

# STARS AND STRIPES®

Sunday, January 26, 2020

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

## ROLO program changing battlefield injuries

BY PHILLIP WALTER  
WELLMAN  
*Stars and Stripes*

KABUL, Afghanistan — Two Army Rangers are alive today thanks to a program that is changing the way blood transfusions are done in combat.

The service members, one of whom sustained life-threatening injuries during a harrowing battle last summer in Afghanistan, received type O-negative blood from soldiers who donated on the battlefield and returned to combat within minutes, the 75th Ranger Regiment said.

The case was the first substantial whole blood transfusion to occur at the point of injury in modern warfare, said Lt. Col. Ryan Knight, 75th Ranger Regiment command surgeon.

“Previous transfusions were all stored blood products carried into combat, and the previous fresh whole blood transfusions have only occurred at ... medical facilities,” he said.

Ranger medics put the Ranger O Low Titer Whole Blood Program, or ROLO, into action in Afghanistan last summer during a battle with insurgents in Wardak province, although news of its success was only made public this month.

Under ROLO, members of a unit are screened to see if they have Type O-negative blood with low antibodies, meaning that they can donate to any other blood group.

In Wardak, medics ran out of the blood they carry into combat and called on three pre-screened donors to give blood

to their wounded colleagues.

Blood was drawn from the volunteers and immediately administered to the wounded Rangers, even as “hellfire missiles, 30 mm rounds and 105 mm rounds were being executed as close as 30 meters from our position,” Staff Sgt. Charles Bowen, who, with fellow medic Sgt. Ty Able, treated the injured during the battle, said in a statement.

One soldier who was bleeding profusely from a chest wound received 10 units of blood, including three from battlefield donations, before he was evacuated to a hospital. He defied the odds and survived.

“No casualty has received such a massive transfusion on the battlefield,” Knight said. “ROLO is transforming how we treat battlefield casualties.

We now always have blood on the battlefield ... This case demonstrates the absolute need for this technique to percolate across the U.S. military.”

Bowen, Able and a Ranger first responder at times shielded the wounded Rangers with their own bodies to prevent further injury.

“(They) had to ignore their own survival instincts and concentrate on their patients. They displayed the highest levels of courage as they repeatedly placed their patients’ survival above their own safety,” Knight said. “While this is an amazing display of personal courage, medical expertise and the most incredible saves I’ve ever heard of, it’s also Rangers living the Ranger Creed” — to never leave a fallen colleague.

## Seahawk crew in stable condition after crash

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS  
*Stars and Stripes*

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — Five naval aviators were in stable condition on Sunday, a day after their MH-60 Seahawk helicopter went

down in the Philippine Sea, according to the 7th Fleet.

The Seahawk, assigned to the USS Blue Ridge, was conducting routine operations when it crashed at about 5:15 p.m. on Saturday, the fleet said in a statement.

Two of the crew members were found during a search-and-rescue mission and brought back to the Blue Ridge by a Navy helicopter, the statement said. The others were recovered by a Japan Air Self-Defense Force UH-60.

The crew members were then taken to Naval Hospital Okinawa for evaluation, according to the 7th Fleet.

Officials did not say whether the cause of the crash had been determined.

## Sailor in rescue squadron dies while snorkeling on Guam

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS  
*Stars and Stripes*

A 22-year-old sailor assigned to a rescue unit drowned on Jan. 11 while snorkeling on Guam, Navy officials said.

Petty Officer 3rd Class Daniel Perez, a naval aircrewman assigned to Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25, was

found unresponsive and pulled from the water in Fish Eye Marine Park at about 1 p.m., Joint Region Marianas spokesman Navy Lt. Cmdr. Rick Moore said in a statement on Friday.

Friends gave Perez CPR until an ambulance arrived, according to a Jan. 17 Guam Daily Post report. He was later declared dead at Naval Hospi-

tal Guam, Moore said.

Perez had been on the island with the squadron for about four months before his death, the squadron’s commanding officer, Cmdr. Christopher Carreon, said in a statement.

“Petty Officer Perez was a kind, hardworking sailor, who wore a constant smile,” Carreon said. “In the four months

he was at HSC-25, he already made strong bonds with many in our squadron.”

Perez, a California native, was one of several swimmers reported in distress over a four-hour period that day, according to the newspaper. Six people were rescued after being swept over a reef in two separate incidents.

# Pentagon chief Esper launches review of Southern Command

McClatchy Washington Bureau

DORAL, Fla. — Defense Secretary Mark Esper launched a review of U.S. Southern Command last week as part of the Pentagon's worldwide look at where it can reallocate forces, raising the possibility that the already small Florida-based command could see additional cuts.

The worldwide review of all combatant commands was directed by Esper to find areas from which forces can either return to the United States to retrain and improve readiness or shift to the Asia-Pacific region or other commands to focus on longer-term threats posed by China and Russia.

"There's only a finite number of dollars, a finite number of troops, and so I've got to figure out, where is the best place to put them?" Esper said.

The potential for more cuts comes just as U.S. Southern Command is seeing a worrisome increase in Chinese and Russian investment, weapons sales and influence in the command's area of responsibility, Southern Command of-

ficials said on the condition they not be identified. Southern Command covers 31 countries in the Caribbean, Central America and South America.

In a briefing to reporters traveling with Esper to Southern Command, the officials provided several examples of how China and Russia have increased their ability to influence policy in South America.

For example, China has sold more than \$615 million in weapons over the last 10 years to Venezuela, increasing its influence there.

For months, a Russian ship specialized in tracking and interfering with undersea cables has loitered off the coast of Uruguay and is currently en route to Antarctica, as "part of the highest (Russian) naval activity here in 15 years," another Southern Command official said.

The command has already seen seven previous cuts to its staffing levels, making it more difficult to keep pace with China and Russia's outreach, one official said.

"Ten years ago, if you came here, we had a Colombia divi-

sion. a division of analysts working Colombia," another Southern Command official said. "Right now we have two analysts working Colombia."

"We are assuming risk in a number of areas in order to meet the present challenge," the official said.

Southern Command's overall annual budget is \$1.2 billion, of which approximately one-third is spent on security cooperation programs such as joint exercises; one-third is spent on drug interdiction efforts, and one-third is spent on headquarters support funds, said Southern Command spokeswoman Army Col. Amanda Azubuike.

Esper said that the review does not necessarily mean Southern Command will see cuts.

"Everybody assumes when you do a review that it means a reduction, an elimination, but not necessarily," Esper told reporters traveling with him. "What I'm looking at first and foremost is how do I ensure our forces' posture around the globe to implement the (National Defense Strategy)?"

## Kauai may be site of \$1B missile radar base

BY WYATT OLSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — The Missile Defense Agency is considering a Navy base on the Hawaiian island of Kauai as a possible site for a planned \$1-billion ballistic missile radar.

The recent inclusion of the Pacific Missile Range Facility at Barking Sands on Kauai's west coast could be a way of sidestepping local opposition over three sites on Oahu the agency has studied as possible sites.

The U.S. Navy operates the missile range, which includes about 1,100 square miles of adjoining sea, from about 2,400 acres of government-owned property.

The planned radar would identify, track and classify long-range ballistic missiles in mid-flight. Interceptors would be fired from outside Hawaii.

If the Kauai site is found suitable, it will be incorporated into environmental impact analyses being done on the Oahu sites, the Missile Defense Agency said in a statement.

# US soldier dies in vehicle rollover accident in Syria

BY CHAD GARLAND  
*Stars and Stripes*

A U.S. soldier was killed Friday in a vehicle rollover accident in Syria, the military said.

Spc. Antonio I. Moore, 22, of Wilmington, N.C., died in Deir al-Zour province while conducting route-clearing operations in support of Operation Inherent Resolve, the Defense Department said in a statement Saturday. The incident is under investigation.

U.S. forces in Syria withdrew from an area near the country's border with Turkey last fall, ahead of a Turkish incursion, but more than 500 U.S. troops are still in the country, including at several outposts

in the eastern provinces of Deir al-Zour and Hassakeh, where they are assisting local partner forces in prevent a resurgence of the Islamic State and keeping it from exploiting oil resources there. The group was routed from its last territorial strongholds last year but has continued to mount insurgent attacks in Iraq and Syria, where officials estimate thousands of militants remain.

Moore was assigned to 363rd Engineer Battalion, 411th Engineer Brigade, Knightdale, N.C., a relatively new unit that activated in December 2015.

The battalion was "deeply saddened at the loss" of the young soldier, said Lt. Col. Ian Doiron, the battalion commander, in a statement.

"Antonio was one of the best in our formation," Doiron said. "He will be missed by all who served with him. We will now focus on supporting his family and honoring his legacy and sacrifice."

Moore is survived by his mother, stepfather, three brothers and one sister, said a statement from the unit's higher headquarters, the Vicksburg, Miss.-based 412th Theater Engineer Command.

He was on his first deployment since enlisting in the Army in May 2017 as a combat engineer, said Maj. Alan Moss, a spokesman for the engineer command.

Moore's awards and decorations include National Defense Service medal and the Army Service Ribbon, Moss said.

# Democratic race heats up in Iowa as caucus approaches

Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa — Democratic presidential candidates have roared back into Iowa touting fresh endorsements, critiquing their rivals and predicting victories in the caucuses that will soon launch the process of deciding who will challenge President Donald Trump.

Sen. Elizabeth Warren said Saturday she was “delighted” to pick up a coveted endorsement from The Des Moines Register. The state’s largest newspaper called the Massachusetts Democrat “the best leader for these times” and said she “is not the radical some perceive her to be.” But Warren’s progressive rival, Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont, predicted victory in Iowa and campaigned alongside Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y., one of the most prominent leaders on the left.

Joe Biden, meanwhile, appeared for the first time alongside Rep. Cindy Axne, D-Iowa, who is the latest in a growing list of local politicians backing the former vice president’s candidacy. And Pete Buttigieg, the

former mayor of South Bend, Ind., sought to position himself a Washington outsider above the partisan fray.

But as the candidates set out to make their best case to voters, the volatility of the race was evident. Several candidates began their day in Washington, sitting as jurors in Trump’s impeachment trial. They will have to return to Capitol Hill early this week as the trial continues, sidelining them from campaigning during a critical period.

More fundamentally, there’s no clear front-runner despite the fact that many candidates have now spent more than a year courting Iowans. A New York Times/Siena College poll released Saturday showed Sanders with a slight — but not commanding — edge in Iowa. But several polls show Biden, Buttigieg and Warren remain among the front-runners.

“There’s still plenty of time for movement,” said Kurt Meyer, chairman of the Tri-County Democrats in northern Iowa. “Every part of the ground game counts.”

# Trump’s Mideast plan puts focus on peace and politics

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A blueprint the White House is rolling out to resolve the decades-long conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians is as much about politics as it is about peace.

President Donald Trump said he would likely release his long-awaited Mideast peace plan a little before he meets Tuesday with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his main political rival Benny Gantz. The Washington get-together offers political bonuses for Trump and the prime minister, but Trump’s opponents are doubting the viability of any plan since there’s been little-to-no input from the Palestinians, who have rejected it before its release.

“It’s entirely about politics,” Michael Koplow, policy director of the Israel Policy Forum, said about Tuesday’s meeting. “You simply can’t have a serious discussion about an Israeli-Palestinian peace plan and only invite one side to come talk about it. This is more about the politics inside Israel and inside the U.S. than it is about any real efforts to get these two sides to an agreement.”

Jared Kushner, a Trump adviser and the president’s son-in-law, has been the architect for the plan for nearly three years. He’s tried to persuade academics, lawmakers, former

Mideast negotiators, Arab governments and special interest groups not to reject his fresh approach outright.

People familiar with the administration’s thinking believe the release will have benefits even if it never gets Palestinian buy-in and ultimately fails. According to these people, the peace team believes that if Israeli officials are open to the plan and Arab nations do not outright reject it, the proposal could help improve broader Israeli-Arab relations.

There have been signs of warming between Israel and the Gulf states, including both public displays and secret contacts, and the administration sees an opening for even greater cooperation after the plan is released, according to these people.

Trump, for his part, told reporters on Air Force One this week that “It’s a plan that really would work.” He said he spoke to the Palestinians “briefly,” without elaborating.

Nabil Abu Rdeneh, a spokesman for the Western-backed Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, says that’s not true.

“There were no talks with the U.S. administration — neither briefly nor in detail,” he said. “The Palestinian position is clear and consistent in its rejection of Trump’s decisions regarding Jerusalem and other issues.”

# US president’s travel ban back in court 3 years later

Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. — After the U.S. Supreme Court upheld President Donald Trump’s ban on travelers from several predominantly Muslim countries in 2018, the ruling appeared to shut down legal challenges that claimed the policy was rooted in anti-Muslim bias.

But a federal appeals court in Richmond is set to hear arguments from civil rights groups hoping to keep the challenges

alive.

The 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals will hear arguments Tuesday in three lawsuits filed by U.S. citizens and permanent residents whose relatives have been unable to enter the U.S. because of the travel ban, which was first imposed shortly after Trump took office in January 2017.

The court is being asked to decide whether a federal judge in Maryland made a mistake

when he refused to dismiss constitutional claims made in a lawsuit filed by the International Refugee Assistance Project despite a 2018 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in a Hawaii case that found the travel ban “a legitimate grounding in national security concerns.”

The Justice Department argues the high court’s ruling effectively puts an end to the legal challenges.

The Trump administration is asking the 4th Circuit to dis-

miss the lawsuits.

But the plaintiffs’ attorneys say the Supreme Court merely rejected a preliminary injunction to block the travel ban and did not decide the merits of the constitutional claims. The plaintiffs allege the travel ban violates several constitutional rights, including the First Amendment’s Establishment Clause prohibiting the government from favoring one religion over another.

# Kim's aunt reemerges amidst rumors

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's aunt made her first public appearance in about six years, state media reported Sunday, quelling years of rumors that she was purged or executed by her nephew after helping him inherit power from his father.

According to a Korean Central News Agency dispatch, the name of Kim Kyong Hui was included in a list of top North Korean officials who watched a performance marking Lunar New Year's Day with Kim Jong

Un at a Pyongyang theater on Saturday.

Kim Kyong Hui, 73, was once an influential figure in North Korea as the only sister of late North Korean leader Kim Jong Il, the father of Kim Jong Un. She had initially kept a low profile during the early part of her brother's rule, but Kim Kyong Hui later frequently accompanied him on his inspection trips after he suffered a stroke in 2008.

While taking up many top posts such as a four-star army general and a member of the

powerful Politburo, she was also believed to have played a key role in grooming Kim Jong Un as the next leader. Kim Jong Un eventually took power after his father died of a heart attack in late 2011.

Kim Kyong Hui's fate had been in doubt after Kim Jong Un had her husband and the North's No. 2 official, Jang Song Thaek, executed for treason and corruption in December 2013. His death was reported by the North and remains the most significant in a series of executions or purges that Kim

Jong Un has engineered in what outside experts believe were attempts to remove potential rivals and cement his grip on power.

Days after Jang's execution, Kim Kyong Hui's name was mentioned in a KCNA dispatch as a member of a funeral committee for another top official. But she missed a state ceremony commemorating the second anniversary of Kim Jong Il's death days later. Her name had since never been mentioned in North Korean state media until Sunday's KCNA report.

## US to evacuate as virus death toll rises in China

Associated Press

BEIJING — A new viral illness being watched with a wary eye around the globe accelerated its spread in China on Sunday with 56 deaths so far, while the U.S. Consulate in the city at the epicenter announced it will evacuate its personnel and some private citizens aboard a charter flight.

China's health minister said the country was entering a "crucial stage" as "it seems like the ability of the virus to spread is getting stronger."

Ma Xiaowei declined to estimate how long it would take to bring the situation under control, but said travel restric-

tions and other strict measures should bring results "at the lowest cost and fastest speed."

President Xi Jinping has called the outbreak a grave situation and said the government was stepping up efforts to restrict travel and public gatherings while rushing medical staff and supplies to the city at the center of the crisis, Wuhan, which remains on lockdown with no flights, trains or buses in or out.

The epidemic has revived memories of the SARS outbreak that originated in China and killed nearly 800 as it spread around the world in 2002 and 2003. Its spread has come amid China's busiest

travel period of the year when millions crisscross the country or head abroad for the Lunar New Year holiday.

The latest figures reported Sunday morning cover the previous 24 hours and mark an increase of 15 deaths and 688 cases for a total of 1,975 infections.

The government also reported five cases in Hong Kong and two in Macao. Small numbers of cases have been found in Thailand, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, the U.S., Vietnam, Singapore, Malaysia, Nepal, France and Australia.

The U.S. has confirmed cases in Washington state, Chicago, and most recently Southern

California. Canada said it discovered its first case, a man in his 50s who was in Wuhan before flying to Toronto. Taiwan, Singapore and South Korea each reported one new case Sunday, while Thailand reported three new cases.

A notice from the U.S. Embassy in Beijing said there would be limited capacity to transport U.S. citizens on a Tuesday flight from Wuhan that will proceed directly to San Francisco. It said that in the event there are not enough seats, priority will be given to individuals "at greater risk from coronavirus."

## Concerns intensify as another quake hits Puerto Rico

Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — A 5.0 magnitude earthquake hit southern Puerto Rico on Saturday at a shallow depth, raising concerns about unstable infrastructure in a region that has been hit by quakes every day for nearly a month.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the quake occurred at a depth of eight miles around the southern coastal town of

Guayanilla, located close to the epicenters of most of the recent earthquakes. At least one small landslide was reported.

"We felt it really hard," town spokesman Danny Hernandez told The Associated Press, saying authorities were patrolling the area to investigate any potential damage.

The newest quake comes a day after hundreds of people in the island's southern region were evacuated from earth-

quake shelters that flooded after heavy rains hit the U.S. territory. In the coastal city of Ponce alone, more than 350 people on Friday were moved back into a school that served as the initial shelter when the ground first began shaking, Angel Vazquez, the city's emergency management director, told the AP.

He said no damage was immediately reported in Ponce, but that crews were out inspect-

ing buildings in areas affected by a 6.4 magnitude quake that hit Jan. 7, killing one person and damaging hundreds of homes. A 5.9 aftershock that hit the same area on Jan. 11 caused further damage.

The ground in southern Puerto Rico first began shaking on Dec. 28, and while experts say several local faults are to blame, they are still analyzing data to determine why the earthquakes continue.

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Police: Naked teen goes on rampage in store

**NJ** MIDDLE TOWNSHIP — A naked teenage customer who went on a rampage inside a southern New Jersey upholstery business was subdued after he fought with police, a struggle that left three officers injured.

Police responded to the Middle Township business and confronted the teen, 17, who had damaged several items. The teen fought with officers when they tried to arrest him, and authorities said it eventually took “several officers” to subdue him.

The teen and three officers were treated at a hospital for undisclosed injuries.

## Sea turtles ‘stunned’ during cold snap

**NC** ROANOKE ISLAND — Rapidly dipping temperatures in North Carolina’s Outer Banks “cold stunned” at least 120 sea turtles, causing them to float to the surface of the chilly waters and wash ashore in critical condition.

Ninety-five sea turtles were brought to the Sea Turtle Assistance and Rehabilitation Center at the North Carolina Aquarium on Roanoke Island, The Virginian-Pilot reported. Experts think that when the temperature suddenly drops below 55 degrees, the cold-blooded creatures can become temporarily immobile and even contract pneumonia, said Karen Clark, director of the Outer Banks Center for Wildlife Education.

Teams will feed and treat the turtles while they recover in water tanks before returning them to the sea, the newspaper said.

## Women defend mother with ‘nurse-in’

**GA** AUGUSTA — Moms came to the defense of a mother who said she was asked to cover up while breastfeeding inside a Chick-fil-A in Georgia.

Mothers held a “nurse-in” at the fast food restaurant near Augusta, The Augusta Chronicle reported.

Samantha McIntosh said she was breastfeeding her 7-month-old daughter in a booth with her niece, 9, at the restaurant when a manager approached. McIntosh says the manager told her they’d had a complaint and asked her to cover herself.

A spokesperson for the Georgia-based company said in an email that the operator of the franchise has apologized to McIntosh.

## Bill proclaims Jan. 24 ‘Granny D Day’

**NH** CONCORD — A New Hampshire state senator introduced a bill that would proclaim Jan. 24 as “Granny D Day.”

Doris “Granny D” Haddock of Dublin was a political activist who drew attention to the need for campaign finance reform. She died at age 100 in 2010. Her 110th birthday would have been Jan. 24.

At age 88, she walked more than 3,200 miles across the United States. She started in California on Jan. 1, 1999. Fourteen months later, she arrived in Washington.

“Granny D was a fierce activist who dedicated her life to defending democracy,” said Sen. Melanie Levesque, a Democrat from Brookline. She introduced the bill to the Senate Election Law and Municipal Affairs Committee.

## Woman dies after being caught in raisin machine

**CA** SANGER — A woman died after her clothing got caught in a raisin processing machine in California’s Central Valley, authorities said.

The woman, 33, was working at the Del Rey Packing plant in Sanger, east of Fresno, according to the county Sheriff’s Office.

She became entangled with a shaft to a cylinder that breaks up bunches of raisins and she struck her head, the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health Administration said.

Cal/OSHA will investigate to determine whether any workplace safety regulations were violated.

## For hippo’s birthday, zoo seeks to aid wildlife

**OH** CINCINNATI — The Cincinnati Zoo is using the third birthday of its beloved premature hippo Fiona as a way to raise money for Australian wildlife affected by the recent bushfires.

Instead of sending birthday gifts, the zoo asks people to buy T-shirts that will directly benefit the Bushfire Emergency Wildlife Fund. The shirt features a koala and kangaroo giving Fiona a hug and says “Supporting Our Friends Down Under.”

All proceeds from sales of the shirts will be sent to Zoos Victoria to help them care for the animals that are suffering. The zoo will add \$5,000 to the total amount raised.

Fiona became a global celebrity after she was born on Jan. 24, 2017, and weighed in at just 29 pounds. Fiona now weighs a healthy 1,300 pounds, according to the zoo.

## Store to stop selling Nazi, racist items

**LA** NEW ORLEANS — A store owner in New Orleans’ French Quarter told a newspaper she will stop selling items such as a Nazi flag and Jim Crow-era items with racist caricatures of black people. The leader of the Anti-Defamation League’s South Central Region, which combats antisemitism and racism, had called for their removal in a statement to the Times-Picayune/The New Orleans Advocate.

Rare Finds owner Sue Saucier first told the newspaper, “The items in my store are historical items. We don’t mean to offend anyone when we sell these things. They represent history. They do not represent my sentiments.”

However, she called back minutes later and said she would remove the items.

## Mayor wants bond issue to repair more streets

**NE** OMAHA — Omaha’s mayor wants voters to decide whether they’re willing to raise their property taxes to fund a long-term plan for improving city streets — often the objects of residents’ wrath and complaints.

Mayor Jean Stothert announced that she will ask the City Council to put a \$200 million bond issue on the May 12 ballot. It would cost owners \$35 more a year in property taxes for every \$100,000 in valuation.

“We can stop the deterioration of our infrastructure,” Stothert said. “But it will take all of us to agree that it’s worth the expense.”

The city spends \$41 million a year on street repairs, the mayor said, but needs to be spending at least \$75 million a year.

From wire reports

Your objective source for military news  
updated 24/7 from bases  
around the world.  
Now online at [www.stripes.com](http://www.stripes.com).

STARS AND STRIPES®

# 49ers assistant coach defies expectations

Associated Press

HESSTON, Kan. — The old downtown strip, like so many in small towns across America, is quiet on a brisk January morning, just a few cars parked at one end in front of The Citizens State Bank and a few more in front of the pharmacy at the other.

Around the corner is an old Texaco station, the pumps long removed and the windows covered up. Nearby, the sign for Weaver's Grocers — "Your local hometown grocers!" — is all that remains from the once-bustling store. Most businesses have moved east toward the main highway, which takes traffic between the cities of Salina and Wichita.

The predominantly Mennonite town of about 3,700 in south-central Kansas is hardly the kind of place one would expect to produce a trailblazing NFL coach, one that has helped the San Francisco 49ers return to the Super Bowl.

Then again, Katie Sowers had been defying expectations all her life.

When the Niners face the Kansas City Chiefs on Sunday, she will become the first female assistant and first openly gay coach to take the sideline in the sport's biggest game. Her story has spread like a prairie fire thanks in large part to a Microsoft commercial featuring Sowers that ran repeatedly during last weekend's conference championship games, and she will no doubt be a popular interview subject when reporters descend on Miami early this week.

It's all a little hard to believe for her family and friends, those who grew up playing tackle football with her in the backyard, or coached her in high school basketball, or took classes with her at Hesston College.

"People ask me what we did for fun," recalls her twin sister, Liz, "and I don't honestly have an answer. We drove to Wichita? But we always had each other. We were never really looking for things to do. We always had a best friend. But being in a small conservative town was different, especially being gay. But we were lucky to be in the most open-minded family in town. I love

everybody knowing everybody, even with all the small-town gossip."

The sisters' dad, Floyd, was a basketball coach at nearby Bethel College, but the kids always preferred the rough-and-tumble of football, gender norms be damned. Even though they were in the heart of Chiefs country, Katie grew up a Dallas Cowboys fan and Liz a Denver Broncos fan, because those were the uniforms and plastic helmets they got as Christmas gifts one year. One of the neighbor boys that played with them had gotten the Chiefs outfit.

The Sowers kids eventually shelved their football ambitions, though, never thinking at the time that they could continue playing with the boys in high school. Instead, they turned their attention to just about every other sport, whether it was basketball or track and field, helping the Swathers — the nickname coming from a piece of farming machinery common on the Great Plains — win enough championships to fill a trophy case.

"Katie was a competitor, hard worker, and didn't like to lose," says their basketball coach, Brennan Torgerson. "She didn't break into the starting lineup as soon as Liz did. Katie's role off the bench was our super sub. When she came in the pace changed along with the energy level of the team."

"She was definitely known on campus for her athletic ability," adds Rachel McMaster, who overlapped with Katie for a year at Hesston College, and is now the school's director of marketing and communications.

The Sowers kids never could shake the football bug, though.

After starting at Hesston College, where her mother, Bonnie, was the longtime director of nursing, Katie finished her studies at Goshen College in Indiana. She resumed playing football with the West Michigan Mayhem in the Women's Football Alliance and for USA Football's national team, but any thought of ever coaching men was temporarily dashed when Katie was denied a volunteer assistant job at the private liberal arts college.

Injuries eventually took their toll on Katie — a separated shoulder, a torn labrum in her hip. So with degree in hand, she joined her sister in Kansas City and began working toward her master's degree at Central Missouri.

That is where fate set her on the path toward the NFL sideline.

One of Katie's part-time jobs was coaching a youth basketball team, and one her players happened to be the daughter of former Chiefs general manager Scott Pioli. He soon became a father figure to her, and when Pioli was fired by the Chiefs and hired as the assistant GM in Atlanta, he helped Katie catch on through the Bill Walsh Diversity Coaching Fellowship. There, she made such an impression on then-Falcons offensive coordinator Kyle Shanahan that he asked her to follow him to San Francisco when he was hired to coach the Niners.

At first she helped break down film and work on practice scripts, but over time she was given more responsibility. These days, she works largely with wide receivers alongside offensive coordinators Mike LaFleur and Mike McDaniels, helping an offense that was second only to the Baltimore Ravens in scoring this season.

Her rapid rise in the cut-throat coaching profession doesn't surprise those who knew her growing up.

"Katie was an amazing teammate and was always willing to do the little things that allow a team to come together and win ball games," says Matthew Richardson, who taught and coached the Sowers sisters in middle school and high school. "Katie wasn't ever concerned with recognition, she only wanted to do her job extremely well so the team could be successful."

It's hard to get much more successful than reaching the Super Bowl.

"When Katie is walking down the sideline," Liz says with pride, "she'll have parents shouting that their daughter wants to coach in the NFL, or play in the NFL, and that dream is real now for people, for young girls."

## Dodgers go public with complaints aimed at Astros

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The Los Angeles Dodgers would rather earn a World Series trophy on their own than accept any scraps from the Houston Astros or Boston Red Sox, the teams that beat them in 2017 and '18.

Despite being eager to focus on the upcoming season, sev-

eral Dodgers publicly for the first time expressed annoyance at the Astros for the sign-stealing system used during the 2017 season, when Houston beat them in seven games in the World Series.

"They cheated and they got away with it," utilityman Kike Hernandez said Saturday. "I don't think it hurts more now

than it did three years ago when we lost the Series."

Hernandez said the Dodgers "had our doubts" about the Astros in 2017.

"Everybody warned us. A lot of people told us to worry about them," Hernandez said. "We just thought it was just rumors, but I guess not."

Furious Dodgers fans have

snapped up tickets for the Angels' home opener against Houston — a rare chance to boo the Astros, who aren't scheduled to play the Dodgers this season. LA manager Dave Roberts understands their irritation.

"Frustrating is probably the floor of my emotions," Roberts said.

# Kenin stops Gauff's latest Slam run

BY HOWARD FENDRICH  
Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — It made sense to Sofia Kenin that Coco Gauff would be the one getting all of the attention and generating all of the buzz.

That's only natural when Gauff is 15 and making tennis history time and time again.

"Yeah, I mean, the hype is for her. She's obviously done great stuff, of course. It's absolutely normal. Just (tried) not to let that get in my head," Kenin said. "Of course, I didn't do it for the hype. I did it for myself, because I wanted to prove to myself that I could do it."

Well, Sofia, you did it. Now get ready for the spotlight to shine your way. Kenin stopped Gauff's latest Grand Slam run by beating her 6-7 (5), 6-3, 6-0 in the Australian Open's fourth round on Sunday.

Like Gauff, Kenin is a young — although, at 21, not quite as young — American and she reached her first major quarterfinal with the victory.

"I want to show who I am, show my best tennis, show why I'm there, why I belong," the 14th-seeded Kenin said. "I'm doing that."

In her previous match, the 67th-ranked Gauff beat Naomi Osaka to become the youngest player in the professional era to defeat the reigning women's champion at the Australian Open. At Wimbledon last year, Gauff became the youngest qualifier ever at that tournament, beat Venus Williams in the first round and made it all the way to the fourth.

Entering Sunday, Gauff was 8-2 in Grand Slam action, with her only losses to women who have been ranked No. 1 and own multiple major titles: Si-

mona Halep (at Wimbledon) and Osaka (at the U.S. Open).

Hence the hype.

"I couldn't really write this," Gauff said. "I don't think anybody could really write how this past (several) months have gone."

She did not play as well as she has been playing this time, though, winding up with 48 unforced errors, more than twice as many as Kenin's 22.

Gauff's power is impressive. One tiny indication: She slammed a forehand into the net so hard that it dislodged a piece of a sponsor's white plastic sign.

Kenin can't copy that.

But thanks to her relentless ball-tracking and a bit of in-your-face attitude with a racket in hand, Kenin surged up the WTA rankings from 52nd to 12th in 2019 while winning her first three tour-level singles

titles plus a couple in doubles.

"She definitely put a lot of balls in the court," Gauff said. "She's quick."

Just before Gauff announced herself last season, Kenin delivered her own breakthrough at the French Open by upsetting Serena Williams to get to the round of 16 at a major for the first time.

Now Kenin has taken another step. Wasn't easy, though.

After double-faulting twice in the tiebreaker to drop the opening set — "For sure, nerves," Kenin acknowledged — she immediately tilted things the other way, breaking in the initial game of the second and never letting that lead slip away.

When it ended, appropriately enough, on a missed backhand by Gauff, Kenin dropped her racket at the baseline and covered her face as tears welled in her eyes.

## NBA roundup

# LeBron passes Kobe on scoring list in loss

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — LeBron James was a teenager when he first met Kobe Bryant at a youth basketball camp, in awe of his idol and ears open as the Los Angeles Lakers star offered advice to the prodigy that has lasted to this day.

"I was just listening," James said. "I was just trying to soak everything up I could. I remember one thing he said was that if you want to try and be great at it, and want to be one of the greats, you've got to put the work in."

James put in the work and followed Bryant's path — from making the leap from high school straight to the NBA, to winning NBA titles, and, eventually, to playing in Los Angeles. With a driving right-handed layup, James no longer chased Bryant, he zoomed past him for third place on the NBA's career scoring list.

"I'm just happy to be in any

conversation with Kobe Bryant, one of the all-time greats to ever play," James said.

With a tribute to Bryant written on his Nikes, James scored 29 points in front of a roaring 76ers' crowd, but the Lakers fell short in a 108-91 loss to Philadelphia on Saturday night.

**Nets 121, Pistons 111 (OT):** Kyrie Irving scored 17 of his 45 points in the third quarter to overcome a double-digit deficit and visiting Brooklyn went on to beat Detroit.

The franchises are among many sub-.500 teams in the Eastern Conference, likely vying for the last two spots in the playoffs.

Irving made free throws early in the extra period to put his team ahead and end a five-game losing streak.

The Nets went ahead 106-104 with 38.4 seconds left in regulation when Andre Drummond was called for goaltending. Derrick Rose had an unforced turn-

over on the ensuing possession, then made up for it with a tying layup with 1.9 seconds left.

Irving missed a three-pointer just before the buzzer, sending it to overtime. Rose had 27 points for the Pistons, scoring more than 20 for the 12th straight game to extend his career high.

Brooklyn's Jarrett Allen finished with 20 points and 15 rebounds.

"The way we've been struggling it's big for us," Nets guard Spencer Dinwiddie said.

**Bulls 118, Cavaliers 106:** Zach LaVine scored 44 points for Chicago in another dominating performance at Cleveland.

LaVine made 16 of 30 shots and had 27 points at halftime. The 6-foot-5 guard also had 10 rebounds and eight assists, falling just short of his first career triple-double.

It was LaVine's second big game against the Cavaliers in eight days. He scored 42 points Jan. 20, including 21 in the

fourth quarter when the Bulls rallied from a 15-point deficit to win.

Kevin Love had 20 points and 11 rebounds for Cleveland. The Cavaliers have lost seven straight and 12 of 14.

**Jazz 112, Mavericks 107:** Rudy Gobert had 22 points, 17 rebounds and five blocks in host Utah's comeback victory over Dallas.

Donovan Mitchell scored 25 points, and Bojan Bogdanovic added 23 for the Jazz. They have won 14 of their last 15.

Luka Doncic scored 25 points for the Mavericks, who have dropped two of three after winning four straight.

**Thunder 113, Timberwolves 104:** Dennis Schroder scored 26 points and Chris Paul had 25 to lead Oklahoma City to a win at Minnesota for its fifth straight victory.

Karl-Anthony Towns scored 37 for the Timberwolves. They have lost nine in a row.

## Top 25 basketball roundup

# Short-handed No. 3 Jayhawks top Vols

Associated Press

LAWRENCE, Kan. — Devon Dotson scored 22 points, Udoka Azubuike added 18 and No. 3 Kansas beat Tennessee 74-68 Saturday in the Big 12/SEC Challenge.

Azubuike was the lone big man for the Jayhawks (16-3) after Silvio De Sousa was suspended 12 games and David McCormack banned two for their roles in a brawl Tuesday against Kansas State.

After Azubuike went to the bench with two fouls early, Yves Pons hit consecutive three-pointers to put the Volunteers (12-7) on a 14-2 run for a 20-13 lead. Kansas answered when Azubuike checked back in, stringing together a 12-0 run en route to a 37-30 lead at halftime.

**No. 1 Baylor 72, Florida 61:** MaCio Teague and Devonte Bando scored 16 points apiece and the Bears extended their winning streak to 16 games with a win over the host Gators in the Big 12/SEC Challenge.

Baylor improved to 6-1 in the annual interconference series, the best record of any team in either conference.

**No. 2 Gonzaga 92, Pacific 59:** Killian Tillie scored 22 points and blocked four shots to help the host Bulldogs earn their 13th straight victory.

Corey Kispert added 16 points and Filip Petrushev had 15 for Gonzaga (21-1, 7-0 West Coast). The Bulldogs also won their 35th consecutive home

game, the longest streak in the nation.

**No. 5 Florida State 85, Notre Dame 84:** Wyatt Wilkes scored 19 points and the host Seminoles held off the Fighting Irish for their 10th straight victory.

Wilkes drilled five of six from three-point range, and FSU (17-2, 7-1 Atlantic Coast Conference) made 12 of 18 from beyond the arc.

**No. 6 Louisville 80, Clemson 62:** Darius Perry set career highs with 19 points and five three-pointers, and the Cardinals beat the Tigers for their sixth straight win.

Louisville (17-3, 8-1 Atlantic Coast Conference) pulled away with a 20-0 first-half run and shot 66% before halftime.

**No. 7 Dayton 87, Richmond 79:** Obi Toppin had 24 points and 12 rebounds and the Flyers pulled away from the host Spiders after halftime and won their ninth straight game.

Jalen Crutcher added 24 points, eight rebounds and seven assists for Dayton (18-2, 7-0 Atlantic 10).

**No. 9 Villanova 64, Providence 60:** Collin Gillespie grabbed a rebound and found Jeremiah Robinson-Earl on the fast break for a dunk as the Wildcats turned back a rally by the host Friars with 55 seconds left for their sixth straight win.

Gillespie, who also hit a pair of free throws with 28 seconds to play, scored 18 and had eight rebounds for Villanova (16-3, 6-

1 Big East).

**No. 14 West Virginia 74, Missouri 51:** Jermaine Haley had 15 points and nine rebounds, Miles McBride scored 15 points and the host Mountaineers broke open a close game with a huge run early in the second half to beat the cold-shooting Tigers.

West Virginia's Bob Huggins earned his 876th win, tying Adolph Rupp for seventh place on the NCAA Division I coaching list.

**No. 15 Kentucky 76, No. 18 Texas Tech 74 (OT):** Nick Richards scored seven of his 25 points in overtime, including the game-deciding free throws with 10 seconds left, and the visiting Wildcats beat the Red Raiders Tech in the only Big 12/SEC Challenge game featuring two ranked teams.

Richards scored the first five points in overtime for Kentucky (15-4), which blew a 10-point lead in the second half and went the final six minutes of regulation without a field goal.

**No. 16 Auburn 80, Iowa State 76:** Isaac Okoro scored 19 points, Samir Doughty had 18 and the host Tigers held off the Cyclones.

Okoro had 10 straight points to help Auburn (17-2) take a 76-62 lead with under six minutes to play. Iowa State (9-10) responded with 10 points in a row.

**SMU 74, No. 20 Memphis 70:** Kendrick Davis had 20 points and five assists, Em-

manuel Bandoumel added 14 and the visiting Mustangs used a late run to knock off the host Tigers.

Isiaha Mike scored 13 points, all in the second half, and Tyson Jolly finished with 10 as SMU (15-4, 5-2 American Athletic Conference) won its third straight.

**No. 21 Illinois 64, Michigan 62:** Ayo Dosunmu hit a contested jumper from the free throw line with 0.5 seconds remaining to lift the Illini over the host Wolverines.

**Arizona State 66, No. 22 Arizona 65:** Alonzo Verge Jr. scored on a layup with 10.9 seconds left and Remy Martin led the host Sun Devils' comeback from a 22-point deficit in a victory over the rival Wildcats.

Arizona (13-6, 3-3 Pac-12) shook off a shaky start with a massive run, building the 22-point lead midway through the first half.

**No. 23 Colorado 76, Washington 62:** Tyler Bey returned to the lineup and scored 16 points, McKinley Wright IV had 15 and the host Buffaloes beat the Huskies, snapping a five-game losing streak to Washington.

**No. 24 Rutgers 75, Nebraska 72:** Geo Baker hit a three-pointer with 1.2 seconds left as the Scarlet Knights extended their home winning streak to 14 games with a win over the Cornhuskers.

## Service academies

# Army defeats Navy for fourth consecutive victory

Associated Press

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Tommy Funk matched his career high with a season-high 26 points as Army beat Navy 73-66 on Saturday.

Matt Wilson had 18 points for the Black Knights (9-10, 4-4 Patriot League), who won their fourth consecutive game. Josh

Caldwell added 10 points and 10 rebounds.

Cam Davis scored a career-high 26 points for the Midshipmen (11-8, 5-3). Evan Wieck added 13 points and four assists and John Carter Jr. had seven rebounds.

Army takes on Bucknell at home on Wednesday. Navy takes on Holy Cross at home on Wednesday.

**San Jose State 90, Air Force 81:** Seneca Knight had 20 points as the host Spartans defeated the Falcons on Saturday.

Brae Ivey had 17 points for San Jose State (7-14, 3-6 Mountain West Conference). Richard Washington added 12 points. Eduardo Lane had 11 points. Omari Moore had nine points and 10 assists.