

## Navy: Rebuilding ship too expensive

BY CAITLIN KENNEY

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The USS Bonhomme Richard will not return to sea after the Navy determined that the damage it sustained from a fire in July was too extensive and restoration deemed too expensive, the service announced Monday.

“We did not come to this decision lightly,” Navy Secretary Kenneth Braithwaite said in a prepared statement.

“Following an extensive material assessment in which various courses of action were considered and evaluated, we came to the conclusion that it is not fiscally responsible to restore her.”

The 22-year-old Bonhomme Richard, a Wasp-class amphibious assault ship, was undergoing maintenance at Naval Base San Diego when the fire started July 12.

The fire burned through 11 of its 14 decks, destroying the ship’s forward mast, and damaging its superstructure before it was extinguished July 16. About 40 sailors and 23 civilians were treated for minor injuries, such as heat exhaustion and smoke inhalation.

How the fire started is still unknown, however Navy officials at the time believed it began in the cargo hold where supplies for the maintenance work being conducted on

the ship were stored.

“This fire probably couldn’t have been in a worse point on the ship in terms of its source that allowed it to spread up elevator shafts as an example, up exhaust stacks as an example, to take that fire up into the superstructure and then forward,” Adm. Mike Gilday, the chief of naval operations, said about the fire a day after it was put out.

In an email to senior naval leaders soon after Gilday’s visit to the ship, he wrote that sections of the flight deck were warped and bulging and firefighters told him that they had faced 1,200-degree heat, zero visibility and multiple explosions on the ship.

Wind from the bay and the explosions allowed the fire to spread and become more intense, he said.

Gilday praised the work of sailors in his letter, some of whom went aboard the ship eight times to fight the fire.

“They had experienced the intense, inferno-like heat, the dark smoke that obscured view of teammates by their side, and the explosions — the latter had to be like a mine field ... unknown when and where, and how severe, those blasts might be. Some had been knocked down by these blasts — some, more than once — but they got up, refocused and reattacked.”

All investigations into the fire are still on-

going, according to the Navy’s statement Monday.

The Navy’s assessment of the damage concluded it would cost more than \$3 billion to restore the ship and five to seven years for construction to be completed. The service also considered rebuilding the ship for other purposes but again determined the \$1 billion cost, which could build a new hospital ship or command and control ship, was too much.

“Although it saddens me that it is not cost effective to bring her back, I know this ship’s legacy will continue to live on through the brave men and women who fought so hard to save her, as well as the sailors and Marines who served aboard her during her 22-year history,” Braithwaite said.

When the ship will be dismantled has not been decided, according to the Navy. However before that, the service plans to remove systems and components from the Bonhomme Richard to be used by other ships.

The cost of decommissioning the ship will be about \$30 million and will take up to a year, according to Rear Adm. Eric Ver Hage in a report by The San Diego Union-Tribune.

Ver Hage is the commander of Navy Regional Maintenance Center.

## Camp Lejeune starts random LSD testing

BY JOHN VANDIVER

*Stars and Stripes*

LSD has been added to the list of drugs that are randomly tested for at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina amid suspicions that more and more Marines and sailors at the base are tripping, base officials said.

“We have a drug problem in the 2d Marine Division,” said the unit’s commanding general, Maj. Gen. Francis L. Donovan, in a statement Monday. “We are changing the way in which we test for illegal substances.”

A series of drug-related incidents involving Marines and sailors was behind the decision to test for LSD in random screenings, the Corps said.

In the past, Marines would typically only be screened for the hallucinogenic drug if there was probable cause.

But “all that changed following recent incidents,” 2nd Marine Division said, without providing details.

Since LSD hasn’t traditionally been tested by the Marine Corps, the division is working with the Armed Forces Medical Examiner lab in Dover, Del., to conduct “large-quantity random LSD testing.”

Some 4,000 tests have been conducted since the summer, when random testing for the hallucinogen was launched, the Corps said.

“This testing led to numerous positive re-

sults,” the division said, without specifying a number. “Consequently, going forward, 2d MARDIV plans to conduct random testing, locally and on a more consistent basis.”

Marines who test positive for LSD, or any other illegal drug, could face nonjudicial punishment, a dishonorable discharge or time in confinement, the Corps said.

Several incidents involving LSD, also known as acid, in the past 15 months indicated that the drug was becoming a problem at the base and beyond.

Some medical studies have suggested that drugs like LSD and magic mushrooms have potential benefits for those who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder.

# Flu vaccine trickles in to US bases in Europe

By JENNIFER H. SVAN  
*Stars and Stripes*

Many Americans affiliated with the U.S. military in Europe haven't been able to get flu shots this year, due to delays in delivering the vaccine that officials are struggling to explain.

Military and health officials have said the inoculations are particularly important this year, as they would help reduce the impact of contagious respiratory illnesses on the broader population and ease the burden on the health care system during the overlapping flu season and coronavirus pandemic.

But even as some U.S. bases in Japan wrapped up their flu vaccination drives in

October and others are in the process of completing them, many Americans in Europe are waiting to be inoculated.

U.S. Naval Hospital Naples in Italy is a rare exception in Europe. It has "enough influenza vaccine on hand to inoculate all eligible beneficiaries," a spokeswoman said last week. But many European bases ran out of doses after immunizing health care workers and military members this fall.

More vaccine arrived Monday and was expected to be distributed to Army medical clinics this week, said Gino Mattorano, a spokesman for Regional Health Command Europe. Bases were expected to announce further vaccination dates soon, he said.

But the command is still waiting for about 40% of its total allotment, which would allow it to vaccinate "the rest of our beneficiaries," Mattorano said Tuesday.

He was unable to give a precise date for when the remaining vaccine doses would arrive, saying only that officials "hope to get more ... in the next week or two."

The Ramstein Air Base clinic, which inoculated 4,000 airmen in October, received an additional 3,500 doses this week, and the 86<sup>th</sup> Medical Group is preparing for another two-day vaccination campaign, one of which will be open to all beneficiaries, said Lt. Col. Will Powell, 86<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing spokesman, on Tuesday.

## Aquilino expected to lead Indo-Pacific Command

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS  
*Stars and Stripes*

The White House is expected to name Adm. John Aquilino, commander of the Navy's Pacific Fleet, to lead Indo-Pacific Command, The Wall Street Journal reported Tuesday.

Aquilino would replace Adm. Philip Davidson, who since May 2018 has overseen the geographic combatant command that spans an area from the United States to India. Davidson is expected to retire, according to the Journal report, which cited unnamed U.S. officials.

President Donald Trump, whose term

ends Jan. 20, is expected to nominate Aquilino to the post, the report said, and the Senate could consider the nomination "in the early winter," according to the report.

INDOPACOM did not immediately respond to an emailed request for comment Tuesday.

The command covers 36 nations in a region the Defense Department deemed its "priority theater" and "the single-most consequential region for America's future" in a June 2019 Indo-Pacific strategy report issued amid simmering tensions with China.

The region is "a vital driver of the global economy and includes the world's busiest

international sea lanes and nine of the 10 largest ports," according to the INDOPACOM website.

It also is home to seven of the world's 10 largest standing militaries and five nuclear-armed nations.

Aquilino is a Naval Academy graduate and naval aviator who spent his early career flying the F-14 Tomcat and the F-18 Hornet, according to his Navy biography. His résumé also includes time as the Pacific Fleet's director of maritime operations, deputy chief of naval operations for operations, plans and strategy, and 5th Fleet commander.

## Air Force needs some active-duty airmen to transition

By COREY DICKSTEIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The Air Force will need some of its active-duty troops to transfer early to Reserve or National Guard duty or change specialties amid the highest retention rate that the service has seen nearly two decades, a top general said Tuesday.

The Air Force now boasts some 334,600 airmen on active-duty, about 900 more than the service's congressionally determined target end strength for fiscal year 2021, said Lt. Gen. Brian Kelly, the Air Force personnel chief. The service has been overloaded as airmen have sought to remain on active-duty by recommitting or delaying retirement plans amid the coronavirus pandemic, which has cut deeply into the U.S. civilian job market.

In 2020, the Air Force has seen its greatest retention of troops since 2002, just after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Kelly said, calling the unexpected boost "welcomed." He said he believed it reflected the poor jobs market but also an Air Force committed to improving its airmen's lives.

Nonetheless, the service is facing overmanning in certain jobs and ranks that it must take steps to address, he said.

"And so, as we go on in [fiscal year 2021], you'll be seeing us begin to look at the various levers for us to give people some opportunities to make some transitions in different ways," Kelly said. "Particularly if they wanted, for instance, to transition to the Guard or Reserve on an earlier timeline than they normally would — we have abilities and opportunities for them to do that.

Or if they wanted to move from an overmanned to an undermanned career field ... we'll have some opportunity for them to do that as we go forward."

The service is in the process of examining its career fields to determine precisely which ones are overmanned and at what ranks within those fields airmen might need to be moved, Kelly said. The service will provide further information to the force soon, he added.

The high retention rates could also mean the end of some popular incentive bonuses, including reenlistment bonuses in some specialties, Kelly said. He did not provide specifics Tuesday about which retention bonuses could end. The service, however, will not revert to involuntary measures to address its force size, Kelly said.

# GAO: Weekly unemployment report flawed

WASHINGTON — A government watchdog has found that the Labor Department's widely watched weekly unemployment benefits data are providing an inaccurate reading on the number of newly laid off workers because of flaws in the government's data collection.

The Government Accountability Office said in a report Monday that the Labor Department's weekly report of the number of people filing new applications for unemployment benefits and those receiving continuing claims contained a number of inaccuracies.

The GAO said the problems in data collection and reporting were making it hard for policymakers to get a reliable picture of what unemployment was doing during the pandemic. The report said the weekly data included overestimates, and at other times underestimates of the number of people filing for unemployment benefits.

GAO said the problem arose because the Labor Department was using the number of people filing for claims in each state as a proxy for the number of people claiming benefits nationwide. This has resulted in

inaccurate counts, however, because of large backlogs in processing historic levels of claims and other data collection problems.

"Without an accurate accounting of the number of individuals who are relying on these benefits in as close to real time as possible, policymakers may be challenged to respond to the crisis at hand," the GAO said in its report.

GAO recommended that the Labor Department revise its weekly news releases to clarify that the numbers in the reports are not an accurate estimate of the number of individuals claiming benefits.

The GAO also recommended that the department pursue other means to get more accurate readings on benefit applications, such as using data collected by the states.

The GAO report said that the Labor Department had agreed to make revisions to its weekly news releases and agreed to pursue options for obtaining more accurate data from the states. But the Labor Department balked at a recommendation that it seek state data going back to January 2020, contending that collecting back data would

put too much of a burden on already strained state unemployment offices.

The GAO report also found that, under the program to help gig workers and the self-employed, the majority of states had been paying the unemployed in these programs the minimum allowable benefit instead of the amount they would be eligible to receive based on their prior earnings.

The GAO findings were part of the congressional watchdog agency's routine reviews of the operation of the programs Congress passed last spring to provide support for the country after the economy went into deep recession.

Rep. James Clyburn, D-S.C. and the chairman of the House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis, said the new report highlighted continued failures of the Trump administration in dealing with the crisis.

"With the coronavirus killing more than one thousand Americans each day, I strongly agree with GAO that we need urgent actions to prevent the further loss of Americans' lives and livelihoods," Clyburn said in a statement.

## Biden names liberal economics team

*Associated Press*

WILMINGTON, Del. — With unemployment still high and the pandemic threatening yet another economic slump, President-elect Joe Biden is assembling a team of liberal advisers who have long focused on the nation's workers and government efforts to address economic inequality.

Janet Yellen, announced Monday as Biden's nominee for treasury secretary, served as chair of the Federal Reserve from 2014 to 2018, when she placed a greater emphasis than previous Fed chairs on maximizing employment and less focus on price inflation. Biden also named Cecilia Rouse as chair of his Council of Economic Advisers, and Heather Boushey and Jared Bernstein as members of the council.

All are outspoken supporters of more government stimulus spending to boost growth, a major issue with the coronavirus pandemic cramping the U.S. economy.

Those choices "signal the desire of the Biden administration to take the CEA in a direction that really centers on working people and raising wages," said Heidi Shierholz, senior economist at the Economic Policy Institute and former Labor Department

chief economist during the Obama administration.

Biden's nominees are also a more diverse group than those of previous presidents.

Yellen, if confirmed by the Senate, would be the first woman to serve as treasury secretary, after breaking ground as the first woman to chair the Fed. Rouse would be the first Black woman to lead the CEA in its 74 years of existence. And Neera Tanden, Biden's pick for director of the Office of Management and Budget, would be the first South Asian American in that job.

Biden also selected Wally Adeyemo to be Yellen's deputy, which would make him the first Black deputy treasury secretary. Rouse, Tanden and Adeyemo will all require Senate confirmation, and Tanden in particular is already drawing heavy Republican criticism.

Along with its progressive cast, Biden's team also has years of experience in government and policymaking. And that's earning plaudits from some conservatives, who note that the nominees are not a far-left group bent on strangling the economy, as President Donald Trump repeatedly warned during the 2020 campaign.

## Americans facing post-Thanksgiving virus restrictions

*Associated Press*

Americans returning from Thanksgiving break faced strict new coronavirus measures around the country Monday as health officials brace for a disastrous worsening of the nationwide surge because of holiday gatherings over the long weekend.

Los Angeles County imposed a stay-at-home order for its 10 million residents, and Santa Clara County, in the heart of Silicon Valley, banned high school, college and professional sports and decreed a quarantine for anyone traveling over 150 miles.

In Hawaii, the mayor of Hawaii County said trans-Pacific travelers arriving without a negative test must quarantine for 14 days, and even those who have tested virus-free may be randomly selected for another test upon arrival.

"The red flags are flying in terms of the trajectory in our projections of growth," said California Gov. Gavin Newsom. "If these trends continue, we're going to have to take much more dramatic, arguably drastic, action."



# Study: Some students falling behind in math

Associated Press

A disproportionately large number of poor and minority students were not in schools for assessments this fall, complicating efforts to measure the pandemic's effects on some of the most vulnerable students, a not-for-profit company that administers standardized testing said Tuesday.

Overall, NWEA's fall assessments showed elementary and middle school students have fallen measurably behind in math, while most appear to be progressing at a normal pace in reading since schools were forced to abruptly close in March and pickup online.

The analysis of data from nearly 4.4 million U.S. students in grades 3-8 represents one of the first significant measures of the pandemic's impacts on learning.

But researchers at NWEA, whose MAP Growth assessments are meant to measure student proficiency, caution they may be underestimating the effects on minority and economically disadvantaged groups. Those students made up a significant portion of the roughly 1 in 4 students who tested in 2019 but were missing from 2020 testing.

NWEA said they may have opted out of the assessments, which were given in-person and remotely, because they lacked reliable technology or stopped going to school.

The NWEA findings show that, compared to last year, students scored an average of 5 to 10 percentile points lower in math, with students in grades three, four and five experiencing the largest drops. English language arts scores were largely the same as last year.

## California

SACRAMENTO — A staggering rise in coronavirus cases could overwhelm California's health system within weeks and "drastic" action such as a wide-

spread stay-at-home order may be needed to combat the threat, Gov. Gavin Newsom warned.

Hospitalizations from COVID-19 have increased nearly 90% and could triple by Christmas, officials said Monday.

"The red flags are flying in terms of the trajectory in our projections of growth," Newsom said.

The number of COVID-19 cases reported each day in California has been setting records, with the average daily case rate over the last week topping 14,000. The levels are far above those recorded during a summer peak or even in March, when a state public health order restricted people from going outside except for the most essential reasons. That order was later eased.

Currently, 51 of 58 counties are in the "purple" tier of the state's COVID-19 system, meaning they are under the strictest business restrictions. Those counties account for most of the state's population.

## Delaware

DOVER — A school district in Delaware has returned its students to remote learning after the state's COVID-19 figures showed that the county has met two of three indicators to determine significant community spread of the coronavirus.

Remote instructions for Capital School District students in Kent County will be effective until Jan. 4, Interim Superintendent Dr. Sylvia Henderson said in a statement on the district's website.

The county's rates of new case and positive COVID tests are now in the "red phase" used to determine how schools operate during the pandemic, but closures are not mandated by the state.

## Maine

PORTLAND — Maine has launched a grant program designed to help health care orga-

nizations continue serving patients during the coronavirus pandemic.

The program is backed by \$30 million in federal coronavirus relief dollars and is called the Maine Health Care Financial Relief Program, Democratic Gov. Janet Mills said. The grant program is open to hospitals as well as nursing, congregate care and behavioral health facilities and community service providers, state officials said.

The grants can go as high as \$100,000, Mills said Monday.

Mills also announced a \$40 million economic recovery grant program for Maine's tourism, hospitality and retail small business sector earlier on Monday. That program is backed by CARES Act money as well.

## Rhode Island

PROVIDENCE — Rhode Island has opened two field hospitals that combined have more than 900 beds to deal with an expected flood of COVID-19 patients that has already swamped the state's hospitals.

Care New England opened a field hospital with more than 300 beds in Cranston on Monday, the same day the state sent an emergency alert saying conventional hospitals had reached their coronavirus capacity. A facility with nearly 600 beds opened Tuesday at the Rhode Island Convention Center in Providence. It is run by Lifespan, the state's largest hospital group.

There were 365 patients in the state's hospitals with the disease as of Saturday, the most recent date for which the information was available, according to the state Department of Health, down from a single-day high of 381 on Nov. 23.

## Maryland

ANNAPOLIS — Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan and state Attorney General Brian E. Frosh are pressing leaders in Wash-

ington for more stimulus relief related to the coronavirus pandemic.

The Frederick News-Post reported Monday that the governor urged President-elect Joe Biden to prioritize a new stimulus package to help states and small businesses that are struggling. The state is approaching 200,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19.

"States are already fighting an uphill battle to rebuild our economies and maintain essential services in education, health care, emergency operations and public safety," the Republican wrote.

Frosh, the state's Democratic AG, joined a coalition of attorneys general who are asking Congress to extend CARES Act funding through the end of next year. The CARES Act has provided more than \$2 trillion in economic relief to state and local governments.

## Michigan

LANSING — State Rep. John Chirkun said Monday he had tested positive for the coronavirus, becoming at least the 10th member of the Legislature to be infected since the pandemic hit Michigan more than eight months ago.

Also, two people in the Senate notified the business office of their positive tests. It was not specified if they are senators, employees or interns. Neither was on site during the transmission period nor had close contact with anyone in the Senate.

Chirkun is the sixth known lawmaker to be infected in less than a month, amid surging COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths among the public. The Legislature has 148 members and is due to return this week after a two-week break.

House Democratic Leader Christine Greig said Chirkun, a third-term Democrat from Roseville, thinks he contracted the virus during a recent hunting trip.

## Inmates start jail fire by burning mattresses, send 3 to hospital

**GA** ATLANTA — Three people were transported to a hospital after inmates started a fire at a Georgia jail by burning two mattresses, authorities said.

Fulton County Sheriff's Office spokeswoman Tracy Flanagan said two Fulton County Jail employees and an inmate were taken to a hospital as a precaution after the blaze.

The fire was already out by the time crews got to the building, but there was heavy smoke and minor damage, Atlanta Fire Rescue spokesman Sgt. Cortez Stafford told The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. He said a guard had also suffered from smoke inhalation.

It is not clear how many inmates are responsible for setting the mattresses on fire.

## Light extravaganza goes drive-thru due to virus

**LA** NEW ORLEANS — The light extravaganza tradition called Celebration in the Oaks that is held yearly in City Park has turned into a drive-thru experience as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

Thousands of visitors usually go to the park every holiday season to see the elaborate light show. It features various scenes and characters made out of lights interspersed throughout the park's trees and landscapes.

In recent years, visitors would buy a ticket and walk through a section of the park where the lights are arranged. But this year the pandemic has meant some changes. Instead of walking, visitors will buy tickets and drive through the park to see the lights.

## Mayor-elect loses arm after hunting accident

**WV** DUNBAR — The mayor-elect of a West Virginia city has lost an arm in a hunting accident.

Dunbar Mayor-elect Scott Elliott was injured in a hunting accident, City Council member Greg Hudson said in a Facebook post.

Elliott was elected mayor in November. He is the city's current public works director and retired in 2017 after more than 20 years with the Dunbar police department.

## Mysterious silver monolith disappears from desert

**UT** SALT LAKE CITY — A mysterious silver monolith that was

placed in the Utah desert has disappeared less than 10 days after it was spotted by wildlife biologists performing a helicopter survey of bighorn sheep, federal officials and witnesses said.

"We have received credible reports that the illegally installed structure, referred to as the 'monolith' has been removed from Bureau of Land Management public lands by an unknown party," BLM spokesperson Kimberly Finch said in a statement. The agency did not remove the structure, she said.

The Utah Department of Public Safety said biologists spotted the monolith. It was about 11 feet tall with sides that appeared to be made of stainless steel.

## Police: Man charged in machete attack outside victim's home

**NC** MACCLESFIELD — Police in North Carolina said they've charged a man with attempted murder after he attacked a person with a machete.

The Edgecombe County Sheriff's Office said the attacked occurred in Macclesfield.

Police said Carlos Antonio Washington attacked a person with a machete outside the victim's home. Police said Washington fled after being shot at by members of the victim's family.

Washington was apprehended later by police and is being held at a local detention center. Police said the victim suffered minor injuries.

## Nuns to decide fate of closing monastery as they move on

**NH** CONCORD — A Catholic monastery in Concord is closing, leaving its five remaining nuns with a decision to make.

The Concord Monitor reported the Diocese of Manchester announced that it will close the Carmelite Monastery, 74 years after it was founded as a branch of the Carmelites of Boston.

It will be up to the nuns to decide whether they want to join another Carmelite monastery. The Monitor reported they will also decide what to do with the monastery's property and the remains of several sisters buried onsite.

## Man stopped with loaded handgun at airport

**IA** DES MOINES — An Oklahoma man was caught with a loaded handgun in his carry-on bag at an Iowa airport during Thanksgiving week, federal

transportation officials said.

Des Moines police were called to the airport, and officers confiscated the gun and cited the man on suspicion of a weapons charge. It was the sixth gun confiscated at the Des Moines International Airport in 2020, the TSA said. There were 12 guns found at the airport in 2019.

A typical first offense for carrying a loaded handgun into a checkpoint is \$4,100 and can go as high as nearly \$13,670, depending on any mitigating circumstances, the TSA said.

## Restaurant customer kills gunman during robbery attempt

**PA** PHILADELPHIA — A customer shot and killed an armed man during an attempted robbery at a restaurant, police said.

The 53-year-old suspect entered the Wingstop eatery on Cottman Avenue, brandished a gun and demanded money from the employees, police said.

The suspect pointed the weapon at a 27-year-old customer who had walked into the restaurant, according to police. The customer, who had a valid permit to carry a gun, shot the suspect in the neck, police said.

The suspect was pronounced dead at the scene.

The customer was taken in for questioning and police recovered both weapons.

## Fort Wayne's replica fort faces costly repairs after car crash

**IN** FORT WAYNE — The replica of Fort Wayne's early 1800s namesake military post is facing costly repairs after a car crashed into its outer timber wall.

The crash knocked down the tall timbers making up a corner of the Old Fort's wall and damaged the baker's oven.

"This is the fourth time the fort has been hit by a vehicle," said Tom Grant, the treasurer of Historic Fort Wayne. "This is absolutely the worst situation we've had."

Grant estimates that it could cost tens of thousands of dollars to make repairs at the replica fort that was first built in the 1970s at the downtown site along the St. Marys River. He said the nonprofit group was seeking donations.

The car drove over a grassy berm between a street and the fort before hitting the timber wall. The car was abandoned when police officers arrived and the crash was under investigation, police said.

— From The Associated Press

# NBA camps open as new season looms

Associated Press

For the Los Angeles Lakers and Miami Heat, it was the shortest offseason ever. For the eight teams that haven't played since March, the offseason dragged for longer than most seasons last. And for all 30 clubs, questions are far more prevalent than answers these days.

Ready or not, the NBA is back.

Training camps opened around the league Tuesday, though on-court sessions were limited to individual workouts and only for those players who have gotten three negative coronavirus test results back in the last few days. Mandatory "group training activities," another way to describe what would otherwise be called practice, will begin in some cities Friday and for most clubs Sunday, the league said.

"I feel like a kid getting excited for the first day of school again," Atlanta guard Trae Young tweeted.

As is the case with school,

there will be tests in NBA camps. Lots of them.

Players and coaches will be tested for coronavirus daily around the league, and a positive test at this point would likely derail someone for most of camp and probably into the pre-season. The rules are so strict that clubs cannot even hold a team dinner on the eve of training camp; the NBA isn't allowing those to take place until at least Dec. 11, or the start of Phase 4 in the league's five-phase plan for health and safety.

"We're all going to have to be very nimble, first of all keeping guys safe and healthy," Utah general manager Justin Zanik said Monday. "We'll get an idea of the schedule, how travel is, how the pandemic affects us. ... No one in the NBA, other than a three-month bubble, has ever gone through what we're about to go through."

Preseason is less than two weeks away, starting Dec. 11. The regular season starts on Dec. 22, three weeks from Tuesday. A schedule for the first half

of the shortened 72-game regular season could be known in the coming days, and many teams are still deciding if they can begin the season with fans in their arenas or not. The NBA champion Lakers have already said they aren't having fans in their building to start the season; Charlotte and Oklahoma City announced Monday that they will begin their home schedules the same way.

"This is going to be a challenging season for us," Phoenix general manager James Jones said. "We're going to do everything in our power to make sure that we try to stay COVID-free and try to stay healthy. With 72 games in a condensed season and more or increased back-to-backs means that we'll have to manage our time appropriately."

For nine coaches — Tom Thibodeau in New York, Steve Nash in Brooklyn, Billy Donovan in Chicago, Doc Rivers in Philadelphia, Nate Bjorkgren in Indiana, Stan Van Gundy in New Orleans, Stephen Silas in

Houston, Mark Daigneault in Oklahoma City and Tyrone Lue with the Los Angeles Clippers — this week marks the formal start of their on-court tenures with their clubs.

It'll also be the first training camp as head coach for J.B. Bickerstaff in Cleveland; he took over as coach of the Cavaliers in February.

Some teams haven't played since March 11. Others saw their seasons resume in July, then end in August or September. And for the Lakers and the Heat, the NBA finalists, the season went until mid-October.

Not even two months later, it's time to play again.

"I think it's fair to say that coming into the season, given everything that's going on in the country relative to COVID and the effects that it's having on everybody both locally and nationally, this is going to be a pretty unique season," Oklahoma City general manager Sam Presti said.

"We've never been through a season like this before."

## Davis, 14th-ranked North Carolina overwhelm UNLV

Associated Press

ASHEVILLE, N.C. — North Carolina started its first game of the relocated Maui Invitational so badly that it faced an immediate double-digit hole as its Hall of Fame coach benched multiple starters.

The 14th-ranked Tar Heels offered up a confidence-building response to those early troubles.

Freshman RJ Davis scored 16 points to help UNC beat UNLV 78-51 in Monday night's first round. After falling behind 13-0, the Tar Heels used a big run spanning halftime and a dominating effort on the glass to advance.

"I told them at the first time-out I wasn't worried about the score," coach Roy Williams

said. "I was just worried about how we were playing."

Garrison Brooks added 14 points and surpassed the 1,000-point mark for his career in the first half for North Carolina (2-0), which didn't score for the first 6½ minutes. But UNC closed the gap, then went on a 28-4 run for its own big lead.

The Tar Heels got a big contribution from senior reserve Andrew Platek, who had 11 points and hit a pair of first-half three-pointers after UNC sputtered out of the tipoff.

"I think we were worried for a second," Platek said of the players' reaction to the early deficit. "But then we just knew if we played our principles and played our game plan, we were going to be fine."

Bryce Hamilton scored 15 points for the Runnin' Rebels (0-2), who hit their first five shots. But UNLV made just 13 of 57 shots (22.8%) while the Tar Heels snagged seemingly every miss to finish with a 54-35 rebounding advantage.

**No. 17 Texas 78, Davidson 76:** At Asheville, N.C., Courtney Ramey had the go-ahead driving score with 20 seconds left for the Longhorns in the opening game of the Maui Invitational.

Ramey's score broke a 76-all tie, then Texas (2-0) came up with a pair of stops on the final possession, when the Wildcats (1-1) had a chance to tie or win.

Davidson's Sam Mennenga missed a contested three-point shot from the wing, but the Wild-

cats got another shot when the ball went out of bounds with 3.8 seconds left.

Davidson inbounded again to Mennenga, who missed a final three for the win with the Longhorns' Andrew Jones closely defending him. Mennenga turned toward the official at the horn, while Wildcats coach Bob McKillop also protested slightly before leaving the court.

Mennenga scored 17 points to lead Davidson.

**Long Beach St.-No. 22 UCLA, ppd.:** The Bruins' home opener against the Beach was postponed. UCLA spokesman Alex Timiraos said the game is off "out of an abundance of caution" based on COVID-19 protocols in the Long Beach State program.



# Metcalf paces Seahawks past Eagles

*Associated Press*

PHILADELPHIA — DK Metcalf got extra motivation he didn't even need.

Metcalf caught 10 passes for 177 yards, Russell Wilson threw for 230 yards and a touchdown and the Seattle Seahawks beat the Philadelphia Eagles 23-17 on Monday night.

Before the game, Metcalf said Eagles defensive coordinator Jim Schwartz, who coached Calvin Johnson in Detroit, compared him to the former Lions star.

"I'm getting a little respect, but you know I still got work to do. One of the defensive coaches came up to me and it kind of made me mad that he was like, 'You know, I was in Detroit with Megatron but you're not there yet,'" Metcalf said. "In my mind, I'm not trying to be Megatron. I'm trying to be me. So I had a little chip on my shoulder the whole game."

The Seahawks (8-3) moved one game ahead of the Rams in the NFC West. The Eagles (3-7-1) fell a half-game behind the Giants and Washington in the woeful NFC East.

Carson Wentz didn't cede many snaps to backup Jalen Hurts but had another rough game. He was 25 of 45 for 215 yards, two TDs — one in garbage time — and one interception.

Seattle's defense entered the game allowing the most yards in the NFL and most yards passing but held Philadelphia's inept offense to 250 yards.

Metcalf was on the board when the Eagles took J.J. Arcega-Whiteside in the second round with the 57th pick in 2019. Arcega-Whiteside has 12 career catches and was

a healthy inactive before landing on the COVID-19 list. Metcalf, who was the final pick of the second round, had the best game of his rookie year in Seattle's playoff win at Philadelphia last season and again showed why he's one of the best receivers in the NFL.

Metcalf's 52-yard catch on third-and-13 set up Wilson's 1-yard TD pass to David Moore that gave the Seahawks a 7-0 lead.

"It's kind of like coming home, a place that had a chance to draft me but they didn't so I've got to make them pay," Metcalf said.

Cornerback Darius Slay, who followed Metcalf in coverage, called it the worst game of his career.

"I lost every 50-50 ball. I let the team down. I gotta play better," Slay said.

Chris Carson made it 14-0 when he bullied his way through Philadelphia's defense on a 16-yard run.

"You know me, I saw that end zone so my game is physical so I wanted to get it in," Carson said.

The Eagles didn't get a first down until Wentz ran for 20 yards with under five minutes left in the first half. Wentz scrambled for 13 yards on third-and-5 to keep the drive going and tossed a 3-yard TD pass to Dallas Goedert to cut it to 14-6 at halftime. Jake Elliott missed the extra point wide left.

Elliott's 42-yard field goal cut it to 14-9 in the third quarter. Jason Myers hit one from 44 yards to extend it to 17-9.

After a holding call on Cedric Ogbuehi negated a 17-yard TD run by Carlos Hyde, Myers connected from 33 yards. He hit another one from 39.

Richard Rodgers caught a tipped ball on a

desperation heave by Wentz for a 33-yard TD in the final minute.

Trailing by 11, Eagles coach Doug Pederson passed up a field goal and went for it on fourth-and-4 from the Seahawks 15. Wentz's pass went straight to Seattle's Quandre Diggs as Goedert turned the other way on the route.

The Eagles got a huge stop on Seattle's opening series. After a pair of unsportsmanlike conduct penalties helped the Seahawks reach the 3, Derek Barnett stuffed Moore for a 5-yard loss on fourth down from the 2. Barnett sacked Wilson on fourth-and-2 from Philadelphia's 37 on Seattle's second drive.

## Owning Philly

Wilson is 6-0 against the Eagles and the Seahawks have won seven in a row in the series.

## No QB rotation

Hurts took the snap on two plays. He completed a 6-yard pass to Alshon Jeffery on one and handed off on the other. Wentz was split wide on the running play and on the sideline for the pass.

## Going backward

The Eagles had minus-4 yards in the first quarter, matching their worst first quarter in the past 30 seasons (also minus-4 vs Minnesota on Oct. 7, 2018). The last team to have negative yards in the first quarter was Chicago with minus-1 against Philadelphia on Nov. 3, 2019.

The Eagles went three-and-out on their first five drives.

# Ravens-Steelers moves to Wednesday afternoon

*Associated Press*

The Baltimore Ravens' struggle to contain an extended outbreak of the coronavirus forced their rescheduled game Tuesday night against the unbeaten Pittsburgh Steelers to be moved back to Wednesday afternoon.

It's the third fix to a matchup originally slated to be played Thanksgiving night. The game will remain on NBC.

Also, the Steelers' home game in Week 13 against Washington has been moved from Sunday to Dec. 7.

The Ravens' home game against Dallas

will be on Tuesday, Dec. 8, on Fox and NFL Network. It was originally set for Thursday night, then moved to Dec. 7.

Ravens-Steelers was moved back one more day for medical reasons, but now Baltimore gets some time for workouts.

The NFL permitted the Ravens to return to their facility on Monday night under doctors' supervision, which is similar to what happened when the Tennessee Titans had a coronavirus outbreak earlier this season. The Titans got three days of workouts in that scenario.

"Players arrived already prepared to

work out on the field, and they did not enter the locker room or training room," the Ravens said in a statement. "We intend to hold another walk-through session on Tuesday, in preparation for traveling to Pittsburgh Tuesday evening."

The NFL announced the most recent switches Monday after the Ravens placed starters Matthew Judon, Willie Snead and Mark Andrews on the reserve/COVID-19 list.

Although Baltimore also had four players return from that list, the team will still be severely short-handed

# Gophers call off game after virus spike

*Associated Press*

Minnesota announced Monday it has called off this weekend's game against No. 16 Northwestern, the second straight cancellation for the Gophers due to a spike in COVID-19 cases within the program.

University officials made the decision in consultation with the Big Ten after seven additional positive cases were confirmed. The Wildcats, who lead the West Division by one game at 5-1, were scheduled to play Saturday at TCF Bank Stadium. Those Gophers who've contracted the virus have experienced "very, very mild symptoms," according to coach P.J. Fleck.

College football is limping toward the postseason in late December as multiple programs deal with COVID-19 outbreaks and contact tracing protocols. Four games on this week's schedule have been postponed or canceled. Over the last three weeks, 52 games have been called off because of COVID-19 issues out of 179 that were scheduled. Since late August, the total number of canceled or postponed games is 103.

Minnesota's football team has turned up 47 positive cases since Nov. 19 — 21 players and 26 staff members. The Gophers paused all team activities six days ago, when they canceled the annual rivalry game at Wisconsin.

Minnesota also said it will hold all meetings virtually for the rest of the season. Left on the schedule is a game at Nebraska on Dec. 12 and a to-be-determined cross-divi-

sion opponent on Dec. 19.

"There's not a lot we can do about it. Nobody's doing anything wrong. The virus remains undefeated," Fleck said on his weekly radio appearance on KFAN-FM. "We are in a major city, surrounded by a lot of people."

The university is working with the state health department to isolate and treat the individuals who've tested positive. Last week, Minnesota added testing beyond the conference's established protocols.

"The health and safety of our student-athletes, coaches and staff continues to be our main priority," athletic director Mark Coyle said. "The last couple of days have shown a decrease in positive cases, but not to the point where we are able to return to competition."

Coyle said the Gophers are aiming to play Nebraska as scheduled, and Fleck said the team is game-planning for the Huskers.

The virus has done a number on the Big Ten race, with six cancellations so far. The 18th-ranked Badgers have likely become ineligible for the conference championship because they haven't played enough games. East Division leader and third-ranked Ohio State, which had to cancel its last game against Illinois, would be in danger of that fate with one more cancellation.

In the ACC, Virginia coach Bronco Mendenhall said he and athletic director Carla Williams have contacted the Atlantic Coast Conference calling for updated protocols and procedures after the Cavaliers flew to

Florida on Friday only to learn their game against Florida State would not be played because of COVID-19 issues involving the Seminoles.

Virginia is the second team in as many weeks that made the trek to Tallahassee and learn the Seminoles had an outbreak limit the number of players of their roster. Florida State's scheduled game game Nov. 21 against No. 4 Clemson was called off hours before kickoff.

## College basketball

The pandemic is also disrupting the early days of the college basketball season, with coaches scrambling to fill holes in the schedule. The 21st-ranked Oregon men's basketball program announced it would play two games in Omaha, Nebraska — against Missouri on Wednesday and Seton Hall on Friday.

Oregon is yet to open its basketball season because of the COVID-19-related cancellations of multi-team events the Ducks hoped to play in as well as a game against Eastern Washington.

Ducks coach Dana Altman was the longtime coach at Creighton, in Omaha, before leaving for Oregon and he has remained close friends with athletic director Bruce Rasmussen.

Seton Hall (0-1), like Creighton, plays in the Big East. Rasmussen served as the middleman to get the Ducks and Pirates together on Creighton's home court at the CHI Health Center.

# Army uniform inspired by Wolfhounds of Korean War

*Stars and Stripes*

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — The U.S. Army's Hawaii-based "Tropic Lightning" 25th Infantry Division is serving as the inspiration for the uniforms to be worn next week during the Army-Navy football game.

The annual matchup will take place Dec. 12 at Army's Michie Stadium.

Black Knights players' uniforms will honor the division's Korean War-era 27th Infantry Regiment, the Wolfhounds, which played a decisive role in repelling the initial massive assault by the North Korean People's Army in 1950, according to promotional materials released by the Army.

Army's helmets will sport the division's distinctive insignia: a golden lightning bolt

emblazoned upon a red taro leaf.

The division was activated on Oahu shortly before Japan's surprise attack on the island on Dec. 7, 1941. Its soldiers participated in the invasion of Luzon, Philippines, in January 1945 and were among the occupying forces in Japan after its surrender later that year.

On one shoulder of the uniform is a wolf head, symbol of the division's Wolfhounds, whose soldiers were deployed from the tranquil Japan occupation to Korea when war broke out in June 1950.

The Wolfhounds were among the units defending the Pusan Perimeter and then pushed the enemy back toward the north, earning three Presidential Unit Citations

during the conflict, which ended in 1953.

"The Wolfhounds have more Medal of Honor recipients than any other regiment going back to the Spanish-American War," the Army said.

The uniforms carry a shoulder patch of an American flag from the early 1950s, which had only 48 stars before Hawaii and Alaska became states in 1959.

The game venue of West Point, N.Y., chosen in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, is a significant departure from the long-time tradition of holding the game at neutral locations.

Over the 120 years the rivals have competed, about three-quarters of those games were played in Philadelphia.