

## Women getting better air support

*McClatchy Washington Bureau*

WASHINGTON — As a helicopter pilot in Iraq in 2004, now-Sen. Tammy Duckworth stopped drinking water hours before she climbed into the cockpit of her Army UH-60 Black Hawk for combat missions.

Even in Iraq's heat, she'd purposefully dehydrate herself because there was not a safe way for her to use the restroom in her one-piece, zip-up flight suit.

"I would have to take off my sidearm. I wore a shoulder holster, so I would have to take off my shoulder holster. Then I would have to take off my flight vest, my survival vest, then I would have to take off my body armor and then I would have to take off my flight suit in order to go to the bathroom," said Duckworth, an Illinois Democrat.

"So I did what any sane person did, which was I just didn't drink [water]," she continued. "And that is a very dangerous practice that many of our female service members went through."

McClatchy reported this summer that of the military's 48,000 pilots, only 3,300 were women and only 72 were Black. There are a multitude of reasons for this, including that the services did not open up flying roles to women until in the 1970s and did not allow women to fly in combat until the 1990s.

But even 25 years later, aircraft systems that could make military aviation more accommodating for women and encourage

more of them to stay in service are still designed around men.

That's starting to change. This summer, due in part to the uproar over the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis police custody, all of the service branches took a deeper look at the lack of race and gender diversity in their ranks.

Those internal reviews prompted process reforms, such as who sits on military promotion boards. But it also re-energized reviews of warfighting equipment and a commitment that future military aircraft systems would be designed with both men and women in mind.

In the past, "we were eliminating about 44% of the U.S. female population right off the bat" through aircraft design, said Jennifer Whitestone, a biomedical engineer with the Air Force's Airman Accommodation Laboratory, which is assisting with the review.

Most of the nation's current fighter jets were designed around male pilot body measurements from Army, Navy and Air Force studies completed in the late 1960s or early 1970s.

When women tried to operate them, many were too short to see over the aircraft's nose.

In an August memo, the Air Force said that past aircraft configurations had disqualified as many as 74% of Black women, 72% of Hispanic women and 61% of Asian women.

"To put it bluntly, the U.S. faces a crisis of scale," wrote Will Roper, the Air Force assistant secretary for acquisitions. The August memo eliminated height restrictions in place since a 1967 study and directed that all future aircraft acquisition would need to be designed to accommodate 95% of body sizes among the recruitment-eligible U.S. population.

It will be too expensive to retrofit the military's older jets, such as F-16s and F/A-18s to meet the 95% standard, Whitestone said.

But the Air Force has been able to retrofit the T-1 Jayhawk trainer aircraft with a cushion to help some pilots obtain the height needed to qualify for and safely operate that aircraft. In addition, its future replacement for the UH-1N Huey helicopter, the MH-139A Grey Wolf, is already undergoing measurements at its various positions such as gunner to determine what range of body types it can accommodate, Whitestone said.

A new ejection seat being produced by Collins Aerospace will remove another barrier female pilots faced: many of them did not weigh enough for the old seat to safely eject them.

There are also initiatives underway within the services to revise body armor, adapt anti-gravity suits to fit correctly around female pilots' thighs and calves and design bladder relief systems to provide better support for female service members.

## USS Roosevelt sails for 2nd deployment this year

*The San Diego Union-Tribune*

After leaving its home port of San Diego more than two weeks ago, the Navy announced the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt has officially begun its second deployment in less than a year.

The ship and its more than 5,500 sailors have been operating off the coast of California since leaving its berth at Naval Air Station North Island on Dec. 7. It began sailing west on Wednesday, the Navy said in a statement.

This deployment caps a year marked by controversy and tragedy for the ship and its crew.

The Roosevelt left San Diego in January 2020 for a routine deployment to the western Pacific. Just as the coronavirus began spreading worldwide, the ship visited Da Nang, Vietnam. Two weeks later, at the end of March, COVID-19 began to spread out of control among the crew.

The ship diverted to Guam where much of the crew was sequestered in local hotels.

A firestorm of criticism and controversy followed the publication of a letter, written by the ship's commanding officer at the time, Capt. Brett Crozier, decrying the conditions on board for the crew and questioning the seriousness with which Navy brass

were taking the outbreak.

Days after the letter's publication, Crozier was fired by then-acting Navy secretary Thomas Modly. Modly himself resigned after a speech he gave aboard the ship criticizing Crozier became public.

The ship was sidelined in Guam for two months, only getting back to sea in June. It returned to San Diego in July.

Last month, the ship began preparing to again deploy. That involved thousands of sailors sequestering over the Thanksgiving holidays to prevent the virus from again getting onboard. The ship left San Diego just over two weeks ago.

# 'Peanuts' maker inspired by WWII service

By J.P. LAWRENCE  
*Stars and Stripes*

The cartoonist who created the Peanuts gang and television specials like "A Charlie Brown Christmas" drew from some of his experiences as an Army staff sergeant during World War II to fashion the enduringly popular comic series.

Charles Schulz, the cartoonist behind "Peanuts," took part in the liberation of the Dachau concentration camp and the occupation of Munich shortly before the end of the war.

Biographies about Schulz, as well as his own essays, talk about the impact military service had on him and the characters he created.

"The three years I spent in the army taught me all I needed to know about loneliness," Schulz wrote in "My Life with Charlie Brown," published in 2010. "My sympa-

thy for the loneliness that all of us experience is dropped heavily upon poor Charlie Brown."

Much like Charlie Brown, Schulz was a small, shy and geeky boy who dwelled on his bad luck, and there was a real Little Red-Haired Girl who turned down his affections, according to the 2007 book "Schulz and Peanuts: A Biography," by David Michaelis.

In November 1942, Schulz received his draft notice. The Army's call meant that he would have to leave his mother who was suffering from cervical cancer. Schulz dutifully reported to Fort Snelling in Minnesota for induction into the service, visiting his mother whenever he could on weekend passes and holiday furloughs.

On one of these trips, his mother from her sickbed told him it would be nice if the family had a dog named Snoopy, a name much like a common Norwegian form of endear-

ment, Michaelis wrote. But this was never to be. She died in February of 1943 and Schulz left for basic training a few days later.

Schulz came home from the war newly confident, but he would always remember how his return didn't have the fanfare he expected. His father didn't stop cutting a customer's hair to welcome him back, he said.

Schulz pursued cartooning, which he had trained for prior to getting drafted. By 1950, his comic strip "Peanuts" reached national syndication, leading to a career in which Charlie Brown and his pals would wind up in newspapers, TV shows and merchandise the world over.

He made a point of paying tribute to other WWII veterans through his cartoons. On Veterans Day, Snoopy would quaff root beers with Stars and Stripes cartoonist Bill Mauldin, whose comic strip, "Willie and Joe," Schulz had read while deployed.

## Citing virus variant, Japan bans foreign travelers through January

By JOSEPH DITZLER  
*Stars and Stripes*

TOKYO — The government of Japan will ban nonresident foreigners from entering the country starting Monday through January to reduce the risk of a new, potentially more transmissible form of the coronavirus from expanding its presence.

According to the government order issued Saturday, resident foreigners may still enter the country but after Wednesday they must provide proof of a negative coronavirus test conducted no more than 72 hours prior to departing for Japan.

The orders follow news accounts of two more people with the variant hospitalized in Tokyo, bringing to seven the known cases.

The Japan Times on Saturday reported one of the two is a man in his 30s who returned to Japan from Britain, where the variant surfaced, on Dec. 16. The other is a woman in her 20s, a member of the man's family, who has not visited the U.K., according to the Times.

The government on Friday at first confirmed that five people, four men and one woman, were infected with the new coronavirus variant following travel from Britain,

according to the newspaper.

U.S. military personnel have been allowed to travel in and out of Japan under the status of forces agreement between the two countries after Japan earlier in the pandemic had frozen nearly all inbound travel. A spokesman for U.S. Forces Japan could not be reached Sunday morning for further comment.

Japan in October opened its borders again for foreigners with medium- to long-term residency status, according to public broadcaster NHK.

Meanwhile, the virus has continued to surge in Japan, and especially in Tokyo. The Tokyo Metropolitan Government reported on Saturday its highest ever one-day total of new coronavirus cases, 949, according to the metro government website. The fall viral surge has repeatedly set new daily records in Tokyo, only to overtake them within days.

Japan on Friday reached a new daily high of 3,841 cases, according to the World Health Organization. During the pandemic, 3,155 have died of coronavirus complications in Japan, with 607 in Tokyo, according to WHO and metro government data.

## EU begins virus vaccination push

*Associated Press*

ROME — Doctors, nurses and the elderly rolled up their sleeves across the European Union to receive the first doses of the coronavirus vaccine Sunday in a symbolic show of unity and moment of hope for a continent confronting its worst health care crisis in a century.

Even though a few countries started giving doses a day early, the coordinated rollout for the 27-nation bloc was aimed at projecting a unified message that the vaccine was safe and Europe's best chance to emerge from the pandemic and the economic devastation caused by months of lockdown.

The vaccine developed by Germany's BioNTech and American drugmaker Pfizer started arriving in super-cold containers at EU hospitals on Friday from a factory in Belgium. Each country was only getting a fraction of the doses needed — fewer than 10,000 in the first batches — with the bigger rollout expected in January when more vaccines become available. All those getting shots Sunday will need to come back for a second dose in three weeks.

# Stimulus bill in limbo, jobless aid expires

Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — President Donald Trump appeared no closer to signing an end-of-year COVID relief and spending bill Sunday as unemployment aid expired, the government barrels toward a mid-pandemic shutdown and lawmakers implored him to break the impasse he created after Congress approved the deal.

The fate of the bipartisan package remained in limbo after Trump blindsided members of both parties with a demand for larger COVID relief checks and complained about “pork” spending, even as help for millions of Americans struggling to make ends meet lapsed overnight.

The federal government will run out of money at 12:01 a.m. Tuesday if Trump refuses to sign the bill as he spends the holidays in Florida.

In the face of economic hardship and spreading disease, several lawmakers urged Trump to sign the legislation immediately,

then have Congress follow up with more relief.

Republican Sen. Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania also said Trump should sign the bill, then make the case for more.

“We’ve got a bill right now that his administration helped negotiate,” he said. “I think we ought to get that done.”

That point was echoed by Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan, a Republican who’s criticized Trump’s pandemic response and his efforts to undo the election results.

“I just gave up guessing what he might do next,” he said.

Washington has been reeling since Trump turned on the deal after it had won sweeping approval in both houses of Congress and after the White House had assured Republican leaders that Trump would support it.

Instead, he assailed the bill’s plan to provide \$600 COVID relief checks to most Americans — insisting it should be \$2,000.

House Republicans swiftly rejected that idea during a rare Christmas Eve session. But Trump has not been swayed in spite of the nation being in the grip of a pandemic.

While payments could be received retroactively, any gap would mean more hardship and uncertainty for Americans who had already grappled with bureaucratic delays, often depleting much of their savings to stay afloat while waiting for payments to kick in.

The bill, which was in Florida awaiting Trump’s signature, would also activate a weekly \$300 federal supplement to unemployment payments.

In addition to the unemployment benefits that have already lapsed, Trump’s continued refusal to sign the bill would lead to the expiration of eviction protections and put on hold a new round of subsidies for hard-hit businesses, restaurants and theaters, as well as money for cash-starved transit systems and for vaccine distribution.

# FBI searches home in Nashville blast probe

Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Federal agents converged Saturday on the home of a possible person of interest in the explosion that rocked downtown Nashville as investigators scoured hundreds of tips and leads in the blast that damaged dozens of buildings on Christmas morning.

More than 48 hours after the explosion, a motive remained elusive as investigators worked round-the-clock to resolve unanswered questions about a recreational vehicle that blew

up on a mostly deserted street on a sleepy holiday morning after a recorded warning advised those nearby to evacuate.

The attack, which damaged an AT&T building, continued to wreak havoc on cellphone service and police and hospital communications in several Southern states as the company worked to restore service.

Investigators from multiple federal and local law enforcement agencies descended on the home in Antioch, in suburban Nashville, on Saturday af-

ter receiving information relevant to the investigation, said FBI Special Agent Jason Pack. Another law enforcement official, who was not authorized to discuss an ongoing investigation and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity, said investigators regard a person associated with the property as a person of interest.

Federal agents could be seen looking around the property, searching the home and the backyard. A Google Maps im-

age captured in May 2019 had shown a similar recreational vehicle parked in the backyard; an AP reporter at the scene did not see the vehicle at the property in the late afternoon Saturday.

There were other signs of progress in the investigation, as the FBI revealed that it was looking at a number of individuals who may be connected to it. Officials also said no additional explosive devices have been found. Investigators have received around 500 tips and leads.

# EU, UK unveil trade pact set to take effect Jan. 1

Associated Press

BRUSSELS — The European Union and the United Kingdom made public Saturday the vast agreement that is likely to govern future trade and cooperation between them from Jan. 1, setting the 27-nation bloc’s relations with its former member country and neighbor on a new but far more distant footing.

EU ambassadors and lawmakers on both sides of the English Channel will now pore

over the “EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement,” which contains over 1,240 pages of text. EU envoys are expected to meet on Monday to discuss the document, drawn up over nine intense months of talks.

Businesses, so long left in the dark about what is in store for them, will also be trying to understand its implications.

Most importantly, the deal as it stands ensures that Britain can continue to trade in goods with the world’s biggest trading bloc

without tariffs or quotas after the U.K. breaks fully free of the EU. It ceased to be an official member on Jan. 31 this year and is days away from the end of an exit transition period.

But other barriers will be raised, as the U.K. loses the kind of access to a huge market that only membership can guarantee. They range from access to fishing waters to energy markets, and include everyday ties so important to citizens like travel arrangements and education exchanges.



# Health provider's vaccine distribution probed

*Associated Press*

NEW YORK — Police and health officials were probing Saturday whether an Orange County health care provider violated state guidelines in the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. State Health Commissioner Dr. Howard Zucker said in a statement that his office and state police were investigating Parcare Community Health Network in Orange County.

Zucker said he had received reports that Parcare may have fraudulently obtained the vaccine and diverted it to other facilities to be given to members of the public. The state has prioritized front-line health care workers, long-term care residents and staffers to receive the vaccine first. The first vaccine in the state was given to a critical care nurse in Queens on Dec. 14.

In an emailed statement, the company said it would cooperate with the investigation and that it “has a long history of partnering with the city of New York to provide vital health care services to New Yorkers who need them most — including providing COVID-19 testing — especially for New Yorkers in medically underserved communities who’ve been hardest hit by COVID-19.”

## California

LOS ANGELES — Health inspectors and authorities stepped up enforcement at restaurants and shopping malls over the post-Christmas weekend as they desperately seek to curb a coronavirus surge that has already filled some hospitals in California well beyond normal capacity.

Crowding at Los Angeles County shopping malls came under scrutiny before the holiday. Several of them were cited and fined up to \$500 for violating COVID-19 measures, which could include not keeping occupancy below 20% capacity and not prohibiting eating and drinking, the Los Angeles Times reported Saturday.

Health officials were waiting to see whether people followed their pleas and avoided Christmas and New Year’s festivities that could lead to a new round of infections and threatened to extend stay-at-home orders in several regions of the state. They repeated warnings before the holiday week that Thanksgiving gatherings where people didn’t wear masks or observe social distancing have resulted in a surge.

## Florida

MIAMI — After taking Christmas Day off as a holiday, and with most state COVID-19

testing sites closed on Friday, Florida’s Department of Health resumed reporting COVID-19 numbers on Saturday.

The state confirmed 17,042 additional cases of the coronavirus, a two-day figure, to bring the state’s known total to 1,264,588.

The state has reported single-day totals of more than 10,000 for 14 days in December from Dec. 1 to Christmas Eve on Thursday, when 13,147 cases were confirmed — similar to July’s peak.

Also, 140 new resident deaths were announced in Saturday’s two-fer, bringing the resident toll to 21,135.

## Idaho

BOISE — Vaccinations for about 10,200 residents and staff at 75 Idaho long-term care facilities will begin Monday, officials say.

Idaho Department of Health and Welfare spokeswoman Niki Forbing-Orr told the Idaho Press that most of Idaho’s 315 long-term care facilities will receive the vaccine from CVS Health Care and Walgreens through the Pharmacy Partnership organized by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

About 1,350 Idaho residents have died due to COVID-19, and more than 500 of the deaths have been at long-term care facilities. About 135,000 Idaho residents have been infected.

“What we have been hearing from residents is, ‘We just want our life back, we want our families to visit, to play cards with our friends,’” said Zendi Meharry, director of clinical operations at Cascadia Healthcare, a group that runs several skilled nursing facilities in Idaho. Residents and workers at long-term care facilities are in the first group scheduled to get vaccines. That group also includes front-line healthcare workers. About 130,000 people are in that group.

## Kansas

LAWRENCE — One northeast Kansas county is moving jury trials to a building on its fairgrounds to allow for better social distancing amid the pandemic. The Lawrence Journal-World reported that the plan is for jury trials in Douglas County to resume Jan. 11 at the Flory Meeting Hall.

Chief Judge James McCabria said the jury selection room can safely seat up to 30 people at a time in addition to the judge, parties and court staff. Trials that need bigger jury pools will bring in panels at staged intervals. Because court proceedings will be livestreamed on YouTube for public access

for the time being, prospective jurors will not be addressed by name, but by number.

Trials will be held on the other side of the collapsible wall that divides the meeting hall in half. The space is big enough that the 14 chairs of the jury box can be distanced from one another.

## New Mexico

SANTA FE — New Mexico will begin providing COVID-19 vaccinations to 15,000 people who work or live at long-term care facilities, state officials announced Saturday.

Beginning Sunday, the CVS and Walgreens pharmacy chains and Vida Pharmacy in Albuquerque planned to administer doses of the Moderna vaccine at nursing homes and assisted living facilities across the state, officials said.

The statement noted that people receiving vaccinations will need two doses from the same manufacturer administered several weeks apart. The pharmacies will send staff to facilities three times over the coming months to administer the vaccines.

Dr. Tracie Collins, Department of Health cabinet secretary, said people who have been vaccinated can still carry and transmit COVID-19, so it’s important that they continue to wear masks and take other precautions such as washing their hands and distancing.

## North Dakota

FARGO — The North Dakota Army National Guard on Saturday began providing rapid coronavirus testing to people arriving at Hector International Airport in Fargo.

The tests were being offered for free to people on arriving flights in an effort to catch new infections from spreading in the community. The tests are expected to take 15 minutes to give a result.

Over the last two weeks, North Dakota has seen a 68% decline in the average number of new cases reported each day. An average of about 199 new cases was reported each day over the last week. The Department of Health reported that 133 people had tested positive during testing completed Friday.

The number of people hospitalized by the virus also declined to 111, but health officials reported four deaths among people who contracted COVID-19. That brought the total number of deaths to 1,264. The state has seen the nation’s fourth-highest rate of deaths per capita over the course of the pandemic.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Year 2020 made with 3K dominoes destroyed

**MA** BOSTON — A Boston area online personality took to YouTube to accomplish something many have yearned to do for months — knock the year 2020 to pieces.

Lily Hevesh used her skills with dominoes to give 2020 its just desserts. Hevesh built a display of the numbers “2020” using 3,000 dominoes and smashed it with a baseball bat in a clip made public over the weekend.

Hevesh said it took her three days to make the display.

### High school bans novellas by Steinbeck, Watson

**MN** MENDOTA HEIGHTS — Administrators at Henry Sibley High School ordered instructors to stop teaching John Steinbeck’s “Of Mice and Men” and Larry Watson’s “Montana 1948,” the St. Paul Pioneer Press reported.

They said families and staff had complained about racist stereotypes and slurs in “Of Mice and Men,” which was first published in 1937.

Sibley administrators said the Native American community is upset with “Montana 1948” because the protagonist’s uncle sexually assaults and murders a Sioux housekeeper.

### Pandemic delays plastic bag ban for months

**ME** AUGUSTA — Maine is delaying by several months a statewide ban on single-use plastic carry-out bags that was scheduled to take effect in January.

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection said it’s delaying enforcement of the laws that ban the bags until July 1, 2021.

The department said in a statement that it’s taking the delayed approach “in response to several practical and logistical effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.”

### Police: Man steals loader, crashes into Target

**NY** BAY SHORE — A Long Island man was arrested after a Christmas morning crime spree that gave new meaning to the term doorbuster.

Suffolk County police said Justin Shuffle, 33, stole a 2010 Bobcat skid loader, which is used to push snow, from a Bay Shore shopping center. He then crashed the mini-snow plow through the front doors of a nearby Target.

Once inside, authorities said, Shuffle swiped a coat and several gift cards before police caught him in the electronics section of the big-box retailer.

### Several people injured in attack by pack of dogs

**MO** FLORISSANT — Authorities in the St. Louis suburb of Florissant said a pack of dogs is responsible for attacking several people.

The incident happened when four dogs ran out of a home and first attacked two elderly women who were walking, causing serious injuries to one of the women.

The dogs went to a road, where one of them was fatally struck by a vehicle. The other three dogs then attacked another woman, her dog and a neighbor who tried to intervene.

The dogs were eventually taken into custody by St. Louis County Animal Control.

### Cat reunited with owner after 5-year absence

**IA** DES MOINES — A cat named Lottie was reunited with his Des Moines owners just in time for Christmas after he went missing nearly five years ago.

The Des Moines Register reported that Kara Hanlon, 37, figured the cat had died until she got a letter in the mail saying otherwise.

The Animal Rescue League’s animal control division had picked up Lottie and identified him by scanning his microchip.

### Officials use fireworks, cannons to scare geese

**SD** SIOUX FALLS — Sioux Falls officials are using fireworks and cannons to scare geese away from the city’s airport.

The city’s animal control officers said they usually see thousands of geese migrate into the city as ponds freeze.

The city needs to keep the air space around the airport and surrounding areas clear of geese and have taken to firing off pyrotechnics and propane cannons to scare them away.

### Mom drops kids from window to escape fire

**SC** IRMO — A mother tossed her 1-year-old and 1-month-old children from their third story apartment to bystanders below to escape an apartment fire caused by a child playing with fireworks, authorities said.

The mother then jumped 20 feet from the window and suffered a severe leg injury, the Irmo Fire Department told media outlets. All three were taken to the hospital but are expected to survive, authorities said.

### Fraternity suspended for hazing, COVID violation

**CT** MIDDLETOWN — A fraternity at Wesleyan University was suspended following a hazing incident that also violated the school’s COVID-19 Code of Conduct.

Lauren Rubenstein, the school’s director of media and public relations, confirmed the suspension but did not identify the fraternity or elaborate on details of the incident and suspension.

The school’s code of conduct limits informal gatherings to 25 people and requires students maintain 6 feet between themselves and others not considered part of their “family unit,” a group of students who live together as roommates or housemates.

— From The Associated Press

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# Fitzpatrick lifts Dolphins past Raiders

*Associated Press*

LAS VEGAS — With a defender dragging him down by his face mask, Ryan Fitzpatrick still managed to launch the pass that might have saved the Miami Dolphins' season.

Just a little more FitzMagic.

Fitzpatrick's desperation heave to Mack Hollins set up Jason Sanders' 44-yard field goal as the Dolphins drove the field in the final 19 seconds to move one step closer to a playoff berth with an improbable 26-25 victory over the Las Vegas Raiders on Saturday night.

"We just felt like we needed a spark, trying to win the game," coach Brian Flores said about the decision to bench rookie Tua Tagovailoa for Fitzpatrick in the fourth quarter.

"If we have to go to a relief pitcher in the ninth, that's what we'll do. Fitz is always ready to go. He went in and moved the ball for us. We were able to

make enough plays to win the game."

Fitzpatrick led three scoring drives in the fourth quarter for Miami (10-5) with the final one the most unlikely after the Raiders (7-8) bypassed a gimme touchdown for a field goal. The move to play for the field goal backfired as Las Vegas lost on a kick instead.

The Dolphins moved a half-game ahead of Baltimore in the AFC playoff race and can clinch a wild-card berth with a win next week at Buffalo.

"I want to go," said Fitzpatrick, who hasn't made the playoffs in his 16-year career. "I want to feel what it's like. I feel like we have a special team. I'm proud I've been able to contribute to that."

The Raiders were eliminated with their fifth loss in six games and will be out of the postseason for the 17th time in 18 seasons.

Coach Jon Gruden chose to

run down the clock for a go-ahead field goal instead of trying for a touchdown with Josh Jacobs going down on purpose at the 1-yard line and Derek Carr taking a knee to set up Daniel Carlson's 22-yard field goal with 19 seconds left.

"I don't regret it one bit," Gruden said. "I just regret the results."

One play was enough to move Miami from its own 25 into field-goal range. Hollins was left open for a 34-yard pass that Fitzpatrick threw while being dragged down by the face mask by Arden Key.

"The odds are pretty low there of us being able to complete something with the proper yardage," Fitzpatrick said. "I didn't know it was complete. My head was getting ripped off."

The penalty moved the ball down to the Las Vegas 26, setting up Sanders' winning kick.

The Dolphins became the

second team in the past 20 years to take over that deep in their territory in the final 30 seconds when trailing and drive for the winning score. Green Bay did it to Detroit five years ago on a desperation pass from Aaron Rodgers to Richard Rodgers.

The back-and-forth final few minutes from Fitzpatrick and Carr made up for a game that lacked offensive fireworks for most of the night. After Miami tied the game at 16 with 4:01 to play, the Raiders took little time to answer.

A holding penalty on first down put them in a hole, but Carr got them right out of it when he scrambled away from pressure and launched a deep pass to Nelson Agholor, who outjumped Byron Jones for the catch.

Agholor then juked safety Bobby McCain and raced to the end zone for the 85-yard score that put Las Vegas up 22-16.

## BOWL ROUNDUP

# No. 23 Liberty thwarts No. 9 Coastal Carolina

*Associated Press*

ORLANDO, Fla. — Liberty ended Coastal Carolina's perfect season with a blocked kick in overtime.

Elijah James blocked Massimo Biscardi's 42-yard field goal attempt to give the No. 23 Flames a 37-34 victory over the No. 9 Chanticleers in a wild finish Saturday night in the FBC Mortgage Cure Bowl.

Liberty (10-1) took the lead on Alex Barbir's 44-yard field goal on the first extra possession.

Coastal Carolina (11-1) got a huge break in regulation when the Flames' Joshua Mack fumbled inside the 1 with 41 seconds left in the fourth quarter. Safety Alex Spillum recovered the fumble to end the long drive.

"I thought it was a touchdown but they called it a fumble," said Liberty quarterback Malik Lewis, who set several records in the game. "But the next opportunity we got, we took advantage of it."

Willis ran for 137 yards and four touchdowns and completed 19 of 29 passes for 220 yards with two interceptions.

The Flames' only loss came to North Carolina State on a blocked field goal.

"No question this is the best season Liberty University has ever had," safety Javon Scruggs said.

The Chanticleers overcame an early 14-0 deficit, and drove 72 yards to tie it in the fourth quarter. Grayson McCall ran in a 2-point conversion to make it 34-34 after throwing a 5-yard touchdown pass to Greg Latushko with 3:01 remaining.

Coastal Carolina had won 12 straight.

"We couldn't do anything with their quarterback," Chanticleers coach Jamey Chadwell said. "You see why he was a five-star player."

McCall had a big game for Coastal Carolina, completing 21 of 32 passes for 318 yards and three touchdowns with one inter-

ception. The red-shirt freshman also ran for 96 yards. It was the first time any ranked team had played in the six-year-old bowl, which was moved to prime time after being scheduled in the early afternoon.

**No. 16 Louisiana-Lafayette 31, UTSA 24:** Trey Ragas scored on a 1-yard plunge with 7:16 left and the Ragin' Cajuns beat the Roadrunners in the First Responder Bowl at SMU's Ford Stadium in Dallas. Louisiana-Lafayette (10-1) drove 72 yards in 12 plays for the winning score after UTSA (7-5) overcame a 24-7 second-half deficit to tie it.

**Georgia State 39, West Kentucky 21:** Redshirt freshman Cornelius "Quad" Brown threw for 226 yards and three touchdowns to lead the Panthers past the Hilltoppers in the LendingTree Bowl in Mobile, Ala. Georgia State (6-4) scored touchdowns on four consecutive first-half possessions.

Western Kentucky finished 5-7.



# Brady's big half earns Bucs playoff spot

Associated Press

DETROIT — Tom Brady was so dominant in Detroit that he could've left Ford Field at halftime to get his favorite chicken wings near the University of Michigan's campus and still made it back to fly to Florida with his team.

Brady threw four touchdown passes in the only half he needed to play and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers went on to rout the Lions 47-7 Saturday, sealing a spot in the playoffs for the first time since 2007.

"When we do play the way we're capable of playing, we're pretty tough to beat," Brady said.

The Bucs (10-5) set a franchise record with 588 yards and snapped the NFL's second-longest postseason drought behind Cleveland's 18-year run that can end Sunday.

"We've been scratching and clawing every single year to make the tournament," said receiver Mike Evans, who was drafted by Tampa Bay six years ago. "It's been a journey and we're happy that we finally accomplished it."

The Bucs rested Brady ahead 34-0, their largest halftime lead in franchise history.

Brady was 22-for-27 for 348 yards with a mix of passes deep down the field and darts in traffic. The six-time Super Bowl-winning quarterback threw touchdown passes to Rob Gronkowski, Evans, Chris Godwin, who made a one-handed catch, and Antonio Brown from 33, 27, 7 and 12 yards.

"When we can keep Tom standing, he's going to deliver for us," coach Bruce Arians said.

The 43-year-old Brady, who split time with Drew Henson in college, started his 298th game to tie Brett Favre's record for an NFL quarterback and played in his 300th game.

The Lions (5-10) started the game without interim coach Darrell Bevell along with assistants on the defensive staff because of COVID-19 contact tracing. And they played much of the game without quarterback Matthew Stafford. He was questionable to play with hip and thumb injuries and then hurt his right ankle on the opening drive and did not return.

Chase Daniel struggled to move the ball much for Detroit, which avoided getting shut out for the second time this season when Jamal Agnew returned a punt 74 yards for a touchdown in the third quarter.

Daniel was replaced in the fourth by David Blough, an undrafted rookie last year.

"It's obviously tough when you've got a lot of coaches shifting around, but those guys did a great job of getting us ready," Blough said. "No one feels sorry for us."

Tampa Bay's Blaine Gabbert threw a 25-yard touchdown pass to Gronkowski on his first snap, one play after Lions running back D'Andre Swift fumbled, and a 22-yard pass to Evans later in the third quarter.

Brady has thrown a franchise-record 36 touchdowns and set a personal record with 348 yards passing by halftime. Brady and Gabbert combined to throw a Bucs-record six touchdowns. Tampa Bay set team records in points (34) and yards (410) in the first half. Evans, who had 10 catches for 181 yards, scored twice to set a team record with 13 receiving touchdowns.

## Cards lose to 49ers, no longer control playoff fate

Associated Press

GLENDAL, Ariz. — Quarterback Kyler Murray lingered on the bench for a minute or two before eventually limping toward the locker room following the Arizona Cardinals' humbling 20-12 loss to the San Francisco 49ers on Saturday.

His right leg was hurting. His face was scrunched with a look of anger and pain.

The Cardinals controlled their postseason fate entering the weekend. That's no longer the case after losing to an opponent that was down to its third-string quarterback and had lost six of its previous seven games.

"I definitely didn't see something like this coming," Arizona linebacker Haason Reddick said. "We don't really know what happened. I do know it wasn't just one person. It was a collective effort. We didn't get the job done."

The Cards (8-7) are still in the No. 7 and final spot in the NFC playoff race after losing to the 49ers, but the Chicago Bears are just a half-game behind. If the Bears win their final two games — starting with Sunday's matchup against the Jaguars — they will reach the playoffs because of a tie-

breaker over Arizona.

It was a frustrating game for the Cardinals' offense, which moved the ball well at times but struggled to hit on big plays. Tight end Dan Arnold dropped a pass that would have gone for a big gain. Pro Bowl receiver DeAndre Hopkins couldn't make a difficult catch that would have been a touchdown.

A couple of ill-timed penalties hurt. So did a couple of turnovers. It all added up to a deflating loss that could keep Arizona out of the postseason for a fifth straight season.

"We know how good we can be when we play at our best," receiver Christian Kirk said. "Today is just one of those days where we just didn't play the caliber of football that we know we can play."

"We let one slip."

The Cardinals' defense gave up 227 yards rushing, including 183 for Jeff Wilson. That meant there wasn't too much pressure on third-string quarterback C.J. Beathard, who was making his first start since 2018. Beathard threw three touchdown passes on just 22 pass attempts.

The biggest immediate concern for Arizona is Murray's health. The second-year quarterback was hit by the San Francisco's Alex Barrett after making a throw as the

Cardinals tried to rally in the closing seconds. The fourth-down throw fell incomplete, clinching the 49ers win, and Murray rolled over in pain.

Trainers attended to him before he limped off the field after a couple of minutes. Coach Kliff Kingsbury didn't have an update on the quarterback's status after the game, saying the injury was being evaluated. The quarterback didn't talk to reporters after the game.

"I think CJ played awesome," San Francisco coach Kyle Shanahan said. "I thought he made some plays in the pass game, made some in the zone read ... Just his leadership out there, the way the guys gravitated to him."

It was an uneven performance for Murray, who threw for 247 yards on 31 of 50 passing.

He also ran for 75 yards on eight carries. But he threw a crucial interception in the end zone with 4:39 left when Arizona was trying to rally for the game-tying touchdown.

"We just have to find a way to take the next step, not have these moments where we don't play as well we could and coach as well as could," Kingsbury said.

## NBA ROUNDUP

## Trail Blazers outlast Rockets in OT

Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. — CJ McCollum scored 44 points, including a three-pointer with 6.3 seconds left in overtime that gave the Portland Trail Blazers a 128-126 win over the Houston Rockets on Saturday night.

Damian Lillard had 32 points and nine assists to help Portland get its first win. McCollum also had eight assists.

James Harden finished with 44 points and 17 assists for Houston, and Christian Wood added 31 points and 13 rebounds. Harden also had a game-ending turnover on the final possession of OT.

McCollum finished 17-for-30 from the field, including 9-for-16 on threes. Lillard was 5-for-13 from beyond the arc.

**76ers 109, Knicks 89:** Joel Embiid had 27 points and 10 rebounds while remaining unbeaten at Madison Square Garden, and Philadelphia won at New York.

Ben Simmons had 15 points, nine rebounds and six assists while also leading the defensive effort that forced the Knick's RJ Barrett into a miserable shooting performance. Embiid and Simmons have never dropped a game at MSG and the Sixers have won the last 13 meetings overall.

Tobias Harris and Seth Curry each scored 17 points to help Philadelphia improve to 2-0. New coach Doc Rivers earned his 945th victory, moving ahead of Bill Fitch into sole possession of 10th place.

**Spurs 119, Raptors 114:** DeMar DeRo-

zan had 27 points and host San Antonio rallied in the final minute to beat Toronto.

DeRozan's three-pointer with a minute remaining pulled the Spurs to 114-113, and they took a 115-114 lead on LaMarcus Aldridge's fadeaway putback with 29.9 seconds remaining.

The Raptors' Kyle Lowry missed a pull-up 19-footer with 22.3 seconds left, and Rudy Gay made two free throws at the other end.

**Thunder 109, Hornets 107:** Shai Gilgeous-Alexander hit a tiebreaking jumper with 1.4 seconds left and finished with 24 points, helping Oklahoma City win at Charlotte in the Thunder's opener.

Oklahoma City led by 13 with 1:50 to go, but Miles Bridges spurred the Hornets with 11 of his 14 points in the final 1:06 — including three threes in the last 25 seconds. His final three tied it at 107 with 10.3 seconds left.

**Kings 106, Suns 103:** De'Aaron Fox had 24 points and seven assists, Richaun Holmes and Buddy Hield combined for five free throws in the final two minutes and host Sacramento held off Phoenix.

Marvin Bagley III added 13 points and 11 rebounds, Harrison Barnes had 11 points and 11 rebounds and Hield finished with 14 points for the Kings.

**Magic 130, Wizards 120:** Terrence Ross scored 25 points and Orlando overcame Russell Westbrook's triple-double in his home debut for Washington.

Westbrook had 15 points, 15 rebounds and 12 assists to become the fourth player in NBA history to record triple-doubles in his team's first two games. Magic Johnson (twice), Jerry Lucas and Oscar Robertson previously accomplished the feat. Westbrook is the first player to do it with a new team after being acquired from Houston in the offseason for John Wall.

**Cavaliers 128, Pistons 119 (2 OT):** Collin Sexton scored 32 points and three of his teammates had at least 21 points, helping Cleveland win at Detroit in double-overtime.

The Cavs took advantage of the Pistons wasting opportunities to win in regulation and the first overtime, improving to 2-0 and dropping Detroit to 0-2.

**Hawks 122, Grizzlies 112:** Trae Young scored eight straight points down the stretch and finished with 36 to help Atlanta win at Memphis for its second straight victory to open the season.

**Timberwolves 116, Jazz 111:** D'Angelo Russell had 25 points and six assists to lead Minnesota to a win at Utah.

Karl-Anthony Towns added 16 points and 12 rebounds for the Timberwolves.

**Pacers 125, Bulls 106:** Domantas Sabonis had 22 points, 11 assists and 10 rebounds and visiting Indiana used big scoring runs in the second and third quarters to rout Chicago.

## TOP 25 ROUNDUP

## No. 1 Gonzaga, led by Kispert, routs No. 16 Virginia

Associated Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — Corey Kispert recorded career highs with 32 points and nine three-pointers, leading No. 1 Gonzaga to a 98-75 romp over 16th-ranked Virginia, the most recent NCAA champion, on Saturday.

The game at a neutral site in Texas was essentially the Zags' replacement for what was supposed to be a 1-2 matchup against Baylor in early December in Indianapolis.

Kispert was 9-for-13 from long range, in-

cluding one about a foot from the midcourt logo followed immediately by another from several feet behind the arc.

**No. 6 Houston 63, UCF 54:** Marcus Sasser scored 19 points and Caleb Mills delivered seven of his 12 points in the closing minutes to help the sixth-ranked Cougars pull away on the road.

Houston (7-0, 2-0 American Athletic Conference) overcame cold shooting by holding the Knights (3-2, 1-1) to one field goal over the final 8:50 to remain unbeaten and deny UCF a second win over a Top 25 opponent in

a week.

**No. 18 Illinois 69, Indiana 60:** Ayo Dosunmu scored 30 points, Kofi Cockburn added 15 points and 15 rebounds, and the host Illini beat the Hoosiers.

The game was close until about midway through the second half, when Dosunmu hit three consecutive three-pointers to fuel Illinois' 14-0 run. Andre Curbelo added five assists for the Illini (7-3, 3-1 Big Ten).

**Northwestern 71, No. 23 Ohio State 70:** Miller Kopp scored 23 points, Boo Buie had 14 and the host Wildcats beat the Buckeyes.