

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## DHS: New coronavirus screening to begin

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — As the U.S. steps up its response to the coronavirus outbreak, the Department of Homeland Security is warning airline passengers that their flights may wind up rerouted if officials discover midflight that someone onboard has been in China in the last 14 days.

And Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said a “handful” of flights will be heading to China to bring Americans back home from Hubei province, which is at the heart of the outbreak.

“The exact timing of those we’re still coordinating with the Chinese government,” Pompeo said at a news conference Monday in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. “We anticipate that they will happen in the next handful of days and we’ll return those American citizens.”

Pompeo said: “We may well end up bringing some citizens back from other countries as well. We’re working through the details on that.” And he said the U.S. may try to deliver some medical supplies to the region.

“We’re working closely and hand-in-hand with the Chinese government to try and resolve what is now this global epidemiological challenge, and so we’ll have more details exactly on when those flights will depart and when they return and how they’ll return to the United States before too long,” he said.

The DHS guidance on airline flights was included in a notice released by the department Sunday as new travel restrictions officially go into effect for flights commencing after 5 p.m. EDT.

Under the new rules, U.S. citizens who have traveled in China within the last 14 days will be re-routed to one of eight designated airports, where they will undergo enhanced health screening: John F. Kennedy

### Pacific Fleet, USFK impose 14-day isolation once GIs back from China

BY SETH ROBSON AND KIM GAMEL  
*Stars and Stripes*

The Navy has ordered sailors on leave in China to return immediately and go into isolation for 14 days, while the U.S. military said Monday that about 25 service members who recently traveled to the mainland have been quarantined in South Korea to prevent the spread of a deadly new respiratory virus.

Indo-Pacific Command has banned non-essential travel to mainland China, where the coronavirus originated, and directed all Defense Department personnel there on temporary duty and leave status to depart immediately. But the pneumonia-like disease has spread to many other countries in the region, including South Korea and Japan, prompting military and civilian authorities to scramble to contain it.

In a message to his commanders obtained Sunday by Stars and Stripes, Pacific Fleet commander Adm. Chris Aquilino ordered identified sailors “to avoid public areas, gyms, and close contact with others during the 14-day observation period.” He also ordered screening of all personnel on leave to find out who might have been exposed to the virus.

“As a service we inherently work in close quarters in our operational units, and our personnel are the primary resource for all our platforms,” he wrote. “If you have active duty personnel on leave in China, ensure they return as soon as possible. Any active duty personnel returning from China shall be kept separate from their unit for a period of

14 days, starting from day of departure from China.”

“All Commands are directed to ensure members report any travel to China or personal contact with individuals who have traveled to China since [Dec. 31],” he ordered.

Sailors who live aboard a ship or with others and desire to be kept apart from potential exposure will be provided temporary lodging off ship, Aquilino wrote, noting there isn’t funding to support the cost to the command.

Sailors returning from China will be assessed within 24 hours and have daily checks for symptoms such as fever, sore throat, coughing or difficulty breathing, Aquilino wrote. Sailors who show any symptoms must notify their commands and report to their medical departments, according to the order.

“A plain surgical mask should be donned as soon as possible,” the message states.

Civilians and contractors on leave in China should comply with directions from civil authorities, including the State Department, Aquilino wrote. Civilian personnel returning from China shall be placed on administrative leave for 14 days, starting from day of departure from China. Returning contractors are effectively barred from Navy worksites for two weeks from the day they departed China.

U.S. Forces Korea issued a similar directive over the weekend, ordering a “self-quarantine” for troops who have been to China and returned to South Korea since Jan. 19. It stressed the risk for GIs was low and nobody had been found to have symptoms, but it was acting “out of an abundance of caution.”

International Airport in New York; Chicago O’Hare International Airport; San Francisco International Airport; Seattle-Tacoma International Airport; Daniel K. Inouye International Airport in Honolulu; Los Angeles International Airport in California; Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport; and Washington-Dulles International Airport in Virginia.

On Monday, Newark Liberty International Airport in New Jersey, Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport and Detroit Metropolitan Airport joined the list.

U.S. citizens who have been in Hubei province within 14 days of their return will be subject to up to 14 days of mandatory quarantine. U.S. citizens who have been in other areas

of China within the last 14 days will undergo “proactive entry health screening” and up to 14 days of “self-quarantine.” Most non-U.S. citizens who have traveled in China within the last 14 days will be denied entry into the U.S, except for immediate family members of U.S. citizens, permanent residents and flight crew.

# Yemeni-based al-Qaida claim Florida naval base shooting

Associated Press

CAIRO — Al-Qaida's branch in Yemen claimed responsibility Sunday for last year's deadly shooting at the Naval Air Station Pensacola by an aviation student from Saudi Arabia.

The shooter, 2nd Lt. Mohammed Saeed Alshamrani, was a member of the Saudi Air Force in training at the base. He opened fire inside a classroom at the base on Dec. 6, killing three people and wounding two sheriff's deputies before one of the deputies killed him. Eight others were also hurt.

Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, or AQAP, released a video claiming the attack. SITE Intelligence Group, which tracks messaging by militant groups, reported the claim.

AQAP has long been considered the global network's most dangerous branch and has attempted to carry out attacks on the U.S. mainland.

The 18-minute video did not provide evidence of training the shooter, but did indicate that Alshamrani and AQAP were in communication, said Rita Katz, director of SITE. It was not clear when the video was recorded.

The video claimed that Alshamrani had been planning for years to attack a U.S. base, and had been training and "selecting" targets.

The video, which was viewed by The Associated Press, provided a will written by Alshamrani to his family in September 2019, three months prior to the attack. He said he wanted to attack the U.S., citing religious reasons. However, he made no mention of al-Qaida.

Foreign nationals participating in U.S. training go through a vetting process. The Pentagon says it includes screening for any illicit drug activities, support for terrorist organiza-

tions, corruption and criminal conduct.

The video included audio from top AQAP leader Qasim al-Rimi claiming "full responsibility" for the attack by Alshamrani, calling him "the hero, the courageous knight."

A suspected U.S. drone strike destroyed a building housing al-Qaida militants last week in eastern Yemen. President Donald Trump retweeted several tweets and media reports that seemed to offer confirmation the strike killed al-Rimi.

Katz also said that AQAP did not state "May Allah Protect Him" in regard to al-Rimi, as its releases usually do. "(This) adds yet more suggestion to him indeed being killed," she tweeted.

Al-Rimi was one of AQAP's founders and became the group's leader after Nasser al-Wahishi was killed in a U.S. drone strike in 2015.

## Judge won't vacate life sentence in boat attack

Associated Press

NORFOLK, Va. — A federal judge in Virginia has refused to vacate the life sentence handed down to a Somali man convicted in a 2010 attack on a U.S. Navy vessel off the coast of Africa.

A judge in Norfolk issued a ruling Friday rejecting Mohamed Abdi Jama's claim that his sentence should be overturned because his lawyer was ineffective.

According to court records, Jama and his codefendants approached the USS Ashland in April 2010 in the Gulf of Aden and opened fire with AK-47s. Crew members of the Ashland returned fire and took the pirates into custody.

Jama was sentenced to life in prison in 2016 for piracy. He filed a motion last year claiming ineffective assistance of counsel. Jama claimed his lawyer failed to understand the laws and facts needed to prove piracy and failed to argue jurisdictional and other laws regarding piracy offenses and territory. He also argued that his lawyer failed to advise him of plea deals and failed to negotiate or explain any plea offers.

The judge said the court record provides no support for Jama's claims and shows that his lawyer shared a plea offer by prosecutors of 25 years in prison. Jama's lawyer said in an affidavit that his client refused to cooperate.

Jama claimed that he was never told about a 25-year plea offer and that his attorney advised him to reject a 30-year plea offer.

The judge noted that regardless of whether Jama's lawyer told him about any plea offer, Jama testified that he was not willing to testify against any of his codefendants as part of a plea deal.

## USMC bans popular eatery near Iwakuni

By JAMES BOLINGER  
*Stars and Stripes*

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION IWAKUNI, Japan — The Rib House, a popular American-style barbecue restaurant just outside MCAS Iwakuni's main gate, has been declared off-limits following the owner's arrest on drug charges.

Phillip Christopher Azevedo, 41, was taken into custody on Dec. 21 on suspicion of marijuana possession, according to a Fukuoka Prefectural Police spokesman who spoke to Stars and Stripes on Jan. 14. Japanese government officials customarily speak to the media on condition of anonymity.

According to a post on MCAS Iwakuni's official Facebook page, the Rib House, at 7-23 Kurumamachi 2-Chome, was declared off-limits on Jan. 13 for all base personnel, military and civilian, "due to illegal drug activity and other related criminal activity."

Rib House is the only Iwakuni establishment that is off-limits to base personnel. The restau-

rant, however, which is usually open only on Fridays and Saturdays, appears to have been closed since Azevedo's arrest.

Japanese police declined to comment on Azevedo's case, including how much marijuana he was accused of having or how he allegedly acquired the drug. It's also unclear if he is still in custody.

"Off-limits areas may be established by the MCAS Iwakuni Commanding Officer when there is substantive information that an establishment presents conditions that adversely affect the health, safety, welfare, morale or morals of SOFA status personnel," said base spokesman Maj. Joshua Diddams in a recent email to Stars and Stripes.

Americans subject to the status of forces agreement governing the U.S. military and civilian Defense Department employees in Japan can face punitive action under the uniform code of military justice or applicable regulations for visiting off-limits businesses, according to the III Marine Expeditionary Force.



# US soldier's body recovered after scuba dive

BY AYA ICHIHASHI  
*Stars and Stripes*

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — The body of a U.S. soldier who went missing on Sunday while scuba diving off Okinawa was recovered around noon on Monday, according to a spokesman for the Japan Coast Guard.

Sgt. 1st Class Matt Morgan, 30, was found by coast guard divers at a depth of 144 feet near the USS Emmons, a sunken World War II warship and popular dive spot about 1¼ miles off Kouri Island, said Hikaru Yonaha of the coast guard in Nago. Army officials could not be reached on Monday.

"It was such a tragedy, but we were glad to find him for his family," he said. "He was only 90 feet from the USS Emmons and the water was very clear today."

Morgan, a diving instructor assigned

to Torii Station on Okinawa, went on the recreational dive to the wreck with three others on Sunday morning, said another coast guard spokesman, Katsushi Inamine. After their ascent from the Emmons, Morgan and a Chinese diver surfaced behind two other divers. Morgan and his dive buddy prepared to exit the water when their boat captain noticed Morgan drifting away and wondered what was wrong, Inamine said. Then, the captain told authorities, Morgan sank with his gear on.

The other divers tried to chase Morgan in the water but "Morgan's sinking speed was too fast to catch up," Inamine said.

At 9:40 a.m., the captain called the coast guard at Nago, which couldn't find Morgan on Sunday.

The coast guard resumed its search with boats and helicopters Monday morning.

About 10 divers from the U.S. Air Force arrived to assist, Yonaha said Monday afternoon.

"Japan Coast Guard divers were checking the site first, then found Morgan at 144 feet depth, so they pulled him out of the water at 12:09," he said.

The coast guard divers determined that Morgan could not be resuscitated, Yonaha said.

Morgan's body was handed to Kadena Air Base officials Monday afternoon and was to be transferred to a Navy hospital later in the day, Yonaha said.

Sunk on April 6, 1945, during World War II, the Emmons is a popular deep-dive spot for Okinawa service members. Dive-trip providers advise that only experienced divers visit the Emmons because of its depth and the often strong currents in the area.

## Army hikes bonuses to stem pilot exodus

BY SLOBODAN LEKIC  
*Stars and Stripes*

The Army will pay up to \$1,000 per month in aviation incentives, the first increases it has offered in decades, as it tries to remain competitive with commercial airlines offering higher salaries.

The higher pay, which covers most pilots in the Army, the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve, became effective Jan. 1.

"This increase in (incentive pay), the first for Army pilots in over 20 years ... is just one of many efforts underway to maintain aviation readiness and ensure support to the joint force," Maj. Gen. David J. Francis, head of the U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence, said in a statement Friday.

Pilots with two years of Army service would receive \$125 per month and those with more than 10 years of service would get \$1,000 monthly under the new bonus plan, the Army statement said.

The Army also offers targeted retention bonuses to midcareer and senior pilots.

Each of the Pentagon services has struggled to retain pilots, who are often lured away from the military by companies offering enticements such as signing bonuses, tuition reimbursement and a more predictable work schedule.

The other services also offer monthly incentive pay and have recently upped their retention bonuses.

The Navy will pay pilots \$175,000 in bonuses over five years for staying in the service, it announced last month. The size of the bonus depends on the aircraft and length of reenlistment.

The Marine Corps in December announced it was offering bonuses of between \$45,000 and \$280,000 to reserve pilots who are willing to return to the cockpit.

The Air Force faced a shortage of about 2,000 pilots — 800 active duty and around 1,120 reserve pilots — at the end of 2018. The Rand Corp. has estimated that the active-duty pilot deficit will double to around 1,600 by 2023.

## Turkey launches strike on Syria after at least 8 Turkish personnel killed

*Associated Press*

ANKARA, Turkey — Turkey hit targets in northern Syria, responding to shelling by Syrian government forces that killed at least eight Turkish soldiers and civilian contractors, Turkey's president said Monday. A Syrian war monitor said 13 Syrian troops were also killed.

Syrian activists said air-strikes in the country's northern, rebel-held region also killed at least nine civilians Monday.

The exchange of fire inside Syria between Ankara and Damascus came hours after a large Turkish military convoy entered the northwestern province of Idlib, the last rebel stronghold in Syria. It is likely to further increase tensions between the two neighboring countries, as such direct clashes have been rare. It could also cause friction between Moscow and Ankara, which have sought to coordinate their actions in Syria.

Earlier, Turkey's National

Defense Ministry said the Turkish forces were sent to Idlib as reinforcements and were attacked there despite prior notification of their coordinates to the local authorities. It said Turkish forces responded to the attack, destroying targets.

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said five servicemen and three civilian contractors were killed by Syrian government forces. Speaking at a news conference on a visit to Ukraine, he accused Russia of "turning a blind eye" on the Syrian army offensive in Idlib. He added that Turkey has shown patience, but the "developments in Idlib have become increasingly intolerable." Erdogan claimed the Syrian advance has pushed over 1 million people to flee toward the border with Turkey.

The United Nations has estimated that about 390,000 Syrians have been displaced there over the past two months — 315,000 in December and 75,000 in January.

# Senate hears closing trial arguments

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Closing arguments in President Donald Trump's impeachment trial were unfolding on Monday as much for history as any effort to sway votes, one final chance to influence public opinion and set the record ahead of his expected acquittal in the Republican-led Senate.

The House Democratic prosecutors drew on history, the Founding Fathers and common sense to urge senators — and Americans — to see that Trump's actions are part of a pattern of behavior that, if left unchecked, will allow him to “cheat” in the 2020 election.

The president's defense countered that the “fast-track” impeachment case against Trump was flawed, rushed and

nothing short of an effort to undo the 2016 election and to try to shape the next one.

All that's left, as the Senate prepares to acquit Trump on charges that he abused power and obstructed Congress is for Americans to decide now, and in the November election, as the third presidential impeachment trial in the nation's history begins to close.

“Leave it to the voters to choose,” said White House counsel Pat Cipollone.

Senators acknowledged that the House Democratic managers have essentially proven their case, that Trump abused power and obstructed Congress by leveraging U.S. military aid to push Ukraine to investigate political rival Joe Biden to thwart the 2020 election.

But key Republicans have

decided that the president's actions toward Ukraine do not rise to the level of an impeachable offense that warrant the dramatic political upheaval of conviction and removal from office.

“What message does that send?” asked Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, D-N.Y., a House prosecutor, who warned that for Trump, the “past is prologue.” He implored senators to realize that without a vote to convict, the Senate will “allow the president's misconduct to stand.”

House managers opened with a plea from Rep. Jason Crow, D-Colo., a freshman, who told the chamber that “we cannot and should not leave our common sense at the door.”

Rep. Val Demings, a former police chief, argued that the president is not behaving

like someone who is innocent. She warned that he will try to “cheat” again ahead of 2020.

“Innocent people don't try to hide every document and witness, especially those that would clear them,” she told the senators. “That's what guilty people do.”

Kenneth Starr, the former prosecutor ahead of Bill Clinton's impeachment, complained about the inadequacy of the House prosecutors' case.

Prosecutors relied on a 28,000-page report compiled over three months of proceedings in the Democratic-controlled House, including the public and private testimony from 17 witnesses, many current and former ambassadors and national security officials with close proximity to the Ukraine dealings.

## General: Iran retaliation threat remains

The Washington Post

ABOARD THE USS TRUMAN — A month after the U.S. strike that killed Iranian Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani, Iran's military is no longer on a heightened war footing, but the United States continues to brace for further retaliation, a senior military official said on Sunday.

Gen. Kenneth “Frank” McKenzie, who heads U.S. Central Command, said Iran had “de-escalated” its ballistic missile force and brought its air defense forces back to a “normal state of readiness” following

its retaliatory strikes on bases housing U.S. troops in Iraq.

Speaking during a visit to the USS Truman, conducting operations in the northern Arabian Sea, McKenzie said that Iran's maritime forces likewise had displayed a “fairly normal” level of activity in recent weeks.

American officials have voiced concern about further attacks from Iran since the Jan. 7 ballistic missile strikes in Iraq. Those attacks, the first direct, overt military attack by the Iranian government, did not kill any U.S. troops but resulted in a spate of traumatic

brain injuries.

McKenzie said he believed that Iran was still “digesting” the impact of the Trump administration's decision to kill Soleimani, a figure of unparalleled influence whom U.S. officials have described as instrumental in the growth of Iran's network of armed proxy groups across the Middle East.

“I think Iran has seen that we do have will and that we're willing to take action in our own interests,” McKenzie said. “We're not going to endlessly be the recipient of their actions.”

During an overnight visit to the carrier, McKenzie spoke

with commanders, sailors and aviators about their goal of deterring further Iranian actions against the United States and its partners.

Speaking to sailors Saturday via the ship wide-speaker system, McKenzie addressed the ongoing tensions with Iran.

“You're here because we don't want a war with Iran,” he said. “I may need you to fight. I hope I don't.”

“But one thing I know for sure just from what I've seen so far, this ship, this crew and this air wing will be ready if I need you,” he said.

## Ukraine: Recordings show Iran knew missile hit plane

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — A leaked recording of an exchange between an Iranian air-traffic controller and an Iranian pilot purports to show that authorities immediately knew that a missile had downed a Ukrai-

nian jetliner after takeoff from Tehran, killing all 176 people aboard, despite days of denials by the Islamic Republic.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskiy acknowledged the recording's authenticity in a report aired by a Ukrainian

TV channel on Sunday night.

In Tehran on Monday, the head of the Iranian investigation team, Hassan Rezaeifar, acknowledged that the recording was legitimate and said that it was handed over to Ukrainian officials.

After the Jan. 8 disaster, Iran's civilian government maintained for days that it didn't know the country's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, answerable only to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, had shot down the aircraft.



## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Man charged with illegal dog surgeries

**CA** LATHROP — A Central California man who allegedly performed unlicensed surgeries on dogs in his kitchen has pleaded not guilty to animal cruelty.

Pedro Maldonado Victorio of Lathrop was arrested on Wednesday. He entered pleas on Thursday to felony animal cruelty, two felony counts of transporting controlled substances used for anesthetic and pain purposes and a misdemeanor count of practicing veterinary medicine without a license, the San Joaquin County district attorney's office said.

Victorio ran a "puppy mill" that involved inseminating dogs and performing illegal caesarean sections, the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office alleged on Friday.

Sheriff's deputies who inspected Victorio's home found a makeshift surgery room in his kitchen, narcotics and at least a dozen dogs, authorities said.

### Person in trash bin dumped into truck

**KS** WICHITA — A person Wichita officials say was sleeping inside a trash bin is recovering after being dumped into a garbage truck.

The incident happened on Friday morning when the garbage truck driver heard the person's cries for help around 4:30 a.m. and called 911, the Wichita Eagle reported. Firefighters say the truck had picked up and dumped the bin as part of its normal route, unaware that anyone was inside of it.

Fire officials said crews were able to get the person out by "using a truck company to lift them out of the trash compartment without complicating their injuries." The person

was taken to a Wichita hospital with injuries not believed to be life-threatening.

### Rescued puppy helps ease stress at 911 center

**VA** TAZEWELL — A rescued puppy is helping lighten the stressful days of the dispatchers at a Virginia 911 center. The puppy's former owners surrendered the 8-week-old lab mix to the Tazewell County Sheriff's Office, and dispatchers fell in love, WVNS-TV reported.

"A lot of people don't realize how stressful this job can be," Edwinna Cecil told the station. "If we have a bad call, you can't be upset when you see something this precious. It helps calm everybody down. The whole atmosphere has changed since he's been here."

As the official 911 dispatcher service dog, he will not only provide emotional support but also be an ambassador for 911, attending events and visiting schools.

Dispatchers are asking the public to help name the puppy. People can vote on the sheriff's office Facebook page for their favorite of four proposed names — Mischieff, Rookie, Taser or Creed.

### Man convicted of owning tiger cub illegally

**CA** LOS ANGELES — A Southern California man has been convicted of illegally owning a tiger cub that appeared in a video with controversial YouTube star Logan Paul.

Nicholas Perkins, 33, was placed on probation for three years, ordered to pay nearly \$6,000 in fines and \$52,000 in veterinary bills after the tiger was seized in November 2017, Los Angeles City Attorney Mike Feuer said.

"We should never allow any

animal to be exploited," Feuer told the Los Angeles Times. "The defendant's conduct here is illegal — and flaunting this treatment of an exotic, endangered baby tiger on social media sent a horrible message that behavior like this is OK. It isn't."

Prosecutors initially suspected that Perkins obtained the tiger from an out-of-state dealer, though investigators have not determined how it came into his possession.

### 7 of Winston Churchill's paintings now on view

**LA** LAFAYETTE — Seven of Winston Churchill's paintings and one of his sculptures are on view through March 21 at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. The paintings range from a garden walkway edged by trees, some in flower, to distant bathers at a beach with a big black cannon in the foreground.

As prime minister of Great Britain, Churchill once told a friend, "If it weren't for painting, I couldn't live. I couldn't bear the strain of things," Dr. Keith Huxen, senior director of research and history at the National WWII Museum, told a symposium at the exhibit's opening Jan. 17.

Churchill took up painting in his 40s and created more than 500 paintings, mostly landscapes and seascapes. The Royal Academy of Arts named him an Honorary Academician Extraordinary in 1948.

### Off-leash dogs draw ban in Teton Canyon

**WY** JACKSON — The U.S. Forest Service is cracking down on people letting dogs run off leash along trails in Wyoming and Idaho following a surge in reports of dogs harassing wildlife and bit-

ing people.

Officials say it is unacceptable to treat Teton Canyon — which boasts stunning views of Grand Teton National Park — like it's a "dog park."

The forest service will more strictly enforce rules that say dogs must be leashed within 200 feet of trailheads and campgrounds, Teton Basin District Ranger Jay Pence said.

The move comes after nearby communities in Idaho such as the town of Driggs have grown dramatically in recent years, their economies fueled by the wealth of nearby Jackson, Wyo. That's put new pressures on nearby forests that once saw few visitors.

### Woman left weapon in church for safety

**GA** PEACHTREE CITY — Police were called to an Atlanta-area church after someone found a gun inside, but it turned out to have been left by a woman who thought it would be safer there than at her home.

Officers were called to Holy Trinity Catholic Church after a member found a rifle under a jacket in the chapel, according to a Facebook post from the Peachtree City Police Department.

"Investigators worked diligently through the night" to identify the owner, according to the statement. Police said that the gun was left in the church by a mentally ill and mentally disabled woman who lives with the owner of the rifle.

"She informed investigators that she was uncomfortable with the rifle in the home, so she discarded the rifle at a location where she believed it would be handled safely," police said.

From wire reports

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# Chiefs rally past 49ers in Super Bowl

Associated Press

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. — Patrick Mahomes needed just the waning minutes of Super Bowl LIV to end a whole lot of frustration.

A championship 50 years in the making for the Kansas City Chiefs.

A two-decade wait for an NFL title for coach Andy Reid.

All it took was falling behind by double digits in the post-season, again. Then Mahomes found his mojo. The 24-year-old quarterback, who was selected Super Bowl MVP, led the Chiefs to 21 straight points in the final 6:13 for a 31-20 victory Sunday over the San Francisco 49ers.

“We never lost faith,” Mahomes said. “That’s the biggest thing. Everybody on this team, no one had their head down. We believed in each other. That’s what we preached all year long.”

The Chiefs (15-4) trailed 24-0 and 17-7 in their previous playoff games, both in the first half. In the big game, they nearly didn’t have time for a comeback.

Kansas City’s fans in the crowd of 62,417 at Hard Rock Stadium got little opportunity to chant and do the tomahawk chop as KC fell behind 20-10 in the third quarter. Mahomes even threw his second interception of the night after they fell behind.

But the vaunted 49ers defense wilted late and Mahomes brought the magic that makes him so special.

He completed passes of 44 yards to Tyreek Hill and 38 to Sammy Watkins. The touchdowns came on short throws to Travis Kelce to cut the deficit to three and to Damien Williams for the lead. The first NFL title in Reid’s two-decade career was clinched by Williams’ 38-yard TD run, sending red-clad Chiefs fans into chants of “Andy! Andy!”

Reid, 61, won a Super Bowl ring with the 1996 Packers while in charge of tight ends. He’s been seeking one as a head coach since being hired

## Kansas City QB Mahomes named MVP

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. — Patrick Mahomes was struggling, and the Kansas City Chiefs were in huge trouble.

Until the young quarterback coolly brushed aside three-plus quarters of frustration and came through in the clutch, that is.

As he has already done so often in his young career.

“It’s Magic Mahomes,” tight end Travis Kelce said with a huge grin. “It’s Showtime Mahomes. He’s going to be himself no matter what the scenario. And, you know what? I love him.”

Mahomes threw touchdown passes on consecutive fourth-

quarter drives to lead Andy Reid’s Chiefs to a 31-20 comeback victory and deliver the franchise its first Super Bowl title in 50 years.

“We had this guy (Reid) right here to get us there,” Mahomes said. “And we found a way to get it in the end.”

The 24-year-old Mahomes was selected the game’s MVP after bouncing back from being intercepted on two straight possessions as the Chiefs’ title hopes seemingly slipped away.

“I was making a lot of mistakes out there early,” Mahomes acknowledged.

— Associated Press

by Philadelphia in 1999. The Eagles lost in their only trip to the big game under Reid after the 2004 season.

“This is what it’s all about,” Reid said as confetti fell and the Chiefs celebrated the climax of the NFL’s 100th season. “What a great team, great coaches. Appreciate every bit of it.”

Mahomes found Hill, whose bobble led to the second San Francisco pick, for 44 yards on a third-and-15 — the first long pass completed by Kansas City. A 20-yard pass interference call on Tarvarius Moore, who had that earlier pick, put the ball at the 1 and Kelce was wide open for the score.

The Chiefs defense, confounded by the Niners’ misdirection much of the game, got stingy and forced a three-and-out. Mahomes soon hit Watkins down the right sideline behind Richard Sherman for a 38-yard gain, leading to Williams’ first score.

San Francisco (15-4) had nothing left in the fourth quarter, and its coach, Kyle Shanahan, saw yet another late-game meltdown by his team. Three years ago, as offensive coordinator in Atlanta, he was part of the Falcons’ Super Bowl collapse and loss in overtime to New England.

“We’ll lick our wounds and we’ll get over this,” Shanahan

said.

“It’s a beautiful trophy,” said Chiefs owner Clark Hunt — whose father, Lamar Hunt, coined the phrase Super Bowl — as he hoisted the Lombardi Trophy. “I’m so happy for our players, coaches and fans. And especially Andy Reid. Nobody deserves this trophy more than Andy Reid.”

Shanahan came close to a ring once again, but down the stretch the Niners couldn’t slow the no-huddle attack at which Mahomes, Hill, Kelce, Williams and all the other Chiefs excel.

“We have heart,” Mahomes said. “We never give up and those guys around us, the leaders on the team, have that mindset that we never give up.”

The fourth-quarter fireworks by the Chiefs were along the lines of the expected offensive explosion. Earlier, there were some strong drives but not a lot of huge plays.

The 49ers used up nearly six minutes on their opening drive, yet got only Robbie Gould’s 38-yard field goal. Kansas City took up 7:26 for its next march, including a fourth-and-1 run by Williams on a direct snap to the 49ers 1. All four Chiefs in the backfield spun around before the snap.

Mahomes took it in to end the 15-play series on a run option.

The 7-3 deficit was the first for San Francisco since Game 15. It soon became 10-3 after Jimmy Garoppolo’s ill-advised lob under pressure was intercepted by Bashaud Breeland. Another fourth-down gamble paid off for KC, with Williams gaining 3 on a pitchout. But the Chiefs stalled and Harrison Butker kicked a 31-yard field goal.

San Francisco needed a spark and, as it often has this season, the running game provided it. Gouging the Chiefs in the trenches, the 49ers gained 53 yards on five straight rushes before Garoppolo hit on a pair of passes. The second completion, over the middle to Kyle Juszczyk, saw the fullback look like anything but with a nifty open-field move past safety Daniel Sorensen — perhaps Kansas City’s best tackle. Juszczyk surged into the end zone for a 15-yard TD to tie it at 10.

Once more, Garoppolo was brilliant on a drive after being picked off. He improved to 39-for-42 for 461 yards, three touchdowns and no interceptions with a 136.2 rating on such series after the TD.

Gould’s 42-yarder gave the Niners their first lead, capping the opening drive of the second half. Again, their misdirection plays kept the Chiefs off-balance on defense.

As Garoppolo did in the first half, Mahomes then threw into heavy coverage trying to hit Hill and was picked off by Fred Warner. It was the first interception of Mahomes in five postseason games.

And it paid off with another efficient series for the Niners, keyed by a 26-yard completion to Kendrick Bourne on third down. Raheem Mostert, the star of the NFC title game, surged in from the 1 for a 20-10 edge.

Hardly unfamiliar territory for Kansas City.

“We have an ability as a team not just on offense, as team, to figure out what the other team is doing and put our foot in the ground and say enough is enough,” Kelce said. “It’s special.”



# Simpson rallies, tops friend Finau in playoff

Associated Press

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Webb Simpson was in big trouble when he drove into the right-side water on the par-5 15th.

“I didn’t think it was over,” Simpson said. “But I thought, ‘I’m going to really have to do something special to get back in it.’”

He did — at friend Tony Finau’s expense Sunday in the Waste Management Phoenix Open on a TPC Scottsdale course that played tougher with firm greens and a touch of wind.

Simpson birdied the final two holes of regulation to force a playoff with Finau, then won with a 10-foot birdie putt on the first extra hole.

Two strokes ahead with two holes left, Finau missed an 18-foot birdie try in the playoff on the par-4 18th after driving left into the church pew bunkers.

Simpson two-putted from the fringe on the short par-4 17th and made a 17-footer from the edge of the green on the 18th. Finau, after hitting a 366-yard drive and an approach to 8 feet, missed a chance to win when his birdie try slid right.

Simpson closed with a 2-under 69 to match Finau at 17-under 267, setting up the

fourth playoff in five years in the desert.

“Today was a lot different. Today played tougher,” Simpson said. “I thought the pins were very tough, by far the toughest day of pins, course was longer, we had wind. We hadn’t had wind all week, so everything today was harder.”

Finau shot 70.

“I hit good putts,” Finau said. “The first one I hit really good, I thought I made it. ... Second one, similar line, a little bit farther, decided to play a little bit more break and it didn’t break.”

Simpson won his sixth PGA Tour title and first since the 2018 Players Championship. The 2012 U.S. Open champion improved to 2-5 in playoffs, three years after falling to Hideki Matsuyama in extra holes at TPC Scottsdale. Simpson also lost a playoff in November in the RSM Classic.

“I think getting frustrated after RSM led to being better prepared for today,” Simpson said.

Simpson visited instructor Butch Harmon on Monday in Las Vegas.

“I started the week off right, just getting a checkup from him,” Simpson said. “And two weeks of rest, I came in feeling ready

to go.”

Finau missed a chance for his second PGA Tour victory. He also lost a playoff to Xander Schauffele in November 2018 in China in the WGC-HSBC Champions.

“I definitely didn’t give him the tournament,” Finau said. “Unfortunately, it’s how the cookie crumbles. ... I love Webb. I think the camaraderie that I have with him as being one of my best friends out here, it would have been hard for either one of us to take this victory from each other. He got the upper hand this time, but I love that guy.”

Simpson felt for Finau.

“It’s hard. He is a great friend,” Simpson said. “Our wives are friends and he’s one of the best guys on tour. So it is a bit tough.”

Fourth-ranked Justin Thomas tied for third at 14 under after a 65, birdieing the 16th in a jersey from Bryant’s days at Lower Merion High School.

“It’s always a fun week here in Phoenix,” Thomas said. “Somehow it gets crazier every year.”

Bubba Watson and Nate Lashley also finished at 14 under. Watson closed with a 66, and Lashley shot 68.

## Garza’s double-double leads Iowa past Illinois

Associated Press

IOWA CITY, Iowa — Luka Garza is 6-foot-11 and can hit three-pointers.

That foiled Illinois’ defensive plan against the Iowa junior center.

Garza, the Big Ten’s leading scorer, bounced back from a slow start to score 25 points and No. 18 Iowa clamped down in the final four minutes to beat No. 19 Illinois 72-65 on Sunday.

Garza, who added 10 rebounds for his 13th double-double of the season, didn’t have a point in the first 15 minutes. He wound up making four three-pointers on nine attempts, both career highs, and shot 9-for-16 overall.

The plan for the Illini against Garza was to be physical.

“Just hit him,” Illinois coach Brad Underwood said. “He’s 290 pounds. Hit him on every shot.”

But Garza figured during the pregame scouting that Illinois 7-foot center Kofi Cockburn would stay inside against him. Cockburn, he felt, would be too strong for an all-day fight under the basket.

“I can’t really battle with him every time down,” Garza said.

So Garza, who came into the game with 22 three-pointers on 59 attempts, stepped outside and hit some key shots.

“When he got going at the end of the first half, he got going because he was getting offensive rebounds because we didn’t hit him,” Underwood said.

Garza had 11 points in a 13-2 run that erased an early eight-point lead from the Illini.

“I thought we did a better job of getting (the ball) to him,” Iowa coach Fran McCaffery said. “They were sitting in there on top of him. They made a decision to limit his touches.”

## Slam scoreboard: Djokovic gaining on Federer, Nadal

Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — As Novak Djokovic conducted yet another in a long string of interviews after earning his record eighth Australian Open championship, runner-up Dominic Thiem was sliding into the front passenger seat of a white tournament courtesy van.

It was past 1:30 a.m. local time, and Djokovic was toting his large silver winner’s cup everywhere while explaining how he edged Thiem 6-4, 4-6, 2-6, 6-3, 6-4 Sunday night for a 17th major title. Thiem, meanwhile, had just emerged from the locker room, his media obligations long finished.

It is an all-too-familiar scene nowadays when a Grand Slam tournament wraps up: a member of the Big Three holding court and holding the biggest trophy; a younger man leaving the scene to plenty of praise

but not the triumph he wanted. And, increasingly, the guy with the hardware that’s the envy of all is Djokovic, more often than it is either of his rivals, Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal.

Which, of course, is the point right now. Roger and Rafa need to watch out, because the guy whose nickname is Nole is gaining on them. Djokovic has won five of the past seven major tournaments, a run that dates to Wimbledon in 2018.

So as the tour departs from Australia, Federer leads the men’s list with 20 Slam trophies, one ahead of Nadal and, rather suddenly, just three more than Djokovic.

“Obviously, at this stage of my career, Grand Slams are the ones I value the most. They are the ones I prioritize,” said Djokovic, who defeated Federer in the final at Wimbledon last year and the semifinals at the Australian Open this week.

## NBA roundup

# Antetokounmpo, Bucks bounce back

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — The Milwaukee Bucks have lost 28 games since the start of last season. Only once did they follow one defeat with another.

Giannis Antetokounmpo had 30 points and 19 rebounds, and the Bucks rebounded yet again by beating the Phoenix Suns 129-108 Sunday — two days after a loss to Denver.

“A good response,” Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer said. “Not our best, but a steady, good response.”

Antetokounmpo reached the 30-point mark for the 26th time, and fellow All-Star Khris Middleton had 25 points, eight rebounds and six assists. Brook Lopez added 17 points, and Milwaukee shot 49.5% and made 15 of 38 from three-point range.

Devin Booker scored 32 points and spurred a third-quarter surge by Phoenix, and the deficit dropped to nine when DeAndre Ayton dropped a hook shot with 3:51 left in the quarter. The Bucks responded

with three straight three-pointers — including back-to-back from Donte DiVincenzo — to snuff out the rally.

“It was a game until they hit those three threes in a row,” Suns coach Monty Williams said. “I’m proud of the way the guys competed.”

**Raptors 129, Bulls 102:** Terence Davis scored a career-high 31 points and host Toronto tied a team record with its 11th straight win.

The Raptors also won 11 straight in January 2016, and again from Feb. 26 to Mar. 16, 2018.

Pascal Siakam added 17 points, Serge Ibaka had 16, Chris Boucher 15 and Kyle Lowry 14 for the reigning NBA champions. Toronto outscored Chicago 69-39 in the second half to win their 12th consecutive meeting.

**Rockets 117, Pelicans 109:** James Harden had 40 points and came an assist shy of a triple-double to lead host Houston to a win over New Orleans.

Rookie sensation Zion Williamson had

21 points and 10 rebounds for the Pelicans, whose three-game winning streak was snapped.

Harden, who added 10 rebounds and nine assists, poured in 26 points in the first half and cooled down in the second half. But he still had his second straight game with 30 or more points after failing to score 30 in his previous four games as he worked through a shooting slump.

**Pistons 128, Nuggets 123 (OT):** Andre Drummond had 21 points and 17 rebounds, and host Detroit rallied from an early 21-point deficit to beat Denver, snapping its five-game losing streak.

Reggie Jackson added 20 points and Bruce Brown scored 19 for the Pistons. Drummond put Detroit ahead to stay with a dunk early in overtime, and Brown added a three-pointer that made it 116-112.

Drummond fouled out with 2:43 left, but the Pistons were able to hold on. Nikola Jokic had 39 points, 11 assists and 10 rebounds for the Nuggets.

## NHL roundup

# Crosby, Penguins get the better of Ovechkin, Capitals

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Sidney Crosby got the better of Alex Ovechkin in their 50th regular-season meeting and set the stage for more drama down the stretch.

Crosby had an assist, Matt Murray made 29 saves and the Pittsburgh Penguins beat the Washington Capitals 4-3 Sunday in the bitter rivals’ first matchup this season. Pittsburgh crept within four points of Metropolitan Division-leading Washington with one extra game to play, and they’ll face off three more times over the next two months.

“This is the kind of games we’re going to see from here on in with the intensity and emotion and playoff kind of mentality,” said Crosby, who now has 12 points in seven games since returning from a long injury absence. “There’s enough guys around that have played

in these games for a long time, and for new guys it seems like they get a feel right away for the intensity and emotion of the game.”

The Penguins are 2-0 out of their bye week and have won five of seven since Crosby came back. They’ve won 31 of the 50 Crosby-vs.-Ovechkin games dating to their NHL debuts during the 2005-06 season.

Keeping Ovechkin in check was a big reason for this victory. Ovechkin was held off the score sheet and remained at 37 goals this season and 695 for his career.

“He’s going to get his chances,” Crosby said. “He had some really good looks. He’s consistent, and he finds ways every game, whether it’s in the usual spot where he gets it or it’s around the net. You’ve just got to try to limit them, and you need some saves, too, and we were able to get that.”

Murray was solid, reward-

ing coach Mike Sullivan for the start over All-Star Tristan Jarry. One of his biggest stops came on a breakaway by Jakub Vrana in the second period with Pittsburgh leading 2-1, and Dominik Simon scored minutes later to double the lead.

Murray also got a piece of a shot by Ovechkin late in the third period with the Penguins clinging to a lead.

“It was Ovi who picked it up, and he made a nice move,” Murray said. “He kind of held on to it instead of just shooting it. I just tried to get over there as fast as I could.”

**Hurricanes 4, Canucks 3 (SO):** Justin Williams scored the winning goal in a shootout to lift host Carolina over Vancouver.

Williams wristed a shot inside the post to the right of Thatcher Demko, giving the Hurricanes a 2-1 edge in the shootout. Carolina goalie James Reimer then used his left pad to stop Bo

Horvat to clinch the win.

It was Williams’ second shootout winner in four games since returning to the Hurricanes following an extended offseason. Carolina, which is 3-1 since Williams’ return, got goals in regulation from Nino Niederreiter, Sebastian Aho and Andrei Svechnikov as Reimer made 32 saves.

Elias Pettersson scored twice, Tyler Myers added a goal and Oscar Fantenberg and J.T. Miller each had two assists for the Canucks, whose five-game winning streak was snapped. Demko made 29 saves.

**Blue Jackets 4, Canadiens 3:** Pierre-Luc Dubois scored twice and added an assist to lift Columbus to a win at Montreal.

Vladislav Gavrikov and Gustav Nyquist also scored as the Blue Jackets swept the season series. Columbus picked up at least a point in eight straight games.