

Study: Texas bases tops in assault risk

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Female soldiers at Army bases in Texas, Colorado, Kansas and Kentucky face a greater risk of sexual assault and harassment than those at other posts, accounting for more than a third of all active-duty Army women sexually assaulted in 2018, according to a new Rand Corp. study.

The study, released Friday, looked at Army incidents, and found that female soldiers at Fort Hood and Fort Bliss, both in Texas, faced the highest risk, particularly those in combat commands or jobs such as field artillery and engineering. And units with more frequent deployments to war also saw higher risk. Other bases with high risk were Fort Campbell in Kentucky, Fort Carson in Colorado and Fort Riley in Kansas, said the study which reviewed assault data from previous years.

Rand's study provides greater detail on the rates of sexual assault and misconduct across the Army, a chronic problem that military leaders have been struggling to combat. And it comes a year after the killing of Spc. Vanessa Guillén, who was missing at Fort Hood for about two months before her remains were found late last June.

Guillén was killed by a soldier, who her family says sexually harassed her, and who killed himself as police sought to arrest him. Her death put a spotlight on violence and leadership problems within the Army. The Rand report also confirmed one of the Ar-

my's conclusions about the impact of command climate, finding a lower risk of sexual misconduct in units with more positive supervisor scores.

The Fort Hood violence prompted an independent review which found that military leaders were not adequately dealing with high rates of sexual assault and harassment at the post. Christopher Swecker, the chairman of the review panel, told Congress that the base leaders were focused on military readiness and completely neglected the sexual assault prevention program. As a result, he said, lower-level unit commanders didn't encourage service members to report assaults, and in many cases were shaming victims.

According to the Rand study, the risk of assault for women at Fort Hood was nearly a third higher than the average risk faced by all women in the Army. Overall, Rand said that the risk across the Army varied widely depending on the female soldiers' base, unit, career field, age, and even whether they were at posts with a higher number of civilians.

For example, female soldiers in medical or personnel jobs have the lowest risk, while those in field artillery face the highest risk. Field artillery jobs were among some of the last Army combat specialties opened to women — coming in 2015. Other jobs that lagged behind were infantry, armor and special operations.

James A. Helis, director of the Army Resilience Directorate, said the study “sheds light on the environmental and occupational factors that contribute to the risk of sexual assault and sexual harassment for our soldiers and, in turn, will help inform future prevention and response efforts.”

The report used earlier Rand studies as well as data from Defense Department anonymous surveys in 2016 and 2018 that seek information about sexual assaults and harassment that may or may not have been formally reported. And it compared that to other military personnel and demographic data.

Soldiers assigned to the Washington, D.C. region, meanwhile, have some of the lowest risk totals, with the Pentagon showing the lowest of all installations listed. Among the bases with the lowest reported risk were Fort Belvoir, in northern Virginia, and Fort George G. Meade and the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, in Maryland.

According to the study, an estimated 8.4% — or about 1 in 12 — of the roughly 5,883 Army women who served at Fort Hood were sexually assaulted, while at the Pentagon it was 1.8%, or about one in 50.

The study noted, however, that the difference is not surprising considering that it's likely that women at the Pentagon are, on average, older, more senior-ranking and more highly educated. They also are more likely to be working with older and more senior-ranking men.

AFRICOM head warns terrorism sweeping Africa

Associated Press

TAN-TAN, Morocco — A senior U.S. general warned Friday that the “wildfire of terrorism” is sweeping across a band of Africa and needs the world's attention. He spoke at the close of large-scale U.S.-led war games with American, African and European troops.

The African Lion war games, which lasted nearly two weeks, stretched across Morocco, a key U.S., ally, with smaller

parts held in Tunisia and Senegal. The annual drills were skipped last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Gen. Stephen J. Townsend, head of the U.S. Africa Command, praised the work accomplished in joint operations, and painted a dark picture of threats besetting parts of Africa.

“I am concerned about the security situation across a band of Africa,” from the Sahel re-

gion in the west to the Horn of Africa, Townsend told reporters. He noted deadly attacks by al-Qaida- and Islamic State-linked jihadis and al-Shabab. “All of them are on the march,” he said.

African neighbors are helping governments deal with the threat, but, he added, “all of that does not seem to be sufficient enough to stop what I call ... (the) wildfire of terrorism that's sweeping that region.”

African Lion saw more than 7,000 troops from seven countries and NATO carry out air, land and sea exercises together.

“It has helped our interoperability, our joint capabilities, and provided readiness and a good opportunity to build cohesion across the forces,” said Maj. Gen. Andrew Rohling, commander of the U.S. Army's Southern European Task Force Africa. He spoke Friday in the desert town of Tan-Tan.

Claudette brings rain, floods to Gulf

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — Thunderstorms and high winds on the east side of Tropical Storm Claudette battered the Florida panhandle and much of Alabama on Saturday, as the weather system moved toward the North Carolina coast.

The National Hurricane Center declared Claudette organized enough to qualify as a named storm at 4 a.m. Saturday, well after the storm's center of circulation had come ashore southwest of New Orleans. By mid-morning it was 75 miles north-northeast of the city with winds clocked at 40 mph. It was moving north-northeast at 14 mph, and most

of the heavy weather was happening far to the north and east of the center.

After dumping flooding rains north of Lake Pontchartrain in Louisiana and along the Mississippi coast, the storm was inundating the Florida panhandle and, well inland, a broad expanse of Alabama. The National Weather Service issued a series of possible tornado warnings Saturday morning in north Florida and south Alabama.

Parts of inland Mississippi and Georgia were getting heavy rain from Claudette as well. And even though the storm was weakening, the National Hurricane Center issued a tropical storm watch for parts of the

North Carolina coast, which could feel the effects by Sunday night. The storm was forecast to cross into the Atlantic Ocean off North Carolina on Monday, and regain tropical storm strength over open water Tuesday.

Forecasters said Claudette could dump 5 to 10 inches of rain in the region, with isolated accumulations of 15 inches possible.

Most people riding out the storm still had electricity when they woke up Saturday morning. The website poweroutage.us reported roughly 22,000 outages total across Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida.

Western heat wave threatening health

Associated Press

PHOENIX — Extreme temperatures like the ones that blistered the American West last week aren't just annoying, they're deadly.

The record-breaking temperatures last week were a weather emergency, scientists and health care experts say, with heat responsible for more deaths in the U.S. than all other natural disasters combined. With more frequent and intense heat waves likely because of climate change and the worst drought in modern history, they say communities must better protect the vulnerable, like homeless people and those who live in

ethnically and racially diverse low-income neighborhoods.

Phoenix baked in temperatures above 115 degrees all week. The high Friday hit a record 117 degrees after breaking another Thursday at 118 degrees. Daily records also were set last week in places across the U.S. West, such as Nevada and California, including 128 degrees in Death Valley on Thursday.

Those who are vulnerable to high temperatures include the very young, the very old and people with heart or kidney disease, ailments that disproportionately affect communities of color.

The rising risks of the heat became painfully clear three years ago when 72-year-old Stephanie Pullman died at her Phoenix-area home after Arizona's largest electric utility turned off her service for failure to pay \$51. A coroner listed "environmental heat exposure" as one of the causes of her 2018 death.

The utility, Arizona Public Service, says it has suspended service disconnections and waived late fees through Oct. 15.

The county that includes Phoenix reported three heat-related deaths as of Saturday, with an additional 20 fatalities being investigated as possibly caused by high temperatures.

Biden opposes gas tax hike for infrastructure

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The White House made clear Friday that President Joe Biden was opposed to letting the federal gasoline tax rise at the rate of inflation to help pay for an infrastructure package that a bipartisan group of 21 senators is trying to craft.

The gas tax increase was part of an early package that called for \$579 billion in new spending on roads, bridges, rail and public transit. It's unclear if it will make the final cut and the White House seems intent on making sure it doesn't.

"The President has been clear through-

out these negotiations: He is adamantly opposed to raising taxes on people making less than \$400,000 a year," White House spokesman Andrew Bates said. "After the extraordinarily hard times that ordinary Americans endured in 2020 — job losses, shrinking incomes, squeezed budgets — he is simply not going to allow Congress to raise taxes on those who suffered the most."

The federal gas tax stands at 18.4 cents a gallon and has not increased since 1993. It helps pay for highways and mass transit programs around the country. Congress

has traditionally relied on the user-pay principle to pay for road and bridge work, but is increasingly relying on general funds to accomplish that task. Lawmakers from both parties are wary of attack ads accusing them of supporting a hike in gas prices.

The White House is expecting to hear from the senators crafting the infrastructure package on Monday. It is scaled back from Biden's proposal, but Democrats are preparing to move other parts of Biden's agenda in separate legislation that they could pass using a tool that requires only a simple majority for approval.

Catholic bishops OK drafting of politician rebuke

Associated Press

U.S. Catholic bishops overwhelmingly approved the drafting of a “teaching document” that many of them hope will rebuke Catholic politicians, including President Joe Biden, for receiving Communion despite their support for abortion rights.

The decision, vehemently opposed by a minority of bishops, came despite appeals from the Vatican for a more cautious and collegial approach to the divisive issue. And it raises questions of how closely the bishops will be able to cooperate with the Biden administration on issues such as immigration and racial injustice.

The result of the vote — 168 in favor and 55 against — was announced Friday near the end of a three-day meeting of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops that was held virtually. The bishops had cast their votes privately on Thursday after several hours of impassioned debate.

Supporters of the measure said a strong rebuke of Biden is needed because of his recent actions protecting and expanding abortion access, while opponents warned that such action would portray the bishops as a partisan force during a time of bitter political divisions across the country.

As a result of the vote, the USCCB’s doctrine committee will draft a statement on the meaning of Communion in the life of the church that will be submitted for consideration at a future meeting, probably an in-person gathering in November. To be formally adopted, the document would need support of two-thirds of the bishops.

One section of the document is intended to include a specific admonition to Catholic politicians and other public figures who disobey church teaching on abortion and other core doctrinal issues.

Bishop Donald Hying of Madison, Wis., said during Thursday’s debate that he speaks with many people who are confused by a Catholic president who advances “the most radical pro-abortion agenda in history,” and action from the bishops’ conference is needed.

“They’re looking for direction,” Hying said.

Bishop Robert McElroy of San Diego countered that the USCCB would suffer “destructive consequences” from a document targeting Catholic politicians.

Biden boasts 300 million vaccine shots in 150 days

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden took a cautious victory lap Friday in his quest to bring the COVID-19 pandemic under control, announcing that 300 million vaccine shots have been administered in the 150 days since he took office.

Biden credited scientists, companies, the American people and his whole-of-government effort. The president noted that the widespread vaccination campaign had set the stage for most Americans to have a relatively normal summer as businesses reopen and employers hire.

“We’re heading into a very different summer compared to last year,” the president said. “A bright summer. Prayerfully, a summer of joy.”

But as Biden marks one milestone, he is in danger of failing to meet another: his target to have 70% of American

adults at least partially vaccinated by July Fourth, in a little over two weeks.

Overall, about 168 million American adults, or 65.1% of the U.S. population 18 years and older, have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine as of Friday, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The pace of new vaccinations in the U.S. has dropped significantly from a high of nearly 2 million per day about two months ago, jeopardizing Biden’s ability to hit the 70% mark.

The White House said its whole-of-government approach to the vaccination effort has put the virus in retreat, which in turn has brought COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths to their lowest levels in over a year.

But Biden noted in his remarks that some communities in states with lower vaccination rates are seeing cases and hospitalizations increase.

Poll: Many Americans resume pre-virus life; some fear haste

Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Many Americans are relaxing precautions taken during the COVID-19 pandemic and resuming everyday activities, even as some worry that coronavirus-related restrictions were hastily lifted, a new poll shows.

The poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research finds that majorities of Americans who were regularly doing so before the pandemic say they are returning to bars or restaurants, traveling and attending events such as movies or sports.

Just 21% are very or extremely worried about a COVID-19 infection in their inner circle — the lowest level since the pandemic began — and only 25% are highly concerned that the lifted restrictions will lead to additional people being infected in their community.

Andrea Moran, a 36-year-old freelance writer and mother of two boys, said she feels both relief and joy at the chance to resume “doing the little things,” such as having

drinks on a restaurant patio with her husband.

“Honestly, I almost cried,” Moran said. “It’s such a feeling of having been through the wringer, and we’re finally starting to come out of it.”

Still, 34% of Americans think restrictions in their area have been lifted too quickly, while somewhat fewer — 27% — say they were not lifted quickly enough. About 4 in 10 rate the pace of reopening about right.

The way Americans approached their daily lives suddenly changed after COVID-19 spread through the U.S. in early 2020. Following the advice of health officials and governments, people isolated in their homes — either alone or with families — to avoid exposure to the virus, which has sickened more than 33 million people and killed 600,000 people in the U.S.

The emergence of the vaccine has helped slow down rates of infection and death, allowing state and local economies to reopen and leading Americans to return to activities they once enjoyed.

Hard-line judiciary chief to be next president of Iran

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Iran's hard-line judiciary chief won the country's presidential election in a landslide victory Saturday, propelling the supreme leader's protege into Tehran's highest civilian position in a vote that appeared to see the lowest turnout in the Islamic Republic's history.

Initial results showed Ebrahim Raisi won 17.8 million votes in the contest, dwarfing those of the race's sole moderate candidate. However, Raisi dominated the election only after a panel under the watch of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei disqualified his strongest competition.

His candidacy, and the sense the election served more as a coronation for him, sparked widespread apathy among eligible voters in the Islamic Republic, which has held up turnout as a sign of support for the theocracy since its 1979 Islamic Revolution. Some, including former hard-line President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, called for a boycott.

In initial results, former Revolutionary Guard commander Mohsen Rezaei won 3.3 million votes and moderate Abdolnasser Hemmati got 2.4 million, said Jamal Orf, the head of Iran's Interior Ministry election headquarters. The race's fourth candidate,

Amirhossein Ghazizadeh Hashemi, had around 1 million votes, Orf said.

As night fell Friday, turnout appeared far lower than in Iran's last presidential election in 2017. At one polling place inside a mosque in central Tehran, a Shiite cleric played soccer with a young boy as most of its workers napped in a courtyard. At another, officials watched videos on their mobile phones as state television blared beside them, offering only tight shots of locations around the country — as opposed to the long, snaking lines of past elections.

Balloting came to a close at 2 a.m. Saturday, after the government extended voting to accommodate what it called "crowding" at several polling places nationwide. Paper ballots, stuffed into large plastic boxes, were to be counted by hand through the night, and authorities said they expected to have initial results and turnout figures Saturday morning at the earliest.

"My vote will not change anything in this election; the number of people who are voting for Raisi is huge and Hemmati does not have the necessary skills for this," said Hedyeh, a 25-year-old woman who gave only her first name while hurrying to a taxi in Haft-e Tir Square after avoiding the polls. "I have no candidate here."

Juneteenth holiday leads to scramble in some states

Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Congress and President Joe Biden acted with unusual swiftness this week in approving Juneteenth as a national holiday. That shifted the battle to the states, where the holiday faces a far less enthusiastic response.

Nearly all states recognize Juneteenth in some fashion, at least on paper. But most have been slow to move beyond proclamations issued by governors or resolutions passed by lawmakers. So far, at least nine states have designated it in law as an official paid state holiday — Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Texas, Virginia and Washington. All but Texas, where the events of the original Juneteenth took place, acted after the killing of George Floyd last year.

This year alone, legislation to make Juneteenth a paid state holiday died in Florida and South Dakota and stalled in Ohio, all states controlled by Republicans. But even in Maryland, where Democrats control the Legislature, a Juneteenth bill passed one chamber only to die in the other.

Only a handful of states headed into Thursday's signing of the federal Juneteenth law with the paid holiday on the books to be celebrated in 2021. The governors of Washington, Illinois, Louisiana and Maine, by contrast, all signed more recent laws that were set to kick in for 2022.

Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards closed state offices for a half-day Friday, only a few days after he signed Juneteenth legislation, and Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker was among governors who changed their states' start dates to 2021.

Republican Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine issued a Juneteenth statement late Thursday and closed state offices in the manner of a hastily called school snow day. West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice also declared Juneteenth a state holiday at a last-minute virtual press conference. The governors of Connecticut and Florida issued their Juneteenth proclamations Friday.

Georgia law caps the number of state holidays at 12, meaning Juneteenth could be added only if another holiday were dropped.

Ariz. teen suspected in shootings thought he was being followed

Associated Press

PHOENIX—An Arizona teenager suspected of killing one person and injuring a dozen others during a 90-minute string of drive-by shootings in metropolitan Phoenix told police he believed people were after him because of his involvement in another shooting, according to court documents released Friday.

Ashin Tricarico, 19, is accused of opening fire on vehicles and pedestrians from a white SUV on Thursday in at least eight separate shootings in three cities. Four people were shot, including a man whose pickup careened into a canal alongside a freeway.

A witness told police he saw the suspect drive up behind the truck and swerve into the lane beside it and then he heard a gunshot. Police later found the man's body inside the

truck with a gunshot wound to the neck, the court documents state.

Tricarico told police he was involved in another shooting a month ago in Phoenix while he was a security guard and believed people have been following him because of it, according to the court documents.

Tricarico was working as a licensed, armed security guard at a restaurant in north Phoenix on May 5 when he shot a male customer outside who was reportedly intoxicated, causing a disturbance and charging at Tricarico, Phoenix police said in a statement Friday night.

Police said the man was taken to a hospital with a non-life-threatening injury, and Tricarico cooperated with investigators. The case is still being investigated.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

'Little slice of hell' home for sale for \$590K cash

CO DENVER — The real estate listing promises it could be “your own little slice of hell” — a home with spray painted profanities left by a tenant, a refrigerator full of rotting meat, soiled carpets from an illegal pet rescue and a back porch falling off. But in the hot real estate market, the owner is asking for \$590,000 cash for the five-bedroom home in Colorado Springs.

The strategy appears to be working. A lack of houses available for sale means most homes are selling as is, without buyers asking for fixes or having their closing costs covered, listing agent Mimi Foster told KMGH-TV. She said that she received 16 written cash offers in the first 24 hours after putting the house on the market.

The owner cannot afford to fix the home, and with the national freeze on foreclosures ending in July, decided to sell.

Historic clock restored, returned to church

MA BOSTON — An almost 3-century-old clock was returned to the Old North Church in Boston after a two-month restoration project.

The Old North Church, which still hosts services, was a seminal location in the Revolutionary War when two lanterns hung from the steeple set off Paul Revere's ride to warn of the British army's approach.

Ken Pearson, 70, of Gloucester, who owns a timepiece repair store, completed the restoration project of the Avery-Bennett gallery clock built in 1726.

He is also the descendant of two men who also worked on the clock in 1823 and 1830, the newspaper reported.

Stunt rider dies in world record jump attempt

WA MOSES LAKE — A stunt rider died from injuries sustained while attempting to set a world record motorcycle jump in Grant County.

Alex Harvill, 28, was attempting to jump the length of a football field on his motorcycle during a performance at the Moses Lake Air Show when he crashed.

He was taken to the hospital for his injuries, but later passed away, officials said.

Woman waits hour for ambulance after crash

VA RICHMOND — The fire department responded when a pregnant woman was in a car crash in Richmond, but Latanya Thornton said she waited more than an hour for an ambulance.

Mark Tenia of the Richmond Ambulance Authority said they are short staffed and have just half of the emergency drivers needed. At the time of the crash, all other manned ambulances were at or on the way to a hospital or on the scene of another call, he said.

Jim Nolan, a spokesperson from the mayor's office, said in a statement that it “should not have happened,” but officials are thankful that police and fire departments were there in minutes to render first aid until an ambulance arrived. The first responding agencies will meet

with the ambulance authority to figure out what happened in this case, he said.

Train hits man sleeping on railroad tracks

MS PASCAGOULA — A man on the Mississippi coast was seriously injured after being hit by a train while he was sleeping on the tracks.

WLOX-TV reported that the man, 63, whose name was not released, was hit on the railroad tracks in Pascagoula.

One of the man's arms and both of his legs were severed, police told the television station. Officers applied tourniquets and the man was transported to Singing River Hospital. He was later airlifted to USA Medical Center in Mobile.

City sues 'crime-plagued' Greyhound station

OH COLUMBUS — A downtown Greyhound bus station that has been the scene of hundreds of emergency calls this year alone is a public nuisance, the city of Columbus and its police department declared in a lawsuit.

City Attorney Zach Klein and the Columbus Division of Police filed the complaint against the bus carrier.

They are seeking preliminary and permanent injunctive relief against the “crime-plagued” property, according to a statement.

The lawsuit comes as Columbus police report having received more than 300 calls for service to the bus station in 2021. The calls, the department said, have ranged from con-

cerns about guns, narcotics and stabbings to overdoses and a shooting last month.

Fire destroys business that made pipe organs

IA LAKE CITY — Fire destroyed a western Iowa business that made pipe organs for churches, schools and customers from around the world, officials said.

Firefighters found Dobson Pipe Organ Builders engulfed in flames that caused its exterior walls to collapse, officials said.

The State Fire Marshal's Office said it believes the fire was started by a malfunctioning fan that caused sawdust to ignite.

Dobson Pipe Organ Builders was founded in 1974.

Plane at bottom of lake not from 1965 crash

CA FOLSOM — A small plane recently spotted by sonar at the bottom of a Northern California lake is not the wreck of an aircraft that disappeared into the water after a midair collision in 1965, authorities said.

The possibility arose when wreckage was spotted by technicians testing sonar equipment at Folsom Lake.

Dive team sergeants from the Placer and El Dorado county sheriff's offices went out with the technicians to obtain better images, and determined it was an airplane that crashed in 1986, the Placer County Sheriff's Office said.

The 1986 crash did not involve any fatalities, the office said in a statement.

— From wire reports



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Mann, Clippers finish off Jazz in Game 6

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Paul George, Terance Mann and the Los Angeles Clippers have learned to thrive under adversity.

So, when they trailed by 25 points early in the third quarter Friday night in Game 6 of their Western Conference semifinal series against the Utah Jazz, it was nothing new.

Instead of being rattled, the Clippers rallied, posting the largest comeback victory by a team in a series-clinching win over the last 25 seasons and advancing to a conference final for the first time in the franchise's 51-year history.

Mann scored 25 of his career-high 39 points in the second half as the Clippers posted a 131-119 victory to eliminate the Jazz.

The Clippers are the first team in NBA history to rally from a pair of 2-0 series deficits in the same postseason. They had to do it this time without All-Star forward Kawhi Leonard, who was sidelined by a sprained right knee for the final two games.

"They have been starving,

starved for success. They have had a lot of good teams and just caught a lot of bad breaks. We know when Kawhi went down, probably thinking the same thing over and over again," coach Tyrone Lue said. "Our team, I just tell you, they just don't quit. It's a total team effort and we are all trying to win and our team is willing to do whatever it takes to win."

The fourth-seeded Clippers will face second-seeded Phoenix in the Western Conference finals. Game 1 is Sunday in Phoenix. Los Angeles won two of the three games in the regular season.

The close-out victory was viewed by 17,105 at Staples Center, marking the first time in 15 months the Clippers had played in front of a full house after California eased COVID-19 safety restrictions on Tuesday.

"You felt the monkey off of the Clippers' back in terms of getting out of the second round," said George, who had 28 points. "It was just a special night. You know, you felt it, the cheers, the excite-

ment.

"The playoffs are about grit. It's about fighting. It's about whatever it takes, and time after time, I think we've shown that."

Mann — who had 25 points in the first five games of the series — helped bring the Clippers back with 20 points in the third quarter. Utah had a 94-91 lead going into the final 12 minutes, but Jackson gave the Clippers their first lead since early in the second quarter when his layup made it 96-95 with 10:36 remaining.

Mann was 15-for-21 from the field and also became just the third player in franchise history to make at least seven threes in a postseason game.

"You saw a full complete game from a second-year player," said George of Mann. "I mean, you saw him stretch the floor. You saw him rebound, muscle his way to the basket. You just saw so many flashes of so many different things. He did it in the most crucial part of the game."

The Clippers had a 107-106 lead with eight minutes remain-

ing before they seized control with nine straight points, including five by Mann. The closest the Jazz would get after that was six.

Donovan Mitchell led top-seeded Utah with 39 points. It is the second time in franchise history the Jazz have blown a 25-point lead in a postseason game.

Royce O'Neale added 21 for the Jazz. They had the NBA's top regular-season record but lost four straight for the first time all year.

"We just turned the ball over a lot. We didn't execute defensively. We didn't get back and let their guys do whatever they want," said Mitchell, who had seven games in the playoffs with 30 or more points.

Mitchell opened the second half with a 33-foot, step back three-pointer to give the Jazz a 75-50 lead 24 seconds into the third quarter. It was 88-67 with 6:37 remaining when LA fought its way back by going on a 21-2 run to get within a basket with 1:42 remaining with 10 points from Mann and Jackson scoring nine.

Curry, Harris help Sixers stave off elimination

Associated Press

ATLANTA — The Philadelphia 76ers remained confident after blowing big leads in back-to-back losses to the Atlanta Hawks and continued to avoid self-doubt after falling behind by 12 early in Game 6.

Finally, the 76ers showed their belief in their talent, and their No. 1 seed, were justified.

Seth Curry hit six three-pointers and scored 24 points and the 76ers avoided elimination in the Eastern Conference semifinal series by beating the Hawks 104-99 on Friday night.

The 76ers overcame Trae Young's 34-point effort to force Game 7 on Sunday night in Philadelphia.

"You saw the fight and grit of a whole group," said Tobias Harris, who also had 24 points.

Harris made four free throws in the final 13 seconds to protect the lead. Joel Embiid added 22 points and 13 rebounds.

"Tonight I think we showed that mental toughness and came out on top," Ben Simmons said.

Curry made six of nine threes as he served as Philadelphia's answer for Young's long-distance shooting.

"It's fun. It's a lot of fun," Curry said. "That's a great team over there. ... You've just got to weather the storm and come back at them at the other end."

Young's long three, just before the shot clock expired, cut Philadelphia's lead to 94-93. Embiid answered with a basket. Free throws by Embiid and Tyrese Maxey, who scored 16 points off the bench, pushed the advantage to 98-93.

Danilo Gallinari's jam with 20 seconds remaining cut the lead to three points but the 76ers made all six of their free-throw attempts to close the game.

The Hawks rallied from deficits of 18 and 26 points to win back-to-back games and were in position to clinch the series at home.

"That stung for us as a whole team," Harris said of blowing big leads in two losses. "We said there's really going to be a lot of criticism but we really have to stay focused because the series isn't over. ... As a group we basically just locked into that."

The Hawks finally started strong, leading by 12 points in the first period and never trailing in the first half. Atlanta led 51-47 at halftime.

The 76ers opened the second half with a flurry of four threes, including three by Curry, during a 14-0 run to open the second half that gave Philadelphia a 61-51 lead. The 76ers led by 11 at 68-57, following a jumper by Embiid.

"I don't think we were tight," said Hawks coach Nate McMillan, who said the team struggled when it "just started to take quick shots. We didn't make them work on defense."

Atlanta cut the lead to 80-76 entering the final period.

Lochte 7th in 200 IM

Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — After beating only one other swimmer, Ryan Lochte was the last one to climb from the pool.

He struggled to lift himself out of the water, undoubtedly feeling all of his 36 years after attempting to make one more Olympic team in the grueling 200-meter individual medley.

After embarrassing himself five years ago in Rio de Janeiro, Lochte's bid for a fifth Olympics ended with a labored, seventh-place finish in the 200 IM at the U.S. swimming trials Friday night.

Youth was served in a race that requires one lap using each of swimming's four strokes.

That was something Lochte just didn't have.

Michael Andrew — 14 years his junior — romped to victory by going under world-record pace over the first three laps and holding on in the freestyle for a winning time of 1 minute, 55.44 seconds.

Chase Kalisz, who already had won the 400 individual medley at these trials, claimed another Olympic event by finishing next in 1:56.97.

Lochte lagged far behind, touching in 1:59.67. That was nearly 6 seconds off the world record he still holds, a time of 1:54.00 from the 2011 world championships in the prime of his brilliant career.

In other events, Ryan Murphy romped to victory in the 200 backstroke, adding to his triumph in the 100 back, while Abby Weitzel won the 100 freestyle after defending Olympic champion Simone Manuel shockingly failed to advance from the semifinals the previous night.

Lilly King also booked a second event in Tokyo, though she didn't touch the wall first. The outspoken American settled for the runner-up spot in the 200 breaststroke, touching the wall nearly three-quarters of a second behind Annie Lazor.

Crouser goes big, breaks 31-year-old shot put mark

Associated Press

EUGENE, Ore. — The record was older than he is.

When Ryan Crouser broke it, "it felt like it was a huge weight lifted."

The 28-year-old who built a training ring at his home in Arkansas to stay on point during the coronavirus pandemic shattered a shot put world record Friday night that was set 2½ years before he was born.

On Day 1 of the U.S. Olympic Trials, he heaved the massive medal sphere 76 feet, 8¼ inches (23.37 meters) to put his name in the record book and punch his ticket for Tokyo, where he'll have a chance to defend his Olympic title next month.

Just like he always imagined. "There were so many times that I was throwing a six-pound shot out behind the middle school, throwing by myself, and let it go and put my hands over my head and be like, 'Oh, new world record!'" Crouser said. "I knew

it's been a possibility or potential to do it since 2017."

Virtually everyone in this tightly knit group of throwers knew the record of 75-10¼ (23.12) held by Randy Barnes since May 20, 1990, was in jeopardy. Earlier this year, Crouser topped Barnes' indoor record. Earlier on Friday, during qualifying, Crouser heaved 75-2½ (22.92) to set the American Olympic trials record.

Crouser was feeling so good in the preliminary round that he thought a world record was possible right then and there. What kept him from going for it was his shoes. Though he had brought a pair of new Nikes to Eugene for the trials, he opted for a more broken-in pair because the shot put ring at newly remodeled Hayward Field was "fast."

"But they take your shoes if you break the world record," Crouser said of World Athletics, which tests all shoes involved in a record. "I thought, 'I don't know, if I throw a world record in prelims, I

won't have shoes for the final. I'll have to throw in the (new) Nikes.'"

So, the record held — but only for a few more hours.

Even before the fourth of his six tries on a mild, sunshiny evening had plunked into the dirt, Crouser was lifting his arms to celebrate. When the shot landed, far beyond where any other mark had been made, a collective gasp came from the quarter-filled stands.

About a half-minute passed while officials checked the distance. When the mark came up on the board, confirming that he had broken one of the longest-standing records in the books, he was mobbed by his competitors near the ring.

"Finally timed that one up," said Crouser, who grew up in Oregon, went to college at Texas and now serves as a volunteer coach at Arkansas. "I think I was celebrating on that one almost before it left my hand."

Bland, Henley surprise leaders at US Open

Associated Press

Raise your hand if you had a guy named Bland sharing the 36-hole lead on your U.S. Open bingo card. Now put it down. Even he didn't.

The 48-year-old Englishman — first name, Richard — won the first tournament of a not-so-distinguished European Tour career at the British Masters just last month to snap an 0-for-447 streak and earn an invitation to Torrey Pines. Next, he followed up his opening-round 67 with a 70 on Friday, sharing the top spot on the leaderboard with the slightly-less-improbable Russell Henley at 5 under.

To suggest the golf world didn't see either one coming

might be an understatement.

"Most guys who come in here," a reporter asked Bland at his post-round news conference, "have Ping or Titleist across their hat. What's the story behind ..."

"This is just my golf club back home, the Wisley," Bland said. "I don't have a hat kind of deal at the minute. ... I kind of said to the golf club, 'Look, it would be quite nice if I wore the hat,' and they gave me sort of like 10 to come out here with."

Henley, on the other hand, has a golfing pedigree. The former college golfer of the year award winner at Georgia turned pro 10 years ago and has won three times on the PGA Tour,

the last one in 2017. He hasn't recorded a single top-10 finish in 26 previous major appearances.

"I've never been in this position before in a major," Henley said. "Just feel like I'm going to learn something no matter what happens."

What the rest of us learned — or at least, were reminded of again — is that the U.S. Open deserves its reputation as the toughest test in golf. Unlike the double-digit birdie-fests the PGA Tour stages to favor the big-hitting stars every week, there's never any question where the United States Golf Association set-ups fall on the risk-reward scale.

Nats top East Division-leading Mets

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Yan Gomes hit a game-ending single in the ninth inning, Erick Fedde extended his scoreless streak to 20 innings and the Washington Nationals two-hit the first-place New York Mets in a 1-0 victory Friday night.

Juan Soto opened the ninth with a walk and moved to third on Ryan Zimmerman's single to right. Gomes then singled to left to beat Edwin Díaz (1-2).

Brad Hand (4-2) pitched the ninth to close out Washington's gem. The Nationals have won a season-high five straight.

Orioles 7, Blue Jays 1: Cedric Mullins homered twice and Thomas Eshelman pitched effectively into the fifth inning to help host Baltimore snap an eight-game losing streak with a victory over Toronto, which lost its fifth straight.

Athletics 5, Yankees 3: James Kaprielian made it to

the Bronx six years after New York took him in the first round of the amateur draft, and beat the team that drafted him by pitching three-hit ball over 5½ innings as Oakland won its seventh straight.

Padres 8, Reds 2: Wil Myers homered twice and doubled, Tommy Pham hit a leadoff homer and Chris Paddock struck out 11 in five impressive innings to match his career high for San Diego in a win over visiting Cincinnati.

Pirates 11, Indians 10: Gregory Polanco hit a two-run homer in a five-run first inning and Pittsburgh nearly squandered a 10-run lead at home before hanging on to beat Cleveland and snapping a 10-game losing streak.

Braves 9, Cardinals 1: Ozzie Albies and William Contreras homered off Carlos Martínez in a four-run second inning, Max Fried allowed two hits in seven innings, and Atlanta

handed visiting St. Louis its fifth straight loss.

Astros 2, White Sox 1: Yordan Álvarez had a game-ending double in the ninth inning for his third hit, lifting host Houston over Chicago.

Marlins 10, Cubs 2: Adam Duvall hit a grand slam and a two-run drive, and Miami snapped a four-game slide by routing the host Cubs.

Twins 7, Rangers 5 (10): Luis Arraez hit an RBI triple to start his team's 10th inning and visiting Minnesota then drew two bases-loaded walks to beat Texas in the opener of a three-game series matching last-place teams.

Royals 5, Red Sox 3: Adalberto Mondesi hit a 464 foot three-run homer, Salvador Pérez added his 18th home run this season, and host Kansas City beat Boston for its second win in its last 13 games.

Rockies 6, Brewers 5 (10): At Denver, C.J. Cron hit a

game-ending single in the 10th inning, and Colorado beat Milwaukee to extend its winning streak to a season-high five.

Giants 5, Phillies 3: Johnny Cueto struck out five in six uneven innings, Brandon Belt homered and San Francisco beat visiting Philadelphia.

Mariners 5, Rays 1: Yusei Kikuchi threw four-hit ball over seven innings, host Seattle batted around during a four-run first inning and beat Tampa Bay.

Angels 11, Tigers 3: Shohei Ohtani celebrated his appointment to next month's All-Star Home Run Derby by connecting twice during Los Angeles' win over visiting Detroit.

Dodgers 3, Diamondbacks 0: Arizona stumbled to its franchise-record 15th straight loss, with Steven Souza Jr. hitting a go-ahead home run in his return to Phoenix following a horrific knee injury and leading Los Angeles.

Canadiens beat Knights in OT to take lead in series

Associated Press

MONTREAL — Luke Richardson didn't envision his debut as an NHL head coach coming this way.

But he'll take it.

Josh Anderson scored his second goal of the game at 12:53 of overtime and Carey Price made 43 saves as Montreal beat the Vegas Golden Knights 3-2 on Friday night for a 2-1 lead in the Stanley Cup semifinal series hours after learning interim coach Ducharme tested positive for COVID-19.

"I would have thought my first chance running an NHL bench would be an exhibition game," said Richardson, a Canadiens assistant temporarily promoted to the top job in Ducharme's absence. "But it happened to be in third round of the Stanley Cup playoffs in overtime, so it's pretty exciting."

"We're just hoping to keep this thing going and we'll get the whole group back together."

Cole Caufield also scored for Montreal in

front of 3,500 fans at the Bell Centre as the Canadiens won in overtime for the fourth time in the playoffs.

Ducharme's first test came back positive Friday morning before a subsequent result provided confirmation. He addressed the team before and after the game virtually, and was in communication with Richardson and his staff between periods.

"It was very difficult," Anderson said of not having Ducharme present. "Most of us were pretty confused, too. Us staying in such a tight bubble, and not going anywhere outside."

"When you lose your head coach, it's obviously very tough."

Nicolas Roy and Alex Pietrangelo scored for Vegas. Marc-Andre Fleury finished with 24 stops — and one major gaffe on Anderson's tying goal late in regulation — for the Golden Knights.

"We liked the way we played," Vegas captain Mark Stone said. "Starting from the top, we have to score goals."

The Golden Knights will have to do that

when the best-of-seven showdown resumes Sunday night.

Anderson's winner came after he knocked down a pass from Jesperi Kotkaniemi at the offensive blue line. The puck fell to Paul Byron, who froze Fleury before passing back to Anderson for his third goal of the playoffs.

"It looked like we had a lot more energy than them (in OT)," Anderson said. "We found a way."

Price stymied Vegas time and again until his teammates finally found traction.

"It was incredible," Anderson said of the goaltender's performance. "He kept us in the game, all game."

"We wouldn't be sitting here talking about this without him."

After the Golden Knights, who dominated much of the first two periods and led 30-8 on the shot clock through 40 minutes, killed off a penalty to start the third, Pietrangelo scored his fourth goal of the playoffs — and third in the last two games — under Price's blocker on an odd-man rush at 2:22.