

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Crisis declaration facing multiple suits

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Let the lawsuits begin.

President Donald Trump declared a national emergency along the southern border Friday and predicted his administration would end up defending it all the way to the Supreme Court.

That might have been the only thing Trump said Friday that produced near-universal agreement.

The American Civil Liberties Union announced its intention to sue less than an hour after the White House released the text of Trump's declaration that the "current situation at the southern border presents a border security and humanitarian crisis that threatens core national se-

curity interests and constitutes a national emergency."

Nonprofit watchdog group Public Citizen filed suit later, urging the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia to "bar Trump and the U.S. Department of Defense from using the declaration and funds appropriated for other purposes to build a border wall."

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and several Democratic state attorneys general already have said they might go to court.

The coming legal fight seems likely to hinge on two main issues: Can the president declare a national emergency to build a border wall in the face of Congress' refusal to give him all the money he wanted and, under the federal law Trump invoked in his declaration, can the Defense

Department take money from some congressionally approved military construction projects to pay for wall construction?

The Pentagon has so far not said which projects might be affected.

But after weeks of publicly ruminating whether to act, Trump's signature on the declaration set in motion a quick march to the courthouse.

Trump relied on the National Emergencies Act of 1976, which Congress adopted as a way to put some limits on presidential use of national emergencies. The act requires a president to notify Congress publicly of the national emergency and to report every six months. The law also says the president must renew the emergency every year, simply by notifying Con-

gress. The House and Senate also can revoke a declaration by majority vote, though it would take a two-thirds vote by each house to override an expected presidential veto.

Beyond that, though, the law doesn't say what constitutes a national emergency or impose any other limits on the president.

The broad grant of discretion to the president could make it hard to persuade courts to rule that Trump exceeded his authority in declaring a border emergency.

"He's the one who gets to make the call. We can't second-guess it," said John Eastman, a professor of constitutional law at the Chapman University School of Law.

## Vice President Pence takes hard line with NATO allies

By JOHN VANDIVER

*Stars and Stripes*

MUNICH — Vice President Mike Pence delivered a hard-line message to allies here Saturday, accusing them of undermining U.S. sanctions against Iran and failing to live up to their NATO obligations, in a speech that exposed deep divisions between Washington and Berlin.

On defense spending, Pence credited allies for stepping up their investments but demanded that all 29 NATO members hit a 2024 deadline to meet agreed-upon spending targets.

"When you hear President (Donald) Trump say NATO allies have to live up to their promises, that is what we call being leader of the free world," Pence said. "The truth is many of our NATO allies need to do more."

Pence rattled off a list of pri-

orities at the Munich Security Conference, ranging from opposition to a gas pipeline deal between Russia and Germany to a demand that Europe end business dealings with Tehran.

"The time has come for our European partners to withdraw from the Iran nuclear deal," Pence said.

In Munich, Pence's tough stance was at odds with priorities laid out minutes earlier by German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who backs the nuclear agreement with Iran that Washington has abandoned. Merkel also called into question the value of a top Trump priority that calls on NATO members to dedicate 2 percent of GDP to military matters by 2024. Merkel said Germany will not meet the deadline and questioned the value of the spending goal.

"Many people are not satis-

fied with that," Merkel said, but indicated no plan to satisfy Trump's spending demands.

Merkel also indicated that things other than military spending, such as development aid to countries in need, should be counted in some way toward alliance security efforts.

"We are one of the largest donors in the world ... it's just as important in strengthening our alliance," she said. Merkel also called on partners to preserve international institutions such as the European Union and NATO that she sees as anchors of stability.

"We have to fight for multilateralism and against all those who think they can do it alone," she said.

Pence sought to reassure his European audience that Washington is as committed as ever to NATO and building up that alliance.

"When we are strong and when we are united, there is nothing we can't achieve together," Pence said.

But there remains skepticism about Trump's commitment to NATO, which he has repeatedly criticized. Trump is regarded widely in NATO capitals as the alliance's most urgent, and often most difficult, problem," wrote former U.S. ambassadors to NATO Nicholas Burns and Douglas Lute in a joint report released at the start of the Munich conference.

Former U.S. Vice President Joe Biden, who addressed the conference Saturday, offered a repudiation of Trump's views on NATO.

"Without a stable Atlantic alliance, everything in my view falls apart," said Biden, who is mulling a run for the presidency in 2020 and was warmly welcomed by the Munich audience.

# US military planes send aid to Venezuela

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — U.S. military aircraft are being used to transport humanitarian aid for Venezuela to a city in Colombia near the border of the two countries, a defense official confirmed Friday.

More than 200 tons of humanitarian aid, including food, medical supplies and hygiene kits, from the State Department's U.S. Agency for International Development began arriving Saturday in a city in Colombia that is close to the Venezuelan border, according to a defense official who spoke

on the condition of anonymity.

The aircraft used could be C-17 Globemasters, used to move cargo and troops, the official said, but he did not know how many would be used to deliver the aid. The U.S. military will help send the aid to Colombia over an unspecified period of time, he said.

The official said the military's only role is to help drop off the aid and then leave. The only military personnel will be the air crews of the C-17s that include two pilots and one loadmaster, according to an Air Force fact sheet.

No troops are being sent there to hand out the sup-

plies or move them across the border.

"We are supporting our federal partners," he said.

USAID has already staged supplies such as food and hygiene kits in Cucuta, Colombia, according to a Feb. 8 agency news release. The defense official would not say to which city the aid will be delivered; however, The Associated Press reported it is Cucuta.

Venezuela is experiencing economic turmoil and a mass migration in response to dictator Nicolas Maduro's government, according to the State Department.

In January, the United States

recognized opposition leader Juan Guaido as Venezuela's interim president over Maduro, calling his win in last year's elections illegitimate.

In response to a request by Guaido for international aid, the United States delivered humanitarian aid to Colombia last week, Pentagon spokesman Lt. Col. Jamie Davis said Friday in a statement.

The United States "will continue to coordinate with President Guaido and his team of experts, governments in the region and our humanitarian partners to mobilize aid for the Venezuelan people," he said.

## Judge halts efforts to drop airmen with HIV

*Associated Press*

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — A federal judge on Friday ordered the U.S. Air Force to temporarily stop discharging servicemembers who are HIV positive, ruling that it's working under a policy that is "irrational" and "outdated."

U.S. District Judge Leonie M. Brinkema, in Alexandria, Va., issued her decision as a lawsuit moves forward against the U.S. military.

Servicemembers in the Air Force claim they're being discharged solely because of their HIV status and despite the recommendations of their doctors and commanding officers, who say they are fit to serve.

For now, the ruling keeps at least two HIV-positive men in the Air Force who were days and weeks away from being formally discharged.

Air Force policies had prevented the servicemembers with HIV from deploying to places outside the U.S., such as Iraq and Afghanistan, without a waiver. That, in turn, resulted

in the men being considered "unfit" for continued military service.

Because of advances in medicine and treatment for HIV, Brinkema wrote that the disease "does not impose unreasonable burdens on the military when compared to similar chronic conditions."

She also said HIV "does not seriously jeopardize the health or safety of the servicemember or his companions in service."

The judge added that the servicemembers are likely to have success in arguing their case.

The military has argued that the lawsuit is premature because the personnel have not explored all of their options within the military to fight being discharged. The military has also argued that such policy questions fall under the discretion of the federal government's executive branch.

The Department of Justice is representing the military. Spokeswoman Kelly Laco said its attorneys are reviewing the judge's decision. She declined to comment further.

## Navy creates company commander position

By BROCK VERGAKIS

*The (Norfolk) Virginian-Pilot*

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. — The Navy is creating a new company commander position in the fleet to manage small groups of Riverines that protect harbors and high-value assets like aircraft carriers around the world.

The first person to hold what will be one of six positions, split between Virginia Beach, Va., and San Diego, assumed command Friday at Joint Expeditionary Base-Little Creek in Virginia.

Lt. Cmdr. Jorge Roldan will oversee three Mark VI patrol boats and deploy with his crews overseas. The Mark VI is 84 feet long, armed with a .50-caliber gun and other weapons and has a maximum crew size of 12.

The Navy rotates Mark VI crews abroad that use boats already based in Bahrain or Guam but that can deploy anywhere they're needed within their fleet's area of responsibility.

The Mark VI can be transported by ship, has a range that exceeds more than 600 nautical miles and can support unmanned aircraft, surface vessels and underwater vehicles.

The Navy said the new positions will provide necessary leadership to safely maintain the boats, keep crews battle ready and perform administrative and other support. Roldan will be in charge of Coastal Riverine Squadron Four's Alpha Company.

"Today, in particular, yeah, absolutely a bit of an emotional day," Roldan said following an assumption of command ceremony with his squadron, friends and fiancée. "I understand some of the challenges that are coming here. ... I just feel absolutely supported."

Roldan was commissioned as a surface warfare officer in 2006 and previously served with Coastal Riverine Squadron 3, the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise and the mine countermeasure ship USS Guardian, among others.



# Afghans fear US withdrawal could result in repeat of 1989 civil war

BY PHILLIP WALTER  
WELLMAN  
*Stars and Stripes*

KABUL, Afghanistan — Habib Belal's small grocery store in central Kabul has a blanket nailed over the doorway to keep the winter air out. He sat inside, wearing a jacket and scarf, tending to customers.

"Things are good now," he said with a smile, referring to life in the Afghan capital. But he went on to say that most people he knew feared the security situation soon could worsen. "They feel there is a chance for another civil war."

These concerns have been sparked by ongoing talks between U.S. and Taliban negotiators aimed at achieving a peace deal, prompting speculation of an impending withdrawal of U.S. forces.

The last time foreign troops pulled out of Afghanistan en masse — when the Soviet Union ended its decade-long occupation 30 years ago Friday — Afghan groups fought each other

and the central government that had been backed by the Soviets collapsed.

"We'd watch rockets rain down on Kabul all day long," Belal, 56, said. The co-owner of his shop, Qumadan, nodded in agreement.

Both men, like some others old enough to remember the civil war, said they feared that a precipitous U.S. military withdrawal could produce a similar outcome because the government remains weak and Afghan society is fractured among conflicting alliances, just as it was in 1989.

"There are still many groups fighting each other in Afghanistan. If the U.S. leaves and there is a big fight for control, every ethnic leader and warlord will come forward and fight for their own power," said Ghulam Qadir, 64, a resident of the capital's Jada-e-Maiwand area.

"The city was not rebuilt overnight, and it wasn't easy," he said.

After the latest round of talks with Taliban negotiators

in Qatar last month, U.S. peace envoy Zalmay Khalilzad said the parties had reached an agreement in principle on terms for the withdrawal of U.S. forces and a pledge by the Taliban not to harbor terrorist groups, but no date for any U.S. pullout had been set.

Acting U.S. Secretary of Defense Pat Shanahan told reporters last week that he had received no orders from President Donald Trump.

Nevertheless, Trump's apparent eagerness to end America's longest war has led to speculation among Afghans and analysts that the deal sought by Washington may be primarily focused on bringing the U.S. participation in the war to an end, and less so on ensuring conditions for lasting peace.

Those fears are compounded by the fact that the Afghan government has yet to participate in talks with the Taliban, although Washington has said any final peace settlement must be decided between Kabul and the insurgents.

# President claims Abe nominated him for Nobel

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump claimed Friday that Japan's prime minister had nominated him for a Nobel Peace Prize for opening a dialogue with North Korea.

Trump also complained about President Barack Obama's Nobel Peace Prize and doubted he would be similarly honored.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe "gave me the most beautiful copy of a letter that he sent to the people who give out a thing called the Nobel Prize," Trump said at a White House news conference when asked about his late February summit in Vietnam with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. "He said, 'I have nominated you, respectfully, on behalf of Japan. I am asking them to give you the Nobel Peace Prize.'"

The Associated Press could not immediately confirm Trump's claim.

Japan's Foreign Ministry said Saturday that it was aware of Trump's remark but cannot comment on details of the exchanges between Trump and Abe.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in, who also has credited Trump with starting negotiations with the reclusive North, has endorsed the U.S. leader for the Nobel Peace Prize as well.

Trump said early exchanges with Kim were filled with "fire and fury," but that the two have established a good relationship since their first meeting last year in Singapore.

Obama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2009, his first year in office, for laying out the U.S. commitment to "seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons."

Trump complained Friday that Obama was there "for about 15 seconds" before he was awarded the prize.

"I'll probably never get it, but that's OK," Trump said. "They gave it to Obama. He didn't even know what he got it for."

# Manafort faces over 19 years in prison

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Paul Manafort, the one-time chairman of Donald Trump's presidential campaign, could spend more than 19 years in prison on tax and bank fraud charges, prosecutors said Friday.

Court documents filed by special counsel Robert Mueller's office reveal that Manafort faces possibly the lengthiest prison term in the Russia investigation. Manafort, 69, is also at serious risk of spending the rest of his life in prison if a federal judge imposes a sentence within federal guidelines.

The potential sentence stems from Manafort's conviction last year on eight felony counts related to an elaborate scheme to conceal from tax authori-

ties the millions of dollars he earned overseas from Ukrainian political consulting. It is one of two criminal cases pending against Manafort in which he faces prison time.

Manafort, who led Trump's campaign for months during the 2016 presidential run, is not charged with any crimes directly related to Russian election interference, the thrust of Mueller's probe. But prosecutors have recently revealed that they remain deeply interested in his contacts during and after the campaign with an associate the FBI says has ties to Russian intelligence.

In a 27-page court filing Friday, prosecutors did not recommend a precise sentence for Manafort, but they agreed with a calculation by federal proba-

tion officials that his crimes deserve a punishment of between 19.5 and 24.5 years. They also lay out in great detail for U.S. District Judge T.S. Ellis III how they say Manafort's greed drove him to disregard American law.

"In the end, Manafort acted for more than a decade as if he were above the law and deprived the federal government and various financial institutions of millions of dollars," the prosecutors wrote. "The sentence here should reflect the seriousness of these crimes and serve to both deter Manafort and others from engaging in such conduct."

Manafort has been jailed for months as he awaits his formal sentencing.

# Fired employee kills 5 co-workers in Ill.

Associated Press

AURORA, Ill. — The frantic calls started pouring in at 1:24 p.m. A gunman was shooting people inside a sprawling manufacturing warehouse in Aurora, Illinois.

Within four minutes, the first police officers rushed to the 29,000-square-foot building in the suburban Chicago city and were fired on immediately; one was struck outside and four others shot inside.

By the time the chaos ended Friday afternoon, five male employees of Henry Pratt Co. were found dead and the gunman was killed in a shootout with police after a 90-minute search of the sprawling warehouse. Five male police officers were hospitalized with injuries that were not life-threatening.

“For so many years, we have seen simi-

lar situations throughout our nation and the horrible feeling that we get when we see it on the news. To experience it firsthand is even more painful,” said Aurora Mayor Richard C. Irvin.

Aurora police Chief Kristen Ziman said the gunman, Gary Martin, 45, was being fired from his job Friday after 15 years with the company. It was not immediately known why Martin was being fired.

“We don’t know whether he had the gun on him at the time or if he went to retrieve it,” Ziman said.

She also said authorities don’t yet know if the employees firing him were among the victims. The names of those killed were not immediately released.

In addition to the five employees killed, a sixth worker was taken to a hospital with

injuries that were not life-threatening. A sixth police officer suffered a knee injury while searching the building.

The shooting shocked the city of 200,000 that is about 40 miles west of Chicago.

At Acorn Woods Condominiums, where Martin lived — a mix of brick apartments and condos nestled on a quiet street just a mile and a half from the shooting — neighbors gathered on sidewalks near Martin’s unit talking and wondering among themselves if they knew or had come in contact with him.

Asked if Martin’s rampage had been a “classic” workplace shooting, police Chief Ziman said, “I don’t know. We can only surmise with a gentleman that’s being terminated that this was something he intended to do.”

# Winter weather overwhelms California

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Winter weather enveloping California’s mountains for a fourth straight day Friday kept skiers from hitting the slopes at the start of the Presidents Day holiday weekend, with snow so deep that plows could not tackle it and cities scrambled to find places to pile it.

Several routes to the ski mecca of Lake Tahoe shut down, including about 70 miles of Interstate 80 from Colfax, Calif., to the Nevada state line.

I-80 was reopened to passenger vehicles Friday evening.

Chains were required for travel in many

other parts of the towering Sierra Nevada.

“All avid skiers are itching to get out on the mountain, but the roads are pretty treacherous right now,” said Kevin Cooper, marketing director for Lake Tahoe TV.

The storm was expected to dump between 3 and 6 feet of fresh snow in a region where some ski resorts reported getting 3 feet since Thursday. Officials warned of avalanches in the greater Lake Tahoe Area, where heavy snow and high winds were expected through Sunday.

Storms also have swamped much of the state with heavy rain that crumbled roads and flooded a resort north of San Francisco

where a kayaker paddled through a meeting room after a nearby river swelled over its banks. The onslaught extended into Arizona and other parts of the U.S. West, with a winter blast also hitting Missouri.

In California, the heavy snow forced some skiers to cancel their plans.

Aura Campa of Oakland and her partner were hoping to take advantage of their season passes and the fresh powder at Squaw Valley-Alpine Meadows resort, but a near-accident on an icy road last weekend made them reconsider.

Authorities told people to stay home as snow kept piling up.

# Omar’s Israel tweet no surprise to some back home

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — As Ilhan Omar’s political star was rising last year on her way to becoming one of the first Muslim women in Congress, several Minnesota Jewish leaders invited her to talk privately about past statements they considered anti-Semitic and anti-Israel. Gathering at a state senator’s home, they hoped to get a better sense of her views while expressing their concerns.

Most came away dissatisfied by what they heard.

Those concerns were confirmed last week when Omar suggested on Twitter that members of Congress support Israel for money, igniting a bipartisan uproar in Washington that included criticism

from President Donald Trump and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif.

“There seems to be a pattern developing which indicates more of an attitude than mistakes,” said Ron Latz, the Democratic state senator who hosted the meeting. “And that’s what’s most troubling. I mean, I’m grateful that she seems to be willing to be engaged in conversations with the Jewish community, but she doesn’t seem to be learning from those conversations.”

Omar’s liberal Minneapolis-area district includes the largest Somali-American community in the U.S. as well as the suburb of St. Louis Park, Minn., a historical hub of the region’s Jewish community — making it a revealing listening post for the debate that Omar’s comments sparked. Where many saw a repeat of blatant anti-Semi-

tism, others saw a young politician done in by her own rush to agitate on social media. And others — Jewish and Muslim — said their support for her is unshaken.

In tweets last week, Omar said she is learning.

“Anti-Semitism is real, and I am grateful for Jewish allies and colleagues who are educating me on the painful history of anti-Semitic tropes,” she said in an apology last Monday. But she quickly pivoted back to offense after Trump called her apology “lame.”

“You have trafficked in hate your whole life — against Jews, Muslims, Indigenous, immigrants, black people and more,” she tweeted about the president Wednesday. “I learned from people impacted by my words. When will you?”



# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Brawl over boyfriend leads to 2 arrests

**FL** KEY WEST — It might sound like something out of a Jimmy Buffett song, but a woman was arrested for smashing a beer bottle over the head of another woman who she believed had grabbed her boyfriend in a Key West bar.

Monroe County Sheriff's deputies said that Sally Amato, 42, became upset when she mistakenly thought the woman had grabbed Amato's boyfriend in the crotch.

Amato is faces charges of aggravated battery with a deadly weapon.

Sheriff's deputies said her boyfriend, Dustin Messenger, was arrested for property damage after he returned to the bar and kicked the tavern's door off its hinges.

## Robber hurt in fight with store employee

**NC** CHARLOTTE — Police in North Carolina said a cellphone store robbery suspect was critically injured after fighting with an employee who held him until police arrived.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police said in a statement that officers responding to a report of a robbery found employees holding a suspect on the ground. Officers discovered he needed medical attention and police said CPR was performed until he regained a pulse, then taken to a hospital in critical condition.

Police said their investigation found two males entered the store and fled after one of them stole phones. One suspect fought with an employee and was held until police arrived. Police said the other suspect fled in a truck and an employee fired a handgun, striking only the truck.

## Judge sets bail for men in heart attack death

**AL** GREENSBORO — A judge in Alabama approved bond for two men charged with murder after a business owner they confronted during a burglary died of a heart attack.

Circuit Judge Marvin Wiggins set bail at \$150,000 each for Darnell Coates, 34, and Lonze Byrd, 33, The Tuscaloosa News reported.

Thomas collapsed after confronting burglars at his business and firing a warning shot, prosecutors and court documents said, and the men left without calling authorities. Prosecutors said that and the stress of the crime caused his death of a heart attack.

## Man run over trying to stop television theft

**KS** WICHITA — Wichita police say a man was run over by a car when he tried to stop two suspects who were stealing a television from a neighbor's porch.

KAKE-TV reported officers responded Thursday to an assault call. A 47-year-old man told police he saw a suspect taking a package containing a TV from his next door neighbor's front porch. Another person was in a car in the driveway.

Officer Charley Davidson said the man approached the suspects and was knocked down and run over as they fled in their car. He was treated for cuts and bruises.

The suspects did not get the television.

## Man charged in attack on pregnant bus driver

**NJ** ELIZABETH — A man who allegedly attacked and robbed a pregnant New

Jersey Transit bus driver while she was on duty last month is now facing charges.

Union County prosecutors said Andre Dawson III is charged with robbery, assault and assault on a bus operator.

Police officers responding to a reported assault found the driver had been robbed of her cell phone and suffered from bumps, cuts and bruises.

## Woman found stuck in vacant home's air vent

**TX** HOUSTON — Authorities said emergency personnel rescued a woman who got stuck trying to enter a vacant Houston home through an air vent.

The man, Arthur Reyes, told KTRK-TV he was going to a convenience store around 4:30 a.m. Friday when he heard the woman.

Houston District Fire Chief Eric Hutzley said firefighters had to cut the air vent and free the unidentified woman from inside the home.

Authorities said she may face charges.

## Residents threaten 2 snowplow drivers

**WA** SPOKANE — Unusually heavy snow in the Spokane area has caused snowplow rage. Two plow drivers clearing streets were threatened by people enraged after their driveways ended up blocked with mounds of snow.

In one incident, a man with a holstered handgun yelled obscenities at a plow driver and climbed onto the plow, trying to open the plow truck's door, said Spokane County spokeswoman Martha Lou Wheatley-Billeter.

Another man threatened to get a gun while ordering a plow driver not to block a driveway

with snow from the street, Wheatley-Billeter said.

Spokane County Sheriff Ozzie Knezovich said people with driveways blocked by snow from plows should make complaints to county officials if they are upset.

## New brew possible from beer on 1886 shipwreck

**NY** COBLESKILL — Ahoy, beer lovers: A bottle from a 133-year-old shipwreck may yield yeast for a new brew in upstate New York.

Biotechnology students at the State University of New York at Cobleskill uncorked a bottle from the shipwrecked SS Oregon last week. Serious Brewing Company of Howes Cave plans to develop a new brew if the students successfully extract yeast.

Bill Felter of Serious Brewing acquired the beer from a customer who owns an assortment of artifacts recovered from the Oregon.

## Google picks its office to house finance hub

**IL** CHICAGO — Google officials said the company selected Chicago as its new finance division hub with plans to have the capacity to double its workforce in the city by the end of the year.

The Chicago announcement is part of Google's national expansion plan. The California company said that it plans to invest more than \$13 billion this year on new and expanded data center and offices across the U.S.

Google currently has more than 1,000 employees working in its Chicago West Loop office.

From wire reports

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# Fresh faces dot Daytona 500 lineup

Associated Press

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Among those trying to win the Daytona 500 this year are a Florida watermelon farmer, a short-track champion from New England, a television analyst and a 22-year-old whose career nearly was derailed by a brain tumor.

The front row is the youngest in Daytona 500 history and it will be William Byron, a Liberty University student who had his wisdom teeth removed in the offseason, leading the field to green in Sunday's showcase race to kick off the NASCAR season.

The overall look of the nation's top racing series has undergone a transformation the last few seasons and proof is plastered on the hood of Corey LaJoie's car. His full facial-haired face adorns his Ford Mustang, which easily makes him the most recognizable driver among the eight Dayto-

na 500 rookies in the field.

"He looks like he's going to eat you every lap," quipped Clint Bowyer.

LaJoie's paint scheme for his low-budget team is courtesy of sponsor Old Spice, which chose "The Great American Race" to promote its dry shampoo. Manscaped.com bought the space on the back of Landon Cassill's car, Bubba Wallace signed Aftershokz headphones for the race. After Casey Mears made the field — his first race in two years — skateboard rim maker Rim Ryderz joined his program.

This Daytona 500 is unlike any in recent memory and truly highlights the dramatic loss of star power from just four years ago. The 2015 race featured Jeff Gordon, Dale Earnhardt Jr., Tony Stewart, Matt Kenseth, Carl Edwards, Bobby Labonte, Michael Waltrip and Danica Patrick. All are now retired.

Some of the big-money

sponsors in that race included Lowe's, Target, Dollar General, GoDaddy and 5-Hour Energy. All have since pulled out of NASCAR.

What remains is a new-look NASCAR that nonetheless has a throwback feel.

NASCAR was built on the premise that if a budding driver or team owner could scrape together the funds to field a car, they could bring it down to the beach and try to make the big show. As the sport exploded past its Southern origins, it became nearly impossible for a new driver to claw his way into a ride.

But change has created opportunity — even second and third chances for a guy like Ross Chastain. The eighth-generation watermelon farmer impressed a sponsor with his work ethic and landed a career-changing ride with unexpected funding. Federal agents raided the sponsor right before Christmas, but Chastain still managed to land a seat for his first Daytona 500.

Ryan Preece bounced back

and forth between NASCAR and New England short tracks before finally gambling on his future. He settled for a part-time job with a competitive team because he believed he could show his true talent if given the right equipment. Now he's also a Daytona 500 rookie.

Same with Matt Tifft, who learned he had a brain tumor four races into his 2016 season. Or Daniel Hemric of Kannapolis, N.C., who followed hero Dale Earnhardt Sr. from the old mill town into a ride with Richard Childress Racing.

Parker Kligerman, a part-time racer and full-time television personality, raced his way into his second Daytona 500.

"Watching this race last year, I literally thought I'd never drive a Cup car again, never have another chance in the Daytona 500," Kligerman said. "I'm doing TV full-time. It just didn't seem like I was really getting anyone's attention. For whatever reason, I just couldn't find the right opportunity, couldn't find a sponsor."

## Kaepernick, NFL settle over collusion grievance

Associated Press

NEW YORK — With a public hearing looming and the threat of owners and league officials facing depositions, the NFL settled collusion cases brought by Colin Kaepernick and Eric Reid.

The league, about to celebrate its 100th season, faced criticism from all sides thanks to the protest movement started by Kaepernick. Many Kaepernick supporters wanted to see him back on the field, while other fans said they wouldn't watch if the league allowed players to protest during the national anthem.

The league and Kaepernick's lawyer sent out statements Friday saying that "the parties have decided to resolve the pending grievances" and that a confidentiality agreement

would prevent either side from commenting further.

It remains unclear if the NFL admitted wrongdoing or how much money Reid, Kaepernick or others may have received. Considering the lost salary both players claimed and legal costs, the settlement could have climbed into the tens of millions of dollars.

"For the past several months, counsel for Mr. Kaepernick and Mr. Reid have engaged in an ongoing dialogue with representatives of the NFL," the league statement said. "As a result of those discussions, the parties have decided to resolve the pending grievances. The resolution of this matter is subject to a confidentiality agreement so there will be no further comment by any party."

Kaepernick's lawyer Mark

Geragos tweeted a similar statement.

The protests slowed down this season, as the NFL made contributions to organizations chosen by players and promised more attention to social justice issues. But the controversy reignited every time there was a development in the case.

A hearing was scheduled for later this month.

Kaepernick and Reid filed collusion grievances against the league, saying they were blacklisted because of protests during the national anthem at games. Kaepernick has not played in the league since 2016, while Reid missed three games last season before signing with Carolina. Kaepernick contended the owners violated their collective bargaining agreement with players by conspiring to keep him off teams.

While the players seemed intent on pursuing the cases, the league might not have been eager for those deposed — including Commissioner Roger Goodell and several owners and league executives — to appear. Still, for the players to prove collusion is a mighty challenge because, according to the 2011 labor agreement between the union and league, a "club, its employees or agents" must have "entered into an agreement" to limit contract offers.

Kaepernick filed his grievance in August 2017. Arbitrator Stephen B. Burbank sent it to trial, denying the league's request to throw out the former 49ers quarterback's claims. Burbank's decision meant there was enough evidence of collusion to keep the grievances going.

# US upends World in Rising Stars game

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — When the likes of the Los Angeles Lakers' Kyle Kuzma, Philadelphia's Ben Simmons and Boston's Jayson Tatum get to the NBA All-Star Game and partake in what's become the preferred run-and-gun style where defense is discouraged at virtually all costs, this much is clear.

They'll be ready.

Dunks, layups, three-pointers and little else. That was the playsheet for the Rising Stars game Friday night, one where Kuzma led all scorers with 35 points on the way to MVP honors and the U.S. team defeated the World squad 161-144 on the floor that the All-Stars will be using on Sunday night.

Tatum added 30 points for the U.S. The teams combined for 37 three-pointers, 55 dunks and shot a combined 12 free throws.

"Last year, the World team kicked our butts," Kuzma said. "They came in here and beat

us by 30. A lot of us kind of remembered that."

It was 31, actually — 155-124, not that it matters.

Tatum added 30 points in the game for first- and second-year players that was known for years as the Rookie Game. Atlanta's Trae Young finished with 25 points and 10 assists, Sacramento's De'Aaron Fox had 15 assists and Utah's Donovan Mitchell added 20 points, nine assists and seven rebounds.

Everyone looked happy afterward.

The U.S. squad had a bit more reason to look that way.

"There's a \$25,000 bonus for winning the game," Kuzma said. "So that's good."

Philadelphia's Ben Simmons led the World team with 28 points on 14-for-17 shooting. Chicago's Lauri Markkanen had 21 points for the World squad, and Dallas' Luka Doncic had 13 points and nine assists.

Both teams shot 55 percent. The difference was on threes — the U.S. was 21-for-51, while the World was 16-for-52.

The mood from the outset was predictably light, even including the pregame speeches from U.S. coach Kyrie Irving of the Boston Celtics and World coach Dirk Nowitzki of the Dallas Mavericks.

"I want us to share the ball and not one guy dribble it 20 times and hoist something up — like Luka does with the Mavs," Nowitzki said, laughing a bit at his own joke.

Irving's message was succinct.

"Just have some fun," Irving said. "It's OK to compete."

Doncic talked Phoenix's DeAndre Ayton out of taking the opening tap for the World team, with the young Mavs star jumping against Fox instead of having either center handle the honors. Young was throwing an alley-oop lob to Atlanta teammate John Collins for a 360-degree dunk on one possession, then crossing over Josh Okogie in almost comical fashion on the next.

"We gotta play some defense," Mitchell implored team-

mates at one point.

It was unclear if anyone ever actually listened to his plea.

There was one foul called in the entire first half, Markkanen getting whistled for it with 4:13 remaining until halftime. The first half saw 25 dunks and 20 three-pointers in 20 minutes — the sides played 10-minute quarters. Late in the half, Collins flashed a crossover dribble, then underhand-tossed a pass off the backboard to himself for a dunk that had players on both sides reacting in mock disbelief.

This was the fifth year of the U.S. vs. World format; the World now leads the series, 3-2.

All 10 players on the World team hailed from a different nation, and four different continents were represented. And eight of the players in this year's game were also in last year's event — Mitchell, Collins, Tatum, Kuzma and Fox for the U.S.; Markkanen, Simmons and 2018 game MVP Bogdan Bogdanovic were repeaters for the World side.

## Basketball Hall of Fame announces finalists for 2019

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Paul Westphal says it's an honor these days to have anyone remember that he played basketball.

The Hall of Fame obviously remembers.

Westphal is one of 13 people who were announced Friday as finalists for enshrinement later this year by the Basketball Hall of Fame. He's one of four first-time finalists, joining seven-time All-Star Jack Sikma, five-time All-Star Marques Johnson and four-time defensive player of the year Ben Wallace.

"It's hard to put it into words," said the 68-year-old Westphal, who played 12 seasons — his best of those years with Phoenix — before spending parts of 17 more seasons as a head coach or assistant coach. "You never want to take

anything like this for granted. It's just a real humbling, thrilling time to consider that something like this might happen."

There are nine previous finalists back on the list this year — notably five-time All-Stars Chris Webber and Sidney Moncrief, eight-time first-team defensive player Bobby Jones, two-time NBA coach of the year Bill Fitch, women's basketball pioneer Teresa Weatherspoon and four-time college coach of the year Eddie Sutton.

"I'm so inspired and honored by these individuals on the stage," Moncrief said during the ceremony, looking at Hall of Famers on the stage such as Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Nancy Lieberman, Rick Barry, Spencer Haywood and Rick Welts. "Thank you all for setting the trend for us."

Moncrief, Wallace, Jones

and Weatherspoon were all known as top defenders.

"Defense matters," Moncrief said.

Also selected as finalists were Leta Andrews, who won a high-school-record 1,416 games in more than 50 years on the sidelines in Texas; Hugh Evans, a referee in the NBA for 28 years; and Barbara Stevens, the longtime coach at perennial Division II power Bentley and a winner of more than 1,000 games.

"To be named a Finalist for the Basketball Hall of Fame is a tremendous honor and we are proud to recognize the outstanding men and women who have impacted the game," said Jerry Colangelo, the Basketball Hall of Fame's chairman.

The 2020 class of finalists could — and likely will — include Kobe Bryant, Tim Duncan and Kevin Garnett.

There were four enshrinees who already know they will be honored at the hall's induction ceremony in September. Longtime coach Del Harris and Portland Trail Blazers co-founder Harry Glickman were announced as winners of lifetime achievement awards. And Curt Gowdy Award winners for media contributions to the game went to Marc Stein of The New York Times and retiring Los Angeles Clippers announcer Ralph Lawler.

So Westphal has gotten one call from the Hall — and now he waits to see if the second one comes. The finalists will learn during the NCAA men's Final Four weekend in Minneapolis if they are actually going to be part of the class of 2019.

"You don't run for the Hall of Fame. You don't campaign or anything like that," Westphal said.



## NHL roundup

## Goalie Halak helps Bruins blank Ducks

Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — The Boston Bruins have been trending in the right direction for a while.

Jaroslav Halak is starting to round into form again.

Halak made 30 saves in his fourth shutout of the season, and the Bruins beat the Anaheim Ducks 3-0 on Friday night for their fourth consecutive victory.

“It’s a team effort all the time,” Halak said. “Like any time we win a game or I get a shutout, it has to be everybody on the same page and I think tonight we were for 95 percent of it, and that makes you successful. We opened up the trip on the right note.”

Noel Acciari and Jake DeBrusk scored for the Bruins, who have earned at least a point in nine consecutive games. Chris Wagner added an empty-netter with 1:31 remaining.

Halak has won consecutive starts since a 1-4-2 stretch during which he allowed 23 goals. Bruins coach Bruce Cassidy attributed the rough patch to the defense’s inability to clear

traffic from in front of the net and give the Slovakian goalie a chance to see the puck.

“He had a real hot streak at the start, cooled off a little,” Cassidy said. “A product of both those streaks is usually the team in front of you. You play well, they keep the net clear, the goalie is going to look good.”

Halak did his part, denying Corey Perry on an odd-man rush that was set up by Rickard Rakell’s stellar backhand pass in the opening minute of the second period.

Halak also got some help when defenseman Brandon Carlo deflected Brandon Montour’s follow-up shot of a breakaway by Ducks rookie forward Max Jones late in the first period.

Jones didn’t have the angle he wanted initially and hesitated to shoot after racing past three Bruins at the blue line, allowing Halak to square up and make the initial save.

**Devils 5, Wild 4 (OT):** Nico Hischier scored 3:19 into overtime and Cory Schneider got his first win in nearly 14 months as visiting New Jersey rallied to

beat Minnesota.

Hischier, Marcus Johansson and Kyle Palmieri each had a goal and an assist for the Devils, who won for the second time in eight games. Will Butcher and Ben Lovejoy also scored.

Schneider had 15 saves in relief, including three in overtime. He allowed five goals Thursday in Chicago and was 0-17-4 since his last win on Dec. 27, 2017.

Mikael Granlund and Brad Hunt each had a goal and an assist for Minnesota, which dropped to 1-4-3 in its past eight games. Joel Eriksson Ek and Nick Seeler also scored, and Ryan Suter had two assists.

**Hurricanes 3, Oilers 1:** Nino Niederreiter scored two goals for host Carolina, and Curtis McElhinney stopped the final 40 shots he faced.

Lucas Wallmark also scored and Sebastian Aho had two assists for the Hurricanes, who have won 15 of 21 since Dec. 31 for the best record in the NHL in that span. Carolina moved a point behind idle Pittsburgh for the final wild-card playoff spot in the East.

Leon Draisaitl scored his

team-leading 34th goal on the Oilers’ first shot, and Mikko Koskinen stopped 24 shots while losing his sixth straight decision. Edmonton is 1-7-2 in its last 10.

McElhinney improved to 7-0-0 against Edmonton — his best career record against any opponent.

**Rangers 6, Sabres 2:** Rookie Alexander Georgiev stopped 31 shots, including 13 in the final period, and visiting New York rolled past Buffalo.

Vladislav Namestnikov scored twice in the final four minutes, while also adding an assist. Jesper Fast and Boo Nieves staked New York to a 2-0 lead in the first period, and Jimmy Vesey and Pavel Buchnevich also scored.

New York improved to 8-5-1 in its past 14 and earned its 58th point to move into 12th in the Eastern Conference standings.

Buffalo squandered a chance to close the gap on idle Pittsburgh in the race for the Eastern Conference’s eighth and final playoff spot. The Sabres have 63 points and remain four behind the Penguins.

## No. 25 Buffalo starts poorly, eventually downs Toledo

Associated Press

TOLEDO, Ohio — Buffalo is still in a bit of a three-point shooting funk — except for Nick Perkins, who lifted the Bulls to an impressive victory in a Mid-American Conference showdown with Toledo.

Perkins matched his career high with 26 points — hitting four three-pointers in the second half — to help No. 25 Buffalo beat Toledo 88-82 on Friday night. The Bulls went 0-for-9 from beyond the arc in the first half and finished 7-for-21, but the 6-foot-8 Perkins looked confident from long distance, even though he’s not the most prolific perimeter shooter.

“It was good to see some threes fall,” Perkins said.

The Bulls (22-3, 10-2) fell behind 10-0 and 17-4 in the first half, but Toledo (20-5, 8-4) never came all that close to delivering a knockout blow. Buffalo star CJ Massinburg picked up three fouls in the first half and finished with only 14 points, but the Bulls calmly worked their way back after their poor start.

This was perhaps the most anticipated game of the MAC regular season — a rematch of last year’s conference tournament final. Buffalo won that game and also beat Toledo by 30 last month, but the Rockets figured to put up a better fight

on their home court.

They did, but only to a point. Toledo led 39-36 at halftime, and the Bulls didn’t go ahead until Davonta Jordan’s three-pointer put them up 59-56 around the midway point of the second half. Soon after that, Perkins made a trio of three-pointers in quick succession, giving Buffalo a 70-62 lead. The Bulls held on from there.

## Big picture

**Buffalo:** The Bulls have been knocked off a couple of times in conference play, but this was one of their more impressive wins. Not everything went right for Buffalo by any means,

but there should be little doubt that this team is the class of the conference after this poised performance on the road.

The Bulls shot 15-for-48 from three-point range over their previous two games, and the first half against Toledo was even worse. But Buffalo finally rebounded in the second, thanks to Perkins.

**Toledo:** The Rockets should be disappointed that they couldn’t maintain their double-digit lead until halftime, especially with several Buffalo players dealing with foul issues. Toledo still leads the MAC West and may get another shot at East-leading Buffalo in the conference tournament.