not be sending 12,000 troops to Saudi Arabia, calling it “Fake News.” The Journal story, however, did not mention Saudi Arabia as the location where new troops would be sent, nor did it include the 12,000 figure the president cited.

Several Pentagon officials on Friday declined to comment beyond Esper’s statement, but two officials confirmed recent discussions had included potentially deploying thousands more troops to the region. The officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations, would not provide specific numbers or

the make-up of the forces that could be sent.

Rood faced tough questioning Thursday on Capitol Hill about the Journal report from Hawley and Sen. Marsha Blackburn, R-Tenn. Rood said the Pentagon was evaluating new threats from Iran, but he did not characterize the nature of those threats.

“Based on what we are seeing [with Iran], it is possible that we would need to adjust our force posture, and I think that would be a prudent step depending on what we observe,” Rood told Marshburn on Thursday.

Farah, later Thursday, clarified that planning did not include a deployment of 14,000 troops “at this time,” but added the Pentagon was constantly evaluating its force posture based on observed threats.

## Trump: ‘If you are going to impeach me, do it now, fast’

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Just get on with it.

After months of fighting the House impeachment inquiry, blocking witnesses and ignoring subpoenas, the White House is now publicly embracing a strategy it has privately signaled for weeks: It will accept the reality that President Donald Trump will likely be impeached by the House and focus instead on a made-for-TV trial on friendlier turf in the Republican-controlled Senate.

Democrats, Trump tweeted Thursday, “have gone crazy. Therefore I say, if you are going to impeach me, do it now, fast, so we can have a fair.... trial in the Senate, and so that our Country can get back to business.”

It was a message that came even before Democratic Speaker Nancy Pelosi stood before cameras and announced that House committees would draft articles of impeachment. They’re virtually sure to accuse the Republican chief executive

of violating the Constitution, abusing presidential of power and undermining national security by pressing the president of Ukraine to investigate a Democratic political rival as the White House was withholding crucial security aid.

“The president leaves us no choice but to act,” she said.

The Trump reelection campaign and the White House responded with resignation, publicly acknowledging for the first time that Trump is likely to become only the third president in the nation’s history to be impeached by the House of Representatives.

“We look forward to a fair trial in the Senate,” tweeted press secretary Stephanie Grisham.

Impeaching the president, said campaign manager Brad Parscale, has always been the Democrats’ goal, “so they should just get on with it so we can have a fair trial in the Senate and expose the swamp for what it is.”

## Unemployment in the US falls to 50-year low of 3.5%

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Hiring in the United States jumped last month to its highest level since January as U.S. employers shrugged off global trade conflicts and added 266,000 jobs.

The unemployment rate declined to 3.5% from 3.6% in November, matching a half-century low, the Labor Department reported Friday. And wages rose a solid 3.1% in November compared with a year earlier.

The healthy job gain runs against a widespread view that businesses are struggling to find workers with unemployment so low. Persistent hiring should help keep consumers spending — a key engine of growth as businesses have cut their investment spending and exports have stalled.

Monthly job growth has accelerated since this summer, averaging 205,000 over the past three months, up from just 135,000 in July.

Steady hiring has helped reassure consumers the economy is expanding and that their jobs and incomes remain secure, which, in turn, has helped fuel spending. Consumer spending has become an even more important driver of growth because the Trump administration’s trade conflicts have reduced exports and led many businesses to cut spending.

Renewed concerns that trade will continue to hamper the U.S. economy drove stock prices lower earlier this week, after President Donald Trump said he was willing to wait until after the 2020 elections to strike a preliminary trade agreement with China. With the two sides still haggling, the administration is set to impose 15% tariffs on an additional \$160 billion of Chinese imports beginning Dec. 15.

Both sides have since suggested that the negotiations are making progress, but there is still no sign of a resolution.

# Chase in stolen UPS truck leads to shootout

Associated Press

MIRAMAR, Fla. — Four people, including a UPS driver, were killed Thursday after robbers stole the driver's truck and led police on a chase that ended in gunfire at a busy South Florida intersection during rush hour, the FBI said.

Both robbers were shot and killed, and the fourth victim was in a nearby vehicle when shots rang out at a crowded intersection in Miramar, about 20 miles north of where the incident began, FBI Special Agent in Charge George Piro said during a news conference

Thursday night.

Television news helicopters showed first responders tending to at least one person who fell out of the UPS truck, moments after several shots were fired when the chase ended.

"It's very early in the investigative process," Piro said. "There are a lot of questions that are still unanswered."

In Coral Gables, where the incident began, police said a jewelry store worker was also injured but did not say if she had been shot. There was no immediate update on her condition.

It all started shortly after 4 p.m. when police in Coral Gables received a silent alarm at the Regent Jewelers store in the city's Miracle Mile area, about 5 miles west of Miami. Coral Gables Police Chief Ed Hudak said during a news conference that two suspects were at the store and that shots were being fired when police, summoned by a silent alarm from inside the store, arrived.

The suspects fled in a truck, then carjacked the UPS delivery truck and its driver not long afterward to start the chase into the southern portion of

Broward County, running red lights and narrowly avoiding crashes along the way. The UPS truck finally stopped in one of the middle lanes of a busy roadway, caught behind a wall of other vehicles waiting for a red light to turn green. Television footage showed several officers on foot, some with guns drawn, approaching the truck from the rear and the driver's side once it stopped.

Katherine Gonzalez said officers were in front of her vehicle, a few feet away from the UPS truck, when the shootout started "out of nowhere."

## Uber: More than 3K sexual assaults on rides in 2018

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Uber, as part of a long-anticipated safety report, revealed that more than 3,000 sexual assaults were reported during its U.S. rides in 2018.

That figure includes 235 rapes across the company's 1.3 billion rides last year. The ride-hailing company noted that drivers and riders were both attacked and that some assaults occurred between riders.

The Thursday report, which the company hailed as the first of its kind, provides a rare look into the traffic deaths, murders and reported sexual assaults that took place during billions of rides arranged in the U.S. using Uber's service. It is part of the company's effort to be more transparent after years of criticism over its safety record.

In 2017, the company counted 2,936 reported sexual assaults — including 229 rapes — during 1 billion U.S. trips. Uber bases its numbers on reports from riders and drivers, meaning the actual numbers could be much higher. Sexual assaults commonly go unreported.

"I suspect many people will be surprised at how rare these incidents are; others will understandably think they're still too common," Uber CEO Dara Khosrowshahi tweeted about the report. "Some people will appreciate how much we've done on safety; others will say we have more work to do. They will all be right."

Uber's share price dropped more than 1% in after-hours trading.

Uber and competitor Lyft have faced harsh criticism for not doing enough to pro-

tect the safety of their riders and drivers. Dozens of women are suing Lyft, claiming the company should have done more to protect them from driver assaults. A Connecticut woman sued Uber last month, claiming she was sexually assaulted by her driver.

London refused to renew Uber's license to operate in the city in November after the company was plagued with safety issues including concerns about impostor drivers. Uber said it will appeal the decision.

The companies have both formed partnerships with sexual assault prevention networks and other safety groups, and have touted their background check policies for drivers. But many say they haven't gone far enough to protect passengers and drivers, who are contract workers for the companies.

## Indian police fatally shoot 4 suspects in rape inquiry

Associated Press

SHADNAGAR, India — Police on Friday fatally shot four men being held on suspicion of raping and killing a woman in southern India after investigators took them to the crime scene, drawing both praise and condemnation in a case that has sparked protests across the country.

The burned body of the woman — a 27-year-old veterinarian — was found last week by a passer-by near the city of Hyderabad, India's tech hub, after she went missing the previous night.

At around 3 a.m. Friday, police took the suspects, who had not been formally

charged with any crime, to the sites where the rape and killing are believed to have taken place and the spot in an underpass where the woman's body was burned about a third of a mile away, said V.C. Sajjanar, the local police commissioner.

The police brought the suspects to help them locate evidence, including the victim's phone, Sajjanar said at a news conference.

"The suspects seized some weapons from policemen who had taken them there and started firing," Sajjanar said.

"Even though our officers maintained restraint and asked them to surrender, but without listening to us, they continued to fire and continued to attack us," Sajjanar

said, adding that police returned fire, killing the suspects.

The woman's death is the latest gruesome case of sexual violence against women to rile India and comes despite efforts to strengthen the penalties for such crimes.

Some advocates say those efforts have failed to deter predators.

Hours after the police shootings, the crime scene in Shadnagar, a town in the state of Telangana about an hour southwest of Hyderabad, had the appearance of a fairground.

About 300 people gathered to celebrate the suspects' deaths.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Mom hits barber with car over son's haircut

**CA** ANTIOCH — Police are searching for a San Francisco Bay Area mother they said ran over a barber with her car because she was upset with her son's haircut.

Ruby Delgadillo, 28, confronted the 63-year-old barber Wednesday inside the Delta Barber Shop in Antioch, 45 miles east of San Francisco, but the argument moved outside, Antioch police said in a statement.

Witnesses told police Delgadillo got in her car and drove toward the man, striking and pushing him through a glass storefront. The man, who has not been identified, suffered major injuries, police said.

### TV news helicopter struck by object

**CA** LOS ANGELES — A Los Angeles television news helicopter made a precautionary landing after it was struck in flight by an object that may have been a drone.

KABC-TV reported its AIR7 HD helicopter was flying near downtown Wednesday evening at an altitude of about 1,100 feet when the crew heard and felt the strike.

Helicopter reporter Chris Christi said they initially assumed it was a bird strike, but when they landed, they found dents and holes.

### Cockfighting ring uncovered in drug raid

**NJ** PATERSON — A police raid on a building as part of a drug investigation also uncovered a cockfighting ring and dozens of roosters, authorities said.

Paterson police raided

the building around 1 a.m. Wednesday. Eight people were arrested, and authorities seized marijuana, steroids, opioid painkillers and about \$2,300 in cash. While at the site, authorities discovered a cockfighting arena and found 84 roosters. They were taken to a sanctuary that cares for distressed animals.

Authorities said that animal cruelty charges will likely be filed in connection with the cockfighting operation, but that for now it remains under investigation.

### Traffic sculpture made of sand is unveiled

**FL** MIAMI BEACH — It took artist Leandro Erlich two years and 330 tons of sand to create his largest work of art to date — a giant traffic jam made entirely of sand.

Erlich was commissioned by the city of Miami Beach to create the work, which was unveiled during Art Basel Miami. The surreal traffic jam depicts 66 life-sized sculptures of cars and trucks stuck in an imaginary traffic jam on the oceanfront of popular Lincoln Road.

The installation is meant to be a future relic, like a contemporary Pompeii, and alludes to Miami's fragile position in the large universal canvas, touching on climate crisis and rising sea levels.

The installation cost more than a million dollars, but the city paid \$300,000 thanks to sponsors and donations. It will be on display until Dec. 15.

### Lawsuit from artist over dog poop flap tossed

**NM** SANTA FE — An appeals court has upheld a decision to dismiss a lawsuit filed by a Native American artist who was cleaning

up dog poop but mistaken for a burglar.

The Albuquerque Journal reported the state Court of Appeals recently affirmed a District Court decision that the officers' actions were "objectively reasonable" when they detained him at gunpoint.

Romero filed a lawsuit alleging the violation of his constitutional rights in 2014. He said his Shih Tzu defecated in his car and had pulled into a driveway to clean up the mess when a homeowner called police.

Romero said a Santa Fe officer pointed a rifle at him during the bizarre misunderstanding.

In 2017, a judge ruled an officer's belt recorder showed the officer acted properly.

### Libraries move toward eliminating overdue fees

**IA** CEDAR RAPIDS — Area libraries are moving toward eliminating overdue fees, saying the fines primarily hurt low-income borrowers and don't succeed in getting books and other material returned more quickly.

The Cedar Rapids Public Library board of trustees approved the change at a meeting Thursday. The Hiawatha Library Board already has changed its late-fee policies and The Marion Public Library board could vote on the matter next week, according to the Cedar Rapids Gazette.

The fines would end on July 1 under the changes being considered by the libraries.

There still would be a penalty for not returning material, as patrons would get an email notification and would have their accounts blocked after 30 days. They also would be billed for an item but there would be a six-month period during which material could be returned without a charge.

### Confederate floats cause parade concerns

**NC** WAKE FOREST — A second North Carolina town has canceled its Christmas parade over concerns about possible protests of a float celebrating the Confederacy.

Leaders in Wake Forest had said last week that the town's parade would go on and include the Sons & Daughters of the Confederacy, despite a planned demonstration. That decision changed once police learned that the number of expected protesters had grown from 10 to 200 people, Police Chief Jeff Leonard said in a statement released Wednesday.

The entire parade has now been canceled for safety reasons. This would have been the 72nd year of the parade, news outlets reported.

### Deer knocks down, injures child at school

**MT** MISSOULA — A student at a Montana elementary school was injured after being "knocked down forcefully" by a deer that had jumped the school's fence.

Missoula County Public School's spokeswoman Hatton Littman said the student was injured on the playground after getting off the bus at Rattlesnake Elementary School on Tuesday morning.

Staffers trained in first aid helped the student before first responders took the child to the hospital as a precautionary measure. The deer ran off.

School officials would not comment on the extent of the student's injuries other than to say they were not life-threatening, the Missoulian reported.

From wire reports

Your objective source for military news  
updated 24/7 from bases  
around the world.  
Now online at [www.stripes.com](http://www.stripes.com).

STARS AND STRIPES®

# Trubisky, resilient Bears top Cowboys

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Mitchell Trubisky and the Chicago Bears appear to be hitting their stride — even if it might be too late to salvage their season.

Trubisky threw three touchdown passes and ran for a score in Chicago's 31-24 victory over Dak Prescott and the slumping Dallas Cowboys on Thursday.

In a matchup between disappointing teams that made the playoffs last season, the Bears (7-6) came away with their fourth win in five games after dropping four in a row. The Cowboys (6-7) have lost seven of 10 since a 3-0 start.

"I think it shows we're resilient," Trubisky said. "We stick together. We believe in each other even when nobody else believes in us. It's a special group in that locker room. We just want to keep this feeling going."

Trubisky shook off an early interception near the goal line to complete 23 of 31 passes for

244 yards. He matched a season high for touchdown throws and set one with 63 yards rushing. That included a 23-yard scoring dash early in the fourth quarter, making it 31-14.

Allen Robinson caught two TD passes, and Anthony Miller had one as Chicago tied a season scoring high. Khalil Mack had a sack. Linebacker Roquan Smith left the game with a pectoral injury on the opening drive, with coach Matt Nagy saying it "doesn't look real good for him." But the Bears took out the NFC East leaders after beating the struggling Detroit Lions twice and New York Giants in recent weeks.

"Most teams at some point in time will hit some type of adversity," Nagy said. "We went through that four-game stretch. It was difficult in a lot of different ways. ... Everybody's seeing what type of people we have on this football team. No one's flinched. We've pulled together. We've become even tighter."

Facing a top-10 defense for

the third week in a row, the Cowboys once again couldn't get their high-powered offense going.

NFL passing leader Prescott was 27-for-49 for 334 yards and a touchdown. Ezekiel Elliott ran for 81 yards — his fifth straight game under 100 — and two scores.

Michael Gallup had 109 yards receiving. Amari Cooper caught six passes for 83 yards and a touchdown, but the Cowboys lost their third straight. They lead Philadelphia by a half-game in the division.

"I can't put a finger on it," Prescott said. "I wish I could right now, if I could we wouldn't be in this situation, we would be getting over this and out of this slump, but that's the most frustrating part, we have the skill level, we have the players, we have the chemistry at times, But we're not playing together as a team, complementary enough when we need to and we need to figure it out what it is."

**Taking control:** Kept out of the end zone in a 13-9 loss at New England two weeks ago and then held to two touchdowns in falling 26-15 to Buffalo on Thanksgiving, the Cowboys went 75 yards for a score on the game's opening possession. Elliott lunged in from the 2 to cap a 17-play drive.

Dallas' Jourdan Lewis then intercepted Trubisky's pass with a neat play near the left pylon, dragging his left foot. He was initially ruled out, but the call was overturned by review.

But it was all Bears after that.

Chicago tied it early in the second quarter when Trubisky hit Robinson with a 5-yard pass and took a 10-7 lead on a 36-yard field goal by Eddy Piñero. Dallas' Brett Maher then missed a 42-yarder wide right. Chicago added to the lead in the closing seconds of the half with Trubisky's 8-yard pass to Robinson, and Miller's 14-yarder on a screen in the third made it 24-7.

## Sports briefs

### Former No. 1, Aussie Open champ Wozniacki retiring

Associated Press

Former No. 1 and 2018 Australian Open champion Caroline Wozniacki will retire from professional tennis after competing in Melbourne next year.

The 29-year-old from Denmark wrote in an Instagram post on Friday that she wants to start a family with her husband, former NBA player David Lee, and work to raise awareness about rheumatoid arthritis.

Wozniacki said her decision to stop playing "has nothing to do with my health." She announced in October 2018 that she has rheumatoid arthritis, an autoimmune condition that can cause pain and swelling in the wrist and other joints.

She is currently ranked No. 37 after going 20-15 without a singles title in 2019.

### Joshua: At 283, champ Ruiz is a 'big boy'

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — World heavyweight champion Andy Ruiz Jr. will be nearly 50 pounds heavier than Anthony Joshua for their title rematch on Saturday in Saudi Arabia.

Ruiz weighed in at 283 pounds on Friday — about 15½ pounds more than he was in June when he delivered one of the biggest heavyweight upsets in history.

"He's a big boy, isn't he?" Joshua said of Ruiz. Joshua weighed in at 237 pounds, more than 11 pounds lighter than when he lost the first fight. He will fight at his lightest weight in five years as he tries to reclaim his WBO, WBA and IBF belts.

### Elliott voted most popular driver, again

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Chase Elliott's run as NASCAR's most popular driver hit two consecutive years when he was voted as the sport's top star.

Elliott won the award last season, the first since Dale Earnhardt Jr. retired to end his streak of 15 consecutive years as winner. Earnhardt fell one year short of the record 16 set by Hall of Famer Bill Elliott — Chase's father.

The award is based on a fan vote and sponsored by the National Motorsports Press Association. Bill Elliott won the award every year between 1984 and 2002 until he removed his name from consideration.

### AP source: Kendrick, Nationals reach deal

WASHINGTON — Postseason star Howie Kendrick and the World Series champion Washington Nationals agreed in principle to a \$6.25 million, one-year contract, according to a person with knowledge of the negotiations.

Pending a successful physical exam, Kendrick is set to return to Washington for his 15th season in the majors.

The 36-year-old righty batter hit .344 with 17 homers and 62 RBIs in 121 regular-season games. He hit a tiebreaking grand slam off Joe Kelly in the 10th inning of Game 5 of the NL Division Series to lead the Nationals to a 7-3 victory over the Los Angeles Dodgers.

## Things to watch

# OU, Baylor, Utah will be pulling for LSU

Associated Press

LSU will have plenty of fans on the campuses of Oklahoma and Baylor and perhaps Utah this week.

If No. 4 Georgia (No. 4 CFP) upsets the top-ranked Tigers (No. 2 CFP) in the Southeastern Conference championship game Saturday in Atlanta, both are expected to make the four-team College Football Playoff field. That likely would knock out the Big 12 champion and Pac-12 champion, unless something unexpected occurs, such as No. 3 Clemson (No. 3 CFP) losing to No. 22 Virginia (a 28-point underdog) in the Atlantic Coast Conference championship game.

But if LSU wins as expected, Georgia gets knocked out of playoff competition. That spot instead likely would go to No. 5 Utah (No. 5 CFP) or the winner of Saturday's Big 12 championship game between No. 6 Oklahoma (No. 6 CFP) and No. 8 Baylor (No. 7 CFP). Be-

fore Utah can worry about the LSU-Georgia result, the Utes must beat No. 13 Oregon (No. 13 CFP) in the Pac-12 championship game Friday night.

Here's a rundown of things to watch as the conference championship games take place this week.

### Game of the week

**LSU (12-0, 8-0 SEC) vs. Georgia (11-1, 7-1)**

LSU is a seven-point favorite in a game that features one of the nation's most explosive offenses against one of the best defenses in the land.

Led by quarterback and Heisman Trophy favorite Joe Burrow, LSU ranks second among all Football Bowl Subdivision teams in points per game (48.7), yards per game (560.4) and yards per play (7.9).

Georgia ranks second in points allowed per game (10.4), third in yards allowed per play (4.12) and fourth in yards allowed per game (257). The Bulldogs also rank second in run defense and have allowed just one rushing touchdown all season.

### Heisman watch

Burrow seems to have such a commanding lead in this race that he probably will win the Heisman even if he doesn't play particularly well this week.

But there's still a bit of suspense over who might join him in New York. Plenty of those contenders will be playing this week, most notably in the Big Ten championship game between No. 2 Ohio State (No. 1 CFP) and No. 10 Wisconsin (No. 8 CFP).

Ohio State has three Heisman contenders in quarterback Justin Fields, defensive end Chase Young and running back J.K. Dobbins. Wisconsin running back Jonathan Taylor finished ninth in last year's Heisman balloting.

Young has an FBS-leading 16½ sacks. Fields has thrown 37 touchdown passes with only one interception while directing the offense of the nation's highest-scoring team. Taylor has rushed for 1,761 yards to rank second nationally, while Dobbins is fourth with 1,657 yards.

Another player to watch is Clemson quarterback Trevor Lawrence.

Although a relatively slow start pretty much knocked him out of the Heisman conversation, Lawrence has been on a tear lately. Over his last five games, Lawrence has completed 76 percent of his passes with 16 touchdowns and no interceptions.

### Numbers game

**5** — Clemson and Oklahoma are both chasing their fifth straight outright conference titles Saturday. The only member of any active FBS conference to win five straight outright league championships is Alabama from 1971-75.

**11** — Baylor is the first Power Five team to win 11 games within two seasons of losing 11 games. Baylor went 1-11 in 2017.

**29** — Number of takeaways by Florida Atlantic (10 fumble recoveries, 19 interceptions). The Owls lead all FBS teams in that category.

**94** — Number of career touchdown passes for Oregon quarterback Justin Herbert, which leads all active FBS players.

## No. 14 Auburn survives overtime scare from Furman

Associated Press

AUBURN, Ala. — Bruce Pearl's message to his team was that No. 14 Auburn had been outcoached and outplayed, and that it does happen sometimes.

The Tigers nonetheless survived for an 81-78 overtime victory over Furman on Thursday night with smothering second-half defense.

Christian Okoro scored a season-high 18 points, including two free throws with 1.6 seconds left in overtime to help the Tigers (8-0) complete a rally from a 14-point second-half deficit, easily their largest of the season.

Samir Doughty scored on a drive with 15 seconds left but Mike Bothwell drilled a three-pointer for Furman (7-3), which quickly fouled Okoro.

The freshman made both

foul shots and Bothwell missed a final heave from before half-court.

Austin Wiley scored five points in overtime, finishing with 13 points and 12 rebounds. Wiley just claimed Southeastern Conference player of the week and Legends Classic MVP honors.

Okoro also had nine rebounds.

Auburn won despite a cold-shooting night from Doughty, who scored 13 points but missed all seven three-point attempts. The Tigers were 4-for-25 in three-point shooting.

Noah Gurley led Furman with 21 points and eight rebounds before fouling out with 2:31 left in overtime, when Wiley made a basket and free throw. Clay Mounce added 14 points before also fouling out.

The Tigers tied it 66-66 on two straight layups by J'Von McCormick over the final 1:05 of regulation. The second came with 14 seconds left and then Bothwell lost control of the ball on the other end with 5 seconds left.

McCormick missed a reverse-layup attempt at the buzzer after he juked a defender off his feet, sending the game to overtime.

### Big picture

**Furman:** Finished a four-game road swing with a near-upset. The Paladins started a 20-2 run late in the first half, opening up a 46-32 lead with 16 minutes left.

**Auburn:** Trailed at the half for only the second time this season and its previous largest

deficit was six points in the last game against Richmond. Had an eight-minute drought without a field goal.

### Pugh's spark

Jaylon Pugh came in with 19 points in the first six games, all off the bench. He scored all 11 of his points by halftime, including back to back three-pointers in a 28-second span during Furman's closing run. Those two threes matched his season-high coming into the game, six points.

### Technical

Auburn coach Bruce Pearl drew a second-half technical arguing that Anfernee McLemore was fouled on a rebound.

## NHL roundup

## Landeskog, Avalanche edge Canadiens

Associated Press

MONTREAL — Gabriel Landeskog scored in his return from a lower-body injury and the Colorado Avalanche beat the slumping Montreal Canadiens 3-2 on Thursday night.

Ryan Graves and Matt Calvert also scored and backup goalie Pavel Francouz made 39 saves to help the Avalanche win their fifth straight game and improve to 18-8-2.

Brendan Gallagher and Nick Cousins scored for Montreal. The Canadiens have lost nine of 10 to fall to 12-11-6.

Cayden Primeau stopped 32 shots in his NHL debut. The 20-year-old son of former NHL player Keith Primeau played in the first of a back-to-back for Montreal, with Carey Price scheduled to face the New York Rangers on Friday night.

**Blackhawks 4, Bruins 3 (OT):** Jonathan Toews scored 54 seconds into overtime and visiting

Chicago recovered after blowing a three-goal, third-period lead to end Boston's eight-game winning streak.

Toews picked up the puck after a turnover by David Pastrnak and skated in on Tuukka Rask before backhanding it between the goalie's legs. The crowd, which thought Pastrnak had been tripped, began showering the ice with garbage.

**Islanders 3, Golden Knights 2 (OT):** Ryan Pulock scored a power-play goal 3:20 into overtime to lift host New York past Vegas.

Cal Clutterbuck and Brock Nelson also scored for the Islanders. They won their seventh straight at Nassau Coliseum and snapped Vegas' four-game winning streak.

**Hurricanes 3, Sharks 2 (SO):** Andrei Svechnikov scored in the shootout, Carolina goalie Petr Mrazek stopped visiting San Jose cold in the tiebreaker.

Svechnikov had a goal and an assist in regulation, Jake Gardiner also scored and Warren Foegele added two assists for the Hurricanes. Mrazek stopped 28 shots.

**Wild 5, Lightning 4:** Mats Zuccarello had a goal and two assists and visiting Minnesota beat Tampa Bay for its fifth straight victory.

Joel Eriksson Ek, Jason Zucker, Carson Soucy and Victor Rask also scored for the Wild, who have an 11-game point streak (8-0-3). Alex Stalock stopped 30 shots.

**Coyotes 3, Flyers 1:** Phil Kessel scored two goals to lead visiting Arizona past Philadelphia.

Darcy Kuemper made 28 saves and Conor Garland also scored for the Coyotes. They improved to 10-3-3 on the road.

**Rangers 3, Blue Jackets 2:** Artemi Panarin scored the decisive goal for New York in his

return to Columbus.

Panarin's goal was his team-leading 13th. He left Columbus after signing a lucrative free-agent contract with New York in the offseason.

**Stars 3, Jets 2 (OT):** Joe Pavelski scored on the power play 2:02 into overtime in host Dallas' victory over Winnipeg.

The goal came 31 seconds after Josh Morrissey went to the penalty box. Tyler Seguin picked up a rebound of his own shot and sent a backhand pass to Pavelski, who scored his sixth goal this season.

**Flames 4, Sabres 3:** Milan Lucic scored his first goal with host Calgary in a win over Buffalo.

Tobias Rieder, Johnny Gaudreau and Sean Monahan also scored for the Flames, who are 4-0-1 in their last five games. Monahan also had an assist for his first multipoint game since Nov. 7.

## NBA roundup

## Westbrook's triple-double lifts Rockets over Raptors

Associated Press

TORONTO — No matter what, the Toronto Raptors were determined to double-team James Harden.

The rest of the Houston Rockets made sure that strategy didn't pay off.

Russell Westbrook had 19 points, 13 rebounds and 11 assists, Harden shook off a slow start to score 23 and the Rockets beat the Raptors 119-109 on Thursday night, snapping a three-game road losing streak.

Ben McLemore had a season-high 28 points, P.J. Tucker added 18 points and 11 rebounds, and Danuel House Jr. scored 16 as Houston handed Toronto its second consecutive home loss after a franchise-record nine straight wins to begin the season.

With Harden drawing an extra defender every time he had the ball, his play-making skills were more important than points for once.

"James, to his credit, didn't force anything," Rockets coach Mike D'Antoni said. "He said, 'OK, double me and my teammates will score tonight,' and they did it."

Harden shot 7-for-11, his fewest attempts of the season, and failed to finish as Houston's leading scorer for the second time. The only other time was an opening-night loss to Milwaukee in which Harden shot 2-for-13 and scored a season-low 19 points.

**Wizards 119, 76ers 113:** As well as Philadelphia has been playing at home lately, it just can't consistently get

its act together on the road, and a combined 15 turnovers by Joel Embiid and Ben Simmons contributed to a loss at Washington.

The Sixers dropped to 5-7 away from Philadelphia — where they are 10-0 this season — despite 33 points from Tobias Harris, 26 points and a season-best 21 rebounds from Embiid, and 17 points and 10 assists from Simmons.

**Suns 139, Pelicans 132 (OT):** Devin Booker broke out of a perimeter-shooting slump, scoring 21 of his season-high 44 points in the third quarter, and Ricky Rubio powered visiting Phoenix with four points and a critical assist in overtime in a victory over New Orleans.

Playing the back end of a back-to-back, Phoenix led by

18 points entering the fourth quarter, but the Pelicans fought back with five three-pointers, two by the normally scatter-shooting Lonzo Ball, to tie it at 125. The Pelicans had a chance to win in regulation, but Brandon Ingram missed a 15-foot jumper from the right baseline as time expired.

**Nuggets 129, Knicks 92:** Will Barton scored 17 points to help visiting Denver beat New York.

Jerami Grant added 16 and Monte Morris had 15. The Nuggets shot 56% from the field, had eight players reach double figures and snapped a two-game losing streak. Mitchell Robinson had 17 points for New York. The Knicks have lost eight straight.