

## Many Dems seek bigger defense budget

*CQ-Roll Call*

WASHINGTON — The Senate Armed Services Committee's move to authorize significantly more defense spending next year than President Joe Biden wants demonstrates that there's still a sizable number of Democratic hawks in the Senate willing to challenge the party's dovish progressive wing.

At the committee's markup last week of the fiscal 2022 National Defense Authorization Act, Oklahoma's James M. Inhofe, the ranking Republican, offered an amendment to authorize \$25 billion more than Biden requested (and \$37 billion more than what was appropriated for the current fiscal year), aides

said.

The committee has made little information about the closed markup public. But aides disclosed Friday that a separate vote was held on the total amount of funding, and they also revealed the final tally: 25-1.

That vote, with only Massachusetts Democrat Elizabeth Warren objecting, sends a powerful message in the ongoing debate over how to allocate the government's discretionary budget, between defense and nondefense spending. It also indicates that the loud voices on the Democratic Party's left, who complained that the 1.6% defense budget increase proposed by Biden was too large, will face

a struggle in their own party.

The Armed Services Committee bill would authorize \$777.9 billion for national defense programs in fiscal 2022 at the Pentagon and other departments, 5% more than the current level.

The bill would authorize \$740.3 billion specifically for the Defense Department, although appropriators would make the final call on how much of the money is delivered.

The Armed Services Committee disclosed only one vote tally from its closed proceedings, the 23-3 vote on final approval, but did not say how individual lawmakers voted.

But congressional aides said that when it came time to vote on

final approval of the bill, Warren again voted "no."

So, too, did Republicans Tom Cotton of Arkansas and Josh Hawley of Missouri. Cotton and Hawley were concerned about a provision that would require women for the first time to register for the draft.

Inhofe's amendment ratified what senators on the panel had decided long before Wednesday. Otherwise, the committee would not have been ready to allocate the additional billions for specific defense programs.

Much of the boost went toward programs that top generals and admirals had identified as priorities that did not make the president's budget request.

## Energy drinks, grilled cheese fueled Bagram pullout

By CHAD GARLAND

*Stars and Stripes*

In the waning days of the U.S. presence at Bagram Airfield, Marine Corps veteran Justin Modeste knew the can of energy drink he had was valuable and rare.

"Probably the remaining supply of red Rip It in the country," he wrote in a post shared to several Facebook groups where the base's denizens bought, sold and traded various goods. "Act now to get your hands on the last few drops of this nectar from the gods. No lowball offers, I know what I got."

The post included a photo of a short, opened 8-ounce can of the fruity energy drink that has fueled U.S. wartime operations since 2004 by the tens of millions and has become a staple for troops, veterans and contractors alike. His asking price: \$500.

"It was indeed my last can of Rip It," Modeste said in a phone interview in early July about the photo he'd jokingly posted weeks earlier. He'd planned to snap the photo before popping the can's top and downing half of it, "but I couldn't wait to dig in."

Energy drinks and tobacco became hot

commodities as base residents hunted for diminishing supplies in the hectic weeks before the U.S. left, seemingly overnight, in early July.

Many went from dining at bountiful cafeterias to subsisting on Meals, Ready to Eat, but Army culinary specialists were sent in to serve up hot food at least through June 25.

A group of four Army cooks recently returned to Kuwait after spending several weeks running the North Dining Facility on Bagram. Other cafeterias had been closed and civilian contract workers sent home.

"We were feeding over 2,000 soldiers," said Sgt. Nicole Hall of the Army Reserve's 310th Sustainment Command, quoted in an Army statement last week.

On 12-hour shifts, they served up scrambled eggs, steak, vegetables and "everything you could possibly think of," Master Sgt. Lloyd Cossey said.

Toward the end, the troops were happy just to have hot meals, Hall said. "Their favorite meal was the grilled cheese."

As exchanges and dining facilities closed, things got dicey for those with energy drink and tobacco habits, some of whom turned to

these groups offering to buy cases of Monster or Red Bull, packs of cigarettes and logs of dip. Others offered their dwindling supplies in trade.

Modeste's "last can" ad came after years of being supplied "cases and cases" of the Rip Its that typically filled drink coolers at the dining facilities, he said. He'd first tasted the tantalizing beverage in Iraq, where he'd stuff his cargo pockets with it — his personal record was smuggling out 12 that way.

"That was my life force," he said, adding that the habit "trickled into contractor life" when he arrived at Bagram in 2014 to support the counter-rocket, artillery and mortar systems.

Rip It was adopted as the energy drink of choice to be supplied at dining facilities in 2004 "because it was the most cost-effective," Army spokesman Wayne Hall told Stars and Stripes in late 2018.

In the decade from 2009 to 2018, the Defense Logistics Agency shipped more than 175 million cans of it to U.S. Central Command — \$165 million worth — data DLA provided to Stars and Stripes shows.

# Riot probe may test Rep. Luria's identity

*Associated Press*

NORFOLK, Va. — When members of Congress head home to connect with their constituents, some hit tractor pulls. Others might stop by mom-and-pop stores. For Democratic Rep. Elaine Luria, whose Virginia district includes the world's largest naval base, a recent swing included boarding an amphibious assault ship for a NATO ceremony and a speech by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

"The congresswoman right here in front of me asks tough questions all the time, pins my ears against the wall on many, many topics," Gen. Mark Milley told a recent audience of dignitaries aboard the USS Kearsarge, a reference to Luria's grilling him on military readiness during committee meetings.

Luria's next round of tough queries will concern a topic that is potentially even more sensitive for the military: why veter-

ans were disproportionately involved in the Jan. 6 riot. A 20-year naval veteran and nuclear-trained surface warfare officer who commanded 400 crewmembers in the Persian Gulf, Luria is joining House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's special committee to investigate the mob attack on the U.S. Capitol.

"I bring some additional perspective," Luria, 45, said in an interview from Naval Station Norfolk, where the Kearsarge and about 75 other ships are docked. She may end up being the lone member with military experience on the panel after most Republicans said they'd boycott following Pelosi's objecting to the appointment of two GOP lawmakers, including a Navy veteran.

A deeper investigation of Jan. 6's events would seem a natural fit for Luria, whose district has 40% of its economy tied directly or indirectly to the Navy or the Defense Department. But the assignment could carry

serious political risks for Luria's chief congressional identity besides champion of all things Navy and national security — that of a centrist who has worked to bolster her bipartisan credentials and policy pursuits across the ideological spectrum.

During a Virginia Beach town hall hours after the Milley event, Luria was asked about the possibility the Capitol insurrection was a dry run for a larger attack. She cited the Jan. 6 committee, saying, "This is too important not to do anything."

"I think we need to do this in an unbiased and nonpartisan way," Luria said.

Luria has likened being on the Jan. 6 committee to her serving on an aircraft carrier launching simultaneous airstrikes on foreign terrorist targets in Iraq and Afghanistan, noting that then, "I didn't turn to the sailor next to me operating a nuclear reactor and say: 'Are you a Democrat? Are you a Republican?'"

## Army Ranger at JBLM charged in security guard's beating death

BY ROSE L. THAYER

*Stars and Stripes*

An Army Ranger assigned to Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., was arraigned Friday on charges of murder and kidnapping for beating to death a female security guard at a Tacoma office building, according to court documents and Army officials.

Spc. Patrick P. Byrne, 26, who is assigned to the 2nd Battalion of the 75th Ranger Regiment, was arrested Monday by the Tacoma Police Department. He was charged for beating and choking to death the security guard early Sunday, according to an affidavit filed with Pierce County Superior Court.

Another guard arrived at about 6 a.m. Sunday for a shift and called police to report that he found his female coworker unresponsive with clear signs of trauma, according to court documents. The woman had been beaten so severely she was unrecognizable. The attack was recorded by security cameras in the lobby of the building where the beating took place. The recording of the incident helped police identify Byrne as a suspect.

Described by police as 6 feet tall, Byrne

was at the door of the building, when the 42-year-old, 5-foot-tall guard opened the door, likely to ask him to leave, according to the court documents. He barged past her. As the guard grabbed Byrne's shirt to stop him, he took her to the ground and began to assault her for about 10 minutes.

He hit the woman with his fists, grabbed her braided hair and "dragged her around like a rag doll," then used her own set of keys to stab her in the face. He then began to choke her, according to court documents.

After leaving her body, Byrne entered a conference room and smashed out a window with a chair, according to the documents. He began to throw things, including furniture, and then left the building.

Instead of using the stairs, he then jumped or fell about 14 feet from a landing where a separate security camera showed him lying below on a concrete floor, possibly unconscious. Eventually, he got up and left.

Byrne was charged with two counts of murder, two counts of kidnapping and one count of burglary, all in the first-degree, according to online court records. His next hearing is scheduled for Aug. 16.

## US launches 2nd airstrike in week against al-Shabab

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — For the second time this week, U.S. forces on Friday conducted an airstrike against the al-Shabab extremist group in Somalia. The earlier strike, on Tuesday, was the first in Somalia since President Joe Biden took office in January.

In a brief statement, the Pentagon said the attack was conducted in support of Somali partner forces, and thus was allowed under existing congressional authorization for the use of military force.

A Pentagon spokeswoman, Cindi King, said the airstrike was coordinated with the Somali government and took place in the Galmudug area in central Somalia, in the vicinity of Qeycad. She said further details would not be released to protect operational security.

The United States removed most of its troops from Somalia in the final days of President Donald Trump's term, moving them to nearby countries where they remotely advise and assist Somali forces against al-Shabab, an affiliate of al-Qaida.

# Groups urge virus relief not fund bill

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Organizations representing long-term care facilities on Friday urged lawmakers working on a bipartisan infrastructure plan to avoid dipping into COVID-relief funds to help pay for the roughly \$600 billion in new spending sought for the public works buildout.

The request comes as lawmakers are struggling to finish up negotiations over the package amid stubborn disagreements over how to pay for the new spending. Lawmakers and staff were expected to work through the weekend, sorting through the flurry of tensions over funds for wa-

ter resources, public transit and other details in what they hope are the final stages of their work.

The groups representing the long-term care facilities said tapping virus relief dollars would be “short-sighted, especially as COVID-19 variants continue to spread.” They noted the Delta variant that now accounts for most of the new cases and threatens “the safety of our nation’s seniors and their caregivers.”

Senators working on the infrastructure plan hope to have a bill ready to be voted on this week. President Joe Biden has made passing the bipartisan plan a top priority, the first of

his two-part \$4 trillion proposal to rebuild, but a Senate test vote failed last week after Republicans said they needed more time to finish the package and review the details.

Negotiators have struggled over how to pay for the new spending without raising income taxes or user fees such as the federal gas tax. They’re looking at other sourc eutical rebates, redirecting billions of unspent dollars from last year’s COVID relief and tapping other potential funding streams.

Groups representing nursing homes and other long-term care facilities called on the negotiators Friday not to

redirect money from a fund established to reimburse health care providers for expenses and lost revenue due to COVID-19.

The Department of Health and Human Services said Friday there is about \$24 billion not yet allocated to providers, out of about \$178 billion Congress approved for the fund through various relief measures.

The groups said some of their members have not been able to get reimbursement for expenses and lost revenue incurred in the latter months of 2020 and this year and were anxiously awaiting another round of funding from HHS.

# Poll: Many in US unlikely to ever get shot

Associated Press

Most Americans who haven’t been vaccinated against COVID-19 say they are unlikely to get the shots and doubt they would work against the aggressive delta variant despite evidence they do, according to a new poll that underscores the challenges facing public health officials amid soaring infections in some states.

Among American adults who have not yet received a vaccine, 35% say they probably will not, and 45% say they definitely will not, according to a poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Af-

fairs Research. Just 3% say they definitely will get the shots, though another 16% say they probably will.

What’s more, 64% of unvaccinated Americans have little to no confidence the shots are effective against variants — including the delta variant that officials say is responsible for 83% of new cases in the U.S. — despite evidence that they offer strong protection. In contrast, 86% of those who have already been vaccinated have at least some confidence that the vaccines will work.

That means “that there will be more preventable cases, more preventable hospital-

izations and more preventable deaths,” said Dr. Amesh Adalja, an infectious disease specialist at Johns Hopkins University.

“We always knew some proportion of the population would be difficult to persuade no matter what the data showed, (and) a lot of people are beyond persuasion,” Adalja said. He echoed Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Rochelle Walensky in calling the current surge “a pandemic of the unvaccinated” because nearly all hospital admissions and deaths have been among those who weren’t immunized.

# Federal court lifts CDC rules for Fla.-based cruise ships

Associated Press

MIAMI — Pandemic restrictions on Florida-based cruise ships are no longer in place under a ruling Friday by a federal appeals court, while the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention seek to fight a Florida lawsuit challenging the regulations.

A three-judge panel of the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals had temporarily blocked a previous ruling last Saturday that sided with Florida officials, but the court reversed that decision on Friday, explaining that the CDC failed to demonstrate an entitlement to a stay pending appeal.

The temporary stay had kept the CDC regulations regarding Florida-based cruise ships in place while the CDC appeals the June decision by U.S. District Judge Steven Merryday. Those regulations can no longer be enforced but can still be used as guidelines.

The lawsuit, championed by Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis, claims that the CDC’s multiple-step process to allow cruising from Florida is overly burdensome, harming both a multibillion-dollar industry that provides some 159,000 jobs and revenue collected by the state.

In court filings, attorneys for Florida had urged the 11th Circuit to reject the CDC request to keep its rules intact.

“The equities overwhelmingly favor allowing the cruise industry to enjoy its first summer season in two years while this Court sorts out the CDC’s contentions on appeal,” Florida’s lawyers argued.

The CDC, however, said keeping the rules in place would prevent future COVID-19 outbreaks on ships that are vulnerable to the spread of the virus because of their close quarters and frequent stops at foreign ports.



# States lend support to wildfires in West

*Associated Press*

BLY, Ore. — Out-of-state crews headed to Montana on Saturday to battle a blaze that injured five firefighters as the West struggled with a series of fires that have ravaged rural lands and destroyed homes.

Progress was being made on the nation's largest blaze, the Bootleg Fire in Oregon, but less than half of it had been contained, fire officials said. The growth of the sprawling fire had slowed but thousands of homes remained threatened on its eastern side, authorities said.

In California, Gov. Gavin Newsom on Friday proclaimed a state of emergency for four northern counties because of wildfires

that he said were causing “conditions of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property.” The proclamation opens the way for more state support.

On Saturday, fire crews from California and Utah were coming to Montana, Gov. Greg Gianforte announced. Five firefighters were injured Thursday when swirling winds blew flames back on them as they worked on the Devil’s Creek fire burning in rough, steep terrain near the rural town of Jordan.

They remained hospitalized Friday but Bureau of Land Management spokesperson Mark Jacobsen declined to release the extent of their injuries. The firefighters in-

cluded three U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service crew members from North Dakota and two U.S. Forest Service firefighters from New Mexico.

In California, the Tamarack Fire south of Lake Tahoe continued to burn through timber and chaparral and threatened communities on both sides of the California-Nevada state line. The fire, sparked by lightning July 4 in Alpine County, has destroyed at least 10 buildings.

Mandatory evacuation orders were issued Friday in Butte County, Calif., as the Dixie Fire continued to grow explosively eastward, becoming the state’s largest wildfire so far this year.

# Search for bodies ends at site of Fla. condo collapse

*Associated Press*

MIAMI — Firefighters on Friday declared the end of their search for bodies at the site of a collapsed Florida condo building, concluding a month of painstaking work removing layers of dangerous debris that were once piled several stories high.

The June 24 collapse at the oceanside Champlain Towers South killed 97 people, with at least one more missing person yet to be identified. The site has been mostly swept flat and the rubble moved to a Miami warehouse. Although forensic scientists are still at work, including examining the debris at the warehouse, there are no more bodies to be found where the building once stood.

Except during the early hours after the collapse, survivors never emerged. Search teams spent weeks battling the hazards of the rubble, including an unstable portion of the building that teetered above, a recurring fire and Florida’s stifling summer heat and thunderstorms. They went through more than 14,000 tons of broken concrete and rebar, often working boulder by boulder, rock by rock, before finally declaring the mission complete.

Miami-Dade Fire Rescue’s urban search-and-rescue team pulled away from the site Friday in a convoy of firetrucks and other vehicles, slowly driving to their headquarters for a news conference to announce that

the search was officially over.

At a ceremony, Fire Chief Alan Cominsky saluted the firefighters who worked 12-hour shifts while camping out at the site.

“It’s obviously devastating. It’s obviously a difficult situation across the board,” Cominsky said. “I couldn’t be prouder of the men and women that represent Miami-Dade Fire Rescue.”

Officials have declined to clarify whether they have one additional set of human remains in hand that pathologists are struggling to identify or whether a search for that final set of remains continues.

If found, Estelle Hedaya would bring the death toll to 98.

# Virus-related lockdowns spur protests in Australia

*Associated Press*

SYDNEY — Thousands of people took to the streets of Sydney and other Australian cities on Saturday to protest lockdown restrictions amid another surge in cases, and police made several arrests after crowds broke through barriers and threw plastic bottles and plants.

The unmasked participants marched from Sydney’s Victoria Park to Town Hall in the central business district, carrying signs calling for “freedom” and “the truth.”

There was a heavy police presence in Sydney, including mounted police and riot officers in response to what authorities said was unauthorized protest activity. Police confirmed a number of arrests had been made after objects were thrown at of-

ficers.

New South Wales Police said it recognized and supported the rights of free speech and peaceful assembly, but the protest was a breach of public health orders.

“The priority for NSW Police is always the safety of the wider community,” a police statement said.

The protest comes as COVID-19 case numbers in the state reached another record with 163 new infections in the last 24 hours.

Greater Sydney has been locked down for the past four weeks, with residents only able to leave home with a reasonable excuse.

“We live in a democracy and normally I am certainly one who supports people’s

rights to protest ... but at the present time we’ve got cases going through the roof and we have people thinking that’s OK to get out there and possibly be close to each other at a demonstration,” said state Health Minister Brad Hazzard.

In Melbourne, thousands of protesters without masks turned out downtown chanting “freedom.” Some of them lit flares as they gathered outside Victoria state’s Parliament House.

They held banners, including one that read: “This is not about a virus it’s about total government control of the people.”

A car protest rally is also planned in Adelaide, which is also under lockdown, with police warning they will make arrests over unlawful activity.

**AMERICAN ROUNDUP**

**Teen on ride hit in the face by flying seagull**

**NJ** WILDWOOD — A teenage girl was hit in the face by a seagull while riding an amusement park ride in New Jersey.

Kiley Holman, 13, was celebrating her friend's birthday at Morey's Piers in Wildwood when she was struck, NJ Advance Media reported.

The girls were just seconds into their ride on the SlingShot when the bird flew into her. Video shows that after a moment of shock she was able to pull the bird off her face.

"The seagull just flew away," Kiley said. "The only thing that happened to me was a little tiny cut; that was all."

**Armed person accused of stealing ambulance**

**TX** HOUSTON — An armed suspect stole an ambulance while a patient and a firefighter were inside, Houston police said.

The suspect is accused of running the ambulance off the road, the department said in a series of tweets. Then, a firefighter behind the wheel was forced out of the ambulance at gunpoint and left on the side of the road.

A patient and another firefighter were in the back of the vehicle.

Authorities said they used a GPS to track down the ambulance.

**Homeowner finds woman skinny dipping in pool**

**FL** PUNTA GORDA — A Florida man returning home from a doctor's ap-

pointment found a stranger skinny dipping in his backyard swimming pool, sheriff's officials said.

At first, the man only noticed clothes scattered across his lanai, Charlotte County Sheriff's officials said in a social media post. Then, he saw the woman in his pool and called deputies, sheriff's officials said.

Deputies took her to the Charlotte County Jail, but she refused to tell them her name. Officials eventually identified her through previous jail booking photos.

The woman, 42, was charged with trespassing and resisting a law enforcement officer without violence.

**Police: Man tried to kill woman with yo-yo string**

**ND** BISMARCK — A North Dakota man was charged with attempted murder for allegedly trying to kill his girlfriend with a modified yo-yo string that he thought could be used to sever a human head.

A police affidavit said the woman was driving the Bismarck man, 32, to the Bismarck Police Department so he could turn himself in on outstanding warrants when he repeatedly kicked the dash and the windshield and threatened to kill her.

The man wrapped the yo-yo string around the woman's neck as she pulled into the police station parking lot, the affidavit said. But the string broke and she was able to get out of the car and get inside the station. The man drove away and was found that afternoon as he was riding a minibike.

In addition to attempted mur-

der, the man is also charged with felony aggravated assault, terrorizing and fleeing police.

**Zoo announces its first white rhino birth**

**VA** NORFOLK — The Virginia Zoo is welcoming its first baby southern white rhinoceros.

The male calf was born to mom, Zina, and dad, Sibindi, on July 11, zoo officials announced. He is strong, nursing well and is bonding with his mother, officials said. The calf is the first of his species to be born at the Virginia Zoo and his birth brings the zoo's rhino count to four.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature classifies the species as near threatened because of habitat loss and the illegal poaching of their horns.

**State's first Chick-fil-A closing after 47 years**

**AL** BIRMINGHAM — The first Chick-fil-A restaurant to open in Alabama nearly 50 years ago is closing.

Jerry Cotney, who owns the restaurant at Brookwood Village mall in metro Birmingham, announced the shutdown in a social media post that said the once-popular shopping venue is no longer thriving.

The restaurant opened under another owner in 1974, just seven years after Truett Cathy launched the first Chick-fil-A at a mall in metro Atlanta. The company now has more than 100 locations in Alabama, its website shows.

The Brookwood Village location will close at the end of the month, Cotney said.

**Airplane's landing gear falls onto a golf course**

**ME** GORHAM — An airplane's landing gear fell from the sky onto a golf course in Maine but no one was hurt, police said.

The strut with tire and wheel crashed onto the seventh hole fairway at the Gorham Country Club, said Sgt. Ted Hatch of the Gorham Police Department.

The pilot was planning to land at Portland International Jetport but returned to New York upon learning part of the landing gear was missing, Hatch said.

The twin-engine Piper Navajo returned safely, conducting a belly landing at Long Island MacArthur Airport in Ronkonkoma, N.Y., he said.

**Women hater indicted in planned sorority shooting**

**OH** CLEVELAND — A man who identifies with a group that despises women appeared in federal court in Cincinnati on charges related to his plans to kill sorority members at an unidentified university in Ohio, authorities said.

Tres Genco, 21, of Hillsboro was charged with an attempted hate crime and possession of a machine gun, according to an unsealed indictment.

Federal prosecutors in a statement said Genco identifies himself as an "incel" — involuntary celibate — and has interacted with an online community of mostly men who advocate for violence against women because they believe they are unjustly denied sexual or romantic attention.

— From wire reports



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# US women's soccer team routs New Zealand

Associated Press

SAITAMA, Japan — After a stunning loss in the opener, the U.S. women's soccer team vowed to be ruthless against New Zealand.

And they rebounded in a big way.

The Americans cruised to a 6-1 rout of New Zealand in front of First Lady Jill Biden at the Tokyo Olympics on Saturday.

With the United States leading 2-0 at the break, Biden arrived in time to watch the team put the game away in the second half at Saitama Stadium.

The United States was blanked by Sweden 3-0 in the opener. It was the team's first loss since January 2019 and snapped a 44-game unbeaten streak. The Americans had not been held scoreless since 2017.

But the Americans vowed to regain control of the tournament. Defender Kelley O'Hara said the United States needed to be "ruthless" against New Zealand.

"Sweden was a very good

team and we didn't play our best, and when you do that up against a top opponent, they're going to punish you. So that wasn't our best performance," Crystal Dunn said. "I think we came into Game 2 knowing that we don't go from being a really great team two days ago to not being a great team anymore."

Rose Lavelle scored off a well-placed pass from Tobin Heath in the ninth minute to give the United States an early lead — and the team's first goal of the Olympics. Despite the lack of goals, the Americans dominated the half, unlike their out-of-sorts start against the Swedes.

Lindsey Horan scored with a header in the final moments of the half to put the United States up 2-0 at the break. It was Horan's 23rd international goal and it came on her milestone 100th appearance for the national team.

Horan called it surreal: Her 100th cap while the First Lady looked on in an otherwise empty stadium.

"I think my approach going into this game — obviously it's in the back of your head that you're getting your 100th cap — but I didn't want that to be a factor today, Horan said. "I think we wanted to get the job done and my focus was doing whatever I possibly could to help the team win. I'm happy to get a goal and yeah, it's nice to have a fan in the stands, too."

It could have been worse for New Zealand but the United States had four disallowed goals, all for offside, in the first half.

An own-goal by Abby Erceg extended the U.S. lead to 3-0 in the 64th minute. New Zealand avoided the shutout with Betsy Hassett's goal in the 72nd.

Christen Press, who came in as a second-half substitute, scored from the center of the box in the 80th off a feed from Julie Ertz, before Alex Morgan scored in the final minutes of regulation. Another New Zealand own-goal closed out the game in stoppage time.

"Look, from our perspective I thought we had a terrific 80 minutes and unfortunately the last 10 minutes kind of let us down a little bit on the scoreline," New Zealand coach Tom Sermanni said. "From an effort perspective, you can't fault the players, they gave blood sweat and tears on the field tonight to come up against a very good team."

U.S. coach Vlatko Andonovski made five changes to the starting lineup he used against Sweden, giving Carli Lloyd the start over Morgan, Megan Rapinoe for Press, Ertz for Sam Mewis, Emily Sonnett for O'Hara, and Tiarna Davidson for captain Becky Sauerbrunn.

The United States, the reigning World Cup champion, has been to every Olympics since women's soccer joined the event in 1996. The world's top-ranked team has five gold medals, more than any other nation.

The U.S. also lost the first match of the 2008 Beijing Games, falling to Norway 2-0, but went on to win the gold.

# Gilchrist makes winning return at Tokyo games

Associated Press

TOKYO — On the way to her first game in the Tokyo Olympics, Kaleigh Gilchrist cried. She looked at pictures of family and friends, and thought about climbing out of that terrifying night in South Korea. And the tears just started falling.

Tears of joy — and gratitude.

Playing in the city where her father, Sandy, swam for Canada in the 1964 Games, Kaleigh Gilchrist made a successful return to the Olympics when she scored two goals in the United States' opening 25-4 victory over Japan in women's water polo on Saturday.

"These Games were almost taken away from me not once but twice with the injury and the pandemic," Gilchrist said. "So what I've learned through it all is just to really embrace it."

Gilchrist, 29, helped the U.S. to its second straight gold medal in Rio, but her playing career was in jeopardy after she got hurt while celebrating a world cham-

pionship almost two years ago. She was on a nightclub balcony when it collapsed, killing two people and sending Gilchrist to the hospital.

She sustained some deep lacerations on her left leg and got some stitches for cuts on her left thigh. She had surgery and stayed behind in South Korea for a few days while the rest of the team returned home.

To get to Tokyo, Gilchrist had to navigate her way through an arduous process that tested her both mentally and physically.

"Every moment, we called it, was a big day," U.S. trainer Larnie Boquiren told the AP, "because from that point forward everything was going to be new. The fact that she was going to stand. The fact that was going to move her muscles. The fact that she was going to be getting in the water. Those were all milestones and big days."

Boquiren was right by Gilchrist's side throughout her rehab, which included everything from tap dancing to Gilchrist

picking up marbles with her toes and dropping them into a cup. Gilchrist, Boquiren said, made her better, too.

"We pushed each other," Boquiren said. "For myself, I grew, too, as a person, just by knowing her and getting to know her as a person and as a friend."

Boquiren dubbed Gilchrist's comeback her "Mamba Mission" in honor of another key figure for the Newport Beach, Calif., native. Gilchrist struck up a friendship with Kobe Bryant through their shared Olympics experience, and the former Los Angeles Lakers star stayed in touch with her while she recovered.

"After my injury, I just reached out to pick his brain and he just continued to check in on me and gave me some of his contacts," she said.

When Bryant died in a January 2020 helicopter crash, Gilchrist mourned the loss in a social media post paying tribute to his influence on her outlook.

"He was such a mentor for me," she said.



# Devers propels BoSox past Yankees

Associated Press

BOSTON — Rafael Devers hit two home runs, including a go-ahead blast in the fifth inning, to help the Boston Red Sox best New York Yankees ace Gerrit Cole for the second straight time at Fenway Park in a 6-2 victory Friday night.

Devers followed his two-run with a three-run homer in the seventh — the 100th of his career — to help Boston improve to 9-2 against New York this season. The Red Sox maintained their one-game AL East lead over Tampa Bay and increased their lead to nine games over the third-place Yankees.

Yacksel Rios (3-0) got the victory, pitching two scoreless innings to cap a strong night from the bullpen after starter Eduardo Rodriguez left in the second inning after experiencing migraine symptoms.

Cole (10-5) started strong for New York, but was pulled after five innings, giving up three runs off six hits, striking out

eight and walking two.

**Mets 3, Blue Jays 0:** Tylor Megill threw six scoreless innings for his first big league victory and got his first career hit, Pete Alonso homered twice and New York beat visiting Toronto.

Alonso continued his post-Home Run Derby surge, hitting a two-run shot off former teammate Steven Matz (8-5) in the first inning and adding a solo blast off Ryan Borucki in the eighth. Alonso has four homers in his last four games.

**Rays 10, Indians 5:** Nelson Cruz homered in his debut with his new team and Joey Wendle hit a go-ahead single in a six-run ninth inning to help Tampa Bay beat host Cleveland.

**Cubs 8, Diamondbacks 3:** Javier Baez homered, Robinson Chirinos went deep twice, Zach Davies earned his first victory since a combined no-hitter last month and Chicago beat visiting Arizona.

**Astros 7, Rangers 3:** Kyle Tucker hit a three-run homer in

his team's big third inning to help host Houston hand Texas its 10th straight loss.

**Phillies 5, Braves 1:** Zack Wheeler returned to his All-Star form for seven innings, Bryce Harper stole three bases, including home, and Philadelphia beat visiting Atlanta.

**Orioles 6, Nationals 1:** Pat Valaika homered twice — doubling his total for the season — and host Baltimore beat Washington for just its second victory in its last 11 home games.

**Padres 5, Marlins 2:** Joe Musgrove pitched six solid innings, Tommy Pham led off with a home run and visiting San Diego beat Miami.

**Reds 6, Cardinals 5:** Tyler Stephenson drove in Kyle Farmer with a tiebreaking sacrifice fly in the eighth inning, rallying host Cincinnati past St. Louis.

**Brewers 7, White Sox 1:** Tyrone Taylor hit a grand slam to cap Milwaukee's six-run seventh inning against visiting Chicago.

**Royals 5, Tigers 3:** Ryan O'Hearn hit a three-run homer, Carlos Santana also connected and host Kansas City ended Detroit's winning streak at seven.

**Twins 5, Angels 4:** Nick Gordon scored the go-ahead run in the eighth inning on a throwing error by catcher Kurt Suzuki in Minnesota's victory over visiting Los Angeles.

**Mariners 4, Athletics 3:** Cal Raleigh and Luis Torrens hit back-to-back homers, Dylan Moore scored the go-ahead run on consecutive wild pitches and host Seattle beat Oakland.

**Pirates 6, Giants 4:** Bryan Reynolds homered, Adam Frazier drew a bases-loaded walk to force in the go-ahead run in the seventh inning when his team scored three times without a hit, and Pittsburgh beat host San Francisco.

**Rockies 9, Dodgers 6 (10):** Trevor Story homered and drove in the go-ahead run in the 10th inning as Colorado took advantage of host Los Angeles' recent bullpen woes.

## NFL teams making progress with vaccinations

Associated Press

The number of NFL players in the COVID-19 vaccination process has reached 80%, with nine teams having 90% or more of their players in that category.

Dr. Allen Sills, the league's medical director, said Friday that nearly all Tier 1 and Tier 2 team employees — those who deal directly with players — have been vaccinated. Five teams are at less than 70% of players who have either received one vaccination shot or both. He is optimistic the number of vaccinated players will continue to rise as training camps open.

"I think we are off to an excellent start," Sills said. "Those numbers are much higher than what we're seeing in society as a whole. There has been a lot of movement

in that area. As you see players coming to training camp, you will see more players beginning that process (of vaccination)."

Sills cited teams having strong advocates for vaccination among players and coaches, as well as the educational materials available.

"I think that has influenced a lot of players," he said. "I think we are still seeing a lot of positive momentum. Numbers are changing on a day-by-day basis and I think we'll be seeing them day by day going up.

"What matters is that individuals have the most accurate information. Let's not get information from Instagram or Facebook posts. Let's try to hear from the most reputable professionals. You don't shout anyone into belief

here — there have to be thoughtful conversations. What we can do is provide the facts and make sure the entirety of the medical facts are presented."

On Thursday, NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell sent a memo to the 32 teams warning that forfeited regular-season games could occur for a COVID-19 outbreak caused by nonvaccinated players.

Dawn Aponte, the league's chief football administrative officer, reiterated that games will not be postponed to avoid roster issues because of the flexibility built in: COVID-19 replacement players; expanded practice squads to 16 players; a three-week minimum stay on injured reserve instead of six weeks; no limit on activating players from

IR.

That means 272 games on time within 18 weeks "safely and responsibly," she said.

"Flexible and adaptable will continue to be key," Aponte added, noting that Goodell's memo was vetted by people in a variety of NFL roles. "We are committed to playing a full season as scheduled. There is the no-play/no-pay provision (from 2020), which has been agreed to with the players' association and will carry into this season."

"Health and science truly is what drives and guides these decisions," she added. "And I think we illustrated that last season and will continue to do so. I think we know a lot more this year ... the biggest difference is a vaccination is available."

# NHL Draft: Power taken with top pick

*Associated Press*

The NHL Draft turned into a Michigan maize and blue affair Friday night. And there's a Hughes sibling reunion set to happen in New Jersey.

Whatever challenges the coronavirus pandemic presented scouts in grading prospects, many of whom played shortened seasons, they were unable to put a dent on the Wolverines' hold on the top rankings. Four players with ties to Michigan were taken among the top five selections.

The run began with defenseman Owen Power going No. 1 to the Buffalo Sabres followed by center Matthew Beniers being selected second by the expansion Seattle Kraken.

It marked the first time since 1969 that teammates went with the first two selections.

Things developed so quickly, Beniers was in the middle of an interview when he watched a

third Michigan player, forward Kent Johnson, get selected fifth by Columbus.

"I'm kind of lost for words right now," Beniers said. "I'm just so excited for my teammates and for what's next."

The trio made Michigan college hockey's first program to have three teammates selected in the first round.

That wasn't all, however. Luke Hughes, who is committed to playing at Michigan this season, was chosen fourth overall by the Devils, where the defenseman is united with brother Jack, who was the No. 1 pick in the 2019 draft.

Hughes watched the draft on his family's living room couch with both of his NHL-playing brothers, rounded out by Quinn, who was selected seventh overall by Vancouver in 2018. Jack Hughes immediately jumped up and began hugging Luke upon hearing Devils GM

Tom Fitzgerald announce the pick.

"I think Jack's even more excited — that might be the happiest I've ever seen him," said Luke Hughes, who spent last season playing for USA Hockey's developmental program. "It's a dream come true to play in the NHL and it's also a dream come true to play with your brother. Both those things are happening tonight."

The draft had its controversial moment as well. The Montreal Canadiens used their 31st selection to select Logan Mailoux, who was criminally convicted in Sweden last year for sharing an explicit photo of a woman performing a sex act without her consent. Mailoux had asked teams not to select him even though a player cannot remove himself from the draft.

"I know he's been remorseful about the incident, which we

truly don't agree with it in all sense of the world," general manager Marc Bergevin said. "But he's a young man who made a serious mistake of judgment and we really have to work with him."

Ontario junior center Mason McTavish was the only player without Michigan ties to round out the top five, after he was selected third overall by Anaheim.

NHL scouting officials entered the draft expressing concern over projecting prospects because of a lack of playing time due to COVID-19 and after the combine was canceled for a second consecutive year.

Michigan played 26 games before its season abruptly ended with a series of positive tests just before the start of the NCAA Tournament. The Ontario Hockey League, by comparison, had its entire season canceled.

## Blackhawks acquire Jones from Blue Jackets

*Associated Press*

SECAUCUS, N.J. — Seth Jones is now with the Chicago Blackhawks and could become the organization's cornerstone on the blue line.

Chicago acquired the star defenseman from the Columbus Blue Jackets in a blockbuster trade Friday just before the NHL Draft began. The Blackhawks got Jones and the 32nd pick in the draft and a 2022 sixth-rounder from the Blue Jackets for 20-year-old defenseman Adam Boqvist, the 12th and 44th picks in the draft and a 2022 first-rounder.

"Thrilled to be able to add someone like Seth Jones to our team," general manager Stan Bowman said on a video call after the first round. "He's an impact defenseman that we've been searching for for quite some time, and to finally be able to add him to our group here is a huge move for the whole group. I think it changes the complexion of our defense in particular but our team in general."

And this isn't a one-year move. Jones agreed to terms on a \$76 million, eight-year extension that carries a \$9.5 million annual salary cap hit, according to a person with

knowledge of the deal. The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the extension won't be signed until this week.

Bowman said the Blackhawks have been plotting their cap situation and stockpiling assets to make this kind of move. Chicago's rebuild just got a jumpstart.

"You're always looking for opportunities to try to accelerate your team's progression," Bowman said. "We certainly had to include a young player in Adam Boqvist and a draft pick, as well — a couple draft picks. But there are so few opportunities to add a player of this caliber that you have to take advantage of it when they come around."

The Blackhawks acquired Seth's brother, Caleb, earlier this month in a trade that sent Duncan Keith to Edmonton. Caleb Jones could be a part of Chicago's future, but Seth is expected to be the No. 1 defenseman for years to come.

Jones skated more than 25 minutes a game last season and recorded 28 points in 56 games. He has 286 points in 580 regular-season NHL games.

The trade was the fourth and biggest of the day, which also included Arizona pulling off a blockbuster by sending captain Oliver Ekman-Larsson and forward Conor Garland to Vancouver for the No. 9 selection, a 2022 second-round pick, 2023 seventh-rounder and three veteran forwards.

The St. Louis Blues also acquired high-scoring forward Pavel Buchnevich from the New York Rangers for Sammy Blais and a 2022 second-round pick.

"He's going to touch all aspects of our game and he's at a good age," Blues GM Doug Armstrong said of the 26-year-old Buchnevich, who is a restricted free agent. "As we continue to retool this roster, I think he's a good piece for us."

Earlier in the day, the Philadelphia Flyers traded the 14th pick and a 2023 second-rounder to the Buffalo Sabres for big defenseman Rasmus Ristolainen.

"He's a player we've been looking at the last three years," Flyers general manager Chuck Fletcher said of Ristolainen. "He can shoot the puck, he can skate, he's big and strong."