

## Navy panel issues diversity guidance

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — A Navy task force made 56 recommendations concerning inclusion and diversity to improve the service's culture of respect and accountability, according to its report released Wednesday.

"While there still is work to be done, I am confident that this report's recommendations will help make our Navy better, and we will move forward together toward meaningful long-lasting change. Make no mistake, I am personally committed to this effort," Adm. Mike Gilday, the chief of naval operations, said in a statement.

Task Force One Navy's recommendations are grouped in five areas: recruiting; talent management and retention; professional development; innovation and science, technology, engineering and mathematics; and additional recommendations.

One is to "counter hate speech" by drafting a document that would "increase accountability and awareness of derogatory language." It is meant to empower leaders by educating them on behaviors and language that constitute hate speech and encouraging action, the report says.

Another is to establish a program of volunteer flag officers, master chief petty offi-

cers and senior civilians who would mentor service members from different backgrounds to improve or increase retention rates and advancement opportunities for personnel from underrepresented communities.

Task Force One Navy was created in July 2020 in reaction to the national uproar over the death of George Floyd and protests against police brutality and institutional racism. The group was asked to explore issues of racism, sexism and bias and how they affected the readiness of the Navy.

"We have fallen short in the past by excluding or limiting opportunity for people on the basis of race, sexual orientation, sexual identity, gender or creed. Our Navy must continue to remove barriers to service, and most importantly, be a shining example of a workforce centered on respect, inclusive of all," Gilday said in the statement.

Over the next six months, the task force held 20 listening sessions with sailors, and there were also more than 280 focus groups from around the Navy, according to the report.

While the final document does not include examples of real stories that were discussed, Rear Adm. Alvin Holsey, director of

the task force, said they took the empathy and respect they heard and witnessed from the sailors and incorporated that into the report.

"We saw transformation watching people in sessions hear other folks' stories. That's how powerful it was," he said. "And then respect — one of our recommendations talks to adding respect to our core values."

Among the panel's other recommendations: A standing committee should be formed to modernize the process for naming ships, buildings and streets to honor national and historic naval figures. Currently, there are ships named after the Confederacy or white supremacists, such as the USS Chancellorsville and the USNS Maury.

The report also found a lack of diversity in the aviation and submarine career fields. Two of the recommendations involve reaching out to grade schools, historically Black colleges and universities and minority-serving institutions to raise awareness of STEM career opportunities in fields such as submarines.

Creating an adviser for policy related to women's issues was also recommended after "significant feedback" from the listening sessions and focus groups, according to the report.

## US general says Germany troop drawdown is 'on hold'

By JOHN VANDIVER

*Stars and Stripes*

STUTTGART, Germany — The United States is no longer actively preparing to move nearly 12,000 troops out of Germany, putting an initiative proposed by the Trump administration on ice while the Pentagon reviews it, the top American general in Europe said Wednesday.

The plan, which called for relocating U.S. European Command from Stuttgart to Belgium, returning the Vilseck, Germany-based 2nd Cavalry Regiment to the U.S. and a host of other moves, would have been one of the largest repositioning of forces in Europe in decades.

"At this very moment, every single

one of those options, they are all on hold. They will all be reexamined from cradle to grave," U.S. European Command's Gen. Tod Wolters told reporters.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin has begun "a very thorough review" of the proposed drawdown, which was announced in July by his predecessor, Mark Esper, Wolters said.

Then-President Donald Trump had ordered the Pentagon to come up with a plan to reduce the U.S. military presence in Germany, saying that there were too many American troops in the country, which he repeatedly said was not investing enough in its own defense.

At one point, Trump said Germany was "delinquent" on its financial contributions to NATO. He also said the country was financially benefiting from having U.S. forces in the country.

Around 34,000 troops are stationed in Germany, with many of them focused on missions in other parts of Europe, such as enhancing security along NATO's eastern flank, or extending the U.S. military's reach into the Middle East and Africa.

When the proposed drawdown was first announced, Esper and Wolters said taking troops out of Germany and moving them elsewhere would enhance security on the Continent.

# Navy drops sex assault charges against SEAL

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — The U.S. Navy on Tuesday dropped sexual assault charges against an enlisted SEAL in a case involving a female sailor at a Fourth of July party in Iraq that had prompted the rare withdrawal of the special operations unit from the Middle East in 2019.

Under an agreement accepted by the military court at Naval Base San Diego, Adel A. Enayat pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor charge of assault consummated by battery for biting the sailor's face and grabbing her neck during what his lawyer described as rough, consensual sex. He will immediately serve up to 90 days in the brig.

At the special court-martial, the judge also reduced his rank of special warfare operator first class by five levels, drastically cutting his pay and benefits, after the masked Enayat wearing

his Navy dress uniform said without emotion that he was guilty.

He told the judge he did not have a "solid memory" of what happened in his room at the al Asad Air Base in Iraq because of the "copious amounts of alcohol I'd consumed."

Still, he said after reviewing the evidence he agreed that he grabbed the sailor by the neck and bit her on her face, ignoring her pleas for him to stop. He agreed with the facts read by the judge that he "applied pressure to her neck that caused her to have difficulty breathing."

When asked by the judge why he did not stop when she asked him, Enayat said it was not an excuse for the crime but he was intoxicated.

Per the agreement, Navy prosecutors stipulated that there was no sexual assault. Enayat was originally charged

in December 2019 with sexual assault, aggravated assault via strangulation and assault by battery for allegedly biting the victim on the face, according to his charge sheet.

It was an abrupt end to a case that had prompted the entire Foxtrot platoon of SEAL Team 7, known as Trident 1726, to be sent home early to San Diego. The withdrawal marked an extremely rare move that cut short the mission of a unit that was in Iraq to combat remnants of Islamic State.

The Navy fired three SEAL leaders in the aftermath of the sexual assault allegation.

Enayat plans to leave the Navy with a general discharge under honorable conditions per the plea agreement. That discharge also means he will lose some of his veteran's benefits.

Colleen Grace, a former U.S. Navy intelligence specialist

who had planned to testify at the trial, told The Associated Press in August that when she saw her friend after the barbecue that night, she had a giant black bruise that marred her jawline and several other marks that lined her neck.

She said her friend told her that the sex started out as consensual in the SEAL's room, but then he started biting and choking her so hard she couldn't breathe and she thought she was going to die. Grace said her friend flew to Baghdad in the early morning hours after the barbecue to be examined at a military hospital and report being sexually assaulted.

Grace declined to comment about the outcome of the case. Her friend submitted a statement to the court that was not made public and her lawyer declined a request to release it to the media.

## Black sailor finds noose on warship, sparking probe

The San Diego Union-Tribune

SAN DIEGO — The Navy is investigating after a Black sailor found a noose on his rack last week aboard the guided-missile cruiser USS Lake Champlain.

A Navy official with knowledge of the incident said a San Diego-based sailor is under investigation and has been removed from the ship, which left San Diego on Monday.

Citing an ongoing investigation, a Naval Surface Force Pacific spokeswoman confirmed in a written statement that the object resembled a noose but declined to comment on details of the case.

The Naval Criminal Investigative Service "is investigating an incident aboard USS Lake Champlain ... where an object resembling a noose was found in a berthing area," said Cmdr. Nicole

Schwegman.

"The Navy takes all allegations of sailor misconduct and racial discrimination seriously," Schwegman said.

The sailor found the noose on his rack Jan. 26, according to a Navy official who was not authorized to comment on the investigation. The ship's leaders were investigating when the NCIS received an anonymous tip and began its own investigation, the official said.

NCIS agents interviewed crew members over the weekend; this led to a suspect. The unidentified sailor admitted to investigators to leaving the noose on the rack as a joke, the Navy official said.

A planned underway period for the Lake Champlain was delayed several days for the investigation. There were no charges filed as of Tuesday.

## Austin dismissing all policy advisory board members

By COREY DICKSTEIN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin will dismiss the members of the Pentagon's policy advisory boards and he has ordered a review to determine whether those panels are needed, Pentagon officials said Tuesday.

Austin has asked the members of at least 42 boards that advise Defense Department secretaries and other top Pentagon workers on topics including business practices, science and technology and personnel issues to resign by Feb. 16, John Kirby, the Pentagon's top spokesman said Tuesday.

He said the review would determine whether each board provides value to Pentagon leadership and whether there is redun-

dancy in their missions.

The dismissals number in the hundreds, according to a senior Pentagon official who briefed reporters on the condition of anonymity. Some of the members could be asked to return to their roles on advisory boards at the completion of the review, which Austin ordered to be concluded by June 1, the official said.

The move comes after Austin last week blocked several individuals with ties to former President Donald Trump from joining some Pentagon boards after they were appointed by former acting Defense Secretary Christopher Miller in his final weeks on the job.

Kirby said Austin's decision to review the boards was linked to those lame duck appointments.

# Biden, Yellen: GOP virus aid too small

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden panned a Republican alternative to his \$1.9 trillion COVID rescue plan as insufficient as Senate Democrats pushed ahead, voting to launch a process that could approve his sweeping rescue package on their own if Republicans refuse to support it.

Biden and Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen joined the Democratic senators for a private virtual meeting Tuesday, both declaring the Republicans' \$618 billion offer was too small. They urged big fast action to stem the coronavirus pandemic crisis and its economic fallout.

Biden was likely to reiterate that message Wednesday as he steps up his public engagements with lawmakers on the issue. The White House announced that Biden would discuss the rescue plan with House Democrats by phone, followed by an Oval Office meeting with Democratic senators.

As the White House reaches for a bipartisan bill, Democrats marshaled their ever-slim

Senate majority, voting 50-49, to start a lengthy process for approving Biden's bill with or without GOP support. The goal is to have COVID-19 relief approved by March, when extra unemployment assistance and other pandemic aid expires.

"President Biden spoke about the need for Congress to respond boldly and quickly," Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said after the lunch meeting. "If we did a package that small, we'd be mired in the COVID crisis for years."

The swift action from Democrats on Capitol Hill underscores the urgency of delivering Biden's top legislative priority even as talks are progressing privately between Republicans and the White House, as well as with centrist Democrats, on potential changes to the package to win over broader bipartisan support.

Biden framed his views during the virtual lunch meeting with Democrats by talking about the need not to forget working and middle-class families — even those like nurses and pipefitters making \$150,000 for a family of

four — who are straining during the crisis, according to a person granted anonymity to discuss the private call.

The night before, Biden met with 10 Republican senators pitching their \$618 billion alternative, and let them know it was insufficient to meet the country's needs. The president made it clear that he won't delay aid in hopes of winning GOP support.

While no compromise was reached during the late Monday session, White House talks with Republicans are privately underway.

The cornerstone of the GOP plan is \$160 billion for the health care response — vaccine distribution, a "massive expansion" of testing, protective gear and funds for rural hospitals, similar to what Biden has proposed.

But from there, the two plans drastically diverge. Biden proposes \$170 billion for schools, compared to \$20 billion in the Republican plan. Republicans also would give nothing to states, money that Democrats argue is just as important, with \$350 billion in Biden's plan to keep police, fire and other workers on the job.

## House Dems argue to convict; Trump denies inciting DC riot

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Donald Trump endangered the lives of all members of Congress when he aimed a mob of supporters "like a loaded cannon" at the U.S. Capitol, House Democrats said Tuesday in making their most detailed case yet for why the former president should be convicted and permanently barred from office. Trump denied the allegations through his lawyers and called the trial unconstitutional.

The dueling filings offer the first public glimpse of the arguments that will be presented to the Senate beginning next week. The impeachment trial represents a remarkable reckoning with the violence in the Capitol last month, which the senators witnessed firsthand, and with Trump's presidency overall. Held in the very chamber where the insurrectionists stood on Jan. 6, it will pit Democratic demands for a final measure of accountability against the desire of many Republicans to turn the page and move on.

The impeachment trial, Trump's second, begins in earnest Feb. 9.

The Democratic legal brief forcefully linked Trump's baseless efforts to overturn the

results of the presidential election to the deadly riot at the Capitol, saying he bears "unmistakable" blame for actions that threatened the underpinnings of American democracy. It argued that he must be found guilty on a charge of inciting the siege. And it used evocative language to conjure the day's chaos, when "terrified members were trapped in the chamber" and called loved ones "for fear they would not survive."

"His conduct endangered the life of every single member of Congress, jeopardized the peaceful transition of power and line of succession, and compromised our national security," the Democratic managers of the impeachment case wrote. "This is precisely the sort of constitutional offense that warrants disqualification from federal office."

Trump's lawyers, David Schoen and Bruce Castor, denied that he had incited the riot by disputing the election results or by exhorting his followers to "fight like hell." They said he was permitted by the First Amendment to challenge his loss to Democrat Joe Biden as "suspect" and that, in any event, the trial itself was unconstitutional now that Trump has left the White House.

## 'New chance at life': Man gets face and hands in surgery

*Associated Press*

NEW YORK — Almost six months after a rare face and hands transplant, Joe DiMeo is relearning how to smile, blink, pinch and squeeze.

The 22-year-old New Jersey resident had the operation last August, two years after being badly burned in a car crash.

"I knew it would be baby steps all the way," DiMeo told The Associated Press recently. "You've got to have a lot of motivation, a lot of patience. And you've got to stay strong through everything."

Experts say it appears the surgery at NYU Langone Health was a success, but warn it'll take some time to say for sure.

DiMeo will be on lifelong medications to avoid rejecting the transplants, as well as continued rehabilitation to gain sensation and function in his new face and hands.

Since leaving the hospital in November, DiMeo has been in intensive rehabilitation, devoting hours daily to physical, occupational and speech therapy.

"Rehab was pretty intense," DiMeo said, and involves a lot of "retraining yourself to do stuff on your own again."



# Pressure builds on schools to reopen

*Associated Press*

CONCORD, N.H. — Pressure is building on school systems around the United States to reopen classrooms to students who have been learning online for nearly a year, pitting politicians against teachers who have yet to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

In Chicago, the rancor is so great that teachers are on the brink of striking. In California, a frustrated Gov. Gavin Newsom implored schools to find a way to reopen. In Cincinnati, some students returned to classrooms Tuesday after a judge threw out a teachers union lawsuit over safety concerns.

While some communities maintain that online classes remain the safest option for everyone, some parents, with backing from politicians and administrators, have complained that their children's education is suffering from sitting at home in front of their computers and that the isolation is damaging them emotionally.

Alicia Houston, whose sons are in sixth and 10th grade, said her biggest frustration is "not being able to help my children effectively," even though she has quit her job to attempt just that.

Some families and their supporters have argued, too, that reopening schools would enable parents to go back to work instead of staying home to oversee their children's education.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said in a recent study that there is little evidence of the virus spreading at schools when precautions are taken, such as masks, distancing and proper ventilation.

But many teachers have balked at returning without getting vaccinated first against the scourge that has killed over 440,000 Americans.

## California

SACRAMENTO — Coronavi-

rus infections and hospitalizations in California are plummeting weeks after it appeared some hospitals were so overwhelmed they might have to start rationing care, and the state's top health official said Tuesday that if the trends continue by early March, the number of hospital patients will fall by half.

When cases were surging at an unprecedented rate in early December, state officials used plunging intensive care unit capacities to issue stay-home orders for most of California. The situation was the most dire in Southern California and the San Joaquin Valley regions, which exhausted all their regular ICU beds and stayed at 0% capacity through January.

But the capacity has now reached 9% in Southern California and 11% in the San Joaquin Valley, and in four weeks, the state projects the rates will increase to 44% and 35%, respectively. The other three regions of the state are in even better shape now.

All stay-home orders have been lifted, though all but four rural counties continue to be in the strictest of four tiers for reopening. Mountainous, sparsely populated Alpine and Trinity counties moved Tuesday to the tier for a "moderate" level of new transmissions.

## Delaware

DOVER — Delaware officials are expanding the state's COVID-19 vaccination program with a focus on underserved and minority communities.

Officials said Tuesday that they also are working to vaccinate hard-to-reach seniors who may have mobility issues or lack access to technology. The Division of Public Health, for example, is partnering with the Wilmington Housing Authority this week to vaccinate senior citizens living in high-rise buildings.

Hospital systems and specialty care providers also are working with the state to vaccinate those 65 and older, including underserved populations.

As of Tuesday, officials had administered 107,597 COVID-19 vaccinations, but minority groups accounted for only about 7% of vaccinations for which racial and ethnic data were reported. For 30% of vaccinations, race and ethnic data have not been received.

## Illinois

SPRINGFIELD — Illinois public health officials said Tuesday that if statistics governing COVID-19 restrictions continue to improve, nearly all of the state will be able to return to milder rules on socialization.

The Public Health Department reported 2,304 new confirmed and probable cases of coronavirus illness, with 47 additional deaths.

Since the first COVID-19 case in Illinois was reported Jan. 24, 2020, there have been 1,130,917 infections detected. Among those, 19,306 people have died since the first fatality was recorded March 17.

The daily figures have consistently dropped since November, the worst month in Illinois for coronavirus illness. Of 11 COVID-19 monitoring regions, eight had returned to Phase 4 of Gov. J.B. Pritzker's Restore Illinois plan and out of the more restrictive tiered categories necessary during last fall's resurgence of the virus.

## Missouri

O'FALLON — Missouri continues to see declines in newly confirmed coronavirus cases and hospitalizations, but the death toll reached another sad milestone on Tuesday, topping 7,000.

The state health department cited 340 additional deaths. All but two of those were the result of the Bureau of Vital Records'

weekly review of death certificates to include COVID-19-related deaths that were not previously reported by local health agencies. Spokeswoman Lisa Cox said 11 of the deaths reported Tuesday occurred in November, 190 in December, 138 in January and one this month.

The state's COVID-19 dashboard cited 890 new cases of the virus, bringing the total since the onset of the pandemic to 460,487. Over the past seven days, the state has averaged 1,056 cases per day, the lowest level since October. Experts correctly predicted cases and hospitalizations would spike due to holiday gatherings starting in November.

## New York

ALBANY — Gov. Andrew Cuomo said Tuesday that he is giving county officials the power to add for-hire drivers and restaurant workers to the list of people eligible for a coronavirus vaccine.

If counties take the governor up on his offer, that would mean another major expansion of eligibility rules, even as New York struggles with an extremely limited supply of shots. The state estimated that 7 million people — including health care workers, group home residents and staff, teachers, police, firefighters, public transit workers, grocery store workers and people over 65 — were eligible before this latest potential expansion.

There are nearly 200,000 licensed cabbies and ride-hail drivers in New York City alone. Statewide, New York had an estimated 865,800 restaurant and food service jobs as of 2019, according to the National Restaurant Association.

Cuomo has spent days complaining that the rapid expansion of eligibility is making it harder for people most at risk to get shots.

**AMERICAN ROUNDUP**

**Wins spur Browns fan to cut hair**

**OH** SANDUSKY — For years, Cleveland Browns season ticket holder and devoted fan Jeff Panovich has let his hair grow as his team saw losing season after losing season.

That changed this year with the Browns ending the regular season 12-4, so Panovich got his first hair cut in six years, the Port Clinton News-Herald reported.

In 2014, Panovich vowed not to cut his hair until his team had a winning season, the paper reported. The Browns' last winning season before this year was in 2007.

Panovich donated his hair to Wigs for Kids, which makes wigs for children who have lost hair because of medical issues.

**Sheriff: Hired hit men killed wrong women**

**LA** MONTEGUT — A Louisiana man facing rape charges tried to have his accuser killed, but two hit men instead ended up killing his sister and her neighbor, authorities said.

Neither Hope Nettleton, 37, nor Brittany Cormier, 34, was the person that the hit men had been hired to kill on Jan. 13, the Terrebonne Parish Sheriff's Office said.

Authorities arrested Andrew Eskine, 25; Dalvin Wil-

son, 22; and Beaux Cormier, 35, on charges of first-degree murder.

When Eskine and Wilson went to a Montegut home and asked for her, investigators said that Cormier's sister claimed to be the woman they requested and was shot and killed. Nettleton, a neighbor, tried to fight off the men but was also shot to death, officials said.

The woman who had accused Cormier of rape was not at the home.

**Fire hits building at amusement park**

**NJ** OCEAN CITY — City officials said fire severely damaged a building at an amusement park on the New Jersey shore, but no injuries were reported.

Ocean City officials said the blaze at Playland's Castaway Cove began in the building that houses the park's arcade, offices, and two fast-food restaurants.

The building, which was left with "extensive damage," was empty at the time and no fire-related injuries were reported, spokesman Doug Bergen said.

The fire remains under investigation, Bergen said.

**Man charged with 6th DUI gets 3 years**

**SD** ABERDEEN — A South Dakota

man has been sentenced after pleading guilty to his sixth drunken driving offense, following an accident in which authorities say he rear-ended a combine.

Jerry A. Anderson, 55, of Claire City, was sentenced to three years in prison and ordered to pay back \$31,895 for damage to the combine.

Anderson had his driver's license revoked for three years, the Aberdeen American News reported.

**Chase ends in crash, nets slaying suspect**

**KY** ELIZABETH-TOWN — A Kentucky State Police trooper watching for speeders along a highway went on a wild high-speed vehicle chase with a man who ended up being a homicide suspect from Pennsylvania, authorities said.

Trooper Elliott Young was using a radar device to watch for speeding vehicles along the Bluegrass Parkway when he saw a truck going 110 mph, state police said in an incident statement.

In an ensuing chase, the suspect led them to Interstate 65, where the chase ended after the suspect's vehicle struck an Elizabethtown Police cruiser head-on.

Officers arrested Isaac Sanchez, 35, of Lancaster, Pa. After Sanchez was booked, state police learned he

was wanted on a criminal homicide warrant in his home state.

**3 sugar pines added to list of tallest**

**CA** SOUTH LAKE TAHOE — A big tree hunter who has been charting some of the largest trees in the West for more than a decade added three in the Sierra Nevada to the list of tallest sugar pines known to exist in the world.

Michael W. Taylor recently documented two in the Tahoe National Forest west of Lake Tahoe nearly as tall as the length of a football field. At 267 feet, 6 inches and 267 feet, 1.8 inches, they are the second and third tallest sugar pines ever recorded, the Tahoe Daily Tribune reported.

The third, found in the Stanislaus National Forest, checks in sixth on the all-time list at 253 feet, 2 inches.

**F-117 stealth fighter heading to museum**

**NE** ASHLAND — A stealth fighter jet is set to arrive at the Strategic Air Command & Aerospace Museum near Ashland this spring.

The radar-resistant F-117 Nighthawk plane is one of 64 built for the Air Force, and one of only four of the planes donated to private museums.



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# KC using patchwork line to protect QB

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The Kansas City Chiefs were supposed to have a talented lineup of millionaires, each a seasoned veteran of the rough-and-tumble NFL, protecting their half-billion-dollar quarterback as they defended their Super Bowl title this season.

Instead, they'll have a motley cast of late-round draft picks, journeymen and castoffs making up their offensive line.

The Chiefs lost Pro Bowl left tackle Eric Fisher to a torn Achilles' tendon in their AFC championship win over Buffalo, which means they are headed to the Super Bowl next weekend with just one offensive line starter playing his original position. The other four in the starting lineup consist of a seventh-round draft pick, an offensive guard pressed into service at tackle, another tackle playing on the veteran's minimum and a right guard that wasn't even on the team a few weeks ago.

Of all the worries facing

coach Andy Reid, their performance in protecting Patrick Mahomes might be his chief concern.

"Listen, they're talented guys," Reid said, "and in some cases we've had some young ones step in and, again, we've had some older guys step in. But that combination has been able to get us through some games here, and most of all I think the quarterback trusts them, as do the running backs, and there's good communication."

To fully appreciate the job the Chiefs have done in patching together their current offensive line, you must consider what Reid and general manager Brett Veach planned on taking into their opener way back in September.

Fisher was supposed to be joined at left guard by Kelechi Osemele, a former All-Pro who had been released by the New York Jets. Austin Reiter was the expected center with Laurent Duvernay-Tardif at right guard and Mitchell Schwartz, also a

former All-Pro and one of the league's most durable players, handling right tackle.

They also had spent a third-round pick on Lucas Niang, who was penciled in as the primary backup at several positions.

That group, with its \$35.5 million price tag, didn't even make it to training camp.

Duvernay-Tardif, a trained physician, opted out of the season to help with COVID-19 patients in his native Canada, and Niang also opted out. Osemele tore tendons in both knees and was lost for the year in Week 5. Schwartz hit the COVID-19 list the same week he hurt his back, an injury that landed him on injured reserve.

Now with Fisher's injury, the Chiefs will have four backups surrounding Reiter when they face the Buccaneers. Mike Remmers, playing for his seventh team, is expected to start at left tackle. Nick Allegretti, a seventh-round pick in 2019, will be next to him. Andrew Wylie had taken over for Duvernay-

Tardif at right guard but will slide out to right tackle, while Stefan Wisniewski — who spent most of this season with Pittsburgh — will slide into his place at guard.

Presto! An offensive line making about \$7.5 million this season, or about one-fifth the anticipated group.

"We say it every year: These are long seasons. It's a battle of attrition," Veach said. "It's not a question of 'if' but 'when' the next guy steps up. We have superstars at the top, but we know as the season goes on, guys like Remmers — those guys keep seasons going, and those guys are going to be called up, they train and prepare and work their tails off."

They'd better be prepared. The Buccaneers had the league's fourth-best pass rush during the regular season, wreaked havoc on the Packers' Aaron Rodgers in the NFC championship and have piled up seven sacks in three postseason games.

# Pierre-Paul excited to be back in Super Bowl

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Nine years and a pair of career-threatening injuries later, Jason Pierre-Paul is back in the Super Bowl and ready to wreak havoc.

The relentless pass rusher helped the 2011 New York Giants beat Tom Brady in the NFL title game.

This time, he's trying to help the six-time champion win a record seventh ring in the 43-year-old quarterback's first season with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Pierre-Paul, traded from the Giants to the Bucs three years ago, is one of just six players on Tampa Bay's roster with previous experience on football's biggest stage, where the Bucs will face the Kansas City Chiefs.

He wants his young team-

mates to embrace the moment and understand that regardless of how talented they are, the road back to another Super Bowl will not be easy.

"Take everything in. Tomorrow is not promised. Super Bowl is not promised for next year," Pierre-Paul said.

"It took me nine years to get back to this point. Every year I played well. I played great. I put up numbers. I do exactly what I need to do to be a great player, be elite," the 32-year-old linebacker added. "But that's not going to get you to the Super Bowl."

Pierre-Paul's journey has been more difficult than most.

In addition to the usual bumps, bruises and assortment of football injuries that come with playing 11 seasons in the NFL, the defensive stalwart also

overcame a pair of scary offseason accidents that could have ended his career.

Pierre-Paul lost an index finger in a July 4 fireworks mishap that also damaged the thumb and middle finger on his right hand in 2015 while he was still playing for the Giants.

He suffered a fractured neck in an automobile crash that sidelined him for the first six games of the 2019 season with Tampa Bay. He not only returned to play the final 10 games, but finished with 8 ½ sacks as the team laid the foundation for an improved defense that's helped Brady reach his record 10th Super Bowl.

Pierre-Paul was asked this week about his resilience.

"I been through a lot and the things I go through, I just stick with happy thoughts. My father

was blind at age of 30, 31 and me being born and he having to look after me when my mom was working. He never quit. To this day, he's still happy and joyful, and happy I am in another Super Bowl," Pierre-Paul said.

"People say you can't do it because they can't do it. But you put your mind to it, you can do whatever you want to do in life. It's easier said than done, but I never quit on anything in life. I am going to give everything I can until you can't, knowing you can't."

Pierre-Paul had 58 sacks in eight seasons with the Giants. He's added 30 ½ in three years with the Bucs, including 9 ½ this season when he led the team and was the only Tampa Bay player selected for the NFC Pro Bowl team.



# Irving scores 39, Nets cool off Clippers

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Kyrie Irving scored a season-high 39 points, including eight straight in the fourth-quarter run that sent Brooklyn into the lead for good, and the Nets beat the Los Angeles Clippers 124-120 on Tuesday night.

Kevin Durant added 28 points, James Harden had 23 points, 14 assists and 11 rebounds, and the three stars scored all the points in the decisive 13-0 spurt. The Nets held on from there to snap the Clippers' three-game winning streak.

Kawhi Leonard scored 33 points and Paul George had 26 for the Clippers, who entered with the NBA's best record and lost for just the second time in 12 games.

They had a five-point lead midway through the fourth before Durant hit a three-pointer. Irving followed with one of his own, then made a basket and another three. Harden finished off the spurt with a three, making it 110-102 with 4:10 to play.

The Clippers got it down to one in the final seconds before Irving's free throws closed it out.

**Raptors 123, Magic 108:** Fred VanVleet set a franchise record with 54 points and hit a career-best 11 three-pointers as Toronto beat depleted Orlando.

VanVleet made 11 of his first 12 attempts from three-point range. He finished 17-for-23 from the field and 9-for-9 at the free throw line to surpass the previous Raptors record of 52 points scored by DeMar DeRozan against Milwaukee on Jan. 1, 2018.

According to the Elias Sports Bureau, it was the most points in an NBA game for an undrafted player — eclipsing the 53 scored by Hall of Fame big man Moses Malone on the exact same date 39 years ago.

The fifth-year guard out of Wichita State easily topped his previous high of 36 points set last season. VanVleet's previous best for threes in a regular-season game was seven. He made eight in a playoff game last year against Brooklyn.

Once 2-8, the Raptors won for the seventh time in 11 games. They beat the reeling Magic for a second time in three nights and for the seventh consecutive time over the past three seasons.

Norman Powell had 23 points for Toronto, and Kyle Lowry posted a triple-double with 14 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists.

Nikola Vucevic had 21 points and 18 rebounds for the Magic, who have lost 12 of 14.

**Celtics 111, Warriors 107:** Jayson Tatum had 27 points in picking up the offensive slack for Boston without injured Marcus Smart, and the team withstood another

scoring spree by Stephen Curry to win at Golden State.

Curry scored 38 points with seven three-pointers and joined late Hall of Famer Wilt Chamberlain as the only players to score 17,000 points for the franchise.

Jaylen Brown, back in the Bay Area where he starred as a college player at California in Berkeley, had 18 points and 10 rebounds. The Celtics snapped a two-game skid with their fourth straight victory the Warriors.

**Trail Blazers 132, Wizards 121:** Damian Lillard scored 32 points, Gary Trent Jr. added 26 while hitting seven three-pointers and short-handed Portland won at Washington.

Enes Kanter had 14 points and 15 rebounds for the Trail Blazers, who improved to 2-2 on their six-game road trip.

**Pacers 134, Grizzlies 116:** Domantas Sabonis had a season-best 32 points and 13 rebounds to help host Indiana snap Memphis' seven-game winning streak.

Sabonis made 11 of his first 12 shots and had 24 points and 11 rebounds by halftime. It was his 14th double-double in 16 starts.

**Jazz 117, Pistons 105:** Donovan Mitchell scored 32 points to lead host Utah past Detroit.

Mike Conley added 20 points and Bojan Bogdanovic had 18 for the Jazz.

# Garza reaches 2,000 points in victory over Spartans

Associated Press

IOWA CITY, Iowa — Luka Garza was surrounded by some different faces in the final minutes of No. 8 Iowa's 84-78 win over Michigan State on Tuesday.

Garza scored 27 points to reach another career milestone, 2,000 career points, but the Hawkeyes finished the win with bench players like freshmen Keegan Murray and Tony Perkins and sophomore Joe Toussaint getting quality second-half minutes.

It's something Garza said wasn't surprising, something he learned when he was starting as a freshman under coach Fran McCaffery.

"Coach has always been like that," Garza said. "If somebody's playing well, playing better than

a starter, they're going to play. I think we have a really unselfish group. We want to win games. It's a lot about who's going, who's not going."

**No. 2 Baylor 83, No. 6 Texas 69:** Davion Mitchell scored 27 points and the Bears used a big run to pull away on the road against the Longhorns.

Baylor (17-0, 9-0 Big 12) has won every game this season by at least eight points. Texas (11-4, 5-3) was within six points late before Baylor pulled away behind open three-pointers from Adam Flagler and Mitchell.

**Mississippi 52, No. 11 Tennessee 50:** Devontae Shuler scored 15 points and fueled a second-half rally in the host Rebels' first win over a ranked team in more than two years.

Ole Miss (9-8, 4-6 Southeastern Conference) rallied from an 11-point first-half deficit and then withstood a late challenge by the Volunteers (12-4, 8-4) to stop a two-game skid.

**No. 12 Illinois 75, Indiana 71 (OT):** Trent Frazier scored the Fighting Illini's final 10 points in regulation, and host Illinois gave up only one basket in overtime to outlast the Hoosiers.

Frazier finished with 19 points and Kofi Cockburn had 16 points and 10 rebounds for Illinois (12-5, 8-3 Big Ten), which won its third straight overall.

**No. 17 West Virginia 76, Iowa State 72:** Taz Sherman hit two free throws with 6.4 seconds remaining and finished with 18 points as the Mountaineers earned a road win.

Sherman was 5-for-7 from the floor and made seven of eight from the line to lead West Virginia (12-5, 5-3 Big 12).

**No. 19 Wisconsin 72, Penn State 56:** Freshman Jonathan Davis scored a career-high 17 points and the host Badgers routed the Nittany Lions.

**No. 23 Kansas 74, Kansas State 51:** Christian Braun hit four three-pointers and scored 18 points, half of them during an 18-3 charge midway through the second half, and the host Jayhawks rolled.

**Maryland 61, No. 24 Purdue 60:** Eric Ayala made two free throws with three seconds left, and the host Terrapins scored the final six points to ruin the Boilermakers' season debut in the Top 25.

# Pavelski shoots Stars past Blue Jackets

Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Joe Pavelski had two goals and an assist, rookie Jake Oettinger made 23 saves and the Dallas Stars beat the Columbus Blue Jackets 6-3 on Tuesday night.

Pavelski, a 15-year NHL veteran, was in the right place at the right time to tip in a pair of long shots by John Klingberg, and then delivered the pass that set up Jamie Benn's second-period goal as the Stars snapped a two-game skid.

Pavelski has a team-leading seven goals and 13 points for the Stars, who improved to 5-1-1 after being forced to delay the start of the season due to a COVID-19 outbreak.

Denis Gurianov, Radek Faksa and Alexander Radulov also scored for Dallas. Benn picked up two assists.

**Ducks 3, Kings 1:** Danton Heinen and David Backes scored, and host Anaheim snapped a three-game losing streak with a victory over Los Angeles in the first Free-way Faceoff of the season.

John Gibson made 20 saves and Nicolas Deslauriers had an empty-net goal for the Ducks, who got only their fourth victory of the season in the 152nd edition of this Southern California rivalry.

Arthur Kaliyev scored a goal in the 19-year-old's NHL debut for the Kings, who have lost two straight. Cal Petersen stopped 40 shots in a strong performance for Los Angeles.

**Avalanche 2, Wild 1:** Philipp Grubauer stopped 27 shots to lead short-handed Colorado to a win over visiting Minnesota.

Logan O'Connor and Valeri Nichushkin scored, and Cale Makar had an assist for the

Avalanche, who have earned five of a possible six points in the third of four straight games against the Wild.

Kirill Kaprizov scored and Cam Talbot had 29 saves for Minnesota.

Colorado leading scorer and first-line center Nathan MacKinnon is out with a lower-body injury that will keep him sidelined week-to-week, the team said earlier Tuesday. MacKinnon was hurt Sunday against the Wild and it adds to an already long list of players who have been injured.

**Canadiens 5, Canucks 3:** Tyler Toffoli and Josh Anderson each scored twice, and host Montreal celebrated captain Shea Weber's 1,000th game with a win.

The Canadiens swept a two-game set with Vancouver and moved a point ahead of idle Toronto into first place in the North Division. Eight of Toffoli's nine goals this season have come against the Canucks.

Toffoli added an assist on Jeff Petry's empty-net goal.

Montreal forward Nick Suzuki had two assists. Weber had an assist on Toffoli's second goal, giving the 35-year-old defenseman seven points (two goals, five assists) in 10 games this season.

**Jets 3, Flames 2:** Nikolaj Ehlers' first-period goal was the eventual game-winner and host Winnipeg held on for a win over Calgary in the second game of a three-game set.

Trevor Lewis and Derek Forbort also scored for the Jets, who lost to the Flames in a shootout a night earlier.

Matthew Tkachuk scored twice for Calgary.

Both clubs played their backup goalies.

Winnipeg's Laurent Brossoit stopped 29 of 31 shots for his second win of the season. Calgary's David Rittich turned away 25 of 28 shots.

**Hurricanes 4, Blackhawks 3 (SO):** Andrei Svechnikov scored in regulation and again in the shootout, and Carolina won at Chicago.

Warren Foegele had a goal and an assist in his return to the lineup, helping the Hurricanes win for the sixth time in their first seven games. Vincent Trocheck also scored, and captain Jordan Staal had two assists.

Svechnikov had the only successful attempt in the shootout, closing out the victory after James Reimer turned away Alex DeBrincat, Patrick Kane and Dylan Strome for the Blackhawks.

Kane, Strome and Phillip Kurashev scored in regulation for Chicago, and Kevin Lankinen made 38 saves. DeBrincat and Dominik Kubalik each had two assists.

**Oilers 4, Senators 2:** Jesse Puljujarvi scored two goals and host Edmonton beat Ottawa to complete a sweep of the teams' two-game set.

It was the first time in more than two years that Puljujarvi scored in the NHL.

Darnell Nurse and Leon Draisaitl also scored for the Oilers. Connor McDavid and Tyson Barrie each had a pair of assists.

Cedric Paquette scored in the second period and rookie Tim Stutzle added a late goal for the struggling Senators, who dipped to 1-8-1.

Mikko Koskinen had 23 saves for Edmonton. Ottawa's Marcus Hogberg stopped 21 of 25 shots.

# Blues top Coyotes, extend win streak to 4 games

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Ryan O'Reilly and Vince Dunn scored to lead the St. Louis Blues to a 4-3 win over the Arizona Coyotes on Tuesday night.

Jordan Binnington made 30 saves and St. Louis earned its fourth straight win.

Justin Faulk and Mike Hoffman also scored for the Blues, who outshot Arizona 31-22 after being outshot 11-1 in the first 11 minutes of the game.

"We were just a step behind,"

St. Louis coach Craig Berube said on his team's slow start. "It was just a matter of playing quicker and playing harder."

Darcy Kuemper made 28 saves for the Coyotes, who have not won consecutive games this season.

Christian Dvorak had two goals and Nick Schmaltz added a score for Arizona.

"I think it was just too sloppy," Dvorak said. "We were too loose on them in our defensive end and just gave them too many odd-man rushes. We had

to rely on Kuemp way too much."

O'Reilly's second goal of the season came with each team playing a man short and stretched the Blues' lead to 4-2. O'Reilly has a point in seven consecutive games.

"That 4-on-4 goal was a killer," Coyotes coach Rick Tocchet said. "The one guy has him. There's no point in having two guys going to the same puck there."

Dunn's third goal of the season gave St. Louis a 3-2 lead

with 8:15 remaining in the second period. It was his second goal in three games after being a healthy scratch on Jan. 26.

"It's always a surprise," Dunn said about his benching. "I guess it was just a reset for me. I didn't think I was playing that bad, but obviously I had a lot more to give."

Schmaltz cut the Arizona deficit to 4-3, scoring his fourth goal of the season with 2:39 remaining in regulation with Kuemper pulled for an extra attacker.