

## Democrats wrap up impeachment case

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — House Democrats began wrapping up their impeachment case against Donald Trump on Saturday after a chaotic morning in which they gave up a last-minute plan for witness testimony that could have significantly prolonged the trial and delayed a vote on whether the former president incited the deadly Capitol insurrection.

An unexpected vote in favor of hearing witnesses threw the trial into confusion just as it was on the verge of concluding. But both sides ultimately reached a deal to instead enter into the record a statement from a Republican House lawmaker about a heated phone call on the day of the riot between Trump and House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy that Democrats say established Trump's indifference to the violence.

Republicans are anxious to get the trial over with and discussion of Trump and the Capitol invasion behind them. Democrats, too, have a motive to move on since the Senate cannot move ahead on President Joe Biden's agenda including COVID-19 relief while the impeachment trail is in session.

While most Democrats were expected to vote to convict the former president, acquittal appeared likely with a two-thirds majority required for conviction and the chamber split 50-50 between the parties. Republican leader Mitch McConnell said he would vote to acquit Trump, according to a person familiar with his thinking. Closely watched,

the GOP leader's view could influence others in his party.

At issue at first on Saturday was whether to subpoena Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler of Washington state, one of 10 Republicans to vote for Trump's impeachment in the House. She said in a statement late Friday that Trump rebuffed a plea from McCarthy to call off the rioters. Democrats consider it key corroborating evidence that confirms the president's "willful dereliction of duty and desertion of duty as commander in chief."

The situation was resolved when Herrera Beutler's statement on the call was read aloud into the record for senators to consider as evidence. As part of the deal, Democrats dropped their planned deposition and Republicans abandoned their threat to subpoena hundreds of their witnesses. The case then proceeded to closing arguments.

Lead House impeachment manager Rep. Jamie Raskin of Maryland had said that witnesses were necessary to determine Trump's role in inciting the riot. There were 55 senators who voted for his motion to consider witnesses, including Susan Collins of Maine, Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, Ben Sasse of Nebraska and Mitt Romney of Utah. Once they did, Lindsey Graham of South Carolina changed his vote to join them on the 55-45 vote.

Trump lawyers opposed calling witnesses, with attorney Michael van der Veen saying it would open the door to him calling as

many as 100. He said the depositions could be done in his law office in Philadelphia, prompting laughter from senators.

"If you vote for witnesses," Van der Veen said, crossing his arms and then then raising them in the air for emphasis, "do not handcuff me by limiting the number of witnesses that I can have."

Senators meeting as the court of impeachment are restrained in taking up other business without consent of the Republican minority, which is unlikely. Rules require senators to be present for the proceedings and this past week almost no other major items have been considered as the trial was underway.

The outcome of the raw and emotional proceedings is expected to reflect a country divided over the former president and the future of his brand of politics. The verdict could influence not only Trump's political future but that of the senators sworn to deliver impartial justice as jurors.

"What's important about this trial is that it's really aimed to some extent at Donald Trump, but it's more aimed at some president we don't even know 20 years from now," said Sen. Angus King, the independent from Maine.

The nearly weeklong trial has delivered a grim and graphic narrative of the riot and its consequences in ways that senators, most of whom fled for their own safety that day, acknowledge they are still coming to grips with.

## Marines have most hazing complaints for FY2020

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — For the fifth year, the Marine Corps has had the most hazing complaints among the military services, according to a new Defense Department report.

During fiscal year 2020, the military received 183 hazing complaints, with 152 from the Marine Corps — 83% of the total — according to the Annual Report for Hazing Prevention and Response in the Armed Forces, obtained this week by Stars and Stripes through the Pentagon. The report has not been publicly released.

The report is submitted every January to Congress as required by the 2017 National Defense Authorization Act. The military services submit data to the Pentagon and cite improvements that have been made or policies they are undertaking to prevent hazing among their ranks. The reporting period for the FY2020 report was between Oct. 1, 2019, and Sept. 30, 2020.

The 183 military-wide complaints were a 15% decrease from FY2019, which had 216 complaints. The DOD is hesitant to say how much the pandemic factored into the decrease, according to the report.

Of those 183 complaints, 52, or 28.4%, were substantiated; 44, or 24%, were unsubstantiated; 77, or 42.1%, were still pending; and 10, or 5.5%, were dismissed, withdrawn, referred to another agency or resolved, according to the report.

The majority of accusers were in ranks E1 to E4, or private to corporal. About 69% of offenders in the substantiated reports were also ranks E1 to E4, and 24.5% were non-commissioned officers at the ranks E5 and E6, or sergeant to staff sergeant.

Physical contact was the most frequently reported allegation.

# Son of US Navy employee charged for death in UAE

*Associated Press*

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — U.S. prosecutors have charged the son of a civilian Navy staffer in Bahrain over her stabbing death in the Mideast island kingdom.

Federal court documents accuse Giovonni Z. Pope, 27, of stabbing his mother to death at her off-base apartment on Jan. 31. Contact details for Pope could not be immediately found and his listed public defender did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Court documents only identify his mother by the initials E.A., describing her as a civilian Defense Department employee at Naval Support Activity Bahrain, the home of the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet. She had worked there since September 2017.

An affidavit by a special agent with the Naval Criminal Investigative Service says the woman's co-workers became worried when she didn't come to work Feb. 1. Inves-

tigators discovered her body under a blanket in her apartment, repeatedly stabbed.

Bahraini police later arrested Pope. He told Bahraini investigators at one point that he killed his mother as she "was blocking him from achieving his goals by not letting him return to the United States to work on his clothing business," the agent's affidavit claims. He had allegedly used his mother's credit card after the killing to purchase airfare back to the U.S. to visit his girlfriend.

Bahrain had declined to prosecute Pope if the U.S. tried him, the agent said. U.S. Magistrate Judge Thomas M. DiGirolamo of Maryland issued an order Thursday for him to be brought back to America to face trial on a murder charge.

The U.S. Embassy in Bahrain and the Naval Criminal Investigative Service did not immediately respond to requests for comment Saturday, nor did Bahrain's Interior Ministry.

# USS Wasp sailor dies of COVID-19 complications

*Stars and Stripes*

A sailor assigned to a Norfolk, Va.-based amphibious assault ship died Friday from coronavirus-related complications, according to the Navy.

The USS Wasp sailor, whose name is being withheld until 24 hours after next-of-kin notification, was admitted to Sentara Princess Anne Hospital in Virginia Beach on Jan. 17 and transferred to Sentara Norfolk General Hospital on Jan. 29, a statement issued Friday said.

"We offer our condolences and join the Sailor's family, friends and shipmates in mourning the loss of this Sailor," the statement said. "Our thoughts and prayers are with them during this difficult time."

As of Friday, 22 service members, including three other active-duty sailors, are named on the Pentagon's list of those who have died due to the coronavirus.

# Biden may close Guantanamo after 'robust' review

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden will seek to close the prison on the U.S. base at Guantanamo Bay following a review process, resuming a project begun under the Obama administration, the White House said Friday.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki said it was the "intention" of the Biden administration to close the detention facility, something President Barack Obama pledged to do within a year shortly after he took office in January 2009.

Psaki gave no timeline, telling reporters that the formal review would be "robust" and would require the participation of officials from the Department of Defense, the Justice Department and other agencies who have not yet been appointed under the new administration.

"There are many players from different agencies who need to be part of this policy discussion about the steps forward," she said.

Obama ran into intense domestic political

opposition when he sought to close the detention center, a notorious symbol of the U.S. fight against terrorism. Biden may have more leeway now that there are only 40 prisoners left and Guantanamo draws much less public attention, though his announcement did draw some immediate criticism.

The U.S. opened the detention center in January 2002 to hold people suspected of ties to al-Qaida and the Taliban. It became a source of international criticism over the mistreatment of prisoners and the prolonged imprisonment of people without charge.

The announcement of a closure plan was not unexpected. Biden had said as a candidate he supported closing the detention center. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said so as well in written testimony for his Senate confirmation.

"Guantanamo has provided us the capability to conduct law of war detention in order to keep our enemies off the battlefield, but I believe it is time for the detention facil-

ity at Guantanamo to close," Austin said.

The 40 remaining prisoners at Guantanamo include five who were previously cleared for release through an intensive review process created under Obama as part of the effort to close the detention center and transfer the remaining prisoners to facilities in the U.S.

At its peak in 2003, the detention center at the Navy base on the southeast tip of Cuba held nearly 680 prisoners. Amid the international outrage, President George W. Bush called it a "a propaganda tool for our enemies and a distraction for our allies" and said he supported closing it but left it to his successor.

There are 10 men facing trial by military commission. They include five men charged with planning and providing logistical support to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. The case has been bogged down in pre-trial proceedings for years.

Human rights groups who have long championed the closure of Guantanamo welcomed Biden's announcement.

# 8 named to panel to eye Confederate base names

By COREY DICKSTEIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The commission to rename military bases honoring Confederate leaders will include three retired generals, a retired admiral, a former drill sergeant, a civilian defense policy expert, a congressman and the secretary of the Smithsonian, Pentagon and congressional leaders announced Friday.

The commission is expected to begin work next month to build a plan to rename 10 Army installations carrying the names of Confederate generals and to remove other names and symbols from Defense Department properties and assets honoring those who served the Confederate States of America, officials said. The group was created by the fiscal year 2021 National Defense Authorization Act, which became law Jan. 1 after the Senate and House voted to override then-President Donald Trump's veto of the annual policy and spending bill.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on Friday named to the commission retired Navy Adm. Michelle Howard, retired Marine Gen. Bob Neller, retired Army Brig. Gen. Ty Seidule, and Kori Schake, a civilian defense policy expert.

"Each of these individuals possesses unique and relevant experience, in and out of government, that I know will inform this important effort," Austin said in a statement. "I am enormously grateful for their willingness to serve the nation again, and I thank them in advance for the wise counsel I am confident they

will provide."

The four will join four members named Friday by the chairmen and ranking members of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees. They are retired Army Lt. Gen. Thomas Bostick; Lonnie G. Bunch II, the secretary of the Smithsonian; Jerry Buchanan, a Tulsa, Okla., businessman, and Rep. Austin Scott, R-Ga.

Congress mandated the commission as Army and Pentagon leaders during Trump's administration began looking at stripping bases of Confederate-linked names amid a nationwide racial reckoning after the Memorial Day killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis police. But Trump rejected calls to rename the posts, and ultimately vetoed the NDAA, in part, over that objection.

The bases in question, all in former Confederate states, were named during the 1910s and 1940s amid the south's Jim Crow era. They are Camp Beauregard and Fort Polk in Louisiana, Fort Benning and Fort Gordon in Georgia, Fort Bragg in North Carolina, Fort A.P. Hill, Fort Lee and Fort Pickett in Virginia, Fort Rucker in Alabama, and Fort Hood in Texas.

Congress charged the commission with working with local communities to establish new names for these installations. The panel is to provide its findings and recommendations to Congress by October 2022 and the Pentagon must implement the changes by Jan. 1, 2024, according to the law.

## Census delays release of redistricting data

*Associated Press*

The U.S. Census Bureau said Friday it won't be delivering data used for redrawing congressional and state legislative districts until the end of September, causing headaches for state lawmakers and redistricting commissions facing deadlines to redraw districts this year.

Officials at the statistical agency blamed operational delays during the 2020 census caused by the pandemic.

"The biggest reason? COVID-19. It's something beyond the Census Bureau's control," said Kathleen Styles, the Census Bureau's chief of Decennial Communications and Stakeholder Relations, in a call with reporters.

Styles had previously said the redistricting data would be available no earlier than the end of July because of delays caused by the virus. Before the pandemic, the deadline for finishing the redistricting data had been March 31.

The redistricting data includes counts of population by race, Hispanic origin, voting age and housing occupancy status at geographic levels as small as neighborhoods, and they are used for drawing voting districts for Congress and state legislatures. Unlike in past decades when the data were released to states on a flow basis, the 2020 redistricting data will be made available to the states all at once, according to the Census Bureau.

The delayed release creates a chain reaction in the political world. Several states will not get the data until after their legal deadlines for drawing new districts, requiring them to either rewrite laws or ask courts to allow them a free pass due to the delay.

## Biden to slowly allow 25K people seeking asylum into US

*Associated Press*

SAN DIEGO — The Biden administration on Friday announced plans for tens of thousands of people who are seeking asylum and have been forced to wait in Mexico under a Trump-era policy to be allowed into the U.S. while their cases wind through immigration courts.

The first wave of an estimated 25,000 asylum-seekers with active cases in the "Remain in Mexico" program will be allowed into the United States on Feb. 19, authorities said. They plan to start slowly,

with two border crossings each processing up to 300 people a day and a third crossing taking fewer numbers.

President Joe Biden's administration declined to publicly identify the three crossings out of fear it may encourage a rush of people, but U.S. Rep. Henry Cuellar, a Texas Democrat, said officials told him that they are Brownsville and El Paso in Texas, and San Diego's San Ysidro crossing.

The move is a major step toward dismantling one of former President Do-

nald Trump's most consequential policies to deter asylum-seekers from coming to the U.S. About 70,000 asylum-seekers were enrolled in the program officially called Migrant Protection Protocols since it was introduced in January 2019.

On Biden's first day in office, the Homeland Security Department suspended the policy for new arrivals. Since then, some asylum-seekers picked up at the border have been released in the U.S. with notices to appear in court.

# CDC guidance: Schools can reopen

*Associated Press*

The nation's top public health agency said Friday that in-person schooling can resume safely with masks, social distancing and other strategies, and vaccination of teachers, while important, is not a prerequisite for reopening.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released its long-awaited road map for getting students back to classrooms in the middle of a pandemic that has killed nearly 480,000 people in the U.S. But the agency's guidance is just that — it cannot force schools to reopen, and CDC officials were careful to say they are not calling for a mandate that all U.S. schools be reopened.

Officials said there is strong evidence now that schools can reopen, especially at lower grade levels.

Recommended measures include hand washing, disinfection of school facilities, diagnostic testing and contact tracing to find new infections and separate infected people from others in a school. It's also more emphatic than past guidance on the need to wear masks in school.

"We know that most clusters in the school setting have occurred when there are breaches in mask wearing," Dr. Rochelle Walensky, the CDC's director, said in a call with reporters.

## Florida

MIAMI — Average Floridians might not realize that every time they pay a court fine or fee, the money helps keep government operations afloat. The revenue — especially from traffic tickets — helps pay for everything from wildlife and environmental conservation, compensation for crime victims and even treatments for people with brain and spinal injuries.

But as the pandemic has largely shuttered courts and led to fewer motorists getting tickets, revenue across Florida has plummeted — exposing what critics have long derided as an

unreliable and unfair system built on the backs of court defendants.

Take, for just one example, the plight of Epilepsy Florida. The non-profit, which helps people affected by the seizure-inducing neurological disorder, gets money from a state trust fund that receives \$5 for every seat belt infraction.

Even before the pandemic, the group was already hurting because fewer people are getting nicked for seat belt tickets these days, leading to a massive drop in revenue.

## California

SACRAMENTO — California will soon expand its list of people eligible for coronavirus vaccinations by another 4 million to 6 million people by adding the severely disabled and those with health conditions that put them at high risk for infection and death, state Health Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly said Friday.

Among those who will become eligible on March 15 are people with certain cancer, heart, lung and kidney conditions, as well as pregnant women, those with Down syndrome, organ transplant recipients and the severely obese. They join people 65 and over and those in high-risk job descriptions who already were eligible under the state's plan.

## Iowa

DES MOINES — Iowa plans to withhold COVID-19 vaccines from five counties this week because they did not use 80% of their allocations this past week, the state's top health official said Friday.

Kelly Garcia, interim director of the Iowa Department of Public Health, did not name the five counties while discussing the decision with AARP members.

A new state rule requiring the use of at least 80% of a county's vaccination allotment is designed to reduce the amount of vaccine sitting in storage, The

Des Moines Register reported.

Garcia said the decision was not intended to punish the counties but to give them "a little bit of a break to catch up." The counties will be given their full allocation the next week if they meet the 80% target, she said.

## Oregon

PORTLAND — Four people in Oregon, who have been fully vaccinated with the COVID-19 vaccine, have tested positive for the coronavirus the health authority reported Friday.

Oregon is among the first states nationwide to report "breakthrough cases" — people who test positive for the coronavirus at least 14 days after receiving their second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

"(This is) not to be unexpected in a vaccine that while phenomenal, with 95% effectiveness, still means 5% may still be infected," Patrick Allen, the director of the health authority, said Friday.

Officials say that the two "breakthrough cases" are in Yamhill County and the other two are located in Lane County. The four people had mild or no symptoms. Officials say that studies show that the vaccine may help reduce the severity of the illness.

## Pennsylvania

After weeks of complaints about Pennsylvania's halting COVID-19 vaccine rollout, the Health Department on Friday ordered providers to get shots into arms more quickly, offer more convenient scheduling and make sure that scarce supplies are only going to eligible recipients.

Acting Health Secretary Alison Beam said the moves are intended to hold hospitals, pharmacies and other providers accountable for the vaccine doses they've been entrusted with, and to address widespread frustrations among Pennsylvania residents about how difficult it can be to secure an appointment. Pennsylva-

nia is among the lowest-ranked states in how efficiently it is vaccinating its population.

Under the order, hospitals, pharmacies and other providers must administer at least 80% of their allotment of first doses of vaccine within a week of getting them, and offer live telephone operators to assist people who don't have the ability to schedule their appointments online.

## New Jersey

TRENTON — Parents can again attend their children's school sporting events in New Jersey.

Democratic Gov. Phil Murphy said Friday he was signing an executive order to permit up to two parents or guardians to attend indoor and outdoor school sporting events. The order continues to cap indoor attendance at 35% of capacity or 150 people, the governor said.

Murphy cited COVID-19 trends heading in the right direction as the reason for the change, which took effect immediately.

## Minnesota

MINNEAPOLIS — Gov. Tim Walz on Friday said he would relax several restrictions in place due to the coronavirus as cases continue to ebb and vaccination efforts increase, including raising the maximum occupancy in bars and restaurants and at private events and celebrations.

Top capacity at bars and restaurants and indoor entertainment venues rises to 250 people, with up to 50 people allowed at private events and celebrations. The governor's order doesn't change the limit on capacity by percentage, meaning bars and restaurants still may not go above 50% of capacity.

The limit for indoor entertainment venues stays at 25%. Gyms and pools can also now have a maximum of 250 people, although percentage limits there also remain unchanged at 25% of capacity.

**AMERICAN ROUNDUP**

**Man killed at gun range tried to steal firearm**

**NV** LAS VEGAS — A man killed by gunfire from a Las Vegas police officer and three shooting range employees tried to steal a gun inside the facility before attacking and wounding the officer's patrol partner with a screwdriver in the parking lot, a police official said.

Marvin Payton Jr., 27, was shot 14 times and died outside Range 702, Assistant Clark County Sheriff Brett Zimmerman told reporters.

Police were called after a gun owner taking a class reported that Payton tried to steal his gun from a bag, Zimmerman said.

Several employees accompanied Payton outside, where video shows Payton wielding the screwdriver and swinging at the officers, striking one. The injured officer was treated at a hospital and is recovering from stab wounds and a broken facial bone.

**Shopper allegedly slapped worker over mask policy**

**CO** PARKER — Police near Denver were looking for a woman who is accused of slapping a worker while shopping at a supermarket after they said the shopper refused several times to wear a mask.

Police in Parker, about 20 miles southeast of Denver, said the shopper fled the King Soopers store after the alleged assault on Feb. 3, but released surveillance video in hopes of identifying her.

Police said the shopper refused to comply with the store's

mask policy.

**Biologist charged with lying about caviar scheme**

**WI** MADISON— Prosecutors charged the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' top sturgeon expert with obstructing an investigation into allegations that his employees have been funneling the valuable fish's eggs to a network of caviar processors under the guise of a scientific study.

Ryan Koenigs faces one count of obstructing a conservation warden, which is a misdemeanor punishable by up to nine months in jail and \$10,000 in fines. DNR spokeswoman Sarah Hoye said Koenigs was placed on administrative leave but declined further comment. He could be the first of many to be charged in what investigators allege was a wide-ranging scheme involving multiple DNR employees and caviar processors.

The DNR and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service began a joint investigation in 2017 into allegations that DNR workers had been illegally selling or trading sturgeon caviar in violation of state and federal law.

**Minor uses flare to start fire at Walmart store**

**AL** MONTGOMERY — A minor has been charged with using a flare to start a fire inside an Alabama Walmart store, according to authorities.

The minor, who was not identified because he is underage, was charged with first-degree arson in connection with the fire at the Montgomery store, the

city's fire-rescue agency said.

Crews responded to the blaze and were able to extinguish the flames with minor damage to the building, news outlets reported. No one was injured.

Authorities identified the minor after he was captured in security video walking around the store with a group of other juveniles.

**Boy, 11, threatens to shoot teacher**

**FL** BUNNELL — A boy, 11, who threatened to shoot his teacher is the fourth student arrested recently for making school threats in one north Florida county.

Flagler County Sheriff's officials say the boy is charged with a false report concerning the use of firearms in a violent manner.

According to the sheriff's office, the boy was singing a violent song involving the use of guns and shooting people in the Bunnell Elementary School classroom Feb. 3. His teacher told him the song and behavior were unacceptable in the classroom. The boy then began searching for guns on his iPad, investigators said.

The next day, the boy took his iPad, pointed it at the teacher and said, "I am going to shoot you up!" while making gun noises, sheriff's officials said. He then did it a second time while leaving the classroom and maintaining eye contact with the teacher.

**Teen police impersonator arrested again as adult**

**IL** CHICAGO — A man arrested three times for impersonating a Chicago police

officer, including once at age 14, was arrested again for the crime, Chicago police said.

Vincent Richardson, 26, was arrested and charged with felony impersonation of a police officer. He is accused of pretending to be a Chicago police sergeant Jan. 14, Jan. 27 and Feb. 3.

Richardson was also arrested in 2009 at age 14 after being so convincing as a police officer he was assigned a radio and went on patrol with a real officer.

In 2013 at age 19, Richardson pretended he was an officer and was arrested when he tried to buy police equipment. And in 2015 at age 21, Richardson was arrested after police stopped his car while investigating a call of shots fired. He was wearing a bulletproof vest and had a police duty belt, scanner, BB gun and stun gun in his possession. He received 18-month sentences for impersonating an officer after each offense.

**Troopers bust sports cars racing at high speeds**

**WA** TACOMA — Authorities say the drivers of three sports cars — a Lamborghini, a BMW and a Porsche — were cited in Pierce County for reckless driving for racing at speeds topping 100 mph.

The three were racing on east-bound Highway 16 when they flew past troopers who were staged in the area. KOMO reported the drivers were eventually stopped on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge.

All three were cited for reckless driving and had their vehicles towed to the Washington State Patrol's impound lot.

— From The Associated Press



Single source convenience, reliably independent. Visit [www.stripes.com](http://www.stripes.com).

**Reporting World, National and Military News**

# Hamlin goes for threeppeat in Daytona

*Associated Press*

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Denny Hamlin, considered perhaps the best NASCAR driver without a Cup Series championship, can look past that hole on his record. He instead points to a pair of Southern 500 trophies, a Bristol night race victory, three road course wins, six at Pocono and the big daddy of them all, the Daytona 500.

Hamlin has won NASCAR's crown jewel, the one race that can define a driver's career, three different times and the last two years. On Sunday, he will attempt to become the first to win three consecutive Daytona 500s, a feat that would forever dull the disappointment of his championship failures.

"This is something that no one's ever done before," Hamlin said. "Other guys have won championships, obviously. I would want to do something no one else has done."

Hamlin is the 8-1 betting favorite but the Daytona 500 can be a crapshoot, particularly in

NASCAR's condensed new schedule forced by the pandemic. Speedweeks at Daytona International Speedway for decades spanned nearly two weeks but this year was cut to just six days.

With only three practice sessions and the 150-mile Duel qualifying races, there is no clear indication who has cars capable of winning the Daytona 500.

Hendrick Motorsports swept the front row in qualifying with Alex Bowman and William Byron, but Byron crashed in the qualifying race and will fall to the back in a backup car at the start of the 500. Bowman had an engine problem that will cost him the pole if the motor needs to be replaced.

Chase Elliott is the reigning series champion but hasn't had enough time to show if he's a contender for his first Daytona 500 victory. It's also unclear how Kyle Larson, new to the Hendrick stable this season after last year's NASCAR suspen-

sion for using a racial slur, is adapting to his new team.

Kevin Harvick is looking to rebound after falling short of the series title in last year's nine-win season. He tweeted "She's bad fast" about his Ford, though it was Stewart-Haas Racing teammate Aric Almirola who won the first qualifying race and said his car is strong for Sunday.

Fellow Ford drivers and Team Penske teammates Joey Logano and Ryan Blaney both seemed able to run with Almirola.

Austin Dillon won the second duel, setting him up for a possible second Daytona 500 victory on the 20th anniversary of Dale Earnhardt's death. Dillon drives Earnhardt's famed No. 3 on grandfather Richard Childress' team and understands how emotional a victory would be in that Chevrolet.

"It would be amazing and huge for the company, RCR and all the 3 fans out there," Dillon said.

Dillon beat Bubba Wallace to

win his qualifying race in a dramatic finish that showed Wallace might finally have the equipment he needs to be competitive. Wallace is the only Black racer at NASCAR's top level and gained a national platform last season for his outspokenness on social justice issues.

He landed multiple sponsors through his activism and Wallace brought that funding to Michael Jordan and Hamlin for the launch of 23XI Racing. Jordan and Wallace are the only Black majority owner and driver combination in the sport, and this team has the sponsorship and support that could finally give Wallace a chance at his first Cup Series victory.

Wallace expects Jordan to demand results.

"He wants winning race cars, he wants a winning race driver and he took an opportunity to invest in me and he has seen something that sparked his interest," Wallace said. "We're just going to go out and do what I know how to do."

## NASCAR fans power through pandemic at Daytona

*Associated Press*

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Sam Maxwell and his band of Cleveland bros packed up their 1997 Four Winds motorhome with 105,000 miles on it, headed south in the thick of the pandemic and pinned their hopes on a party.

Traveling on a budget, the friends like to hit a premier sporting event each year, and this week — thanks only to interest spiked by playing FanDuel — parked in the infield grass at Daytona International Speedway. They came to soak in the Daytona 500 atmosphere, or whatever they found among the campers killing time with games of cornhole and flip cup.

"We're still going to have a party one way or the other," Maxwell said. "Whether there's 100 people or just the four of us, we're still going to have fun."

The diehard Browns fans brought the party to them. They hit a thrift store, plunking down \$25 for a ratty sofa — perfect to absorb spilled

PBR — and even plucked a keyboard out of a dumpster.

They blew up red balloons and tied them to a sign: "Moms Drink 4 Free!!!" Their plan to liven up the bash was overheard by a neighbor, who pressed her face against a window screen and asked if there was an age limit for the moms.

At Daytona, in both speed and celebrations, there are no limits.

So one of the gang waved her down and busted out the Fireball.

In the middle of a pandemic that has killed more than 470,000 people in the U.S., the carousing was more casual than crazy this week at Daytona as race day approached. The roughly 30,000 fans inside the sprawling facility that usually packs more than 100,000 are expected to make Sunday's Daytona 500 the largest-attended single sporting event in the nation since the coronavirus shut down much of the sports world 11 months ago.

Mask wearing? Not so much, and there's

more space between stock cars pack racing on the superspeedway than there is between most campers.

"I'm not really too concerned about it," Maxwell said.

The track made all the usual window-dressing moves to prove safety is a priority, with temperature checks, distanced seating, cashless concessions and adherence to CDC guidelines. Speedweeks, the runup to the big race, is actually sponsored by a health care system headquartered in Florida and COVID-19 testing information sits above a link to official travel packages on the track's website.

Yet in a week where Victoria's state government imposed a five-day lockdown — stripping the Australian Open of fans while play continues — Florida is going for two: The Super Bowl hosted 25,000 fans last week in Tampa, about 150 miles west of Daytona, and viral videos showed throngs of mostly mask-less fans and packed sports bars as the hometown Buccaneers won it all.

# Doncic scores 46 points in Mavs' win

Associated Press

DALLAS — Luka Doncic scored a career-high 46 points, Kristaps Porzingis added 36 and the Dallas Mavericks overcame Zion Williamson's career-best 36 points in a 143-130 victory over the New Orleans Pelicans on Friday night.

Williamson set a New Orleans franchise record by making all 10 of his shots in the first half and finished 14-for-15. His only miss was a wide-open three early in the second half.

Brandon Ingram scored 30 points for the Pelicans in what was supposed to be the second meeting with Dallas this season. The first, scheduled for Jan. 11, was postponed because of COVID-19 issues.

**Lakers 115, Grizzlies 105:** Anthony Davis scored 35 points, LeBron James had 28 points, nine rebounds and eight assists and Los Angeles rallied to beat visiting Memphis for its seventh consecutive victory.

Kyle Kuzma had 20 points and 10 rebounds for the de-

fending NBA champions. Davis finished two points shy of his season high in his return from a two-game absence with an Achilles injury.

**Jazz 129, Bucks 115:** Rudy Gobert had 27 points and 12 rebounds and host Utah beat Milwaukee for its sixth straight victory.

Joe Ingles tied his career high with 27 points, Donovan Mitchell had 26 and Jordan Clarkson 25 to help Utah win for the 17th time in 18 games and improve to an NBA-best 21-5.

**Pistons 108, Celtics 102:** Saddiq Bey scored 30 points, hitting his seventh three-pointer with 39 seconds to play after his team cut a 13-point fourth-quarter lead to three, and visiting Detroit held on to beat Boston.

Jayson Tatum had 33 points, 11 rebounds and seven assists for the Celtics. Jaylen Brown added 27 points.

**Clippers 125, Bulls 106:** Kawhi Leonard scored 33 points, Lou Williams and Mar-

cus Morris came up big in the fourth quarter, and Los Angeles beat host Chicago.

The Bulls cooled off after setting a franchise-record with 25 three-pointers in a win over New Orleans on Wednesday, making 12 of 32. Zach LaVine, coming off a season-high 46-point outing, scored 26 points. He also had nine rebounds and six assists.

**Nuggets 97, Thunder 95:** Nikola Jokic finished an assist shy of a triple-double, scoring 22 points and grabbing 13 rebounds to help Denver beat visiting Oklahoma City.

Justin Jackson led Oklahoma City with 20 points.

**Trail Blazers 129, Cavaliers 110:** Gary Trent Jr. had 26 points and host Portland handed Cleveland its sixth straight loss.

Carmelo Anthony added 23 points, and Enes Kanter had 21 points and 13 rebounds for Portland. The Trail Blazers have won five of their last six.

**Hornets 120, Timberwolves 114:** Terry Rozier scored 41

points and rookie LaMelo Ball had 20 points and 11 rebounds in Charlotte's victory over visiting Minnesota.

Charlotte improved to 13-14, opening a five-game homestand with its third victory in four games. Minnesota has lost four straight to fall to 6-20.

**Knicks 109, Wizards 91:** Julius Randle had 24 points and 18 rebounds and New York cruised past cold-shooting host Washington.

Russell Westbrook had 23 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists for the Wizards. They lacked a reliable second option with NBA scoring leader Bradley Beal sitting out to rest for the first time this season.

**Magic 123, Kings 112:** Nikola Vucevic scored 42 points and matched his career high of six three-pointers in Orlando's victory over host Sacramento.

**Spurs 125, Hawks 114:** DeMar DeRozan scored 23 points and visiting San Antonio beat Atlanta.

Trae Young led Atlanta with 25 points.

## Dosunmu leads No. 6 Illini past Nebraska in OT

Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. — Illinois' Ayo Dosunmu had a conversation with himself after he missed a free throw and Nebraska hit a three-pointer to take a five-point lead with under four minutes left in regulation.

"I told myself it was time to lock in," he said. "Trust in yourself. Believe your instincts. You got this. Let's try to will my team to victory."

Dosunmu did just that Friday night.

The star guard scored the last 10 points in regulation for Illinois and the first five in overtime, allowing the sixth-ranked Fighting Illini to turn back Nebraska's upset bid 77-72.

Dosunmu, who had 22 of his

31 points after halftime, tied it at 66 with his driving layup with 20 seconds left in regulation. Nebraska's Trey McGowens failed to get a shot off at the buzzer, and Dosunmu opened overtime with a layup and three-pointer to send Illinois to its fifth consecutive victory.

"We escaped in a very ugly fashion," coach Brad Underwood said. "Nobody at the end of the year is going to draw pictures of this one, but it's a W. We've got to learn from it. I want to give Nebraska a ton of credit because they played great."

Kofi Cockburn added 21 points and 13 rebounds for his 14th double-double of the season for the Illini (14-5, 10-3), who have their best Big Ten record

after 13 games since the 2004-05 season.

Lat Mayen had 16 points, including a couple of late three-pointers, and Teddy Allen and McGowens scored 15 apiece for the Cornhuskers. Nebraska (4-12, 0-9) lost its 26th straight against Big Ten opponents.

"The biggest thing we need to take out of this is to know we can play with anybody and battle a team that's going to be a national championship contender," coach Fred Hoiberg said. "That's a huge step in the right direction."

Illinois was a 14-point favorite, but this game was anything but easy. Underwood didn't expect it to be. Until a week ago, he and his team had been pointing

toward a game with third-ranked Michigan on Thursday, but that one was postponed because of the Wolverines' COVID-19 pause. Nebraska, which had four games to make up because of its own issues with the virus, was put on the schedule only a week ago.

"We thought we were playing Michigan on the schedule," Underwood said. "You're going to get two top-6 teams playing and then all of a sudden it's not. It's not Michigan, it's a team who is really struggling. And all of a sudden this becomes that trap game."

Nebraska, which hasn't beaten a top-10 opponent since March 2014, led 64-58 with under three minutes left.

# Medvedev advances with 5-set victory

Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Daniil Medvedev finally worked out how to win a five-setter. All by himself.

The fourth-seeded Medvedev was 0-6 in Grand Slam matches that went to five sets, and his Australian Open third-round match against No. 28-seeded Filip Krajinovic looked like it was going all the way.

After some angry outbursts from an increasingly animated and chatty Medvedev directed at his box in an otherwise empty Rod Laver Arena — fans have been banned as a COVID-19 precaution — his coach, Gilles Cervara, got up and left.

“He said just before leaving that he’s sure I’m going to win the match. He’s going to leave me alone to be more calm,” Medvedev explained in his on-court TV interview after Saturday’s 6-3, 6-3, 4-6, 3-6, 6-0 win. “It was a good thing to do. Luckily, I won.”

Some pundits, including John McEnroe, are tipping the 25-year-old Russian to make his major breakthrough in Australia. Medvedev, on a 17-match winning streak that includes ti-

ties at the 2020 season-ending ATP Finals, said while that’s nice to hear, he’s got a long way to go.

He’ll have to face unseeded American Mackenzie McDonald in the next round. After that could be a quarterfinal against No. 7 Andrey Rublev, who helped him win the ATP Cup title for Russia last week. No. 2-ranked Rafael Nadal, a 20-time major winner, is also in his half of the draw.

Nadal extended his winning streak against fellow left-handers to 16 with a 7-5, 6-2, 7-5 victory over No. 69-ranked Cameron Norrie, reaching the fourth round at Melbourne Park for the 14th time in 16 trips.

He is chasing a men’s record 21st major title but entered the tournament with back stiffness and without any competitive matches in 2021.

“Today is better, yeah,” Nadal said of his back soreness. “First day I feel an improvement, and that’s the most important thing for me today.”

Nadal hasn’t dropped a set in three matches, something that he hopes “will help (him) for what’s coming.”

In his immediate future is No.

16 Fabio Fognini, who had a straight-set win over Australia’s last hope in the men’s draw, 21st-seeded Alex de Minaur.

Medvedev had been bothered by a problem with his upper left leg and had a medical timeout for treatment late in the fourth set.

When he fell behind 5-2 in the fourth, Medvedev shouted, “I never saw something like this!”

He returned to better much play in the deciding set, smacking an inside-out forehand winner to a corner to close an 18-stroke exchange and break to go up 2-0.

He didn’t drop another game as he seized the momentum back from Krajinovic, who was previously 4-1 in matches that went the full five sets.

“In contrary with previous matches where I could get tight... here I was really calm to finish the match,” Medvedev said. “Really happy I got the five-set win.”

Medvedev, the U.S. Open finalist last year, will next play McDonald, a player he compared with Roger Federer in style. McDonald beat Lloyd Harris in straight sets to equal his best Grand Slam result by reac-

ting the round of 16 at the Australian Open.

Seventh-seeded Rublev had a 7-5, 6-2, 6-3 win over Feliciano Lopez, ending the 39-year-old Spaniard’s 75th consecutive major tournament.

Two women with titles already this year are through to the Round of 16.

Top-ranked Ash Barty, who won the Yarra Valley Classic last week for a title in her first tournament back from almost 12 months on the sidelines, beat Ekaterina Alexandrova of Russia 6-2, 6-4.

Barty next faces American Shelby Rogers, who beat No. 21 Anett Kontaveit 6-4, 6-3.

Elise Mertens, a 2018 Australian Open semifinalist who won the Gippsland Trophy tuneup tournament last week, had a 6-2, 6-1 victory over 11th-seeded Belinda Bencic. She’ll take a seven-match winning streak into her next match against Karolina Muchova in the fourth round.

No. 25-seeded Muchova rallied from a 5-0 second-set deficit in near silence, which only made the turnaround seem more bizarre as she beat No. 6 Karolina Pliskova 7-5, 7-5.

# Faulk, Blues breakthrough, finally beat Coyotes

Associated Press

GLENDALE, Ariz. — Jordan Kyrou hustled to track down a puck to prevent an icing, spun and took it up the boards. The St. Louis center stopped in his tracks to lose a defender and found Justin Faulk in the slot.

Faulk buried the shot, giving the Blues the kind of goal they needed after a frustrating start to a unique series against the Coyotes.

Faulk had two goals and an assist, Jordan Binnington stopped 24 shots and the Blues ended a three-game losing streak to the Coyotes with a 4-1 victory Friday night.

“It’s good by Kyrou to negate the icing, made a great play to Faulk and Faulk put it in the net,” Binnington said. “That was big, for sure. It’s good to see us close out the game there.”

The quirks of a pandemic-altered season have pitted the Blues and Coyotes against each other for seven straight games, a first in NHL or NBA regular-season history.

Arizona won three of the first four, all in St. Louis. The Blues won the first of three in the desert behind Faulk’s big night, Kyrou’s hustle and some spectacular saves by Binnington.

Ivan Barbashev and Brayden

Schenn scored empty-net goals to seal it.

“We played a pretty good game the last one and knew we needed to come in here tonight and play 60 minutes,” Faulk said. “Sometimes it takes a late goal like that to get over the hump.”

The Coyotes played well deep into the third period, giving themselves a shot at their first four-game winning streak of the season. A couple of breakdowns on Faulk’s second goal put them behind, and the two empty-netters put it out of reach.

Johan Larsson scored his first goal with Arizona, and Darcy

Kuemper stopped 23 shots.

**Bruins 1, Rangers 0:** Jaroslav Halak made 21 saves for his 51st shutout, Nick Ritchie scored in the second period and visiting Boston beat New York for its fifth straight victory.

East-leading Boston extended its points streak to 10 games (9-0-1) in a physical, tight-checking tussle that included several fights. On Wednesday night, Boston beat New York 3-2 in overtime.

Igor Shesterkin stopped 29 shots but the Rangers were blanked for the second time in three games and dropped their third in a row.