

DOD will not release boat strike video

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said Tuesday that the Pentagon will not publicly release unedited video of a strike that killed two survivors of an initial attack on a boat allegedly carrying cocaine in the Caribbean.

Hegseth said that members of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees would have an opportunity this week to review the video, but did not say whether all members of Congress would be allowed to see it, even as a defense policy bill demands that it be released to Congress.

“Of course we’re not going to release a top secret, full, unedited video of that to the general public,” Hegseth told reporters as he exited a closed-door briefing with senators.

President Donald Trump’s top Cabinet officials overseeing national security were on Capitol Hill on Tuesday to defend the swift escalation of U.S. military force and deadly boat strikes in international waters near Vene-

zuela, but it left lawmakers questioning the broader goals of the campaign.

Hegseth, along with Secretary of State Marco Rubio and others, briefed the House and the Senate amid congressional investigations into the military strike in September that killed two survivors. Overall, they defended the campaign as a success that had prevented drugs from reaching American shores.

Rubio told reporters the campaign is a “counter drug mission” that is “focused on dismantling the infrastructure of these terrorist organizations that are operating in our hemisphere, undermining the security of Americans, killing Americans, poisoning Americans.”

But lawmakers have been focusing on the Sept. 2 attack on two survivors as they sift through the rationale for the broader U.S. military buildup in the region that increasingly appears pointed at Venezuela. On the eve of the briefings, the U.S. military said late Monday it attacked three more

boats believed to have been smuggling drugs in the eastern Pacific Ocean, killing eight people.

Senators on both sides of the aisle said the officials left them in the dark about Trump’s goals when it comes to Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro or committing U.S. forces directly to the South American nation.

The closed-door sessions come as the U.S. is building up warships, flying fighter jets near Venezuelan airspace and seizing an oil tanker as part of its campaign against Maduro, who has insisted the real purpose of the U.S. military operations is to force him from office. Trump’s Republican administration has not sought any authorization from Congress for action against Venezuela. But lawmakers objecting to the military incursions are pushing war powers resolutions toward potential voting this week.

It’s all raising sharp questions that Hegseth and the others will be pressed to answer. The administration’s go-it-alone approach

without Congress, experts say, has led to problematic military actions, none more so than the strike that killed two people who had climbed on top of part of a boat that had been partially destroyed in an initial attack.

“If it’s not a war against Venezuela, then we’re using armed force against civilians who are just committing crimes,” said John Yoo, a Berkeley Law professor who helped craft the President George W. Bush administration’s legal arguments and justification for aggressive interrogation after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. “Then this question, this worry, becomes really pronounced. You know, you’re shooting civilians. There’s no military purpose for it.”

Yet for the first several months, Congress has received little more than a trickle of information about why or how the U.S. military was conducting a campaign that has destroyed more than 20 boats and killed at least 95 people. At times, lawmakers have learned of strikes from social media.

Trinidad and Tobago to open airports to US military

Associated Press

PORT-OF-SPAIN, Trinidad — The government of Trinidad and Tobago said Monday that it would allow the U.S. military to access its airports in coming weeks as tensions build between the United States and Venezuela.

The announcement comes after the U.S. military recently installed a radar system at the airport on Tobago. The Caribbean country’s government has said the radar is being used to fight local crime, and that the small nation wouldn’t be used as a launchpad to attack any other country.

The U.S. would use the airports for activity that would be “logistical in nature, facilitating supply replenishment and routine personnel rotations,” Trinidad and Tobago’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement. It did not provide further details.

Trinidad’s prime minister previously has praised ongoing U.S. strikes on alleged drug boats in the Caribbean.

Only 7 miles separate Venezuela from the twin-island Caribbean nation at their closest point. It has two main airports: Piarco

International Airport on Trinidad and ANR Robinson International Airport on Tobago.

Hours after the announcement, Venezuelan Vice President Delcy Rodríguez said her country was immediately canceling any contract, deal or negotiation to supply natural gas to Trinidad and Tobago.

She claimed that the government of Trinidad and Tobago participated in the recent U.S. seizure of an oil tanker off the country’s coast, calling it an “act of piracy.”

She also accused Trinidad and

Tobago Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar of having a “hostile agenda” against Venezuela, noting that the U.S. military installed an airport radar on Tobago.

“This official has turned the territory of Trinidad and Tobago into a U.S. aircraft carrier to attack Venezuela, in an unequivocal act of vassalage,” Rodríguez said.

Persad-Bissessar told The Associated Press that she wasn’t bothered by the statement, describing it as “simply false propaganda.”

Pentagon plan calls for major power shift

The Washington Post

Senior Pentagon officials are preparing a plan to downgrade several of the U.S. military's major headquarters and shift the balance of power among its top generals in a major consolidation sought by Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, people familiar with the matter said.

If adopted, the plan would usher in some of the most significant changes at the military's highest ranks in decades, in part following through on Hegseth's promise to break the status quo and slash the number of four-star generals in the military. It would reduce in prominence the headquarters of U.S. Central Command, U.S. European Command and U.S. Africa Command by placing them under the control of a new organization known as U.S. International Command, according to five people familiar with the matter.

Joint Chiefs Chairman Air Force Gen. Dan Caine is expected to detail the proposal, which has not previously been reported, for Hegseth in the coming days. Such moves would complement other efforts by the administration to shift resources from the Middle East and Europe and focus foremost on expanding military operations in the Western Hemisphere, these people said. Like others interviewed for this report, they spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the effort before it's conveyed.

Hegseth's team said in a statement that they would not comment on "rumored internal discussions" or "pre-decisional matters." Any insinuation that there is a divide among officials over the issue is "completely false — everyone in the Department is working to achieve the same goal under this administration," the statement said.

The Pentagon has shared little to no details with Congress, a

lack of communication that has perturbed members of the Republican-led Senate and House Armed Services committees, according to two people familiar with how the panels have prepared for the proposal. Top officers at the commands involved are awaiting more details as well, officials said.

The plan also calls for realigning U.S. Southern Command and U.S. Northern Command, which oversee military operations throughout the Western Hemisphere, under a new headquarters to be known as U.S. Americas Command, or Americom, people familiar with the matter said. That concept was reported earlier this year by NBC News.

Pentagon officials also discussed creating a U.S. Arctic Command that would report to Americom, but that idea appears to have been abandoned, people familiar with the matter said.

Combined, the moves would reduce the number of top military headquarters — known as combatant commands — from 11 to eight while cutting the number of four-star generals and admirals who report directly to Hegseth. Other remaining combatant commands would be U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, U.S. Cyber Command, U.S. Special Operations Command, U.S. Space Command, U.S. Strategic Command and U.S. Transportation Command.

Those familiar with the plan said it aligns with the Trump administration's national security strategy, released this month, which declares that the "days of the United States propping up the entire world order like Atlas are over."

The proposal was organized by the Pentagon's Joint Staff under the supervision of Caine and is due to be shared with Hegseth as soon as this week as the preferred course of action among

senior military officials. It grew from a request made by Hegseth in the spring to look for ways to improve how troops are commanded and controlled, a senior defense official familiar with the discussion said, adding that Hegseth has kept in touch with Caine about the issue over the past several months.

Any changes would need the approval of Hegseth and President Donald Trump. The moves would come in the Pentagon's Unified Command Plan, which lays out the roles of the military's major headquarters.

Lawmakers have taken the extraordinary step of requiring the Pentagon to submit a detailed blueprint that describes the realignment's potential costs and impacts on America's alliances. The measure, included in Congress's annual defense policy bill, would withhold money to enact the effort until at least 60 days after the Pentagon provides lawmakers with those materials.

The bill has cleared the House and is expected to pass the Senate this week.

The senior defense official said the proposed realignment is meant to speed decision-making and adaptation among military commanders. "Decay" had been observed in how the U.S. military commands and controls troops, he added, suggesting that the need for sweeping change is urgent.

"Time ain't on our side, man," the senior defense official said, describing internal conversations around the plan. "The saying here is, 'If not us, who, and if not now, when?'"

The potential reorganization comes as Hegseth has begun broader efforts to cull the total number of generals and admirals across the military. He also has fired or otherwise forced out more than 20 senior officers, threatened others with poly-

graph tests to determine whether they have leaked information to the news media and told those remaining that if they do not like the administration's policies they should "do the honorable thing and resign."

Chuck Hagel, who served as defense secretary during the Obama administration and as a Republican member of the Senate before that, expressed concerns about the Trump administration's ambitions. There are different dynamics, needs and security threats throughout the globe, he said.

"The world isn't getting any less complicated," Hagel said in an interview. "You want commands that have the capability of heading off problems before they become big problems, and I think you lose some of that when you unify or consolidate too many."

Senior military officials considered about two dozen other concepts, the senior defense official said. At least one discussion called for a reduction to six total combatant commands. Under that plan, Special Operations Command, Space Command and Cyber Command would be downgraded and placed under the control of a new U.S. Global Command, said other officials familiar with the discussion.

Caine is expected to share at least two other courses of action with Hegseth, people familiar with the matter said. One concept calls for creating two commands to house all of the others, with all major geographic organizations such as Central Command and European Command placed under the control of an entity that would be called Operational Command. Other major headquarters, such as Transportation Command and Space Command, would fall under an organization called Support Command.

Hegseth 'escalating' probe of Sen. Kelly

The Washington Post

The Pentagon said Monday night that Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth is "escalating" his review of Sen. Mark Kelly's involvement in a video he and other Democratic lawmakers made reminding service members of their duty to disobey illegal orders — an unprecedented use of the military justice system to investigate a political adversary.

In a statement, the Defense Department said it was elevating what had been a "review" to an "official Command Investigation" to be carried out at least in part by the Pentagon general counsel's office. The change signals a more formal effort by Hegseth to scrutinize the Dem-

ocratic senator from Arizona, who is a retired Navy officer and outspoken critic of the Trump administration.

Within the military, such investigations seek to determine whether disciplinary action — or potential legal action — is warranted, according to a handbook from the Naval Justice School. They typically last about 30 days and can involve documenting evidence and conducting interviews with relevant witnesses.

Military law experts and Democratic lawmakers have said that, although retired military officers can be recalled to active duty, Hegseth's inquiry into Kelly is a highly unusual use of the military justice sys-

tem. Some Republicans have also questioned the investigation's merit.

In a letter sent to the Pentagon before its announcement Monday, Paul Fishman, a lawyer representing Kelly, warned that any legal action against the senator "would be unconstitutional."

The video Kelly joined included five other Democrats who previously served in the military or intelligence community. They spoke directly to U.S. service members, reminding them that they can disobey illegal orders. Though none of the lawmakers explicitly said so in the video, their message appeared aimed at the Trump administration's controversial

military action in Latin America and its domestic use of active-duty and National Guard troops.

The lawmakers involved have since said that they decided to film the message after troops had asked them about the legality of some of the Trump administration's actions, such as striking alleged drug-trafficking boats or sending the military into U.S. cities to protect federal property and agents.

Hegseth had directed Navy Secretary John Phelan to determine whether Kelly's involvement in the video should merit any action by the Pentagon. Phelan provided his recommendation to Hegseth last week, though the Navy did not disclose what he advised.

Ballroom project called national security matter

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration said in a court filing Monday that the president's White House ballroom construction project must continue for unexplained national security reasons and because a preservationists' organization that wants it stopped has no standing to sue.

The filing was in response to a lawsuit filed last Friday by the National Trust for Historic Preservation asking a federal judge to halt President Donald Trump's project until it goes through multiple independent reviews and a public comment period and wins approval from Congress.

The administration's 36-page filing included a declaration from Matthew C. Quinn, deputy director of the U.S. Secret Service, the agency responsible for the security of the president and other high-ranking officials, that said more work on the site of the former White House East Wing is still needed to meet the

agency's "safety and security requirements." The filing did not explain the specific national security concerns; the administration has offered to share classified details with the judge in a private, in-person setting without the plaintiffs present.

The East Wing had sat atop a emergency operations bunker for the president.

Quinn said even a temporary halt to construction would "consequently hamper" the agency's ability to fulfill its statutory obligations and its protective mission.

A hearing in the case was scheduled for Tuesday in federal court in Washington.

The government's response offered the most comprehensive look yet at the ballroom construction project, including a window into how it was so swiftly approved by the Trump administration bureaucracy and its expanding scope.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation did not respond to requests for comment.

Reiner killings stun public as charges for son, Charlie, loom

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Los Angeles police were set to present a case to prosecutors following Nick Reiner's arrest in the killings of his parents, Rob Reiner and Michele Singer Reiner, which stunned their communities in Hollywood and Democratic politics, where both were widely beloved.

Nick Reiner's attorney Alan Jackson said his client will not be in court Tuesday for medical reasons. Jackson told reporters outside the courthouse that he did not know what the medical issue was, but he said Reiner will not appear before Wednesday.

Prosecutors are set to decide whether and how to charge 32-year-old Nick Reiner, who is being held in jail without bail. He was arrested several hours after his parents were found dead in their home in the upscale Brentwood neighborhood of Los Angeles on Sunday, police said.

Rob Reiner was the Emmy-winning star of the sitcom "All

in the Family" who went on to direct films including "When Harry Met Sally..." and "The Princess Bride." He was an outspoken liberal activist for decades. Michele Singer Reiner was a photographer, movie producer and advocate for LGBTQ+ rights. They had been married for 36 years.

Nick Reiner's attorney didn't comment further Tuesday. Investigators believe Rob and Michele Singer Reiner died from stab wounds, a law enforcement official said.

Three months ago, Nick Reiner was photographed with his parents and siblings at the premiere of his father's film "Spinal Tap 2: The End Continues."

He had spoken publicly of his struggles with addiction, cycling in and out of treatment facilities with bouts of homelessness in between through his teen years. Rob and Nick Reiner explored — and seemed to improve — their relationship through the making of the 2016 film, "Being Charlie."

Australian police: Shooting inspired by ISIS

Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia—A mass shooting in which 15 people were killed during a Hanukkah celebration at Sydney's Bondi Beach was "a terrorist attack inspired by Islamic State," Australia's federal police commissioner Krissy Barrett said Tuesday.

The suspects were a father and son, aged 50 and 24, authorities have said. The older man, whom state officials named as Sajid Akram, was shot dead. His son was being treated at a hospital.

A news conference by political and law enforcement leaders on Tuesday was the first time officials confirmed their beliefs about the suspects' ideologies. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said the remarks were

based on evidence obtained, including "the presence of Islamic State flags in the vehicle that has been seized."

Indian police on Tuesday said the older suspect was originally from southern city of Hyderabad and held an Indian passport. They said he married a woman of European origin and migrated to Australia in 1998 in search of employment opportunities, maintaining little contact with his family in India.

"The family members have expressed no knowledge of his radical mindset or activities, nor of the circumstances that led to his radicalization," Telangana State Police Chief B. Shivadhar Reddy said in a statement.

There are 25 people still being treated in hospitals after Sunday's massacre, 10 of them in critical condition. Three of them are patients in a children's hospital.

Also among them is Ahmed al Ahmed, who was captured on video tackling and disarming one assailant, before pointing the man's weapon at him and then setting it on the ground.

Those killed ranged in age from 10 to 87 years old. They were attending a Hanukkah event at Australia's most famous beach Sunday when the gunshots rang out.

Albanese and the leaders of some of Australia's states have pledged to tighten the country's already strict gun laws in what would be the most sweeping reforms since a shooter killed 35 people in Port Arthur, Tasmania, in 1996. Mass shootings in Australia have since been rare.

Officials divulged more information as public questions and anger grew on the third day following the attack about how the suspects were able to plan and enact it and whether Australian Jews had been sufficiently protected from rising antisemitism. Albanese announced plans to further restrict access to guns, in part because it emerged the older suspect had amassed his cache of six weapons legally.

"The suspected murderers, callous in how they allegedly coordinated their attack, appeared to have no regard for the age or ableness of their victims," said Barrett. "It appears the alleged killers were interested only in a quest for a death tally."

Zelenskyy: Peace proposals could be sent to Russia soon

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says proposals being negotiated with U.S. officials for a deal to end the fighting in Russia's nearly 4-year-old invasion of his country could be finalized within days, after which American envoys will present them to the Kremlin before possible further meetings in the U.S. next weekend.

A draft peace plan discussed with the U.S. during talks in Berlin on Monday is "not perfect" but is "very workable," Zelenskyy told reporters hours after the discussions. He cautioned, however, that some key issues — notably what happens to Ukrainian territory occupied by Russian forces — remain unresolved.

U.S.-led peace efforts appear to be picking up momentum.

But as the spotlight shifts to Moscow, Russian President Vladimir Putin may balk at some of the proposals thrashed out by officials from Washington, Kyiv and Western Europe, including

postwar security guarantees for Ukraine.

Zelenskyy said that after the Berlin talks, "we are very close to (a deal on) strong security guarantees."

The security proposal will be based on Western help in keeping the Ukrainian army strong, an official from a NATO nation said, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive matters.

"Europeans will lead a multinational and multi-domain force to strengthen those troops and to secure Ukraine from the land, sea and air, and the U.S. will lead a ceasefire monitoring and verification mechanism, with international participation," the official said.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov repeated Tuesday that Russia wants a comprehensive peace deal, not a temporary truce.

If Ukraine seeks "momentary, unsustainable solutions, we are unlikely to be ready to participate," he said.

41,000 US jobs lost in 2 months; unemployment rate up to 4.6%

The Washington Post

The U.S. labor market lost 41,000 jobs over October and November, and the unemployment rate ticked up to 4.6%, the highest since 2021, underscoring concerns about the strength of the economy.

The long-awaited jobs report by the Labor Department was delayed because of the federal government shutdown, creating headaches for economists and policymakers trying to assess how the labor market slowed this fall as President Donald Trump's economic policies, including higher tariffs and immigration enforcement, continue to take hold.

The October loss of more than 100,000 jobs was particularly striking, the sharpest losses since the COVID-pandemic era recession. But economists expected losses in October, because the data reflected tens of thousands of federal workers who deferred resignation and officially parted ways with the federal government in October.

Federal government payrolls fell by 162,000 jobs in October, the agency reported.

Jobs creation from August was revised down by 22,000 showing the economy lost 26,000 jobs that month. September job gains were also revised lower by 11,000 to 108,000.

"The labor market is cooling," said Guy Berger, director of economic research at the Burning Glass Institute, a company that conducts research on the labor market. "That's a change from where we were during early summer when it looked like things were relatively stable. But data seems to be moving in the wrong direction again."

Health care continued to lead jobs gains, adding 46,000 positions in November. Construction payrolls grew by 28,000 jobs.

The report does not contain the unemployment rate for October because the government could not collect survey data during the shutdown, a first for the agency since the survey began in 1948.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Brian Walshe guilty of murder in wife's death

MA BOSTON — Brian Walshe was found guilty Monday of killing his wife, whose body has never been found after she disappeared from their Massachusetts home on New Year's Day nearly three years ago.

Ana Walshe, an immigrant from Serbia, was last seen early Jan. 1, 2023, after a New Year's Eve dinner at the couple's home. Walshe was convicted of first-degree murder after pleading guilty last month to lesser charges of misleading police and illegally disposing of her body.

Prosecutors leaned heavily on searches made by devices connected to Brian Walshe that related to dismembering bodies and cleaning up blood. The search questions included "dismemberment and best ways to dispose of a body," "how long before a body starts to smell" and "hacksaw best tool to dismember."

4 charged with plotting New Year's Eve attacks

CA LOS ANGELES — Federal authorities on Monday announced the arrests of four alleged members of an extremist group who are suspected of planning coordinated bombing attacks on New Year's Eve across Southern California.

The suspects were arrested last week in Lucerne Valley, a desert city east of Los Angeles, where they were suspected of preparing to test improvised explosive devices ahead of the planned bombings, according to the federal criminal complaint filed Saturday.

They are members of an offshoot of a pro-Palestinian group dubbed the Turtle Island Liberation Front, the complaint said. During a news conference Monday, First Assistant U.S. Attorney Bill Essayli described the group as a "radical anti-government" group.

They each face charges including conspiracy and possession of a destructive device, court documents show.

The group is alleged to have been plotting to set off a series of bombings at multiple targets in California beginning on New Year's Eve and also planned to target Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents and vehicles, Attorney General Pam Bondi said on social media.

Man arrested after painting crosswalk

CA LOS ANGELES — Frustrated by the city's slow progress in painting crosswalks at intersections they believe are unsafe, activists in Los Angeles have been picking up paint rollers and doing it themselves. Now one of them has been arrested on a vandalism charge.

In a video posted online, Jonathan Hale wears a bright yellow safety vest as he's handcuffed by a police officer Sunday. His group, People's Vision Zero, had organized a guerrilla "paint party" at a four-way crossing in a leafy residential neighborhood of west LA.

Hale and his allies have organized operations across the city at intersections they deem dangerous to pedestrians.

The group sets up barricades and swiftly uses rollers to paint the road with bright white markers that they say are code

compliant.

Hale was cited for misdemeanor vandalism.

Hunter Biden disbarred after gun, tax conviction

CT WATERBURY — A judge on Monday disbarred Hunter Biden in Connecticut for violating the state's attorney conduct rules, a decision that comes after complaints were made about the federal gun and tax charges Biden was convicted of before being pardoned last year by his father, former President Joe Biden.

In an agreement with the state office that disciplines lawyers, Hunter Biden consented to being disbarred and admitted to attorney misconduct, but he did not admit to any criminal wrongdoing.

He was separately disbarred for similar reasons in Washington, D.C., in May.

Group appeals on law banning DEI initiatives

AL MONTGOMERY — A group of students and professors at public universities across Alabama are asking an appeals court to halt a state law that bans diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives in public schools and prohibits the endorsement of what Republican lawmakers dubbed "divisive concepts" related to race and gender.

The Alabama measure, which took effect in October 2024, is part of a wave of proposals from Republican lawmakers across the country taking aim at DEI programs on college campuses.

The state law prohibits public schools and universities from using state funds for any programs or curriculum that endorse "divisive concepts" related to race, religion, gender identity and ethnicity.

U.S. District Judge David Proctor allowed the law to remain in place, writing that a professor's academic freedom does not override a public university's decisions about the content of classroom instruction.

Antonio Ingram, a Legal Defense Fund lawyer for the plaintiffs, said the law makes professors vulnerable to frivolous investigations and limits their ability to present vetted research.

Judge refuses to grant Palin new libel trial

NY NEW YORK — Former vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin's bid for a new libel trial against The New York Times was rejected Monday by a New York federal judge who also refused Palin's request that the judge recuse himself.

Judge Jed S. Rakoff said in a written opinion that he was "scrupulous" in affording Palin a fair trial last April, when a jury concluded that the Times did not libel the former Alaska governor in a 2017 editorial.

The lawsuit said Palin was libeled by an editorial about gun control published after U.S. Rep. Steve Scalise, a Louisiana Republican, was wounded in 2017 when a man with a history of anti-GOP activity opened fire on a congressional baseball team practice in Alexandria, Va.

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Steelers top Dolphins, maintain AFC North lead

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — It felt a little bit like Green Bay. And for Aaron Rodgers, it looked a little like the Packers, too.

Frigid conditions. High stakes. The number of games dwindling.

During the four-time MVP's long run with Green Bay, this was the time of year that Rodgers thrived. And while Pittsburgh is not the Packers and the 2025 version of Rodgers is not quite the 2015 version, he offered a reminder on Monday night against Miami that there's still life in his 42-year-old right arm, and in his maddeningly

hot-and-cold team.

Rodgers passed for 224 yards and two touchdowns and the Steelers kept their grasp on the top spot in the AFC North with a clinical 28-15 victory over the Dolphins, who were eliminated from playoff contention.

While Rodgers wasn't quite in what he called a "flow state," he certainly looked comfortable while becoming the oldest quarterback in league history to complete at least 85% of his passes. Rodgers connected on 23 of 27 against Miami, including third-quarter touchdown throws of 19 yards to Marquez Valdes-Scantling and 28 yards to DK Metcalf.

"I think he's the best quarterback to ever play this game," said Valdes-Scantling, who played alongside Rodgers with Green Bay and signed with Pittsburgh's practice squad earlier this season. "I don't care if he's 65 years old or not, he can still spin the ball and he's always playing chess with the defense."

Throwing short passes that got the ball out of his hands quickly, Rodgers was fine working underneath and letting the Steelers' skill position players do the work. Running back Kenneth Gainwell had 126 total yards, including a team-high seven receptions. Metcalf's

touchdown catch — he shoved former Steeler Minkah Fitzpatrick out of the way en route to the end zone — came on a pass between two defenders that echoed Rodgers in his prime.

Pittsburgh (8-6) maintained its one-game lead over Baltimore in the division with three weeks to go. As spotty as the Steelers have looked at times, everything remains on the table as Christmas approaches.

"It's been a while since I've been a part of stuff like this," said Rodgers, who last made the playoffs in 2021. "Nothing changes. It's just, I feel real comfortable in this environment."

Big Ten puts 10 players on AP All-America first team

Associated Press

Four players from Ohio State are among 10 first-team picks from the Big Ten Conference on The Associated Press All-America team released Monday, a group headed by repeat selection Caleb Downs of the Buckeyes and AP Player of the Year Fernando Mendoza of Indiana.

The AP has named an All-America team every year since 1925, and Notre Dame's two first-team picks this season increased its all-time lead to 87.

Downs, the Big Ten defensive player of the year, has made the first team each of his two seasons with the Buckeyes after landing on the second team as a freshman at Alabama in 2023. He is one of 12 players on the 27-man first team who did not start their careers at their current school. Downs is joined on the first team by fellow Ohio State players Jeremiah Smith, Kayden McDonald and Arvell Reese.

Mendoza, who won the Heisman Trophy over the weekend, led the top-ranked Hoosiers to a 13-0 record and the No. 1 seed in the College Football Playoff after transferring from California. He has thrown a nation-leading 33 touchdown passes and is the catalyst of one of the most productive offenses in the country.

A total of 18 schools are represented on the first team, including seven of the 12 in the CFP.

Iowa has had at least one first-team player for seven straight years and in 10 of the last 12. This is the fourth year in a row Miami, Notre Dame and Ohio State have had at least one.

Punter Cole Maynard gave Western Kentucky its first-ever first-team pick. Defensive lineman Landon Robinson is Navy's first since 1975 and kicker Kansei Matsuzawa is Hawaii's first since 1986.

The AP All-America team was selected by a panel of 52 college Top 25 poll voters:

First-team All-Americans (by conference)

Big Ten — 10

SEC — 6

Big 12 — 3

ACC — 1

Independent — 3

Conference USA — 2

American — 1

Mountain West — 1

First-team offense

Wide receiver — Makai Lemon, Southern California, junior, 5-11, 195, Los Angeles

Wide receiver — Jeremiah Smith, Ohio State, sophomore, 6-3, 223, Miami Gardens, Florida

Wide receiver — Skyler Bell, UConn, senior, 6-0, 185, New York, N.Y.

Tackle — Francis Mauigoa, Miami, junior, 6-6, 335, Ili'i, American Samoa

Tackle — Spencer Fano, Utah, junior, 6-6, 308, Spanish Fork, Utah

Guard — Emmanuel Pregnon, Oregon, senior, 6-5, 318, Denver

Guard — Beau Stephens, Iowa, senior, 6-5, 315, Blue Springs, Missouri

Center — Logan Jones, Iowa, graduate, 6-3, 202, Council Bluffs, Iowa

Tight end — Eli Stowers, Vanderbilt, graduate, 6-4, 235, Denton, Texas

Quarterback — Fernando Mendoza, Indiana, ju-

nior, 6-5, 225, Miami

Running back — Jeremiah Love, Notre Dame, junior, 6-0, 214, St. Louis

Running back — Ahmad Hardy, Missouri, sophomore, 5-10, 210, Omaha, Mississippi

Kicker — Kansei Matsuzawa, Hawaii, senior, 6-2, 200, Tokyo

All-purpose — KC Concepcion, Texas A&M, junior, 5-11, 190, Charlotte, North Carolina

First-team defense

Edge rusher — David Bailey, Texas Tech, senior, 6-3, 250, Irvine, California

Edge rusher — Cashius Howell, Texas A&M, senior, 6-2, 248, Kansas City, Missouri

Interior lineman — Kayden McDonald, Ohio State, junior, 6-3, 326, Suwanee, Georgia

Interior lineman — Landon Robinson, Navy, senior, 6-0, 287, Fairlawn, Ohio

Linebacker — Jacob Rodriguez, Texas Tech, senior, 6-1, 235, Wichita Falls, Texas

Linebacker — Arvell Reese, Ohio State, junior, 6-4, 243, Cleveland

Linebacker — CJ Allen, Georgia, junior, 6-1, 235, Barnesville, Georgia

Cornerback — Leonard Moore, Notre Dame, sophomore, 6-2, 195, Round Rock, Texas

Cornerback — Mansoor Delane, LSU, senior, 6-0, 190, Silver Spring, Maryland

Safety — Caleb Downs, Ohio State, junior, 6-0, 205, Hoschton, Georgia

Safety — Bishop Fitzgerald, Southern California, senior, 5-11, 205, Woodbridge, Virginia

Defensive back — Jakari Foster, Louisiana Tech, senior, 6-0, 211, Piedmont, Alabama

Punter — Cole Maynard, Western Kentucky, senior, 6-1, 180, Mooresville, North Carolina

Jokic, Nuggets outlast Rockets in overtime

Associated Press

DENVER — Nikola Jokic had 39 points, 15 rebounds and 10 assists for his NBA-leading 12th triple-double of the season as the Denver Nuggets outlasted the Houston Rockets 128-125 in overtime on Monday night in a matchup of two of the top three teams in the Western Conference standings.

Jamal Murray added 35 points for Denver, including six of his team's 11 points in overtime. Murray made 14 of his 15 free-throw attempts.

The win was the Nuggets' fifth in a row and was their first home victory since Nov. 8.

The final 1:40 of regulation had four ties and four lead changes, a stretch capped by a Murray free throw that tied the game with 2.3 seconds left after an away-from-play foul on Houston's Amen Thompson. Denver retained possession after the free throw, but a 3-point attempt by Jokic from the top of the key was long.

The Nuggets took a 124-117 lead after a Spencer Jones 3 with 2:59 remaining in overtime, but the Rockets clawed back, getting within three with the ball and 13 seconds left. Alperen Sengun missed a contested 24-foot 3 with 4.9 seconds remaining, allowing Denver to hold on for the victory.

Jazz 140, Mavericks 133 (OT): Keyonte George scored 37 points and Lauri Markkanen added 33 to lift host Utah to an overtime win over Dallas, despite a career-high 42 points from Cooper Flagg.

George, who had 39 points on Friday in Memphis, scored the first five points of overtime. Kyle Filipowski scored 16 of his 25 points in the fourth quarter and overtime as the Jazz won consecutive games for just the second time this season.

Flagg has been playing his best basketball the past few weeks as the No. 1 overall draft pick has averaged 25.7 points in the last seven games and became the first 18-year-old in league history to score 40 points. Flagg also tied Mark Aguirre for the most points by a rookie in Mavs history.

P.J. Washington scored 25 and Naji Marshall added 15 points for the Mavericks, who had won five of six games.

Dallas led 124-116 before Utah reeled off 11 consecutive points, capped by Isaiah Collier's driving basket with 53.6 seconds left.

Pistons 112, Celtics 105: Cade Cunningham had 32 points and 10 rebounds to help visiting Detroit beat Boston.

Caris LeVert and Tobias Harris each added 13 points for the Eastern Conference-leading

Pistons, who won their fourth straight. Detroit also got even for a frustrating loss at TD Garden late last month.

Jaylen Brown had 34 points, eight rebounds and seven assists to lead the Celtics. Derrick White scored 31 points as Boston lost its second straight after a five-game winning streak.

Detroit opened the final quarter with a four-point edge and pushed it to 103-93 on Javonte Green's steal and breakaway dunk with just under six minutes left.

The Celtics had cut it to 96-93 on White's three-point play that sent Cunningham to the bench with his fifth foul, but Green had a corner 3 and followed that with his jam that pushed the Pistons up by 10. Boston made one more charge, closing to 104-102 on White's baseline jumper with 2:47 left, but Cunningham had a couple of key jumpers in the final two minutes.

Grizzlies 121, Clippers 103: Jaren Jackson Jr. scored 21 of his 31 points in the first half and Cam Spencer added a career-high 27 points as visiting Memphis beat Los Angeles.

Jaylen Wells scored 16 points and rookie Cedric Coward had 12 as the Grizzlies earned a victory over the Clippers for the third time in less than three weeks.

Ja Morant also scored 12

points for Memphis in his second game since returning from a calf injury.

Grizzlies center Zach Edey missed his second game of an extended absence because of a left ankle injury. Santi Aldama started at center for the second consecutive game and was held to just three points with two rebounds.

Kawhi Leonard scored 21 points and Kris Dunn added 17 for LA, which has lost 12 of its last 14 games.

Raptors 106, Heat 96: Brandon Ingram scored 28 points and visiting Toronto snapped a four-game skid with a win over Miami, extending its losing streak to five.

The Heat lost forward Nikola Jovic to an elbow injury in the first quarter. Jovic took a hard foul from Collin Murray-Boyles while driving to the basket and fell to the floor 12 seconds after he entered the game.

Scottie Barnes added 17 points and 10 rebounds and Immanuel Quickley finished with 15 points for the Raptors, who made 16 3-pointers. Ingram shot 5 of 7 from behind the arc.

Norman Powell and Bam Adebayo scored 20 points each and Davion Mitchell added 12 points for Miami, which played without Tyler Herro. He sat out because of a right toe contusion.

Washington wins first Men's College Cup soccer title

Associated Press

CARY, N.C. — Harrison Bertos scored 1:54 into overtime after Washington blew a two-goal lead in the second half, and the Huskies beat North Carolina State 3-2 to win the Men's College Cup at First Horizon Stadium on Monday night.

It was the first national championship for unseeded Washington (16-6-2), which became the first team to win six road matches in the tournament — beating six seeded

teams along the way under coach Jamie Clark. The Huskies won in their second trip to the final after losing 2-0 to Clemson in 2021.

The No. 15 seed Wolfpack (16-3-4) made the final for the first time behind coach Marc Hubbard. N.C. State was aiming for the school's first national championship since 1983, in men's basketball.

Zach Ramsey scored unassisted with 1:12 remaining in the first half and Washington

took a 1-0 lead into the break. It was only the second time this season the Wolfpack trailed at halftime.

Ramsey scored into an empty net after N.C. State goalkeeper Logan Erb couldn't corral the ball at the top of the box. It was Ramsey's second goal of the tournament.

Richie Aman sent a cross to the center of the goal and Joe Dale knocked it in for a 2-0 lead in the 62nd minute.

Donavan Phillip answered in

the 66th, scoring with an assist from Nikola Markovic to cut it to 2-1.

Taig Healy scored the equalizer with 3:28 remaining with assists from Justin McLean and Caleb Tommy.

Egor Akulov had an assist on Bertos' winner.

Washington keeper Jadon Bowton, the only remaining player from the 2021 squad, had five saves.

Erb saved six shots for N.C. State.

Reinhart leads Panthers over Lightning

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Sam Reinhart scored a shorthanded goal and a power play goal to lead the Florida Panthers to a 5-2 victory over the Tampa Bay Lightning on Monday night.

Reinhart recorded his fourth career game with a shorthanded and power play goal in the same game, the most in franchise history. Anton Lundell, Brad Marchand and Carter Verhaeghe also scored for Florida, which improved to 5-1-1 in the past seven games.

Sergei Bobrovsky finished with 26 saves.

J.J. Moser and Max Crozier scored for Tampa Bay. Brayden Point finished with a pair of assists. Jonas Johansson, making his seventh consecutive start in place of Andrei Vasilevskiy, made 19 saves.

Reinhart scored shorthanded 2:16 into the first period for the Panthers' fourth shorthanded goal of the season.

Reinhart passed Scott Mellanby on the play for sixth most points in franchise history.

Florida made it 2-0 at 3:48

moments after Yanni Gourde hit the crossbar on an open chance above the crease before Lundell finished off a 3-on-1 rush.

Marchand made it 3-0 at 11:48 of the second period before Reinhart notched a power play goal with 1:52 remaining.

Predators 5, Blues 2: Filip Forsberg scored his 12th career hat trick, leading visiting Nashville over St. Louis.

Forsberg scored in the each of first two periods before adding an empty-net goal in the third with 3:51 remaining. Michael Bunting and Reid Schaefer also scored for the Predators, and Juuse Saros stopped 20 shots. Roman Josi and Ryan O'Reilly added two assists each.

Dalibor Dvorsky scored both goals for the Blues. Joel Hofer finished with 21 saves for St. Louis, which has lost three of its last four games.

Bunting scored on a wrap-around from behind the net at 1:23 of the second period. Forsberg scored a power-play goal at 5:31, and Schaefer

made it 4-1 with 1:15 remaining in the second.

Stars 4, Kings 1: Mikko Rantanen, Matt Duchene and Wyatt Johnston had a goal and an assist each and Casey DeSmith tied a Dallas record with his 11th consecutive game earning points as the host Stars rallied past Los Angeles.

Oskar Back scored his first NHL winning goal for Dallas, which is second in the overall standings and avoided its first three-game losing streak since mid-October.

DeSmith made 27 saves and is 8-0-3 after losing his first start of the season, matching Ed Belfour's 8-0-3 run during the 1998-99 season.

Andrei Kuzmenko scored an unassisted 5-on-3 goal for the Kings, who have lost their last three games.

Ducks 4, Rangers 1: Cutter Gauthier scored the go-ahead goal six minutes into the third period and got his second on an empty-netter, Lukas Dostal stopped 26 of the 27 shots he faced, and visiting Anaheim beat New York to end a two-

game losing streak.

Gauthier's first goal with one second left on a power play came off a perfectly placed pass from rookie Beckett Sennecke. Igor Shesterkin barely had a chance to react.

Matthew Robertson scored the only goal for the Rangers, who have lost 12 of 16 games at home. The shot from Robinson deflected off Frank Vatrano's stick and popped into the air before going in off Dostal's.

Senators 3, Jets 2 (OT): Brady Tkachuk scored 2:11 into overtime and visiting Ottawa beat Winnipeg.

Nick Cousins and Jake Sanderson also scored for the Senators, and Tim Stutzle had three assists. Linus Ullmark stopped 23 shots in Ottawa's third win in nine games.

Stanley gave the Jets a 2-1 lead with 1:25 left in the middle period for his sixth, surpassing the total of five goals the big defenseman had in his first five NHL seasons. Gabriel Vilardi had an assist, stretching his point streak to seven games.

Sabres fire GM Adams, tap Kekalainen as replacement

Associated Press

BUFFALO, N.Y. — The Buffalo Sabres fired general manager Kevyn Adams on Monday in a move made 2½ months into his sixth season, with the team sitting at the bottom of the Eastern Conference standings and already in jeopardy of extending their NHL-record playoff drought to a 15th year.

The decision was made by team owner Terry Pegula and announced in a press release.

Adams' replacement was already with the team in Jarmo Kekalainen. The former Columbus GM was hired by Adams in June to serve as a senior adviser. The 59-year-old Kekalainen is from Finland and was the NHL's first Euro-

pean-born GM in spending 11 years with the Blue Jackets before being fired in February 2024.

"We are not where we need to be as an organization, and we are moving forward with new leadership within our hockey operations department," Pegula said. "We are dedicated to building an organization that is competitive year after year, and we have fallen short of that expectation."

The decision to fire Adams comes despite Buffalo enjoying its first three-game winning streak of the season, following a 3-1 victory at Seattle on Sunday night. The Sabres returned home after splitting a six-game road trip and are now off until

hosting Philadelphia on Thursday.

Adams has been criticized for mismanaging the team's assets, an inability to secure a franchise goalie and failure to address a leadership void that continues to linger on a team that's finished last in the overall standings four times and no better than 19th during its playoff drought.

Under Kekalainen, Columbus reached the playoffs five times and set a franchise record with 50 wins and 108 points in 2016-17. He previously held executive roles with St. Louis and Ottawa. Kekalainen also spent three years as general manager of Jokerit in Finland's top professional league and worked

with the Finnish national team program.

"It is a great honor to be named general manager of the Buffalo Sabres," said Kekalainen.

"I am humbled to be the steward of this team and look forward to experiencing the passion that Sabres fans bring to every game."

Kekalainen's promotion comes a day after his father, Kari, died after a lengthy illness at the age of 82. Kekalainen posted a message on his Instagram account, referring to his father as his coach and idol, translated from his native Finnish.

Buffalo is now on its fifth GM since Darcy Regier was fired a month into the 2013-14 season.