

Biden: DOD should make plan for requiring troops to get vaccine

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden on Thursday directed Pentagon leaders to consider how and when they will require troops to receive the coronavirus vaccine but stopped short of mandating the shots as the vaccines remain under emergency-use authorization by the Federal Drug Administration.

Though the military requires troops to receive many vaccinations, federal law prohibits the Pentagon from mandating those without full FDA approval. The president has the authority to bypass the restriction and require troops to get the shot, but Biden has not done so.

Yet Biden said Thursday during a public address from the White House that service members have an especially critical need to get vaccinated.

“I think this is particularly important because our troops serve in places throughout the world — many where vaccination rates

are low and disease is prevalent,” he said.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin is “open” to requiring the vaccine before its full authorization, Biden said, but “the question is when is the right time to get the most bang for the buck?”

“A lot of this is timing, and so I think it’s going to happen,” the president said. “It’s still a temporary approval, so when does the final approval come? It usually takes a lot of work to get there.”

Biden said he expected full FDA approval should come “in the early fall.”

About 77% of active-duty sailors, 70% of soldiers, 61% of airmen and 58% of Marines had received at least one dose of the vaccine as of June 30, according to the most recent data from the Defense Health Agency.

But with the vaccine now readily available and no mandate yet, military leaders face the challenge of how to convince the remaining vaccine holdouts to volunteer for the shot, Vice Adm. John Nowell, the

chief of naval personnel, said Thursday.

“Hey, 77% [vaccinated] is pretty good, but we look at that and say, ‘That means we’ve got 23% and their families that we want to get vaccinated because we don’t want them to die,’ Nowell said. “It’s about that simple.”

In the past week, two unvaccinated sailors died from the coronavirus. The U.S. Naval Institute News reported Wednesday, citing an unnamed Navy official, that both sailors, one of whom was a doctor, were unvaccinated.

“Before we had the vaccine available, it was tragic,” Nowell said. “But it makes me want to cry when I see a sailor who passes away now and they had a chance to be immunized and they didn’t take it.”

Without a mandate, Nowell said he hopes sailors will independently “understand the imperative” of getting vaccinated “as they look at the news and they see what’s happening with those rates of infection for the unvaccinated.”

Sailor charged with starting 2020 Bonhomme Richard fire

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

A crew member of the Navy’s fire-decimated USS Bonhomme Richard has been charged with starting the blaze under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, the service said Thursday.

The charges “were brought forth against a Navy Sailor in response to evidence found during the criminal investigation into the fire” that began July 12, 2020, while the amphibious assault ship was docked in San Diego, according to a statement by Cmdr. Sean Robertson, a spokesman for the Navy’s 3rd Fleet.

The statement did not identify the sailor, and Robertson did not respond to a emailed query by Stars and Stripes.

“Evidence collected during the investigation is sufficient to direct a preliminary hearing in accordance with due process under the military justice system,” Robertson said in the statement.

Vice Adm. Steve Koehler, the commander of 3rd Fleet, is considering court-martial charges, he said.

Koehler has ordered a preliminary hearing headed by an impartial hearing officer who will make determinations and recommendations, including “whether or not there is probable cause to believe an offense has been committed,” he said.

The Bonhomme Richard was undergoing maintenance at Naval Base San Diego when the blaze seared through 11 of the ship’s 14

decks, destroyed its forward mast and damaged the superstructure before being put out four days later.

More than 60 sailors and civilians were treated for minor injuries, such as smoke inhalation.

The Navy announced in December that the ship, only 22 years in service, would be scrapped because repairs would be too expensive.

The Navy has not made public several investigations into the blaze.

A Navy spokesman told the San Diego Union-Tribune this month that a command investigation into the circumstances surrounding the fire had been completed and is being reviewed by Navy leaders.

Evacuation brings 200 Afghans to US

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The first flight evacuating Afghans who worked alongside Americans in Afghanistan brought more than 200 people, scores of them children and babies in arms, to new lives in the United States on Friday, and President Joe Biden said he was proud to welcome them home.

The launch of the evacuation flights, bringing out former interpreters and others who fear retaliation from Afghanistan's Taliban for having worked with American service members and civilians, highlights American uncertainty about how Afghanistan's government and military will fare after the last U.S. combat forces leave that country in the coming weeks.

Family members are accompanying the interpreters, transla-

tors and others on the flights out. The first evacuation flight, an airliner, carried 221 Afghans under the special visa program, including 57 children and 15 babies, according to an internal U.S. government document obtained by The Associated Press.

It touched down in Dulles, Va., just outside Washington, D.C., after midnight, according to the FlightAware tracking service.

Friday's flight was "an important milestone as we continue to fulfill our promise to the thousands of Afghan nationals who served shoulder-to-shoulder with American troops and diplomats over the last 20 years in Afghanistan," Biden said. He said he wanted to honor the veterans, diplomats and others in the U.S. who have advocated for the Afghans.

"Most of all," Biden said in a

statement, "I want to thank these brave Afghans for standing with the United States, and today, I am proud to say to them: 'Welcome home.'"

Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin lauded the Afghans for their work alongside Americans and said their arrival demonstrates the U.S. government's commitment to them.

But a refugee agency said the Biden administration appeared to be still scrambling to figure out the resettlement of thousands more Afghans, and it urged Biden to bring them quickly to the U.S. or a U.S. territory, such as Guam.

"To date, there is simply no clear plan as to how the vast majority of our allies will be brought to safety," Krish O'Mara Vignarajah, president of the Lutheran Im-

migration and Refugee Service resettlement agency, said of the Afghan interpreters.

"We cannot in good conscience put them at risk in third countries with unreliable human rights records, or where the Taliban may be able to reach them," the resettlement official said.

Congress on Thursday approved legislation that would allow an additional 8,000 visas and \$500 million in funding for the Afghan visa program.

The U.S. has been talking with Qatar and Kuwait about temporarily hosting thousands of other Afghan interpreters who are much further along in their visa application process than Friday's arrivals. But U.S. officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss negotiations, said Friday that no deal had been closed.

Philippines-US defense pact deemed to be 'back on track'

By SETH ROBSON

Stars and Stripes

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has withdrawn a long-standing threat to cancel a defense agreement that allows U.S. military forces to train in his country.

The decision on the Visiting Forces Agreement, or VFA, was announced by Philippine Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana at a joint press conference Friday with his U.S. counterpart, Lloyd Austin, in Manila.

"The president decided to retract or rescind the VFA termination," Lorenzana told reporters during the conference, which was streamed online. "We are back on track."

The agreement, which governs bilateral training such as the annual Balikatan exercise, U.S. Navy port calls at Subic Bay and U.S.

Air Force operations out of Clark Air Base, has been under a cloud since January 2020, when Duterte threatened to scrap it.

Its reprieve is the latest swing for an alliance that has been on shaky ground since the strongman took office in 2016.

Duterte began his presidency by insulting U.S. leaders and stating his intention to move closer to China and Russia.

That hasn't gotten much traction with China, which has continued to occupy and enlarge artificial islands in the South China Sea that belong to the Philippines, according to a 2016 international court ruling.

At the press conference Friday, Austin thanked Duterte for the decision on visiting forces and offered condolences following two recent military plane crashes in the Philippines.

Senate passes bill to reimburse Guard for Capitol security work

By SARAH CAMMARATA

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON—The Senate on Thursday unanimously voted to pass a \$2.1 billion funding measure that will reimburse the National Guard for costs incurred to support security in the nation's capital in the wake of the deadly Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol.

The spending bill would provide \$521 million to reimburse the National Guard, as well as more than \$70 million to support more U.S. Capitol Police officers, plus hazard pay, overtime and retention bonuses for the police. The bill also includes \$1.1 billion in relief to Afghans who worked with the U.S. during nearly two decades of war in the country.

National Guard leaders have warned for months that without the additional funding, units across the United States will be forced to stop training next

month. Top Guard officials said recently that units will have to ground aircraft, cancel long-planned summer training operations and weekend drills and the Guard's 54th Security Force Assistance Brigade could miss a rotation to a major combat training center without the funding by Sunday.

More than 25,000 troops deployed to the Capitol grounds between January and May after a mob of former President Donald Trump's supporters broke into the Capitol building Jan. 6 to attempt to disrupt Congress from formally certifying President Joe Biden's election victory.

The measure would also give \$300 million to bolster safeguards for the Capitol complex, including funds for windows and doors of the Capitol and the installation of new security cameras.

US military commanders curtail travel to Tokyo

By JOSEPH DITZLER
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — Japan's capital city, host to the Summer Olympics, reported another 3,300 new coronavirus cases Friday, as U.S. military commands began restricting their populations' access to the inner city.

Some U.S. commanders, alarmed at the all-time high rate of new infections in Tokyo, put the city off-limits altogether, even for fully vaccinated individuals. U.S. bases in Japan reported 20 new coronavirus patients on Friday.

Tokyo is experiencing its fifth and most extreme coronavirus wave, in sheer volume of new cases. It reported its one-day pandemic high, 3,865 new patients, on Thursday.

Friday's tally exceeded by 1,941 the number reported a week prior, according to public broadcaster NHK. More than 3,000 people are hospitalized, 81 of them in serious condition, according to data from the Tokyo Metropolitan Government.

At the Tokyo Olympics another 27 people associated with the Games, including three foreign athletes, tested positive Friday, Kyodo News reported. The Olympic total is 220 since July 1, according to the news service.

Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga was primed Friday to declare states of emergency in several more prefectures in addition to Tokyo and Okinawa, according to The Associated Press.

A government panel approved putting Tokyo's neighboring prefectures of Saitama, Kanagawa and Chiba under an emergency from Monday until Aug. 31, AP reported. The headquarters for the U.S. Navy and Army and the homeport of the 7th Fleet are in Kanagawa.

At Yokota Air Base, the headquarters of U.S. Forces Japan in western Tokyo, the commander ordered the central wards of Tokyo off-limits to anyone affiliated with the base.

"Due to significant increases in the number of COVID-19 positive cases within Japan, travel to the Tokyo metropolitan area and mainland Okinawa is prohibited for all personnel," said the order signed by Col. Andrew Campbell.

Only stays at the New Sanno Hotel, a U.S. military property in central Tokyo, are permitted, along with travel through the city or, with permission from the appropriate authority, travel for mission-essential duties, the order states.

Tornadoes hit Wisconsin, Pennsylvania

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — Tornadoes touched down in Pennsylvania and Wisconsin amid powerful thunderstorms that caused widespread damage that contributed to the death of a man who crashed into a fallen tree and power line, officials said Thursday.

The National Weather Service confirmed two tornadoes touched down in Pennsylvania's Bucks County on Thursday afternoon, sending trees falling and debris flying. A thunderous downpour flooded streets and roadways.

The Courier Times of Bucks County reported one of the tornadoes in Pennsylvania damaged an auto dealership and a mobile home park.

Bensalem Police Public Safety Director Fred Harran said four people were injured at the auto dealership in Bensalem, and a fifth person was hurt at a nearby business. All injuries were considered non-life-threatening. Anthony Perez, an employee at the dealership, said a weather alert sounded on his phone just before the tornado hit.

"At that point, we were looking for shelter," he said. "Everything was in a flash."

Severe weather was a concern along the east coast, with the weather service issuing warnings in New Jersey as well.

In Wisconsin, the strong winds that moved across the state from the Mississippi River to Lake Michigan began Wednesday evening. By 2 a.m. Thursday, the numerous tornado warnings around the state had expired.

Hours later, a man died when he crashed his vehicle into a fallen tree and power line near the town of Ripon at about 6 a.m. Thursday, the Wisconsin State Journal reported.

The National Weather Service surveyed hard-hit areas in southeastern Wisconsin and confirmed one tornado, probably rated EF1, caused damage around the Jefferson County community of Concord, toppling farm buildings. Cows could be seen grazing among debris that landed in farm fields. By Thursday afternoon, the weather service confirmed at least two other tornadoes were also responsible for damage near Waukesha and Watertown.

Gov. Tony Evers signed a declaration imposing a state of emergency in Wisconsin. Evers' order directs state agencies to help those impacted by the storms.

Kim stresses military prep ahead of US-South Korea annual drills

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea said Friday that leader Kim Jong Un called for stronger capability to cope with any foreign provocation as he met with military officers ahead of annual drills next month between South Korea and the United States that Pyongyang views as an invasion rehearsal.

Earlier this week, Kim reopened suspended communication channels with rival South Korea, raising hopes of reduced animosities on the Korean Peninsula. But some experts say Pyongyang could conduct missile tests or take other tension-raising actions in response to the drills, which Seoul and Washington have altered in past years to support diplomacy.

The official Korean Central News Agency said Kim held the workshop of military

commanders and political officers from July 24-27 to discuss ways to enhance the North's military strength. It said it was the first such meeting since North Korea's military was founded.

During the meeting, Kim "stressed that commanders and political officers should focus all efforts on completing preparations for actively and offensively coping with any military provocation of enemies," KCNA said.

Kim accused "the hostile forces," an apparent reference to the U.S. and South Korea, of bolstering their capabilities for making a preemptive attack and intensifying "all sorts of frantic and persistent war drills for aggression." Kim ordered the workshop attendees to put greater efforts to boost their units' combat efficiency, KCNA said.

Ex-Cardinal charged with sexual assault

New York Daily News

Former U.S. Catholic Cardinal Theodore McCarrick was charged Wednesday with sexually assaulting a 16-year-old boy nearly 50 years ago, court documents show.

McCarrick, who was defrocked by the Vatican in 2019 over sexual abuse allegations, was charged with three counts of indecent assault and battery on a person over 14, according to *The Boston Globe*.

The 91-year-old former archbishop of Washington, D.C., was charged with assaulting a teenager during a wedding reception in Massachusetts in 1974.

The complaint was filed by Wellesley Police in Dedham District Court.

McCarrick, once one of the country's most influential Catholic leaders, rose to the top of the Catholic Church in the U.S. after he was ordained as a priest of the Archdio-

cese of New York in 1958.

He is the first cardinal to ever be criminally charged with sexually assaulting a minor, a lawyer representing the man alleging the abuse told *The Associated Press*.

"It takes an enormous amount of courage for a sexual abuse victim to report having been sexually abused to investigators and proceed through the criminal process," Mitchell Garabedian said. "Let the facts be presented, the law applied, and a fair verdict rendered."

In January the man told authorities that during his brother's wedding reception at Wellesley College in June 1974, McCarrick told him that his father wanted the two to have a conversation because the then-16-year-old was "being mischievous at home and not attending church."

The two went for a walk around campus,

when McCarrick groped him, according to the report.

The man also alleges that when they returned to the reception, McCarrick took him into a small room where he fondled his genitals while "saying prayers to make me feel holy."

In 2018, McCarrick was removed from public ministry, over allegations that he had sexually abused an altar boy in New York.

In February 2019, Pope Francis confirmed the removal from the priesthood of McCarrick, who was then 88, after a panel of the Congregation for Doctrine of the Faith found him guilty on Jan. 11.

McCarrick, who now lives in Missouri, was summoned to appear in court for arraignment on Sept. 3.

His attorney, Barry Coburn, declined to comment.

Effort seeks Cheney and Kinzinger out of House GOP

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Conservative lawmakers made a push Thursday to boot Republican Reps. Liz Cheney and Adam Kinzinger out of the House GOP because the two defied party leaders and joined the chamber's special committee investigating the Jan. 6 Capitol attack by supporters of then-President Donald Trump.

The effort by the hard-right House Freedom Caucus faces uncertain prospects. House Republican leaders have exhibited little interest in acting quickly against the two mavericks, which could fuel a fight that would distract from the party's preferred focus on issues such as inflation, crime and immigration.

The move is the latest example of turmoil over the GOP's message and image, even as Trump's shadow continues to loom large over the party.

Banishing Cheney, R-Wyo., and Kinzinger, R-Ill., from the House Republican organization, called the GOP conference, would threaten an end to their committee assignments. It would also deny them other normally routine privileges such as attending closed-door Republican strategy meetings.

Rep. Andy Biggs, R-Ariz., who leads the roughly 40-member Freedom Caucus, told reporters that Cheney and Kinzinger chose to "join the Democrats on a witch hunt" against Republicans. He said it makes little

sense to let them into private meetings where GOP lawmakers strategize against Democrats.

Biggs said letting the two into such sessions would be like having "two spies sitting right there. You knew they were spies, but you couldn't remove them."

Cheney and Kinzinger are outspoken Trump critics who agreed to let House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., appoint them to the Jan. 6 investigative committee.

That infuriated Republicans. They've refused to name any members to that panel after Pelosi blocked two would-be GOP appointees whose fervent pro-Trump views, she said, would jeopardize the investigation's integrity.

Russian lab knocks space station out of its position

Associated Press

A newly arrived Russian science lab briefly knocked the International Space Station out of position Thursday when it accidentally fired its thrusters.

For 47 minutes, the space station lost control of its orientation when the firing occurred a few hours after docking, pushing the orbiting complex from its normal configuration. The station's position is key for getting power from solar panels and for communications. Communications with ground controllers also blipped out twice for a few

minutes.

Flight controllers regained control using thrusters on other Russian components at the station to right the ship, and it is now stable and safe, NASA said.

"We haven't noticed any damage," space station program manager Joel Montalbano said in a late afternoon press conference. "There was no immediate danger at any time to the crew."

Montalbano said the crew didn't really feel any movement or any shaking. NASA said the station moved 45 degrees out of atti-

tude, about one-eighth of a complete circle. The complex was never spinning, NASA spokesman Bob Jacobs said.

NASA's human spaceflight chief Kathy Lueders called it "a pretty exciting hour."

Russia's long-delayed 22-ton lab called Nauka arrived earlier Thursday, eight days after it launched from the Russian launch facility in Baikonur, Kazakhstan.

The launch of Nauka, which will provide more room for scientific experiments and space for the crew, had been repeatedly delayed because of technical problems.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Man charged with setting patrol vehicle on fire

NC GREENVILLE — A Pennsylvania man was accused of setting a patrol SUV at a North Carolina university on fire, police said Wednesday.

East Carolina University said in a news release that officers received a call on Tuesday about one of its vehicles on fire off campus. Damage to the vehicle was confined to the rear and the fire was quickly extinguished, the news release said.

Officers used camera footage from the area to get a description of the suspect, and an ECU patrol sergeant located and apprehended him after he tried to flee, according to the news release.

Authorities filed multiple charges against Fernando Daniel Laurens, 20, of Allegheny County, Pa., including three counts of felony arson to personal property.

Popular bear put down after being hit by vehicle

CT EASTON — A Connecticut bear that became popular locally with its own Facebook page had to be put down by police after it was struck by a vehicle, authorities said Tuesday.

Outpourings of grief were posted on the page after Easton police announced the death of the bear nicknamed "211" for the number on state environmental tags it had on both ears.

Police said they received a report shortly before 6:30 p.m. Monday that a bear had been struck by a vehicle on Route 136 in Easton, which is just north of Bridgeport. When they arrived, officers said the bear was suffer-

ing from serious injuries and they had to put it down.

Police said the driver of the vehicle left the scene before officers arrived.

Woman gets probation for stealing benefits

MA BOSTON — A Massachusetts woman has been sentenced to five years of probation for stealing more than \$260,000 in Social Security retirement benefits intended for a relative, federal prosecutors said.

Debbie Moore, 57, of Springfield, was ordered by a judge Tuesday to spend the first six months of her probationary period under house arrest and also ordered to pay full restitution, according to a statement from the U.S. attorney's office in Boston.

The money intended for Moore's aunt-in-law was deposited into a bank account controlled by Moore from November 2003 through February 2018 even though her relative had died, prosecutors said. She used the money for various personal expenses, authorities said.

She pleaded guilty in September to a charge of theft of government money.

Statue of Black hero on expedition toppled

OR PORTLAND — A statue in Portland, Ore., commemorating York, an enslaved Black member of the Lewis and Clark expedition, has been toppled and damaged, officials said.

A spokesperson with Portland Parks and Recreation told KOIN 6 News that the bust was torn from its pedestal and significantly damaged Tuesday night

or early Wednesday. A park visitor notified a maintenance worker on Wednesday.

The bust mysteriously appeared in February on a pedestal in a park in southeast Portland where a statue of Harvey Scott, a conservative and longtime editor of The Oregonian who opposed women's suffrage, stood until it was torn down. It remains unclear who created or placed the bust of York.

Man accused of attack over mask-wearing

NE OMAHA — Omaha police have arrested a man accused of attacking and shooting another man in the neck with a BB gun for wearing a face mask.

The incident happened Tuesday in the vestibule of a midtown grocery store as one man was leaving and another was entering, the Omaha World-Herald reported. One man was not wearing a mask, police said, and ran up to and spit on the other man, who was wearing a mask.

A fight ensued, and police said the unmasked man pulled out a BB-gun replica of a pistol and shot the other man. The injured man told officers that when he demanded to know why he was attacked, the unmasked man responded, "You're on the other team."

Official: Manhole covers likely caused girl's burns

IN YORKTOWN — A toddler whose hands and feet were badly burned as she was playing at a central Indiana splash pad is believed to have been injured by manhole covers left hot by exposure to sunlight, officials said.

Seventeen-month-old Kai-

'Brea Maurice was hospitalized after being burned Monday at the Yorktown Civic Green splash pad when she ran to an area with manhole covers after playing in the water.

Her burns were so severe her mother suspects she may have come into contact with acid used to the treat water flowing into the splash pad, which opened two months ago in Yorktown, about 45 miles northeast of Indianapolis.

Town Manager Pete Olson said the manhole covers are over chlorine and acid tanks needed to disinfect the water, but they don't appear to have any leaks. He said it's instead believed Kai'Brea was burned because the manhole covers were hot from exposure to the July sun.

Clubs require vaccination, negative COVID test

LA NEW ORLEANS — If you want to listen to the George Porter Trio or Big Chief Bo Dollis Jr. and the Wild Magnolias rip it up at some of the most well-known New Orleans music venues, you'll have to get a coronavirus vaccination or a negative coronavirus test.

The clubs — Tipitina's, the Maple Leaf Bar and d.b.a. — made the announcement late Wednesday in a news release.

"We remain committed to providing a safe and enjoyable atmosphere and livelihood for all performers, employees, and supporters of live entertainment," the clubs said in the release.

Guests will have to show their proof of vaccination along with an identification. Negative tests must be within the 72 hours before the performance.

— From wire reports

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Pistons take Cunningham with top pick

Associated Press

Cade Cunningham sure looked like the No. 1 overall draft pick all year at Oklahoma State with his fluid game, scoring ability and passing — all in a 6-foot-8 frame.

So it was no surprise the Detroit Pistons grabbed the freshman All-American with the top pick as they did to open the draft Thursday night in New York. And it was the start of multiple teams spending high picks on playmakers with size, including Florida State forward Scottie Barnes and Australian teenager Josh Giddey climbing a bit higher than expected as top-six picks.

It comes at a time when the game has evolved to a more position-free flow, making players like Cunningham,

Barnes and Giddey more valuable than ever with their ability to roam all over the court.

Cunningham had been widely expected to be the first name called in New York, although Pistons general manager Troy Weaver wouldn't reveal plans this week and said the team would look at every scenario, including trades. In the end, Detroit stuck with the 19-year-old mentioned as a potential top pick before ever stepping foot on the Oklahoma State campus.

The point guard from Arlington, Texas, lived up to expectations to become a first-team Associated Press All-American. He averaged 20.1 points, 6.2 rebounds and 3.5 assists with a game that allowed him to hit from three-point

range, score off the dribble or find teammates out of traps.

"It's still pretty surreal to me," Cunningham said. "I know how much responsibility comes with being the No. 1 pick. I know how much responsibility a city will put on the guy that they take No. 1. I'm more than excited to take on those tasks and try to deliver to the city of Detroit."

Barnes had risen in mock drafts but offered the first surprise by going to Toronto with the No. 4 pick ahead of Gonzaga freshman point guard Jalen Suggs. Barnes is a long-armed 6-8 forward who ran the Seminoles' offense and has the capability to be an elite defender with his length and ability to chase smaller ball handlers on the perimeter.

"A lot of what we like is his versatility," Toronto coach Nick Nurse said. "He'll rebound it, he can guard, he can switch and guard multiple positions and he's big enough to guard bigs down inside. He's big enough to rebound with bigs. And we like to get out and go with the guys who are grabbing the rebound a lot."

Two picks later, Oklahoma City grabbed Giddey, who was considered a potential lottery pick as a 6-8 floor leader known for his passing touch. He had played in Australia's National Basketball League with an all-around game (10.7 points, 7.1 rebounds and 7.2 assists) and has been part of the NBA Academy program designed to develop elite international prospects.

Sources: Lakers acquire Westbrook from Wizards

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The Los Angeles Lakers are acquiring All-Star point guard Russell Westbrook from the Washington Wizards for three players and the rights to first-round pick Isaiah Jackson.

According to two people with knowledge of the deal, the Lakers are trading Kyle Kuzma, Kentavious Caldwell-Pope and Montrezl Harrell to Washington for Westbrook, a Los Angeles native who helped lead UCLA to two Final Four appearances. The Lakers had the 22nd overall pick in Thursday's draft and selected Jackson, a 6-foot-11 forward from Kentucky.

The people spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the deal can't be officially announced until Aug. 6, when the salary cap becomes official and teams can also begin making moves for the upcoming season. The

Lakers will also receive second-round picks from the Wizards in 2024 and '28.

The Wizards won't be holding on to Jackson, either. NBA Commissioner Adam Silver announced that Jackson's rights were traded by the Lakers to the Indiana Pacers via the Wizards a couple of picks later.

This is the second time in three years that the Lakers have made a significant offseason trade. They acquired Anthony Davis from New Orleans in 2019 for Lonzo Ball, Brandon Ingram, Josh Hart and three first-round draft picks.

Westbrook is the league's career leader in triple-doubles (184) and gives the Lakers a playmaker to pair with LeBron James and Davis. Los Angeles won the NBA title in 2020 but struggled during the second half of this season when James and Davis were out of the lineup due to injuries.

Blues add Saad, while Lightning sign Perry

Associated Press

The St. Louis Blues inked Brandon Saad to a five-year contract and the Tampa Bay Lightning signed Corey Perry for two years Thursday as the two recent Stanley Cup champions brought in more winning experience on the second day of free agency.

The 28-year-old Saad spent last season with Colorado, putting up 24 points during the regular season and scoring seven goals in 10 playoff games. The winger counts \$4.5 million against the salary cap on his new \$22.5 million deal signed Thursday. Saad won the Cup with Chicago in 2013 and 2015 and is heading to his fifth NHL organization.

Perry signed a \$2 million, two-year deal with Tampa Bay that counts \$1 million against the salary cap annually. General manager Julien BriseBois expected to be done making

moves Wednesday but said, "If something falls onto our lap that makes sense and improves our team and we can find a way to squeeze it in, we're certainly open to exploring that."

This certainly qualifies.

The 36-year-old Perry, who won the Cup with Anaheim in 2007, is joining the Lightning after losing to them in the Final each of the past two seasons. Perry was with Dallas in 2020 and Montreal this past season.

The Stars are trying to get over the hump and win the franchise's first championship since 1999 and are taking steps in free agency with that goal in mind. Dallas signed big defenseman Jani Hakanpaa to a \$4.5 million, three-year deal and forward Michael Raffl to a \$1.1 million, one-year contract.

Another Cup contender, the Colorado Avalanche, signed forward Darren Helm on a \$1 million, one-year contract.

South African sets world swim record

Associated Press

TOKYO — South Africa's Tatjana Schoenmaker was the star of the day, setting the first individual swimming world record at the Tokyo Olympics.

Others shined, too.

Evgeny Rylov completed a backstroke double for Russia, Emma McKeon gave the Aussie women another gold, and China earned a return trip to the top of the medal podium.

The mighty Americans? For the first time in the meet, they spent the entire session Friday watching others win gold.

Schoenmaker, a 24-year-old South African, won the women's 200-meter breaststroke with a time of 2 minutes, 18.95 seconds, breaking the mark of 2:19.11 set by Denmark's Rikke Moller Pedersen at the 2013 world championships in Barcelona.

It was the third world record at the Tokyo Aquatics Centre, with the first two coming in women's relays.

"I wasn't expecting that at all," said

Schoenmaker, who added to her silver in the 100 breast. "It couldn't have been a better race. It still just doesn't sink in. Maybe one day."

Rylov thoroughly snuffed out America's dominance in the backstroke, adding the 200 title to his victory in the 100 back.

Rylov won with an Olympic-record time of 1:53.29, while American Ryan Murphy wound up with the silver (1:54.15).

Murphy was a double-gold medalist at the 2016 Rio Olympics, where he extended an American winning streak that began at the 1996 Atlanta Games.

The U.S. won 12 straight men's backstroke events over six Olympics, but that streak ended with Rylov's victory in the 100. He made it 2-for-2 in the longer race, while Murphy settled for bronze and silver in the two events.

Britain's Luke Greenbank grabbed the 200 bronze in 1:54.72.

McKeon touched first in the 100 freestyle with an Olympic-record time of 51.96, becoming only the second woman to

break 52 seconds in the sprint.

Hong Kong's Siobhan Haughey earned the silver in 52.27, while another Aussie, Cate Campbell, took the bronze in 52.52. American Abbey Weitzeil was last in the eight-woman field.

The Americans won three medals Friday, also claiming the other two spots on the podium behind Schoenmaker.

But it was the first time the U.S. team went through an entire session of finals in Tokyo without winning at least one gold.

Lilly King set a blistering pace early in the 200 breast and held on for a silver in 2:19.92, adding to her bronze in the 100 event. Annie Lazor nabbed the bronze in 2:20.84.

A day after winning its first two golds at the pool, China picked up another victory when Wang Shun touched first in the men's 200 individual medley.

Wang edged Britain's Duncan Scott with a time of 1:55.00. Scott took the silver in 1:55.28, while the bronze went to Switzerland's Jeremy Desplanches in 1:56.17.

Rapinoe converts key kick as US defeats Netherlands

Associated Press

YOKOHAMA, Japan — Megan Rapinoe converted the deciding penalty kick in a shootout as the United States advanced to the semifinals of the women's Olympic soccer tournament 4-2 following a 2-2 draw with the Netherlands on Friday.

U.S. goalkeeper Alyssa Naehrer stopped Vivianne Miedema's opening attempt in the shootout and then saved a shot from Aniek Nouwen before Rapinoe put her penalty away.

After Rapinoe scored, she turned to her teammates, folded her arms and grinned in triumph.

Afterward, she joked about the pressure.

"I just try to stay calm. I always say to myself, 'The worst that's going to happen is you're going to lose the whole thing,'" she said with a smile.

Miedema scored two goals in regulation time for the Netherlands,

giving her 10 goals for the tournament — an Olympic record.

Miedema put the Netherlands ahead in the 18th minute but the Americans tied it when Sam Mewis headed in a goal off a feed from Lynn Williams in the 28th. Williams then gave the U.S. its first lead in the 31st.

Miedema, who was playing in her 100th game for the Netherlands, made it 2-2 in the 54th. Naehrer stopped Lieke Martens' penalty in the 81st minute and the game went to overtime.

The United States will next face Canada in Kashima on Monday. The Canadians advanced to the semifinals 4-3 on penalties after a scoreless draw with Brazil in Rifu.

The U.S. went to a shootout for the fifth time in a major tournament. The last time was at the 2016 Rio Olympics, when it lost to Sweden in the quarterfinals.

Golden Slam is gone as Djokovic loses in semis

Associated Press

TOKYO — With his Golden Slam bid over for at least another three years, Novak Djokovic rested his head on Alexander Zverev's shoulder as his German opponent and friend consoled him.

"I told him that he's the greatest of all time," Zverev said. "I know that he was chasing history."

Djokovic, the top-ranked Serb who had seemed invincible in all of the biggest tournaments this year, lost to Zverev 1-6, 6-3, 6-1 on Friday in the semifinals of the tennis tournament at the Tokyo Olympics.

Djokovic was attempting to become the first man to win all four Grand Slam tournaments and Olympic gold in the same year. He won the Australian Open, French Open and Wimbledon this year and needed the Olympic and U.S. Open titles to complete the Golden Slam.

"I feel so terrible right now," Djokovic said. "I can't be positive right now."

Steffi Graf in 1988 remains the only tennis player to achieve the Golden Slam.

Djokovic can still achieve the calendar-year Grand Slam by winning the U.S. Open. No man has accomplished the feat since Rod Laver in 1969.

"He won 20 Grand Slams," Zverev said. "So you can't have everything."

"At the end of the day he's the greatest of all time, because he's going to win the most Grand Slams, he's going to win the most Master Series, he's going to be the longest at the world No. 1, and I'm sure 99% that this is the case when it's all said and done," Zverev said.

Zverev's opponent in the gold-medal match will be Karen Khachanov. The Russian beat Pablo Carreno Busta of Spain 6-3, 6-3.

Rays hammer Yankees to avoid sweep

Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — Luis Patiño outpitched Gerrit Cole, Brett Phillips hit a grand slam during a 10-run sixth inning, and the Tampa Bay Rays avoided a three-game sweep by routing the New York Yankees 14-0 on Thursday.

Patiño (2-2) allowed three hits in six innings. The 21-year-old right-hander, acquired in the trade that sent Blake Snell to San Diego last December, struck out eight and walked two.

Cole (10-6) gave up a season-high eight runs — seven earned — on six hits over 5½ innings and saw his ERA jump from 2.74 to 3.11. He had 10 strikeouts and two walks.

Austin Meadows homered

twice and drove in five runs for the Rays. Louis Head and Ryan Sherriff completed a four-hit-ter.

Nationals 3-8, Phillies 1-11: Max Scherzer (8-4) delivered a signature performance in what might be his last start for Washington, allowing three hits in six innings in the opener of a doubleheader split with host Philadelphia.

In the second game, Brad Miller hit a grand slam in the eighth inning off Sam Clay (0-4) to give Philadelphia the win. The Nationals jumped ahead 7-0 before the Phillies rallied.

Giants 5, Dodgers 0: Brandon Crawford doubled home two runs in his first at-bat after coming back from a left oblique strain and host San Francisco

took two of three from Los Angeles.

Reds 7, Cubs 4: Joey Votto set a franchise record by homering in his sixth consecutive game as visiting Cincinnati beat Chicago.

Braves 6, Mets 3: Austin Riley concluded his big week at Citi Field by hitting a two-run homer, and visiting Atlanta inched closer to NL East-leading New York.

Blue Jays 13, Red Sox 1: Vladimir Guerrero Jr. hit a three-run homer out of Fenway Park, Hyun Jin Ryu (10-5) pitched two-hit ball over six innings and Toronto routed Boston.

Royals 5, White Sox 0: Carlos Hernandez (2-1) pitched six scoreless innings, Salvador Perez homered and host Kansas

City beat Chicago.

Tigers 6, Orioles 2: Miguel Cabrera hit two solo home runs — Nos. 496 and 497 — and Casey Mize (6-5) pitched seven solid innings as host Detroit topped Baltimore.

Brewers 12, Pirates 0: Manny Piña hit two homers and drove in a career-high five runs as visiting Milwaukee routed Pittsburgh.

Athletics 4, Angels 0: Frankie Montas struck out 10 over seven scoreless innings and visiting Oakland took advantage of some early Los Angeles miscues to win in Starling Marte's debut.

Padres 3, Rockies 0: Joe Musgrove (7-7) struck out 11 in seven scoreless innings, leading host San Diego over Colorado.

Source: Dodgers close in on deal for Nats' Scherzer

Associated Press

The World Series champion Los Angeles Dodgers neared a monster trade for ace Max Scherzer and All-Star shortstop Trea Turner of the Washington Nationals late Thursday night, a person close to the deal told The Associated Press.

The person spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because the swap wasn't complete. The Nationals would get four young players for Washington's dynamic duo.

Scherzer has been given permission to speak to the Dodgers to see if he will waive his right to veto any trade, a power he has as a 10-year veteran who has been with his team for at least five years.

If the trade goes through, it would be a stunning haul for the Dodgers, who are three games behind NL West-leading San Francisco. Los Angeles owns the top spot in the wildcard race, 2½ games ahead of

San Diego.

With the Major League Baseball trade deadline at 4 p.m. EDT Friday, there was speculation on Thursday that the Padres would be the winners in the Scherzer sweepstakes.

Instead, the Dodgers got real busy. They made a trade early in the day for longtime Kansas City left-handed starter Danny Duffy, then closed in on Scherzer, the biggest prize in this deadline frenzy.

The Nationals, who have fallen out of playoff contention, were equally active. They traded closer Brad Hand to Toronto early in the day and later sent All-Star slugger Kyle Schwarber to Boston and reliever Daniel Hudson to San Diego.

Washington would get a pair of rookies, right-hander Josiah Gray and catcher Keibert Ruiz, and two minor leaguers, righty Gerardo Carrillo and outfielder Donovan Casey, for Scherzer.

SEC presidents vote to invite OU, Texas to join

Associated Press

Southeastern Conference university presidents voted Thursday to invite Texas and Oklahoma to the league and create a 16-team powerhouse on the field and at the bank.

But how soon?

The latest step in a move that has potential to help reshape college sports came two days after Texas and Oklahoma requested to join the SEC in 2025. That's when the schools' media rights agreement with the Big 12 expires.

The SEC said its leaders voted unanimously to extend invitations to the Longhorns and Sooners and bring them into the conference effective July 1, 2025.

When news of the potential conference realignment broke last week, Texas A&M bristled about letting its old Big 12 and Southwest Conference rival from Austin into the SEC. But the Aggies ended up falling in

line.

"Today's unanimous vote is both a testament to the SEC's longstanding spirit of unity and mutual cooperation, as well as a recognition of the outstanding legacies of academic and athletic excellence established by the Universities of Oklahoma and Texas," Commissioner Greg Sankey said.

Adding Texas and Oklahoma to a conference that already includes football powerhouses such as Alabama, LSU, Georgia and Florida gives the SEC eight programs that have won national championships since 1980.

"It's already the greatest, toughest conference in America. And with those two teams attempting to join this league, it will only get tougher," South Carolina coach Shane Beamer told reporters.

Now the process goes back to the schools.